

**Ministry of External Affairs  
(MER Division)**

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**Brief on BRICS**

BRICS brings together five of the largest developing countries of the world, representing around 41% of the global population, around 24% of the global GDP and around 16% of global trade.

2. The acronym BRIC was first used in 2001 by Goldman Sachs in their Global Economics Paper, "The World Needs Better Economic BRICs" on the basis of econometric analyses projecting that the four economies would individually and collectively occupy far greater economic space and would be amongst the world's largest economies in the next 50 years or so.

3. As a formal grouping, BRIC started after the meeting of the Leaders of Russia, India and China in St. Petersburg on the margins of G8 Outreach Summit in 2006. The grouping was formalized during the 1st meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the margins of UNGA in New York in 2006. The 1st BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, in 2009. It was agreed to expand BRIC into BRICS with the inclusion of South Africa at the BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York in 2010. Accordingly, South Africa attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> BRICS Summit in Sanya in 2011.

4. Fourteen BRICS Summits have taken place so far. The 15th BRICS Summit will be hosted by South Africa during its Chairmanship in 2023. The earlier Summits were held as under:

- 14<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit – 23-24 June 2022 (Beijing)
- 13<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit – 9 September 2021 (New Delhi)
- 12<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit - 17 November 2020 (Moscow)
- 11<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit – 13-14 November 2019 (Brasilia)
- 10<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit - 25-27 July 2018 (Johannesburg)
- 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit – 4-5 September 2017 (Xiamen)
- 8<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit – 15-16 October 2016 (Goa)
- 7<sup>th</sup> BRICSSummit – 8-9 July 2015 in Russia(Ufa)
- 6<sup>th</sup> BRICSSummit -14–16 July 2014 in Brazil(Fortaleza)
- 5<sup>th</sup> BRICSSummit- 26–27 March 2013 in South Africa (Durban)
- 4<sup>th</sup> BRICSSummit - 29 March 2012 in India (New Delhi)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> BRICSSummit- 14 April 2011 in China (Sanya)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> BRICSummit- 16 April 2010 in Brazil (Brasilia)
- 1<sup>st</sup> BRICSummit – 16 June 2009 in Russia (Yekaterinburg)

5. BRICS cooperation has two mechanisms of cooperation– consultation on issues of mutual interest through meetings of Leaders and Ministers and practical cooperation through meetings of Senior Officials in a number of areas including Trade, Finance, Health, Education, Science & Technology, Agriculture, Environment, Energy, Labour, Disaster Management, Anti-Corruption, Anti-Drugs, etc. BRICS Business-to-Business engagement is through BRICS Business Council and BRICS Women Business Alliance. Other BRICS exchanges can broadly be categorized as Parliamentary Exchanges, Seminars/Conferences, Business, People-to-people exchanges and Track II meetings. The BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Relations met on 01 June 2023 in Cape Town, South Africa and adopted a Joint Statement. Meetings are also held on the side lines of multilateral events.

## **India's BRICS Chairship and 13<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit**

6. India took over the BRICS Chairship from Russia in January 2021 and held it until 31 December 2021. India's BRICS Chairship in 2021 coincided with the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BRICS, making it an opportune moment to review its work for greater efficiency and relevance. The theme and approach for India's BRICS Chairship was "*BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus*". The Priorities for India's Chairship in 2021 included the following:

- Reform of the Multilateral System
- Counter Terrorism Cooperation
- Digital and Technological Tools for Achieving SDGs
- Enhancing People to People Exchanges.

7. Over 150 events and meetings were concluded during India's BRICS Chairship in 2021. These include the Leaders' Summit, organized on 9 September 2021 in virtual format, the meeting of the Foreign Ministers which was held on 1 June 2021 in virtual format, meeting of the National Security Advisers which was held on 24 August 2021 and a total of close to 20 other Ministerial meetings including Finance, Trade, Industry, Agriculture, Energy, Environment, Labour and Employment, Education, Health, Science and Technology, Communications, Culture, Tourism, and Youth.

8. Many 'firsts' were achieved during India's BRICS Chairship this year, which include: (a) BRICS Digital Health Summit; (b) 1st BRICS Water Ministers Meeting; (c) Adoption of BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan; (d) Launch of BRICS Alliance for Green Tourism; (e) Operationalization of BRICS Agricultural Research Platform; and (f) Signing of Agreement on BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation. Under India's Chairship, BRICS has emerged stronger and more vibrant.

## **South Africa as BRICS Chair in 2023**

9. South Africa assumed the Chairship of BRICS on 01 January 2023 under the theme '*BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development, and Inclusive Multilateralism*'. The theme emphasises the continued value of BRICS as a partnership of leading emerging markets and developing countries providing leadership and momentum towards global growth and sustainable development.

10. For 2023, the theme of South Africa's Chairship of BRICS has the following priorities:

- a) Developing a partnership towards an equitable Just Transition
- b) Transforming Education and Skills Development for the Future
- c) Unlocking Opportunities through the African Continental Free Trade Agreement
- d) Strengthening Post-Pandemic Socio-Economic Recovery and the Attainment of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development
- e) Strengthening Multilateralism, including Working Toward Real Reform of Global Governance Institutions and Strengthening the Meaningful Participation of Women in Peace Processes

11. South Africa has planned close to 200 events to be held during its Chairship in 2023.

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**August 2023**