



**Policy Dialogue**

# India–Brazil Partnership in the Global South

21 February 2026 | New Delhi

**Outcome Report**



**RIS**  
Research and Information System  
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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

## **Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma**

*Director General, RIS*

India and Brazil share a deep and multifaceted partnership, elevated to a Strategic Partnership in 2006 and rooted in shared democratic values and a common vision for inclusive and sustainable development. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948, this relationship has evolved into one of the most significant South-South partnerships in the contemporary global order. The Policy Dialogue on “India–Brazil Partnership in the Global South”, held at RIS on 21 February 2026, was timely, particularly in light of the Brazilian President’s visit, reflecting renewed momentum in bilateral engagement.

India and Brazil coordinate closely across major multilateral platforms such as the BRICS, G20, United Nations, and the World Trade Organization, consistently advocating development priorities, policy space, and equitable global governance. In a period marked by shrinking development finance, climate stress, and debt vulnerabilities, stronger South-South and triangular cooperation has become essential to advancing the interests of the Global South.

The partnership is expanding across strategic sectors including space cooperation, energy and biofuels under the Global Biofuel Alliance, agriculture and food security, digital public infrastructure, health, climate action, and capacity building through initiatives such as the IBSA Fund. Deeper trade engagement, including with Mercosur, further strengthens South–South economic integration.

The Dialogue brought together policymakers, diplomats, and scholars to generate practical recommendations for advancing India-Brazil cooperation. This Report presents a concise summary of the discussions and speaker interventions. I extend my appreciation to the RIS team, particularly Dr. Sushil Kumar for organising the event, and to our publications team and Mr. Sachin Singhal for bringing out this Report. I am confident it will serve as a valuable reference for strengthening India–Brazil partnership and advancing Global South priorities.



Sachin Kumar Sharma



# SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS



## Inaugural Session

## Welcome Remarks

### **Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma**

*Director General, RIS*

Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma welcomed the dialogue as both timely and significant, particularly in light of the Brazilian President's visit, which underscores the growing strategic depth of India–Brazil relations. He highlighted that India and Brazil share a historically steady and principled partnership rooted in common democratic values and a shared commitment to advancing the interests of the Global South. Over the years, the two countries have worked closely across key multilateral platforms such as the World Trade Organization, United Nations, BRICS, and the G20, coordinating positions on trade, development, and global governance reforms.

He emphasized that both nations have consistently defended development priorities within the international system, including the protection of Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT) for developing countries and the safeguarding of policy space within the global trading architecture. In an increasingly fragmented global order where development concerns risk being sidelined, India and Brazil have a crucial role in reinforcing multilateralism and amplifying the collective voice of the Global South.

Professor Sharma further underlined the significant potential for expanding bilateral cooperation in emerging and strategic sectors such as biofuels, green energy transition, agriculture, digital public infrastructure, technology and innovation, space cooperation, and traditional medicine. He also noted that strengthening trade and economic engagement, including deeper collaboration with regional groupings such as Mercosur, could enhance South-South economic integration. Concluding his remarks, he observed that the India-Brazil partnership represents a strategic pillar of South-South Cooperation, anchored in development-centred multilateralism, trade fairness, and technology-driven collaboration for inclusive and sustainable growth.

## Key Takeaway

The India-Brazil partnership represents a strategic pillar of South-South Cooperation, anchored in shared commitments to development-centred multilateralism, trade fairness, and technology-driven collaboration. By leveraging their complementarities and coordinated engagement across platforms such as BRICS and the G20, both countries are well positioned to strengthen the collective voice, bargaining capacity, and development priorities of the Global South in an increasingly fragmented and uncertain global order.

## Special Remarks

### Professor Amitabh Mattoo

*Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi*

Professor Amitabh Mattoo underscored that President Lula's visit represents a consequential moment in India-Brazil relations, signalling high-level political commitment to deepen the strategic partnership at a time when both countries are seeking to strengthen the voice of the Global South in global governance. He emphasized that the bilateral relationship carries global significance, representing nearly 1.6 billion people and two of the world's largest democracies, thereby giving it both moral weight and strategic relevance in shaping the emerging international order.

He highlighted the need to jointly re-energise multilateralism through coordinated engagement across platforms such as BRICS, G20, and IBSA, including more effective

utilisation of the IBSA Fund. Through these mechanisms, India and Brazil can advocate for more representative global institutions, development-centric norms, and stronger Global South leadership.

On the economic front, Professor Mattoo noted that bilateral trade remains below its full potential and could expand significantly-possibly exceeding USD 20 billion-through deeper trade and investment engagement and enhanced cooperation under frameworks such as Mercosur. Diversification into services, manufacturing, and digital commerce would further strengthen economic integration.

He also outlined several strategic sectors where complementarities are evident. These include defence and aerospace cooperation, critical minerals and resilient supply chains, and collaboration in energy transition and biofuels, particularly through initiatives such as the Global Biofuel Alliance. Technology cooperation-especially in artificial intelligence governance, digital sovereignty, and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)-was identified as an emerging pillar of partnership.

Further areas of cooperation include health and pharmaceutical systems, agricultural sustainability and food security, maritime cooperation, strategic connectivity and the blue economy, as well as strengthened people-to-people engagement. Together, these interconnected domains can anchor a long-term, transformative partnership between India and Brazil.

## Key Takeaway

The India–Brazil partnership has the potential to evolve into a cornerstone of Global South leadership by combining sustained political commitment, technological collaboration, trade expansion, and coordinated multilateral engagement to shape a more inclusive, equitable, and development-oriented global order.

## Special Remarks

### Ambassador Luiza Lopes da Silva

*Deputy Director, Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC)*

Ambassador Luiza Lopes da Silva outlined Brazil's evolution in international development cooperation. She noted that Brazil's journey began in the post-World War II period as a recipient of technical assistance, but gradually transformed into a provider of development cooperation as a result of its own industrialisation process and institutional strengthening. Since the 1960s and 1970s, Brazil has steadily expanded its South–South Cooperation (SSC), initially focusing on neighbouring Latin American countries and subsequently deepening engagement with Portuguese-speaking African nations, reflecting shared developmental contexts and cultural affinities.

She emphasized that Brazil's cooperation philosophy is grounded in horizontal partnerships, mutual learning, and solidarity among developing countries. Rather than prioritising large financial transfers or major infrastructure ventures, Brazil's model centres on knowledge sharing and the transfer of public policy experience. Key sectors of engagement include agriculture, public health, social protection, and institutional capacity building. Public health cooperation, in particular, has deep historical roots, with Brazil collaborating through regional and multilateral mechanisms to combat infectious diseases and strengthen health systems.

Ambassador da Silva highlighted Brazil's successful social policy innovations, especially the Bolsa Família programme, as a notable example of a transferable policy model. Through national beneficiary registries and targeted welfare systems, Brazil has developed tools to enhance transparency, efficiency, and effective delivery of social protection schemes – experiences that are now shared with partner countries seeking to strengthen their own welfare frameworks.

She further underlined the importance of triangular cooperation as a complementary instrument, citing partnerships with countries such as Japan and Germany as examples of collaborative modalities that combine comparative strengths. Engagement through multilateral initiatives, including the IBSA Fund, was acknowledged as valuable, though limited in scale. In this context, she expressed strong interest in operationalising and deepening structured cooperation with India, building on existing understandings and recognising the significant untapped potential for scalable and sustained collaboration.

## Key Takeaway

Brazil's development cooperation philosophy is rooted in shared learning, institutional experience, and solidarity among developing countries. There exists considerable untapped potential for a more structured and scalable India–Brazil partnership to advance South–South and triangular cooperation in support of sustainable development across the Global South.



## Technical Session: Triangular Cooperation and the Global South

### Chair's Remarks

#### Professor Amitabh Mattoo

*Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi*

In his remarks as Chair, Professor Amitabh Mattoo highlighted the vast untapped potential in India-Brazil bilateral cooperation, particularly in the domains of development partnership, science and technology collaboration, and institutional knowledge sharing. He observed that both countries, as leading voices of the Global South, possess complementary developmental experiences that can be leveraged to design more effective and scalable cooperation frameworks.

He reflected on Brazil's evolution from a recipient of international assistance to a provider of South-South Cooperation, noting that this transformation offers important lessons in industrialisation, social policy innovation, and capacity building—areas that resonate with India's own developmental trajectory. He emphasised that meaningful development cooperation must be rooted in knowledge exchange rather than financial transfers alone, with a strong focus on strengthening institutions and public systems.

Professor Mattoo further underscored the importance of collaboration in areas such as social protection systems, beneficiary registries, and inclusive public policy frameworks, which enhance transparency and delivery outcomes. He stressed the need to operationalise existing understandings and move towards more structured, bilateral and triangular cooperation mechanisms, including engagement through platforms such as BRICS and IBSA, to generate sustainable and development-oriented outcomes.

### Key Takeaway

The Chair emphasised that the India–Brazil partnership can be strengthened by deepening knowledge-based development cooperation, drawing on shared experiences of transformation and prioritising institutional innovation to advance inclusive growth across the Global South.

### Mr. Wofsi Yuri Guimarães de Souza

*General Coordinator, Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), Brazil*

Mr. Wofsi Yuri Guimarães de Souza emphasised that the true value of development cooperation should not be assessed merely in terms of financial scale, but rather by the quality of relationships built, the strengthening of institutions, and the mutual learning that emerges from sustained engagement. He noted that Brazil's cooperation model is firmly rooted in horizontality, solidarity, and shared experience, prioritising local solutions and responsiveness to partner countries' needs. Institutional capacity building, rather than large-scale financial transfers, remains at the core of Brazil's approach.

He highlighted that there is considerable scope to deepen collaboration with India by complementing Brazil's predominantly public sector-driven cooperation system with India's more plural and diversified ecosystem that includes academia, the private sector, and civil society organisations. Such complementarities can enhance innovation, outreach, and implementation effectiveness.

Mr. de Souza reaffirmed that trilateral cooperation should not replace South–South Cooperation but rather serve as its reaffirmation and extension, particularly in a context of global uncertainty and increasing pressures on multilateral systems. He identified priority sectors for enhanced India–Brazil engagement, including energy transition, environmental governance, social development, and the digital transformation of public administration.

Importantly, he stressed the need to invest in youth engagement and to adapt cooperation narratives to resonate with future generations, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the partnership and reinforcing global solidarity.

## Key Takeaway

Brazil's approach to international development cooperation emphasises institutional strengthening, shared learning, and solidarity among developing countries. A deeper and more structured partnership with India can significantly reinforce South–South and trilateral cooperation in an evolving and uncertain global order.

### **Ambassador R. Viswanathan**

*Former Indian Ambassador to Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay*

Ambassador R. Viswanathan characterised the India–Brazil relationship as a new paradigm of partnership defined by synergies, complementarities, mutual value addition, and shared learning rather than outdated perceptions of distance or cultural difference. He emphasised that both countries are natural strategic partners whose cooperation is grounded in practical outcomes and economic interdependence. Trade relations, he noted, have grown steadily over the years, with Brazil emerging as one of India's key trading partners and a significant contributor to India's energy and food security through crude oil and agricultural exports such as soy oil.

He highlighted concrete examples of mutual value addition. Indian companies such as UPL Limited have established a strong presence in Brazil, while Brazilian firms including Embraer and WEG S.A. have expanded manufacturing operations and partnerships in India. He also cited innovative collaborations such as Surya Henna in Brazil, which blends Indian Ayurvedic traditions with Amazonian biodiversity, symbolising cross-cultural and commercial synergy.

Ambassador Viswanathan underscored Brazil's global leadership in ethanol blending and flex-fuel technology, suggesting that Brazil's experience offers valuable lessons for India's energy transition and biofuel ambitions. Complementarities in food security, crude oil trade, critical minerals, and agricultural productivity further reinforce the long-term strategic relevance of the partnership. In the health sector, he noted that Indian generic pharmaceutical companies have significantly contributed to affordable healthcare access in Brazil, particularly following regulatory reforms that enabled greater space for generics.

He described Brazil as an “ideal and highly desirable partner” for India, pointing to its geopolitical stability, absence of major border conflicts, strong energy and food security base, and considerable global soft power. Brazil's pragmatic governance model – combining market-oriented growth with social inclusion – has strengthened its economic resilience and diplomatic credibility. These attributes, he argued, enhance Brazil's value as a strategic partner for India in advancing Global South cooperation.

## Key Takeaway

India and Brazil are natural strategic partners whose complementarities in trade, energy, agriculture, healthcare, and global governance position them to build a resilient, mutually beneficial partnership capable of shaping a more balanced and cooperative global order.

### Dr. Ruchita Beri

*Senior Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), New Delhi*

Dr. Ruchita Beri emphasised the deep convergence between India and Brazil in their understanding of the Global South as central to their foreign policy identity. She noted that both countries draw upon shared histories of colonialism, development challenges, and aspirations for greater global equity, positioning themselves not merely as participants but as responsible stakeholders in shaping the collective voice of the Global South. In this context, she underscored that cooperation between India and Brazil is vital for advancing shared interests in an increasingly imbalanced global order.

She highlighted the common emphasis placed by both countries on reforming global governance institutions. India's successful effort during its G20 Presidency to secure permanent membership for the African Union was cited as a landmark achievement that reflected this commitment. She also referred to India's Voice of Global South Summit initiative and Brazil's articulation of a common Global South perspective as clear indicators of ideological convergence in addressing structural economic and political inequities.

Dr. Beri further stressed the importance both countries attach to Africa in their foreign policy frameworks. Rather than viewing Africa through a crisis-driven lens, India and Brazil see the continent as a partner of opportunity, growth, and long-term potential. Their engagement models prioritise partnership, mutual respect, and capacity building, avoiding hierarchical or donor-driven approaches. She observed that both countries share a development cooperation philosophy rooted in knowledge sharing, institutional strengthening, and triangular cooperation, guided by solidarity and mutual benefit rather than transactional engagement.

## Key Takeaway

Dr. Ruchita Beri underscored that India and Brazil are not merely bilateral partners but convergent actors in advancing the interests of the Global South. Through coordinated efforts in global governance reform, constructive engagement with Africa, and a partnership-based model of development cooperation, they can collectively promote shared growth, institutional equity, and greater agency for the Global South in international affairs.

## Dr. Sushil Kumar

*Assistant Professor, RIS, New Delhi*

Dr. Sushil Kumar highlighted that widening development finance gaps, rising debt vulnerabilities, and slow progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underscore the urgent need for stronger and more structured South-South Cooperation. Many countries in the Global South, he noted, face mounting debt burdens and constrained access to concessional resources, making partnership-based and knowledge-driven cooperation models increasingly critical.

He outlined India's development cooperation framework under the Global Development Compact, which is structured around five pillars: capacity building, concessional finance, grant assistance, trade, and technology transfer. This holistic approach is designed to respond to partner country priorities while strengthening long-term institutional capabilities rather than offering fragmented support.

In the area of agriculture and food security, Dr. Kumar emphasised collaboration between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Brazil's EMBRAPA, along with initiatives such as the MAITRI 2.0 partnership. He suggested that India's strengths in digital agriculture, smallholder innovation, and scalable extension systems can be effectively combined with Brazil's expertise in large-scale farming and biotechnology to support third countries, particularly in Africa, under triangular frameworks.

Renewable energy and biofuels were identified as major pillars of convergence. Cooperation through the International Solar Alliance and the Global Biofuel Alliance can enable joint leadership in ethanol blending technologies and clean energy transition strategies tailored for the Global South. In parallel, collaboration under the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure offers opportunities to advance climate-resilient infrastructure and adaptation planning in vulnerable countries.

Dr. Kumar further highlighted human capital and skills development, referencing the G20 Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative proposed by India, which aims to create one million certified trainers through a "Train-the-Trainers" model. In digital cooperation, he pointed to the IBSA Digital Innovation Alliance and the sharing of Digital Public Infrastructure models such as UPI and CoWIN as scalable tools for inclusive governance and service delivery.

In health and development cooperation, he noted complementarities between India's affordable medicines and pharmaceutical production capacity and Brazil's strengths in public health systems and biotechnology. Scaling such initiatives through mechanisms like the IBSA Fund—which has supported projects in over 40 countries—alongside global initiatives such as the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty and DAKSHIN (Development and Knowledge Sharing Initiative), can enhance collective impact.

## Key Takeaway

Dr. Sushil Kumar underscored that India and Brazil must translate their shared vision into structured and action-oriented triangular cooperation. By leveraging complementarities in agriculture, renewable energy and biofuels, digital public infrastructure, skills development, climate resilience, and health systems, the two countries can deliver scalable, knowledge-driven solutions that address development finance gaps and accelerate sustainable and inclusive growth across the Global South.

# CONCEPT NOTE



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## India-Brazil Partnership in the Global South

Saturday, 21 February 2026 | 3.00 pm (IST)  
G Parthasarathi Conference Hall, RIS, New Delhi

The global development landscape is currently characterized by deep uncertainty and overlapping crises, including shrinking development finance, widening SDG gaps, rising debt vulnerabilities, climate pressures, and disruptions in global supply chains. These challenges have disproportionately affected the Global South, constrained fiscal space and slowing progress toward inclusive and sustainable development. In this context, there is a pressing need to strengthen international development cooperation through innovative, resilient, and demand-driven partnerships.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation have emerged as important modalities for addressing shared development challenges. These models emphasize solidarity, mutual respect, national ownership, and solutions aligned with domestic priorities. India and Brazil, as leading democracies and major economies of the Global South, are well placed to jointly shape a forward-looking development agenda grounded in resilience, innovation, cooperation, and sustainability.

India and Brazil share a longstanding and multifaceted partnership, elevated to a Strategic Partnership in 2006. Both countries work closely in platforms such as BRICS, IBSA, and the G20, and have consistently advocated for reforms in global governance to enhance the representation of developing countries. Brazil's leadership in advancing hunger alleviation, inequality reduction, and sustainable development

etc and broadly India's emphasis on development finance, food security, debt relief, and capacity building etc, including initiatives such as DAKSHIN and the Global Development Compact.

The bilateral partnership is expanding across key sectors, including agriculture and food security, renewable energy and biofuels, digital public infrastructure, health and traditional medicine, space cooperation, climate action, and capacity building. These areas offer strong complementarities and opportunities for scalable collaboration that can benefit the wider Global South.

This Policy Dialogue aims to discuss how India and Brazil can deepen their cooperation to advance development priorities of the Global South. It will examine opportunities for strengthening South-South and Triangular Cooperation, including promoting trade-linked development, enhancing capacity building, development finance and generating actionable policy recommendations. In the context of the State Visit of the President of Brazil to India, this dialogue provides a timely platform to reflect on shared priorities and chart the future direction of the India-Brazil partnership in the Global South.

# AGENDA

Time	Details
15:00 – 15:45	<p><b>Inaugural Session</b></p> <p><b>Welcome Remarks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma</b>, Director General, RIS</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Remarks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Professor Amitabh Mattoo</b>, Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Remarks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ambassador Luiza Lopes da Silva</b>, Deputy Director of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC)</li> </ul>
15:45 – 16:45	<p><b>Technical Session: Triangular Cooperation and the Global South</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Professor Amitabh Mattoo</b>, Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi</li> </ul> <p><b>Panellists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Wofsi Yuri Guimarães de Souza</b>, General Coordinator, Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), Brazil</li> <li>• <b>Ambassador R. Viswanathan</b>, the former Indian Ambassador to Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Ruchita Beri</b>, Senior Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), New Delhi</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Sushil Kumar</b>, Assistant Professor, RIS, New Delhi</li> </ul>
16:45 – 17:00	<p><b>Open Discussion</b></p> <p>Interactive discussion with participants</p>
17:00 onwards	<p><b>High Tea</b></p>

# Glimpses







# RIS

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RIS specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. It is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. Through its following centres/forums, RIS promotes policy dialogue and coherence on regional and international economic issues.



The word “DAKSHIN” (दक्षिण) is of Sanskrit origin, meaning “South.” The Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, inaugurated DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence in November 2023. The initiative was inspired by the deliberations of Global South leaders during the Voice of the Global South Summits. DAKSHIN stands for Development and Knowledge Sharing Initiative. Hosted at the RIS, DAKSHIN has established linkages with leading think tanks and universities across the Global South and is building a dynamic network of scholars working on Global South issues.



AIC at RIS has been working to strengthen India’s strategic partnership with ASEAN in its realisation of the ASEAN Community. AIC at RIS undertakes research, policy advocacy and regular networking activities with relevant organisations and think-tanks in India and ASEAN countries, with the aim of providing policy inputs, up-to-date information, data resources and sustained interaction, for strengthening ASEAN-India partnership.



CMEC has been established at RIS under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPS&W), Government of India. CMEC is a collaboration between RIS and Indian Ports Association (IPA). It has been mandated to act as an advisory/technological arm of MoPSW to provide the analytical support on policies and their implementation.



FITM is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Ayush and RIS. It has been established with the objective of undertaking policy research on economy, intellectual property rights (IPRs) trade, sustainability and international cooperation in traditional medicines. FITM provides analytical support to the Ministry of Ayush on policy and strategy responses on emerging national and global developments.



BEF aims to serve as a dedicated platform for fostering dialogue on promoting the concept in the Indian Ocean and other regions. The forum focuses on conducting studies on the potential, prospects and challenges of blue economy; providing regular inputs to practitioners in the government and the private sectors; and promoting advocacy for its smooth adoption in national economic policies.



FIDC, has been engaged in exploring nuances of India’s development cooperation programme, keeping in view the wider perspective of South-South Cooperation in the backdrop of international development cooperation scenario. It is a tripartite initiative of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, academia and civil society organisations.



FISD aims to harness the full potential and synergy between science and technology, diplomacy, foreign policy and development cooperation in order to meet India’s development and security needs. It is also engaged in strengthening India’s engagement with the international system and on key global issues involving science and technology.



As part of its work programme, RIS has been deeply involved in strengthening economic integration in the South Asia region. In this context, the role of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) is very important. SACEPS is a network organisation engaged in addressing regional issues of common concerns in South Asia.



Knowledge generated endogenously among the Southern partners can help in consolidation of stronger common issues at different global policy fora. The purpose of NeST is to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks for collaboratively generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on South South Cooperation approaches for international development.



DST-Satellite Centre for Policy Research on STI Diplomacy at RIS aims to advance policy research at the intersection of science, technology, innovation (STI) and diplomacy, in alignment with India’s developmental priorities and foreign policy objectives.

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