A Decade of Learning Across Borders: PKUâ??s South-South Institute Turns 10

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BEIJING, May 3, 2026 /PRNewswire/ â?? When Ismail Zabeeh enrolled as a doctoral student at the Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development (ISSCAD) at Peking University, he had already served as a state minister in the Maldives. What drew him back to a classroom was the chance to study development through the firsthand experience of countries that have undergone rapid development themselves.

Zabeeh is far from alone. Eric Dodoo-Amoo, who heads the China Desk of the Ministry of Finance of Ghana, is an ISSCAD graduate from the class of 2022. On April 29, 2026, both came to PKUâ??s Yingjie Overseas Exchange Center to join students and alumni from around the world in marking the instituteâ??s 10th anniversary, celebrated with a forum on sustainable development in the Global South.

Founded in 2016, ISSCAD was built on a premise that remains rare in international development education: that developing countries have generated their own body of knowledge worth studying systematically.

â??The most important innovation of this institute is that it draws on the development experience of China and other developing countries,â?• said Justin Yifu Lin, ISSCADâ??s honorary dean and a former chief economist of the World Bank.

The anniversary forum brought together government leaders, scholars, and diplomats. PKU Council Chair He Guangcai and senior officials from the China International Development Cooperation Agency, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Ministry of Education reaffirmed their commitment to the institute as a platform for talent development, policy research, and international exchange.

Arkebe Oqubay, a former senior minister of Ethiopia and a leading scholar on industrial policy in Africa, called the coming decade a critical window for deepening South-South cooperation. Abigail Shoniwa, Zimbabweâ??s ambassador to China, noted that Zimbabwean policymakers have drawn directly on insights gained through ISSCAD programs.

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A special lighting ceremony and flag parade featuring students and alumni from more than 80 countries marked the 10th anniversary, symbolizing unity and shared aspirations of the Global South.

Over the past decade, the institute has trained senior officials, diplomats, and scholars from across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific, offering doctoral and masterâ??s programs that combine academic research with policy fieldwork in China.

As ISSCAD enters its second decade, Lin laid out an aspiration: for the institute to grow into a globally recognized center for academic innovation and knowledge exchange among developing nations.

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