

# Indigenous knowledge meet

CLIVE NDOU

EXPERTS from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (Brics) will from tomorrow exchange ideas on indigenous knowledge and its role in addressing challenges facing the world.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal will co-host the Brics conference in partnership with African traditional leaders.

It aims to explore ways to address global challenges, ranging from food security to human rights, which will kick off in Durban tomorrow.

“A central focus will be the contributions made by traditional leaders and healers and the inclusion of indigenous languages, religions and value systems such as the African philosophy of ubuntu,” UKZN spokesperson Lesiba Seshoka said.

The indaba also aims to mobilise local communities to be more involved in preserving and protecting their environment, using their own indigenous knowledge, attitudes and value systems.

“The conference is also expected to contribute to the upcoming eighth Brics Summit in Goa, India, in October 2016,” Seshoka said.

The conference comes amid the realisation among researchers and policy makers of the immense role that indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) can play in addressing modern challenges such as climate change.

“The significance of incorporating IKS in combating these global challenges is based on the awareness that once people and communities feel that they are part of the business of the state, they become inspired and ready to protect the state, resources and the environment in general as a home and place of work,” director of the DST-NRF Centre in Indigenous Knowledge Systems at UKZN, Prof Hassan Kaya, said.

Jointly organised by the Department of Science and Technology, the conference will end on Wednesday.

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