

JOURNAL OF BRICS



STUDIES

Volume 3 ★ Number 2 ★ December 2024

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Editorial

The Brazilian Presidency of BRICS in 2025

Siphamandla Zondi , Norman Sempijja  & Thulisile Mphambukeli 
Editors

Brazil chairs the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) in 2025 after taking up the mettle of presiding over the G20 in 2024. This is an amazing show of diplomatic and technical strength on the part of Brazil. Brazil chose - *Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance* - as the theme. Five sub-themes chosen are shown below:

1. **Facilitating Trade and Investment:** Promoting economic integration through the development of efficient payment systems.
2. **Regulating Artificial Intelligence:** Encouraging inclusive and responsible AI governance for development purposes.
3. **Addressing Climate Change:** Enhancing financing mechanisms to support global efforts, in coordination with the COP30 climate summit.
4. **Public Health Collaboration:** Strengthening cooperation projects among member countries, focusing on improving public health systems.
5. **Institutional Development:** Bolstering the internal frameworks of BRICS to ensure effective governance and decision-making.

Source: Government of Brazil

The presidency of Brazil represents a significant opportunity for the country to shape the agenda of one of the world's most influential multilateral groups. The bloc has expanded and looks set to expand even more, thus expanding its power currency but also complicating its internal dynamics. As a member since the bloc's formalization, Brazil's leadership and priorities during its presidency reflect its aspirations for global governance, economic cooperation, and geopolitical influence. Brazil's presidency of BRICS typically operates within a rotating system that allows each member state to chair the organization and set the agenda for the year. This rotational presidency is an opportunity to advance issues critical to the host country while maintaining the collective interests of the group. For Brazil, its presidency often emphasizes multilateralism, sustainable development, and addressing inequality.

Brazil's approach is grounded in its historical advocacy for South-South cooperation and its role as a voice for the Global South in global forums. During its last tenure, the priorities typically included: **Promoting Sustainable Development:** Brazil emphasizes policies related to the environment, clean energy, and sustainable economic growth, aligning with its vast natural resources and biodiversity. **Strengthening economic partnerships:** Enhancing trade and investment flows between BRICS members while reducing reliance on the US dollar in international trade. **Advancing multilateralism:** Reinforcing global governance reforms, especially in institutions like the United Nations, IMF, and World Bank. **Addressing global inequalities:** Brazil champions equitable access to vaccines, technology, and education as part of its presidency.

Key challenges anticipated include

- **Internal BRICS Dynamics:** Diverging interests among member states, especially between China and India or Russia and the West, pose a challenge to consensus-building.
- **Global Pressures:** Brazil's presidency occurs amidst heightened global polarization, with mounting US-China tensions and ongoing conflicts such as the war in Ukraine.
- **Domestic Political Constraints:** The effectiveness of Brazil's presidency is influenced by its domestic political stability and leadership priorities.

Impacts and Legacy

Brazil's presidency provides an opportunity to enhance its diplomatic profile and strengthen its economic and strategic ties with member states. Success in achieving its agenda would reinforce Brazil's position as a leader among developing nations and bolster BRICS' credibility as a counterweight to Western-dominated global institutions. Conversely, failure to address internal divisions or produce tangible outcomes could weaken the bloc's unity and global influence. Brazil is ultimately expected to place firmly on the agenda the questions of development including the implementation of the SDGs, advancing the fight against poverty as it did in the G20 and innovative climate financing.

This edition is dedicated to the efforts to lead BRICS to greater heights in 2025.

We thank the authors, reviewers and fellow editors for the sterling work on this edition

Siphamandla Zondi

Editor-in-Chief

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