

BRICS in Global Governance: Differences, Challenges, and the Path Forward

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Abstract

This article delves into the role of BRICS in global governance. It contrasts BRICS governance approach with that of the G7, examines the challenges it faces in the transition to BRICS+, and proposes a way forward. By highlighting BRICS' unique contributions and the hurdles it must overcome, this paper aims to provide insights into the future of BRICS in shaping a more equitable global governance architecture.

Keywords: BRICS, G7, Global Governance, Geo-civilizational synthetic approach.

1. Comparative Analysis of BRICS and G7 in Global Governance

1.1 Jim O'Neill's Prediction on Global Governance

Jim O'Neill predicted the significant growth of BRIC (before the inclusion of South Africa) economies and their potential impact on global governance. Although the BRICS economies have grown faster than expected, the G7 still holds significant influence in global governance, despite a relative decline. O'Neill advocated for BRICS countries to collaborate on economic initiatives and address common challenges, but in the current international situation, BRICS faces pressure from the existing global governance system dominated by developed countries.

1.2 BRICS' and G7's Views on Global Governance

1) Actors/Subjects of governance

The G7, consisting of seven industrialized developed countries, represents the Western - dominated view of global governance. Western countries advocate a pluralistic view of governance actors, but in practice, the United States often pursues “unipolar governance”. In contrast, BRICS countries believe that nation-states, especially effective governments, are the primary actors in global governance. They oppose unilateral governance and advocate for multilateral and equitable governance, as expressed in the Beijing Declaration adopted by BRICS leaders in 2022.

2) Objects of Governing

The G7 mainly focuses on global economic, financial, and trade issues, while BRICS emphasizes the role of emerging market countries in global affairs, South - South cooperation, and development issues. Regarding security, Western countries prioritize non - traditional security, while BRICS countries believe that development challenges should be the top priority, as economic growth can help resolve various intertwined issues. BRICS also advocates for an inclusive approach to governance targets, taking into account the concerns of developing countries, and opposes Western countries' self - interested approach, such as making impractical demands on developing countries in the name of climate change.

3) Models of Governance

The West, led by the United States, advocates “rule - based governance” where they set the rules, aiming to maintain its dominance. The BRICS countries, on the other hand, believe that globalization is not “Americanization” and that global affairs should be decided through consensus - building based on the principles of the UN Charter. They advocate for multipolar governance, which they believe is more stable and can ensure the sharing of international public

goods.

2. Challenges of Transitioning from BRICS to BRICS+

2.1 Unfair Constraints of the Current International Economic Order

The current global economic governance system is biased towards developed countries, as seen in the IMF's crisis - relief attitude after the 1997 and 2008 financial crises. The BRICS countries' efforts to reform this system have been hindered by the dominant players and vested interests. As a result, the BRICS countries' economic power is not effectively reflected in international organizations, and their voting power remains limited.

2.2 Divergent Interests among BRICS Member Countries

BRICS countries have different political and economic systems, value systems, development stages, and historical and cultural traditions, which lead to differences in their views on global governance. These differences can cause internal friction, as seen in the trade disputes between China and India and differences in handling international affairs in the UN Security Council. Disagreements also exist on the reform of the global governance system, which may limit BRICS' collective influence on the global stage.

2.3 Shift of Leading Role and Sustainable Leadership

The leadership within BRICS has evolved from Russia's initial political push to China's economic leadership. As other member countries, like India, experience economic growth, they may seek a more prominent role, which could lead to competition and friction within the group. Maintaining leadership and achieving sustainable development in the face of changing global challenges is also a significant challenge for BRICS.

3. A Geo-Civilizational Synthetic Approach: A Way Forward

To address the challenges, a geo-civilizational synthetic approach is proposed. This approach emphasizes dialogue and mutual understanding among BRICS members, identifying shared values and goals such as economic development, social justice, and global peace. It moves beyond the traditional binary dialectic of "unity and struggle" towards a trialectical synthesis that incorporates multiple perspectives. By cultivating a sense of shared geo-civilizational identity, BRICS can develop an inclusive mechanism for resolving contradictions and promote a more harmonious and prosperous global community.

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