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# BRICS in the Emerging Global Order

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***ABSTRACT***

*This article examines the impact of Trump's new international order on the BRICS+ countries to date. BRICS+ aims to achieve equal representation on the world stage, compete successfully with the G7, and gradually wean itself off the dollar by creating a parallel currency. The West's decline and Trump's preference for the rapidly rising South significantly strengthen BRICS's international position, provided they do not threaten the dollar's primacy. If they dare to do so, their exports are threatened with tariffs equal to 150% of their value. It is still too early to assess the impact of tariffs on the BRICS+ countries. In any case, however, these effects will vary by country, and no dramatic consequences are predicted.*

## 1. Introduction

In his second presidential term, Donald Trump announces, almost daily, radical changes to the international order that fundamentally overturn the foundations that have prevailed since the end of World War II and until recently. Although these upheavals are probably not yet complete, this article will attempt to explore their impact so far on the international position and expected developments of the BRICS countries. In addition, predictions will be made regarding the nature of the future international trading regime. In an earlier article on the BRICS (Negreponti-Delivanis, 2024), I argued, among other things, that the main reason for their creation was Southern countries' intense dissatisfaction with the dismissive way the West treated them and its refusal to recognise their economic achievements. This almost offensive treatment had created an unquenchable hatred of the West, especially from their two leading countries, China and Russia. The main objectives of the BRICS can be summarised as an effort to overturn the existing international order and replace it with another, very different from the present one, which would ensure them an equal presence on the international stage. A more specific ambition was to compete with and surpass the G7 of the world's strongest economies.[1] More importantly, one of BRICS's initial goals was to gradually replace the dollar as the international reserve currency with another currency. Obviously, this would be the Chinese renminbi and the Russian ruble. From 2009, when the BRICS countries formalised their presence on the international stage, until Donald Trump's second election as US president, this group has achieved significant successes in numerous areas. Starting with their five founding members, Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, they have now doubled their initial membership with the addition of Egypt, Iran, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), while numerous candidate countries from the South are crowding in to join the group.

In addition to the impressive increase in their membership, the BRICS countries, which already appear as BRICS+ but also as the integrated South, are reaping laurels as a major economic power internationally and as an overwhelmingly large percentage of the world's population. Relevant indicators, alongside the South's successes, also reflect the West's ongoing decline, which has already been in a long period of stagnation (Negreponti-Delivanis, 2020). While in 1992 the BRICS countries

[1] Which does not include China and Russia, although the new world leader recently promised Russia's entry into it

accounted for 16.7% of global GDP, that figure rose to 37.4% in 2024. This rise in BRICS' share reflects the G7's decline, from 45.5% in 1992 to 29.3% in 2024. In 1992, the BRICS countries accounted for 16.7% of global GDP; by 2024, this figure had risen to 37.4%. The same picture of BRICS's rise and the simultaneous decline in the G7's economic power is also evident in trade, where the BRICS dominate the energy, food, and metals markets (ANI, 2024). However, despite these significant economic achievements, BRICS' influence on world affairs remained limited, and their successes went largely unrecognised (Papa, 2025). The delayed recognition of the BRICS countries as competitors to the US likely stems from their efforts to maintain a low profile to avoid provoking a reaction from the West. Moreover, from the US perspective, the main reason for the delayed recognition of BRICS' successes was the West's absolute dominance, based on liberal democracy and everything that ideology entailed. Based on this, which the West recognised as the only form of government, as well as on its implications[2], all other countries in the world that lived under regimes different from liberal democracy were seen as inferior. Not only that, but the West also considered it its duty, at times, to bring them, even by force, even through military conflicts, onto the right path.

The entire non-Western world experienced the West's contemptuous attitude from the end of World War II until Trump's second rise to power. The world was thus divided into two: first- and second-class citizens. And, precisely, the creation of BRICS, and even more so BRICS+, was an organised effort by states that were despised by the prevailing international system to gain respect, mainly through their rising economic power. In his second term, Trump is putting into practice, without warning, some of the doubts he let slip since he first came to power. He is lowering the flag of Western liberal democracy, both as an ideology and as a form of government, indirectly proving right its long-standing critics, who argued that its imposition was anti-democratic (Ang, 2018). At the same time, the new world leader has also abolished free trade and globalisation because he is convinced this system exploits America. At the same time, he is limiting, to the point of abolition, the power of international law and many international organisations. In place of all the above, the new world leader is introducing tariffs as a decisive weapon to enforce his central goal: to "make America great again." Based on the disruptive abolitions, which have not yet been replaced by other regulatory rules of international relations, apart from the imposition of tariffs at the discretion of the US President, it could be argued that the world lacks a clear international order.

I return to the BRICS+ to examine, in the two main parts of this article, the position reserved for them by the new situation imposed by the US President on the world, their new field of action, but also their weaknesses.

## 2. The BRICS in the New Multipolar System of the World

Suddenly, though somewhat expected, a major upheaval is sweeping across the globe with the abolition of the long-standing international order that had contemptuously pushed the BRICS countries into a corner. The new world leader, with these moves, which, for the time being, abolish the old international order without replacing it with a new one, at least visibly, is trying to distance itself as fast as possible from the declining West. With the abolition of the old international order, everything that represented the West automatically ceases to exist, or in other words, the special bond between the world's privileged economies, which were sufficiently developed, which bowed to the regime of liberal democracy, which had a condescending contempt for countries outside the West, and which, of course, tacitly recognised the primacy of the United States.

All these privileges and special values, which the West had enjoyed for decades immediately after the end of World War II, were abandoned by Trump in an instant. Therefore, there is no longer a West, with all that it represented, but there is also no longer a leader to shape the world's fate. The new ruler of the planet is not interested in the rest of the world outside America, on which he wants to focus to heal the wounds of its decline as much as possible and thus delay the inevitable change of

[2] Which are reminiscent to some extent, and with all due respect, of the ancient belief that "anyone who is not Greek is a barbarian."

guard at the top of the world, where China is invading unchallenged, accompanied by the integrated South (Negreponti-Delivanis, 2025). This move by Trump, in combination with other parallel moves, outlines an emerging new international order, which is already surrounded by movements and intentions that have not yet been finalised but, if they do not change along the way, are summarised in section A. Next, in section B, I will attempt to illustrate the new opportunities opening for the BRICS countries, and how they should take advantage of them to achieve the best possible results.

### 2.1. The New Physiognomy of the Globe

The new world leader's preferences so far have led to a loss of interest in the globe, with his attention focused exclusively on America. However, this impression is partly incorrect, because his indifference to global governance is linked to parallel preferences that mitigate it to a significant degree. Indeed, Trump is turning away from the West because he is trying to disassociate himself from its rapid decline and its leaders, especially those of the EU, whom he shows he does not appreciate.[3] On the contrary, he admires the leaders of the rising South, as well as their non-systemic governments. Everything indicates that he wants to share with them a new form of control over and shaping of what is happening on the globe. Among these leaders, with whom he seems to want to align himself, Trump singles out Putin and Xi Jinping, admiring, among other things, that they rule illiberal democracies, that they are patriots and love their country, and that they have not embraced the woke agenda. A possible collaboration with them, even with particularly flexible rules that would create some rudimentary international order, would certainly face significant obstacles. The first, and I would say the most decisive, is how some form of cooperation could be established between Trump and the Chinese leader, given that the latter represents the former's main opponent. Specifically, the latter appears ready and comfortable to take over the governance of the world, marginalising the American leader. And as was evident at the large gathering of young leaders in Tianjin from September 31 to October 1, 2025, all of whom belonged to the integrated South, if not all to BRICS+, it was revealing of the confidence, ease, authority, and grandeur with which the Chinese leader behaved as the future ruler of the world (Thibault, 2025). Subsequently, the cordiality and honours with which Trump surrounded Putin, humiliating the EU, which found itself suddenly marginalised, showed that he would dearly love for him to abandon Jin Ping. A wish that, however, seems unfulfillable for many obvious reasons.

### 2.2. The Position of the BRICS in the New International Environment

And suddenly, without any effort on their part, the BRICS+ found themselves in an environment in which most of their initial aspirations and concerns seemed to have been resolved. First, they no longer have the West against them, which used to belittle them and refuse to recognise their important achievements. Although the new global regulatory framework has not yet taken shape, everything points to the conclusion that it will be multipolar, and that the leaders of the BRICS, China and Russia, but probably also India and perhaps Japan. Thus, the initial goal of the BRICS, which would have been very difficult to achieve through their own efforts alone, was miraculously achieved without them having to engage in any relevant struggles. With this new, still-undetermined status, India, as a member of BRICS+, which wants to maintain good relations with the US, is also facilitated, as the old tension between the West and the South no longer exists, at least in its traditional form.

One reasonable question in the new world order is whether Trump's cooperation with the two leaders of BRICS+ will be sincere and constructive. I fear the answer will be controversial. This is because, after so many years of tense relations between these two worlds, an unquenchable hatred has been created on the part of those who have been marginalised in the oppressed South. It is therefore

[3] He seems to have singled out the European countries with which he wishes to have relations, while abandoning the rest to their fate. The countries selected, based on rumors of a new US doctrine that has not been formalized and is called "Make Europe Great Again," are Italy, Austria, Poland, and Hungary (i.e., countries that have resisted many EU decisions and have had a pro-American policy).

unlikely that the wounds that are still open will heal so quickly that a climate of trust can be established on both sides. Added to these inherent difficulties is the inability to predict Trump's next move, whose current aspirations and methods do nothing to normalise relations on both sides. In any case, the EU will no longer be critical and contemptuous of the BRICS+, since the new world leader seems to condemn it to "cultural extinction" (Smolar, 2025), threatening its dissolution. Apart from Elon Musk, the US, China, and Russia[4] also want (and obviously seek) the dissolution of the EU. Thanks to these international upheavals, the BRICS+ countries are securing a respectable presence on the world stage. Furthermore, they are participating in international affairs within the multipolar system promoted by Trump. The comfortable conclusion, therefore, based on the analysis so far, is that BRICS+ has achieved its main objectives in a spectacular way, and from now on it is free to enjoy its new international position. From now on, their aspirations will not be specific, because the West pushed them into a subordinate position; instead, they will more broadly focus on issues that concern the world. However, there is another side to the coin, which does not show BRICS as free of problems. The big question that now logically arises is whether continuing their struggle to gain recognition of their international presence and strengthen it is justified, since the dark sides have now been addressed.[5] There is therefore a clear risk that they will pursue their goals with less intensity, since these seem to have been achieved as if by miracle.[6] However, if unexpected adverse changes occur, they will be left unprotected. Despite the optimistic picture that seems to have been created for the BRICS, key questions remain about the choices they should make in the future, as well as the risks that will likely continue to threaten them.

## 3. The Future of the BRICS

The leaders of the BRICS countries are, as is well known, the leaders of China and Russia. It is therefore logical to assume that these two leaders will steer the decisions and overall behaviour, as well as, to a large extent, the fortunes of the BRICS countries. The first question that needs to be explored, therefore, question that needs to be explored is whether these two leaders have confidence in the new world leader. To what extent have his courtesies towards the two leaders dispelled their fears and doubts about his sincerity?

### 3.1. The New Basis of Relations between the Leaders and the BRICS

How reassured can they be about future developments that directly concern them, with Trump facing them, who, moreover, changes with astonishing ease and speed decisions and measures he judges no longer serve his goals or have proven wrong? And above all, is it possible that the disappointments, fears, humiliations, and terror that the leaders of China and Russia have endured over the decades since the end of World War II have disappeared as if by magic? Even though Putin has stopped lashing out at the US with his former vehemence, forgetting the bad events of decades past does not seem easy and may also be dangerous. Thus, everything points to the relationship between the leaders of the US, China, and Russia being closer to a love-hate relationship than to sincere friendship. But beyond the bad experiences of past decades, the three world leaders are fully aware that Trump's friendly gestures, even if they seem innocent and without ulterior motives, are nevertheless, at every moment, based on his effort to prevent China's rapid development of new technologies by any means necessary. Therefore, despite appearances, these relations rest on both sides' attempts to gain partial advantages, knowing that insincerity and a lack of trust remain at their core. Furthermore, another thorn in relations among the leaders of the US, China, and Russia is Trump's hidden but still visible hope of winning over Putin, whom he admires and recognises for his abilities and leadership qualities. This may also explain why Trump is proposing an end to the war in Ukraine, with particularly favourable solutions for Russia, frequently talks to Putin on the phone,

[4] Publication by the American Defense One in European capitals, presenting an unpublished, more extensive version of the new National Security Strategy (NSS), which proposes the gradual withdrawal of four states from the EU
[5] For the reasons that led to the creation of BRICS, see the introduction to this article
[6] Of course, at present there are still no examples of the new form of cooperation between the South and the G7 countries being implemented, so it is not possible to draw any definite conclusions

and has stated his intention to include him in the G7 (what remains of it). However, Putin is extremely unlikely to abandon Xi Jinping. This is because he owes him significant, multifaceted assistance during the war in Ukraine; because he is a serious leader unlikely to break his word; and, above all, because he cannot trust the American leader. These points lead to the conclusion that it is unreasonable to expect BRICS+ to suspend their action plans in light of the international upheavals. Under the current circumstances, however, it seems certain that radical changes will be needed, if only to keep up appearances. In other words, it is inconceivable that, now that Trump has introduced a multipolar system, which was at the top of the BRICS+ agenda, and now that it is being offered to them on a silver platter, they will continue to operate as outsiders to the system, harbouring hatred toward a West that no longer exists, with Trump as its sole remaining representative. Under these new circumstances, BRICS+ will most likely continue to develop unhindered, gain ever greater economic influence in international affairs, and participate with an ever-increasing share of the world's population[7], overwhelming the G7, whose population is declining.

Beyond the above, the new international conditions will almost certainly force BRICS+ to abandon their goal, which was certainly their primary and most decisive objective, of dealing a blow to the US. I am referring, of course, to BRICS' intention to create a parallel currency to replace the US dollar as the international reserve currency. For this reason, and although Trump, at least for the time being, has not paid much attention to BRICS+ and their individual activities and aspirations, he was nevertheless quick to threaten them with 100% tariffs on their products if they continue to work on ways to weaken the dollar (McKibbin, 2025). Indeed, Trump, unlike Biden and Janet Yellen, perceived the BRICS+ initiative to create a currency competitive with the dollar as a significant threat that must be eliminated at all costs. Trump, therefore, demands guarantees that BRICS+ will not proceed with a parallel currency to the dollar.

Let me remind you that BRICS+, since 2023-24, has pursued a long-term effort to free itself from dependence on the US dollar. This gradual de-dollarisation was intended to free its members from the effects of Western sanctions, especially those imposed by the US, and to reduce reliance on international payment systems such as SWIFT. But the BRICS+ de-dollarisation effort was also, and above all, aimed at replacing the dollar internationally with its own currency, dealing it a fatal blow. These efforts by the BRICS+ to de-dollarize intensified with the war in Ukraine and the sanctions against Russia, as well as the West's threats to freeze Russian deposits in Belgium.[8] So far, the consequences of BRICS' efforts to limit the dollar's international reach have not been significant. While the dollar's share as an international reserve currency was 72% in 1999, it fell to 58% by 2024 (McKibbin, 2025). However, BRICS+ continues its collective efforts to reduce its dependence on the dollar gradually. Specifically, BRICS+ facilitates payments in local currencies, increases its gold reserves, and creates alternatives such as the New Development Bank to reduce dependence on the dollar, especially to avoid sanctions. However, the dollar remains dominant, and BRICS+ aims to weaken it gradually rather than overthrow it immediately.

Trump's reactions, including threats to impose devastating tariffs on BRICS+, show that he takes the risk to the dollar very seriously, due in part to the actions and intentions of BRICS+. Alongside Trump's opposition to BRICS' actions, he then turns his attention to free trade. His main reason for this opposition is his belief that globalisation destroys America, as he attributes an excessively high and rising trade deficit to it; the deficit reached $918 billion in 2024 (Swanson, 2024). This brings us to the truly frightening level of US foreign debt, which threatens uncontrollable consequences if the dollar ceases to be desirable as an international currency. Specifically, the US foreign debt (debt to foreign entities) is enormous, with approximately $28.6 trillion in gross foreign debt in mid-2025. Total US national debt (including domestic holdings) exceeded $38 trillion at the end of 2025, a

[7] The population of the old West is predicted to decline steadily, as one of the main consequences of the decline into which it has inevitably fallen

[8] For the time being, the relevant decision has been postponed indefinitely, and the existence of serious objections reinforces the view that it will not be brought back for discussion

significant portion of which foreign governments and investors hold (over $9 trillion in US government bonds by the second quarter of 2025). Foreign holdings represent a large but declining share of total public debt, with Japan and the United Kingdom being the main foreign holders.

In light of this threatening debt, it seems very likely, and also logically tenable, to argue that the choice of tariffs as the dominant US economic policy measure is primarily aimed at controlling this enormous external debt. Although, as is well known, a tariff war never guarantees it will achieve the initially desired results, encouraging signs already suggest the choice is justified. Specifically, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), which is the independent fiscal watchdog of the US, estimated in June this year that the increase in revenue based on the new tariffs imposed by the US between January 6 and May 13, 2025, is expected to reduce the cumulative US public debt by $2.5 trillion for the decade to 2035 (Chu et al., 2025). Despite the parallel losses in working hours and growth rate, reducing US public debt is considered extremely important to maintaining the dollar's status as an international reserve currency. Along with controlling US debt, tariffs also serve an additional, equally important goal. Specifically, they relate to the new world leader's attempt to slow down China's rise to the global throne. In other words, the US wants to gain a few years as China's inevitable successor at the top of the world. Specifically, through tariffs, America seeks to buy time to increase its self-sufficiency, mainly in new technologies, while also slowing China's growth rate.

### 3.2. The Reactions of the BRICS

One serious difficulty for BRICS+ in presenting itself as a unified whole, with one voice, is that the economies and political structures within it do not face the same opportunities and problems; therefore, their reactions cannot be the same. This general observation means that Trump's tariffs will not affect all BRICS+ economies to the same extent. Although it is too early to conclude in this highly unstable area[9], initial research highlights the diversity of the consequences for the individual BRICS+ economies (Luck, 2025). However, before I draw any conclusions about the impact of Trump's tariffs on the BRICS, I want to note that the issue is awaiting a US court decision on whether this burden on individual economies is legal (Morgan, 2025). And if the answer is negative, the US will be obliged to return to the beneficiaries what it received from each of them in the form of tariffs. An important indication of the growing consensus among the BRICS+ countries, which is evident in Trump's imposition of tariffs, is the response of Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar to Trump's threats: "The BRICS+ countries have a strong collective goal to promote the South and cooperation among its members, as well as to promote a multipolar world that will support them if Trump threatens to impose tariffs" (Parashar, 2025). The problems India is expected to face seem to be concentrated in areas such as IT and pharmaceuticals. The expected impact is predicted to be mild, mainly because their exports are directed to enough countries. For Brazil and South Africa, the impact of tariffs on their exports, which are concentrated in commodities, may be more severe and may slow their growth rate. BRICS+ struggles to present a unified front because its member economies and political systems have different challenges and opportunities, leading to varied responses. China's response to the tariffs is to seek closer trade relations with the EU; in any case, it has secured rising demand for its products from BRICS countries. Moreover, the tariffs are not expected to significantly harm China, which is implementing a plan to increase domestic demand, mobilising, for the first time in its history, services whose demand was less developed than in the rest of the world but has already increased significantly.

## 4. Conclusion

The very recent and very favourable developments for the future position of the BRICS on the international stage are related to the ongoing decline of the West, and especially Europe, with Trump's indifference and dose of anger towards it, the EU's obligation to take care of its own defence from now on, with its decision to militarise urgently, anticipating Russia's invasion, with numerous

[9] As evidenced by the constant and significant changes in their amount

bad decisions regarding the war in Ukraine, but above all, with its inability to foresee in time and prepare for the cross-cutting consequences of China's spectacular rise in world affairs.[10] The economic consequences of these changes are multidimensional and, at the same time, overwhelming. I will try to highlight those that mainly concern the conclusions expected here.

Although the political and economic diversity of the BRICS makes it difficult, if not impossible, to draw a conclusion about it as a whole, as noted above, it is still possible to draw a general conclusion about the future course of the BRICS. This course seems to justify the reasons for creating the BRICS. Everything indicates that the BRICS' position in the new international regime introduced by Trump will be infinitely better than it has been until now. I choose the following as specific explanations for this finding:

- First, Trump has dismantled the West, and therefore, the EU no longer counts in the governance of the world. Its position is logically taken by the BRICS, represented by their two leaders, the leaders of China and Russia.
- Second, Trump is against the decline and stagnation of the West, which is why he dismantled it and why he seeks to side with powerful leaders and emerging economies, provided, of course, that they do not threaten the primacy of the US. Consequently, the BRICS countries are at the forefront.
- Thirdly, the new international system introduced by Trump is multipolar, no longer unipolar. Consequently, the BRICS countries' voice will be heard and taken seriously.

The BRICS countries should avoid actions that would anger Trump, such as attacks on the dollar's primacy. At this point, the BRICS countries will need to consider whether their new privileged international position is secure, and above all, whether it is long-term, i.e., not subject to the volatility of the world leader's measures. But it is also worth considering if giving up the fight against the dollar is outweighed by BRICS's new privileged global status. As new situations and opportunities open up for the BRICS, it seems that good relations with the US are the only way forward. This, of course, involves risks if recent positive prospects are overturned. The new prospects opening for the BRICS countries seem positive and without hidden risks. First, India's presidency of BRICS in 2026 opens new horizons for cooperation with other economies of the South in areas such as advanced AI, health, and climate. Further cooperation among group members will also be positive, despite the significant differences that divide them. In the new international order, their achievements are now recognised, and the continuation of their growing economic power seems certain. Risks lurk everywhere. It is expected and hoped that the BRICS will minimise them and keep them under control as far as possible.

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[10] I predicted this back in 2018 (see footnote 3).

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