

The Geopolitics of the BRICS plus

10 April 2024

Summary

This working paper analyzes the geopolitics of the expanded BRICS plus. The BRICS plus is an intergovernmental organization with the member states Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates. BRICS is an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa which exceeded in 2020 the share of the Western G7 of global gross domestic product (GDP) in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP). Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates joined on 01 January 2024, expanding the group to the BRICS plus. Saudi-Arabia did not join the BRICS yet, but has participated in all BRICS plus meetings in 2024 so far. While the BRICS were originally seen as an economic alternative to the established Western-dominated financial organizations (World Bank and International Monetary Fund IMF), the BRICS are meanwhile seen as the political voice of the “Global South”.

The BRICS and now BRICS plus have no charter or a secretariat which provides flexibility for the member states and increases their political freedom of action without the pressures and demands of a bloc formation, but affects the organizational power. The lack of a common ideology or at least a clearly defined agenda blocks the formation of the BRICS plus as a counter-hegemonic structure or as a system of international norms like the Western institutions and norms. But a definition of values or a charter could be the first step to the construction of power structures by the leading actors what the BRICS plus members want to avoid.

As permanent BRICS institution, the Shanghai-based New Development Bank (NDB) with a capital of \$100 billion US dollar (USD) and a contingent reserve arrangement (CRA) with \$100 billion USD as emergency lending during liquidity crises became active in 2015. In addition to the annual meetings of state leaders and BRICS outreach summits with states outside the organization, a variety of multilateral agreements, councils, forums, action plans, policy documents were established, including events like parliamentary exchanges, Working Groups, seminars/conferences etc. There are overlaps with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization SCO. While the SCO is explicitly a Eurasian project, the BRICS plus is focusing on the Global South. There is no official link between SCO and BRICS plus, but the triangle China-Russia-India is present in both organizations and can avoid disputes. It was argued that the BRICS expansion of 2024 brings new conflicts into the group and increases the heterogeneity. But the inclusion of Iran, the UAE and maybe Saudi-Arabia makes the BRICS plus to a major player in the oil and energy market while the (failed) inclusion of Argentina would have made the BRICS to a significant player in the food sector as well. The inclusion of the largest East African powers Egypt and Ethiopia secures (despite the critical relations between both powers) a prominent role of the BRICS plus in East Africa and overall, the relations to and influence on the African continent is steadily increasing while the Western influence is reduced.

Content

- 1 The BRICS plus 3
 - 1.1 Overview and History..... 3
 - 1.2 Structure and Activities..... 4
- 2 Geopolitics and the BRICS plus 5
 - 2.1 Strategic Considerations 5
 - 2.2 The BRICS plus and the SCO 7
 - 2.3 The BRICS plus and Africa 8
- 3 Summary..... 11
- 4 References 12

1 The BRICS plus

1.1 Overview and History

The *BRICS plus* is an intergovernmental organization with the member states Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates. BRICS is an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. The original term BRIC was created as BRIC by the Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill in 2001 in the Global Economics Paper, "*The World Needs Better Economic BRICs*" to describe a group of rising large economies outside the Group of 7 industrial nations known as G7¹.

After a meeting of Russia, India, and China in St. Petersburg during the *G8² Outreach Summit* in 2006, a first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers took place during the *United Nations General Assembly* of 2006³. As a result of the financial crisis of 2008, this was upgraded to a state leader meeting, the BRIC Summit, that was held in Yekaterinburg in Russia in 2009⁴. One year later, the foreign ministers of the BRIC agreed to include South Africa which expanded the BRIC to the BRICS in 2011. Since that time, the annual meetings of the BRICS leaders are the core of the BRICS organization.

As a global response to the financial crisis of 2008, the Group of 20 large global economies, the *Group of Twenty G20*, was founded as global platform for cooperation and to maintain of financial stability. The G20 already began in 1999 as an annual meeting of the financial ministers and central bank governors after the financial crisis in Asia from 1997 to 1999⁵. The G20 includes both G7 and the BRICS states. While the BRICS were originally seen as an economic alternative to the established Western-dominated financial organizations (*World Bank* and *International Monetary Fund IMF*), the BRICS are meanwhile more politically orientated⁶ and seen as the voice of the "Global South"⁷.

Despite the BRICS states lost some momentum of their economic growth⁸, the BRICS countries exceeded in 2020 the G7 share of the global gross domestic product (GDP) in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) and in 2023, the BRICS covered 32% of the global GDP compared to 30% for the G7⁹. In 2023, it was decided to expand the BRICS by invitation of Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi-Arabia, and the UAE¹⁰. While the former government of Argentina was very positive to join as this would have opened new financial opportunities, the new liberal president Milei did not join as he did not want to be in an organization "with communists"¹¹. Saudi-Arabia did not join the BRICS in 2024, but is still weighing the option to join the BRICS¹². Nevertheless, Saudi-Arabia has participated in all BRICS plus meetings in 2024 so far¹³.

¹ India 2022

² Temporarily, Russia was a member state of the G7 which was then the G8 (Group of 8 industrial nations), but was excluded in 2014

³ Putri/Santoso 2023

⁴ India 2022

⁵ Kirton/Larionova 2022

⁶ Maihold/Müller 2023

⁷ Banque de France 2024

⁸ Optenhögel 2023

⁹ Statista 2024

¹⁰ EIU 2023

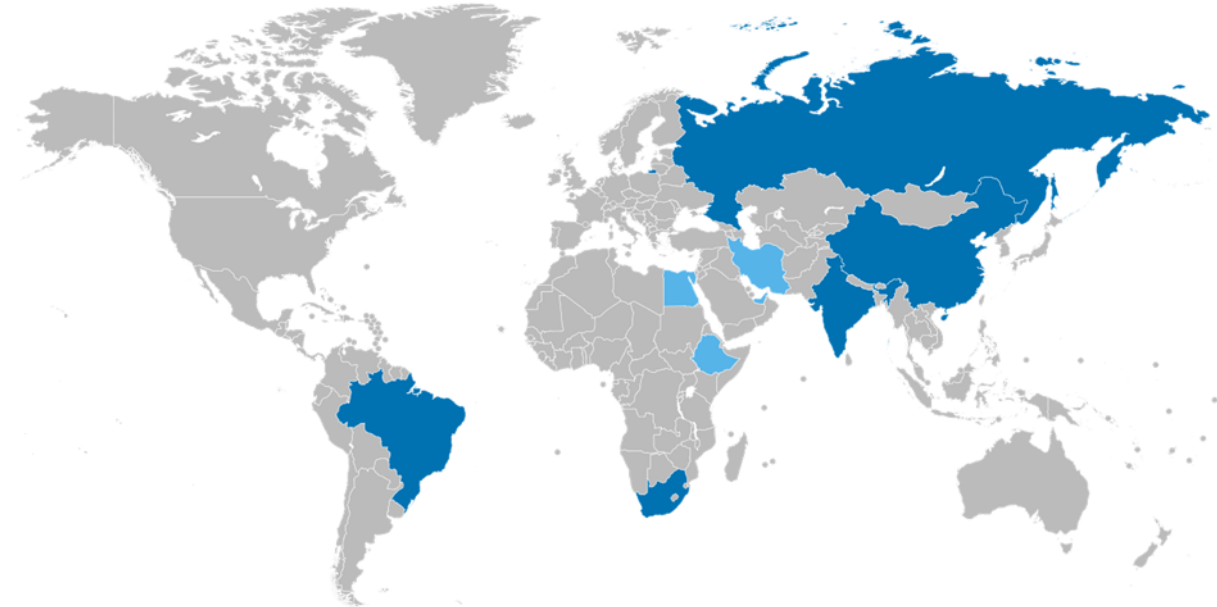
¹¹ Levaggi/Múgica 2023

¹² TASS 2024, Watcher Guru March 2024

¹³ Jütten/Falkenberg 2024

The expanded BRICS have not yet decided to use a new name, but in literature the term “BRICS plus” or BRICS+¹⁴ is meanwhile widely used. For clarity, the term “BRICS plus” will be used for all events and statements related to the expanded group since 2024.

The following map shows the BRICS plus member states in April 2024.



Map of BRICS plus Member States

Source: File:Map of BRICS countries.svg

Date 29 March 2012, last updated by Sangjinhwa 19 January 2024

Author: Дмитрий-5-Аверин

No changes made here.

Page URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_BRICS_countries.svg License: Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported via Wikimedia Commons Link to license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>

1.2 Structure and Activities

The BRICS and BRICS plus have no charter or a secretariat. In literature, this is seen both as advantage as this provides flexibility for the member states and increases their political freedom of action without the pressures and demands of a bloc formation¹⁵ and as disadvantage as this affects the organizational power of the BRICS plus and is seen by some authors as main obstacle to achieve political goals¹⁶.

However, the BRICS plus have multiple mechanisms of cooperation:

- High-level meetings of state leaders and ministers to discuss global issues and promote cooperation which also take place during international meetings of the G20¹⁷.
- BRICS outreach summits with states outside the organization. The first meeting took place in 2013. In 2022, foreign ministers from Argentina, Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates attended a BRICS outreach meeting¹⁸.

¹⁴ Banque de France 2024

¹⁵ e.g., Maihold/Müller 2023

¹⁶ e.g., Scaricic 2023

¹⁷ India 2022

¹⁸ Kipgen/Chakrabarti 2022

- Senior officials' meetings take place for trade, finance, health, education, science and technology, agriculture, environment, energy, labor, disaster management, anti-corruption, and anti-drug activities.¹⁹ In 2015, the first meetings of ministers of energy, environment, labor and employment, industrial policies, communication, culture, and youth took place, as well as meetings of heads of tax authorities and senior officials for development cooperation²⁰.
- A first step to security cooperation was the foundation of the *BRICS Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism* in 2016²¹.
- A variety of multilateral agreements, councils, forums, action plans, policy documents were established, including events like parliamentary exchanges, Working Groups, seminars/conferences etc.²².
- As permanent institution, the Shanghai-based *New Development Bank (NDB)* with an initial capital of \$100 billion USD and a *contingent reserve arrangement (CRA)* with \$100 billion USD as emergency lending during liquidity crises became active in 2015²³. NDB members with small shares are Bangladesh, Egypt, and the UAE despite they were not BRICS members in 2015²⁴.
- A special focus of BRICS is the promotion of intra-group economic relations as laid down in the *Outlines for BRICS Investment Facilitation* (2017), the *BRICS MoU Trade and Investment Promotion* (2019), the *Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025* (2020), *Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus* (2021), and the *Initiative on Trade and Investment for Sustainable Development* (2022)²⁵.
- Furthermore, the BRICS discussed a large-scale maritime project, the *BRICS Cable*, an underwater fiber optic cable through the Indian Ocean with 34,000 km length and 12.8 terabit capacity network which connects Vladivostok in Russia, Shantou in China, Chennai in India, Cape Town in South Africa, and Fortaleza in Brazil²⁶, but this project made little progress so far²⁷.

2 Geopolitics and the BRICS plus

2.1 Strategic Considerations

The BRICS and BRICS plus have no charter or a secretariat. In literature, this is seen both as advantage as this provides flexibility for the member states and increases their political freedom of action without the pressures and demands of a bloc formation²⁸ and as disadvantage as this affects the organizational power of the BRICS plus and is seen by some authors as main obstacle to achieve political goals²⁹. The lack of a common ideology or at least a clearly defined agenda blocks the formation of the BRICS plus as a counter-hegemonic structure or as a system of international norms like the Western institutions and norms³⁰. But a definition of values or a

¹⁹ India 2022, Putri/Santoso 2023

²⁰ Kirton/Larionova 2022

²¹ Kirton/Larionova 2022, see also Papa/Gallagher 2023

²² Scaricic 2023

²³ Scaricic 2023

²⁴ Kirton/Larionova 2022

²⁵ UNCTAD 2023

²⁶ Kipgen/Chakrabarti 2022

²⁷ Scaricic 2023

²⁸ e.g., Maihold/Müller 2023

²⁹ e.g., Scaricic 2023

³⁰ Özekin/Sune 2023

charter could be the first step to the construction of power structures by the leading actors which the BRICS plus members want to avoid³¹.

However, the flexibility and openness of the system facilitates the dialogue and creates opportunities that an “all or nothing”-system could never offer³². By this system, interested states are not urged to decide between two blocks³³, but could choose what serves their interests best, also known as balancing strategy. For example, China and India can cooperate in BRICS despite their repeated violent border clashes in the regions of Aksai-Chin/Galwan³⁴, Arunachal Pradesh/South Tibet and Tawang³⁵ and Doklam/Sikkim³⁶.

The expansion of BRICS was intensely discussed. It was argued that these countries bring new conflicts into the group and increase the heterogeneity³⁷. But a closer look shows that the inclusion of Iran, the UAE and maybe Saudi-Arabia makes the BRICS plus to a major player in the oil and energy market while the (failed) inclusion of Argentina would have made the BRICS to a significant player in the food sector as well³⁸. The inclusion of the largest East African powers Egypt and Ethiopia secures (despite the critical relations between both powers) a prominent role of the BRICS plus in East Africa and overall, the relations to and influence on the African continent is steadily increasing while the Western influence is reduced, refer to Section 2.4. The BRICS plus countries are located at many essential sea routes for trading³⁹.

This is very important for Russia in the ongoing conflict with the West and the fight in the Ukraine. Already in 2014, after the annexation of the Crimea, the BRICS states denied support of Western isolation attempts against Russia⁴⁰. Also in 2022, the BRICS group stood by Russia during the Ukraine crisis rather than supporting the US agenda⁴¹. The boycott of Russia by the West at the G20 summit in Indonesia 2022 may paralyze the future G20 work and makes the BRICS plus even more important for Russia⁴². Furthermore, three consecutive G20 presidencies will be held by BRICS members (India in 2023, Brazil in 2024 and South Africa in 2025).

The increased political freedom of action⁴³ is slowly, but steadily eroding the Western influence, e.g. in Africa, where originally the Western developmental aid and financial support were the only realistic options for developing countries which allowed the Western states to link their support to conditions such as Good Governance and democracy promotion.

Since 2009, BRICS has called for reforms of the existing global financial architecture, in particular the *World Bank* and the *International Monetary Funds IMF*, which are dominated by Western states. The funding of the *New Development Bank NDB* and the emergency lending reserve CAR were steps to establish alternatives⁴⁴.

³¹ Jokela/Saul 2023

³² See also Papa/Gallagher 2023

³³ Schmidt 2023

³⁴ Smith 2021, AP News 2023

³⁵ Adlakha 2022, Lhamo 2023

³⁶ Akhoo/Kumar 2020, Deepak 2017, Yang 2021. Smaller border disputes are also ongoing with Russia, as the Bolschoy-Ussurisky/Heixiazi Island/Vladivostok debates, AP News 2023, Eurasian Times 2020

³⁷ Scaricic 2023

³⁸ Kipgen/Chakrabarti 2022, Banque de France 2024

³⁹ Kipgen/Chakrabarti 2022, Gattolin/Veron 2024

⁴⁰ Carmona 2014

⁴¹ Papa/Gallagher 2023

⁴² Kipgen/Chakrabarti 2022, Scaricic 2023

⁴³ Gattolin/Veron 2024

⁴⁴ Scaricic 2023

Moreover, the dominance of the US dollar is challenged⁴⁵, but so far with limited effect. The economies and interests of the BRICS members are too heterogenous for a common currency⁴⁶ and while a *de-dollarization* is in progress⁴⁷ (e.g., by using the Chinese Yuan for oil trading⁴⁸), the dollar dominance is expected to continue for further decades⁴⁹.

In the literature, the term “Global South” has emerged to describe that the countries on the Southern hemisphere undergo a kind of emancipation process which includes the unwillingness to join political blocs⁵⁰. In this perspective, the Global South is not anti-Western, but non-Western. Despite the growing influence of the BRICS with China as main economic power, they do not form a military or economic bloc against the West, instead they rely on informal multilateral cooperation⁵¹. The expansion to BRICS plus with the broader membership makes it to a key forum for expression for the “Global South” and a platform for an inclusive multilateralism⁵².

A US analysis of the *United Nations General Assembly* voting from 1991 to 2020 showed that the Sino-Russian positions had much broader global support than those of the United States. As to be expected, the member states of the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, and BRICS more likely aligned with China and Russia while NATO members more likely aligned with the United States than their non-NATO counterparts⁵³. The effect of states’ membership in soft-balancing institutions (like BRICS) on their tendency to align with China and Russia has steadily increased over time⁵⁴. In other words: the BRICS membership had a long-term effect on the member states, irrespective of the informal and heterogenous structure of the BRICS and BRICS plus.

2.2 The BRICS plus and the SCO

The BRICS plus and the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization* SCO have overlapping memberships and a similar organizational philosophy, but there are also differences⁵⁵. The SCO with headquarter in Beijing was founded in 2001 as successor of the *Shanghai Five* group from 1996. The SCO stepwise expanded by new member states and in 2022/23, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Egypt got the status of dialogue partners; the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Kuwait may follow soon. The SCO is an inter-governmental organization based on the principle of non-interference in sovereign states’ internal affairs formulated as *„Shanghai Spirit“*. The SCO has an institutional structure with a Secretariat, a *Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure* (RATS, Tashkent), regular meetings, multi-national military exercises (*Peace Mission*) and it supports economic cooperation between member states. The SCO is an alternative global governance model to the alliance model of the West (NATO, EU, Quad) and covers now most of the Eurasian landmass and approximately 40% of the world population, but it is not a military alliance and does not aim to integrate the member states into supranational frameworks. The initial focus on security later shifted to economic issues and now also to energy policy⁵⁶.

⁴⁵ Optenhögel 2023

⁴⁶ Kraemer 2023

⁴⁷ Khan 2023

⁴⁸ Andersen 2022, CRS 2023

⁴⁹ ING 2023, Grassi 2015

⁵⁰ Klingebiel 2023

⁵¹ Jokela/Saul 2023

⁵² Banque de France 2024

⁵³ Papa/Gallagher 2023

⁵⁴ Papa/Gallagher 2023. This coincides with a growing unwillingness of African countries to follow Western policy proposals as shown by the United Nations voting behavior during the Russia-Ukraine war, Hackenesch/Lacher 2023

⁵⁵ BPC 2014

⁵⁶ Refer to the related Working Paper 2023 The Expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization SCO, <https://doi.org/10.48693/288>

While the SCO is explicitly a Eurasian project⁵⁷, the BRICS plus is focusing on the Global South. Overlapping memberships allow an intensified dialogue using multiple platforms and channels. The SCO is more institutionalized which also has to do with the origin as security organization. In both organizations, the triangle China-Russia-India dominates due to the size of their countries and economies⁵⁸. There is no official link between SCO and BRICS plus, but the triangle China-Russia-India is present in both organizations and can avoid disputes.

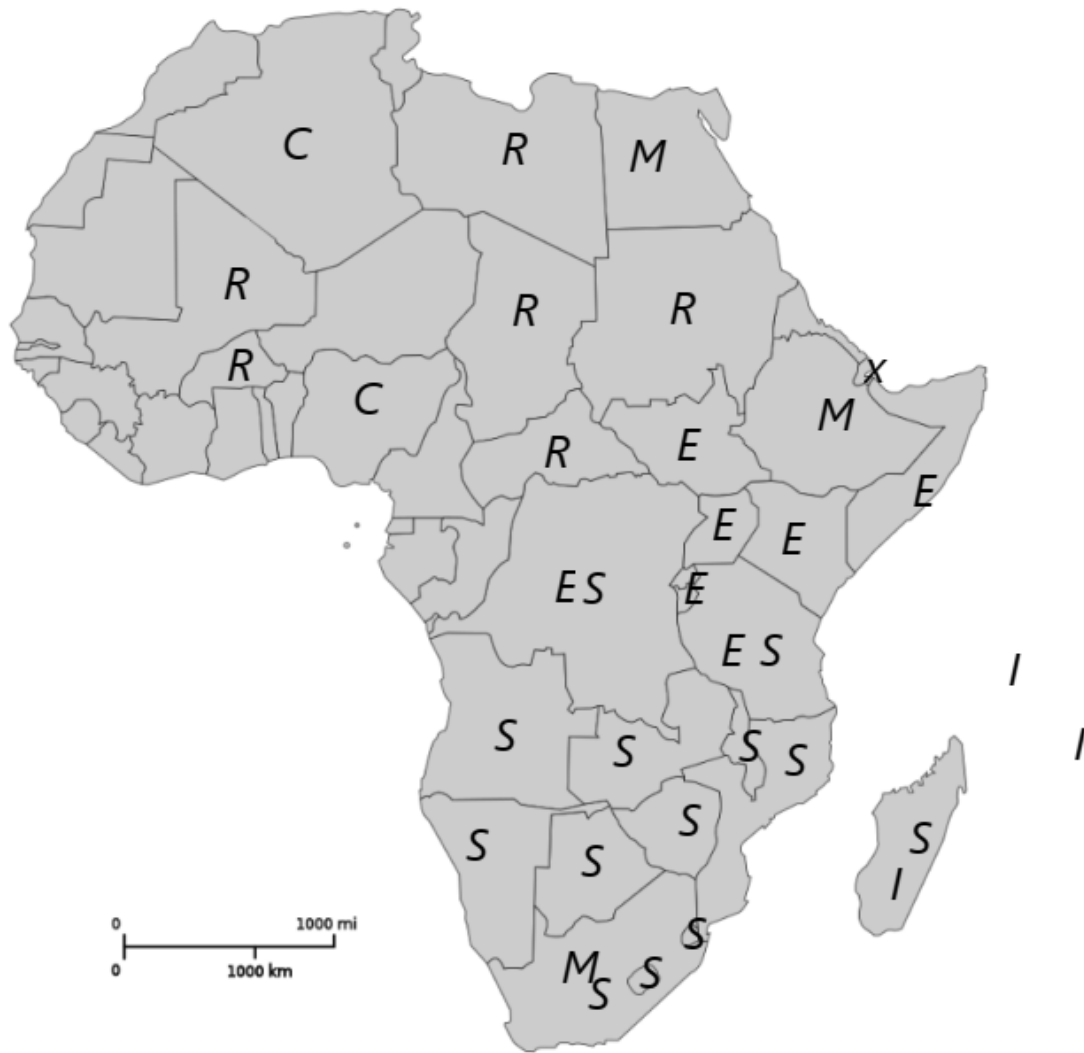
Like for BRICS plus, western analysts sometimes doubt the relevance of the SCO, but it allows its member states a diversification and balancing of their security-related, economic, and diplomatic activities, by this getting more political freedom of action.

2.3 The BRICS plus and Africa

Actual BRICS plus member states are South Africa, Egypt and Ethiopia, future candidates are in particular Algeria and Nigeria. But the economic and military relations of BRICS plus members meanwhile cover large parts of the African continent, in particular the East and the South as shown in the map below. Amongst other relations, China, India, and Russia have military presence while South Africa is the lead economy in the *South African Development Community SADC*. China is the key investor for infrastructure for the expanding *East African Community EAC*.

⁵⁷ SCO, “Shanghai Hezuo jieshou xin chengyuan tiaoli” (“Regulations on the admission of new members to the SCO”), June 11, 2010, Tashkent, Art. 1, Par. 2 cited from Seiwert 2023, page 3

⁵⁸ Papa/Gallagher 2023



Map. Relations of BRICS plus member states

Legend: M = 'BRICS plus' member states, C= candidates for next BRICS expansion, R =Russian military presence early 2024 (successors of Wagner PMC), X= Chinese military base in Djibouti, I = Military bases of India in Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles, E= East African Community with China as key infrastructure investor, S = South African Development Community SADC members with South Africa as lead economy (Data from respective *Wikipedia* sites)

Source: Political map of Africa

File: Date:Blank Map-Africa.svg

URL: https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Blank_Map-Africa.svg

Date: 01 September 2006

Author (Urheber): Andreas 06

Changes made here: Legend and letters added to blank map

Domain: public domain or similar license where not possible (original text in German: *Ich, der Urheberrechtsinhaber dieses Werkes, veröffentliche es als gemeinfrei. Dies gilt weltweit.*)

Important pillars of the growing relevance of the BRICS in Africa are:

- The inclusion of the largest East African powers Egypt and Ethiopia secures (despite the critical relations between both powers) a prominent role of the BRICS plus in East Africa. The relations between both countries are critical, because Ethiopia has built the *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam GERD* for energy production, which could control the availability of Nile water for Egypt and Sudan, because 85% of the Nile water

come from the Blue Nile arm that has its origins in Ethiopia and only 15% from the White Nile in East Africa. But the inclusion of both states offers a chance for dialogue and conflict containment as it was successfully done in the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization* between Saudi-Arabia and Iran: During the Gaza war with the Houthi involvement, Saudi-Arabia and the Iran did not attack each other.

- India established military bases on Madagascar, the Seychelles and Mauritius. These are mainly surveillance posts to ensure maritime security in the Indian Ocean⁵⁹.
- Russia is quite active in Africa in the energy and mining sector⁶⁰ and has relations with many African countries. An important pillar is the military presence in several countries originally by the *Private Military Company (PMC) Wagner*, but now by successor organizations: Libya, Sudan, Chad, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, and Mali. Niger may ask for Russian support as they recently urged France to withdraw and requested US troops in 2024 to do the same.
- South Africa is the lead economy of the *South African Development Community SADC* which includes 16 member states in Southern Africa⁶¹. There are overlapping memberships, as e.g. the Democratic Republic of Congo DRC is also an EAC member, but such overlaps are common in African organizations. In the *SADC Vision 2050*, the aim is to progress to a peaceful, inclusive, competitive, middle- to high-income industrialized region⁶².
- China's main activities are economic, but there is also some military activity: in Djibouti, China has established a military post in 2017, as this is strategically located at the Horn of Africa⁶³. However, in Djibouti many nations are present for the same reason, with the US as largest Western presence. In addition, China has increased its activities in UN Peacekeeping missions, the number of soldiers increased from 52 in 2000 to 2437 in July 2019⁶⁴.
- Since 2000, almost all African countries are in the *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)*⁶⁵ and meanwhile, 52 of 54 countries have joined the *Belt and Road initiative BRI*⁶⁶, which is China's main economic global initiative. The bilateral trade volume between Africa and China is expected to increase from one billion USD in 1980 to 350 billion USD in 2035⁶⁷. China is the leading partner for the *East African Community EAC*, as China is the largest external constructor of pipelines, bridges and ports and the largest provider of consumer goods, capital, and finance for EAC members. The credits and investments of China caused concerns over rising debts, untransparent contracts and negative trade balances for the involved countries⁶⁸. China denies this and argues that 90% of investments are coming from private Chinese companies, i.e., are not state-driven and China has restructured or refinanced about \$15 billion USD of African debt between 2000 and 2019⁶⁹.

⁵⁹ Defence Street 2024

⁶⁰ Caprile/Pichon 2024

⁶¹ SADC 2020 Angola, Botswana, the Union of Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

⁶² SADC 2020

⁶³ Gu et al. 2022

⁶⁴ Gu et al. 2022

⁶⁵ Garrido Guijarro 2022

⁶⁶ Mboya 2023

⁶⁷ Garrido Guijarro 2022

⁶⁸ Mboya 2023

⁶⁹ Gu et al. 2022

- The Western states have realized the need for stronger engagement and have set up new initiatives. The United States have set up for Africa the *International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)* with \$60 billion while the EU is working on a \$22.7 billion funding package to support African transport networks⁷⁰.

3 Summary

This working paper analyzed the geopolitics of the expanded BRICS plus. The BRICS plus is an intergovernmental organization with the member states Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates. BRICS is an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa which exceeded in 2020 the share of the Western G7 the global gross domestic product (GDP) in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP). Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates joined on 01 January 2024, expanding the group to the BRICS plus. Saudi-Arabia did not join the BRICS yet, but has participated in all BRICS plus meetings in 2024 so far. While the BRICS were originally seen as an economic alternative to the established Western-dominated financial organizations (*World Bank* and *International Monetary Fund IMF*), the BRICS are meanwhile more seen as the political voice of the “Global South”.

The BRICS and BRICS plus have no charter or a secretariat which provides flexibility for the member states and increases their political freedom of action without the pressures and demands of a bloc formation, but affects the organizational power on the other hand. The lack of a common ideology or at least a clearly defined agenda blocks the formation of the BRICS plus as a counter-hegemonic structure or as a system of international norms like the Western institutions and norms. But a definition of values or a charter could be the first step to the construction of power structures by the leading actors what the BRICS plus members want to avoid.

As permanent BRICS institution, the Shanghai-based *New Development Bank (NDB)* with a capital of \$100 billion US dollar (USD) and a *contingent reserve arrangement (CRA)* with \$100 billion USD as emergency lending during liquidity crises became active in 2015. In addition to the annual meetings of state leaders and BRICS outreach summits with states outside the organization, a variety of multilateral agreements, councils, forums, action plans, policy documents were established, including events like parliamentary exchanges, Working Groups, seminars/conferences etc.

There are overlaps with the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization SCO*. While the SCO is explicitly a Eurasian project, the BRICS plus is focusing on the Global South. There is no official link between SCO and BRICS plus, but the triangle China-Russia-India is present in both organizations and can avoid disputes.

It was argued that the BRICS expansion of 2024 brings new conflicts into the group and increases the heterogeneity. But the inclusion of Iran, the UAE and maybe Saudi-Arabia makes the BRICS plus to a major player in the oil and energy market while the (failed) inclusion of Argentina would have made the BRICS to a significant player in the food sector as well. The inclusion of the largest East African powers Egypt and Ethiopia secures (despite the critical relations between both powers) a prominent role of the BRICS plus in East Africa and overall, the relations to and influence on the African continent is steadily increasing while the Western influence is reduced.

⁷⁰ Garrido Guijarro 2022

4 References

- Adlakha, H. (2022): The Tawang Clash: The view from China. *The Diplomat* 17 December 2022
- Akhood, I.A., Kumar, K.S. (2020): Doklam Stand-Off 2017: A Geopolitical Rivalry between India, China and Bhutan. *Maharshi Dayanand University Research Journal ARTS* 2020, Vol. 19 (1) pp.95-108 ISSN 0972-706X
- Andersen, L.A. (2022): Shanghai Cooperation Organization: A Forum where China works for multilateral order in central Asia. *Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) Policy Brief* November 2022
- AP News (2023): China's new national map has set off a wave of protests. Why? *AP World News* 01 September 2023
- Banque de France (2024): Expansion of BRICS: what are the potential consequences for the global economy? *Bulletin de la Banque de France* 250/2 - January-February 2024
- BPC (2014): The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS: The Roles of China, Russia (and India) BRICS Policy Center / Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas Rio de Janeiro October, 2014 Policy Brief - Vol. 4 N° #11 BPC Monitor
- Caprile, A., Pichon, E. (2024): Russia in Africa: An atlas. A Briefing of the European Parliamentary Research Service EPRS, PE 757.654 – February 2024
- Carmona, R. (2014): The Return of Geopolitics: The Ascension of BRICS Austral: *Revista Brasileira de Estratégia & Relações Internacionais* v.3, n.6, Jul.-Dez. 2014, p. 37-72
- CRS (2023): Qatar: Issues for the 118th Congress. March 10, 2023 Congressional Research Service CRS R47467
- Deepak, B.R. (2017): The Doklam standoff: What could be done? *South Asia Democratic Forum (SADF) Comment* 5 August 2017 Issue n° 98 ISSN 2406-5617
- Defence Street (2024): Most Important Indian Military Bases Outside India. <https://www.defencestreet.com/indian-military-bases-outside-india/> 06 Jan 2024
- Eurasian Times (2020): Has China really claimed the Russian port city of Vladivostok? *Eurasian Times Desk* 04 July 2020
- Garrido Guijarro, Ó. (2022): China and Africa, a geopolitical pairing that works. *Documento de Análisis IIEE* 48/2022.
- Gattolin, A., Veron, E. (2024): The BRICS, a geopolitical challenge overlooked by the European Union. *Schuman Paper* n°736 13th February 2024
- Grassi, S. (2015): BRICS in Afrika - Chance für den Kontinent und »G-South« auf internationaler Ebene? *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung FES Südafrika Perspektive* Februar 2015
- Gu, X. et al. (2022): China's Engagement in Africa: Activities, Effects and Trends *CGS Global Focus* June 2022
- Hackenesch, C., Lacher, W. (2023): The Russia-Ukraine War's Shockwaves in Africa. A Zeitenwende for German Africa Policy? *Working Paper* 10 February 2024, Berlin/Bonn *Megatrends Afrika*
- ING (2023): Would a larger bloc mean faster de-dollarisation? *ING Bank THINK Economic and Financial Analysis - BRICS expansion and the dollar* August 2023
- Jokela, J., Saul, A. (2023): The changing dynamics of the G7, G20 and BRICS. *Finnish Institute of International Affairs FIIA Briefing Paper* April 2023

- Jütten, M. Falkenberg, F. (2024): Expansion of BRICS: A quest for greater global influence? EPRS European Parliamentary Research Service Members' Research Service PE 760.368 – March 2024
- Khan, H. (2023): The Role of Expanded BRICS and the Global South. 21 December 2023 Munich Personal RePEc Archive MPRA Paper No. 119544
- Kipgen, K.T., Chakrabarti, S. (2022): The politics underpinning the BRICS expansion. *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs*, 8(3), 445-458.
<https://doi.org/10.47305/JLIA2283445k> This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>
- Kirton, J., Larionova, M. (2022): Contagious convergent cumulative cooperation: the dynamic development of the G20, BRICS and SCO International Politics 8 Sept 2022
<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-022-00407-7>
- Klingebiel, S. (2023): Geopolitics, the Global South and development policy, IDOS Policy Brief, No. 14/2023, German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), Bonn,
<https://doi.org/10.23661/ipb14.2023>
- Kraemer, M. (2023): Die BRICS-Staaten planen neue Währung Klartext Landesbank Baden-Württemberg. Cross-Asset- und Strategy-Research 9. Juni 2023
- Levaggi, A.G., Múgica, T. (2023): Navigating Argentina's BRICS Entry: between domestic dynamics and geopolitical Implications LSE Global South Unit Policy Brief Series, Volume 9 No. 2 (2023) - Policy Brief No. 2/2023
- Lhamo, A. (2023): China's Increased Attention to Tibet's Borders with India. *The Diplomat* 04 March 2023
- Maihold, G., Müller, M. (2023): Eine neue Entwicklungsphase der BRICS SWP-Aktuell Nr. 52, August 2023
- Mboya, C. (2023): China's Belt and Road Initiative in the East African Community Shaping a China-Centric Regional Order. *Megatrends Afrika Policy Brief* 12 FEB 2023. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License
- India (2022): India and the BRICS. Official Paper, November 2022.
- Özekin, M.K., Sune, E. (2023): Contesting Hegemony: The Rise of BRICS and the Crisis of US-led Western Hegemony in the MENA Region *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 21-3, 410
- Optenhögel, U. (2023): BRICS to BRICS+: From development ambition to geopolitical challenge. *Global Focus* 141
- Papa, M., Gallagher, K.S. (2023): Rising Power Alliances and the Threat of a Parallel Global Order: Understanding BRICS Mobilization Office of Naval Research Award: N00014-18-1-2744 March 31, 2023
- Putri, F.M., Santoso, M.P.T. (2023): BRICS Diplomacy: Building Bridges for Global Cooperation. *Politics and Humanism* 2(1): 10-21 2023 E-ISSN: 2962-8059
- Saalbach, K. (2023): The Expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization SCO, Working Paper 15 April 2023, University of Osnabrueck
- SADC (2020): Southern African Development Community (SADC) Vision 2050, Gaborone, Botswana, 2020
- Schmidt, M. (2023): „BRICS Plus“ - Europa und Nordamerika. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. KAS 11/23

Seiwert, E. (2023): Expanding the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: mechanisms, perspectives, and challenges for the region and beyond. OSCE policy Brief No. 83, January 2023

Skaricic, A.M. (2023): Uncharted Waters: The BRICS Expansion and Implications. European Policy Centre – CEP Policy Brief November 2023

Statista (2024): RICS and G7 countries' share of the world's GDP in PPP 2000-2023. Published by Statista Research Department, Feb 13, 2024.

TASS (2024): Saudi Arabia has yet to decide on joining BRICS 27 Feb 2024
<https://tass.com/world/1751877>

UNCTAD (2023): BRICS Investment Report United Nations publication issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development UNCTAD UNCTAD/DIAE/2023/1 This work is available through open access, by complying with the Creative Commons licence created for intergovernmental organizations, at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/igo>

Watcher Guru (2024): Saudi Arabia to attend BRICS Summit. 14 March 2024

Yang, J. (2021): Bhutan-China Border Negotiations in Context. The Diplomat 18 November 2021