

The BRICS Summit in Kazan: Between old and new world orders

The world is experiencing an era of unprecedented turbulence, marked by pervasive uncertainty. This multidimensional shift stems primarily from the destabilisation of the rules-based world order, or Liberal Order, which is now faltering due to intrinsic and extrinsic pressures affecting the West. Western societies are undergoing profound transformations, driven by the rise of far-right, conservative, and populist movements on the one hand and, on the other, an intellectual crisis among Western elites, who failed to address these challenges at their inception.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is not the primary cause of the global and regional crises but, rather, a catalyst that accelerates a chain reaction of historical transformations, both globally and within Western societies. Concurrently, the rise of the Global South – or what is now called the “Global Majority” – represents a historical inevitability. However, its rapid ascension has been further propelled by the decline of the West, which is traditionally the primary stakeholder in the contemporary world order.

The BRICS nations are forming a global coalition set to reshape the course of a century. This transformation gained symbolic momentum in October 2024 in Kazan, Russia, where BRICS transitioned from an exclusive club of major powers into a broader geopolitical entity with historic significance. During the summit, the BRICS leaders articulated their vision of the future of the international economic and financial system as well as formalised their strategic objectives through the Kazan Declaration, which serves as a guiding framework for the years ahead.

Another critical force shaping global geopolitics is the technological revolution. This phenomenon extends beyond the scope of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, evolving into a far more complex process with profound geopolitical and geoeconomic implications. Both the West and BRICS recognise that industrial and scientific supremacy, coupled with collective resilience

within alliances, will determine the dominant force shaping the new world order. In Kazan, the BRICS countries paid a lot of attention to the industrial and scientific revolution inside the bloc.

In 2025, these global threats and challenges are likely to intensify rather than stabilise. The technological and informational landscape is undergoing radical transformations, further exacerbating geopolitical complexities. This article examines the grand strategy outlined by BRICS during the Kazan Summit, shedding light on its potential to reshape the global order and its dilemma to remain “reformist” or choose a more aggressive strategy against the liberal world order.

Russia's presidency in BRICS and the expectations

Already in 2023, Russia hoped that the country's presidency in BRICS would be historic in that BRICS will move from a dormant organisation into something that would possess real geostrategic counterbalance against the Western economic and geopolitical power. Russian experts viewed 2024 as a pivotal year marked by the historic expansion of the organisation and the significant turbulence in the Western world due to the electoral process in the United States. The overwhelming optimism was given by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in September 2023, as he drew attention to the fact that after Argentina, Egypt, Iran, the UAE, and Ethiopia had joined BRICS, the format now includes eleven countries, which corresponds to the number of football players on the field in one team; hence BRICS is now one full football team.¹ After the wave of enlargement, it was decided to call the new form BRICS+. However, after Argentina had decided to abandon the bloc and Saudi Arabia paused its participation, this formula did not work at the Kazan Summit.

In December 2023, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergey Ryabkov stressed that, as part of Russia's BRICS Chairmanship in 2024, Moscow's efforts will focus on strengthening strategic partnerships based on consensus and continuity, enhancing BRICS' role in global affairs. The key priority is deepening cooperation with the Global South. Economic priorities involve the implementation of the BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy (2025) and the Innovation Plan (2021–2024) as well as enhancing interbank cooperation, developing alternative cross-border payment systems, and increasing national currency settlements to reduce dependence on the US dollar, which Russia considers as a political tool against the non-Western world. Moreover, there are goals such as commitment to strengthening correspondent banking networks, ensuring efficient international transactions, and transforming the international

¹ “Лавров предложил подумать о создании футбольной команды,” TASS, September 20, 2023, <https://tass.ru/politika/18802029> (accessed here and beyond: 4.03.2025).

financial system. Ryabkov additionally underlined that by recognising the need for alternative financial mechanisms, BRICS aims to promote a stable global economic environment, one that is free from unilateral pressure (sanctions).²

How important the BRICS presidency for Russia is was illustrated by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin's speech on 1 January 2024, which was dedicated to the inauguration of the Russian BRICS Chairmanship. For him, BRICS is about sovereign equality, respect for the choice of one's developmental path, mutual consideration of interests, consensus, the aspiration to shape a multipolar world order and a fair global financial and trade system, as well as the pursuit of collective solutions to the most pressing challenges of the modern era. He formulated the basic motto of Russia's presidency for 2024 – "Strengthening Multilateralism for Fair Global Development and Security."³ He also promised to formulate the practical and theoretical features of the new category of the states, namely "the BRICS partner countries", deepen the cooperation in energy and food security, enhance the role of BRICS in the international monetary and financial system, develop interbank cooperation, and expand the use of national currencies in mutual trade.

Finally, it is essential to highlight the former President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev's vision for BRICS and Russia, which he presented in his article titled "The Time of Metropolises is Over." He calls the recent process of de-neo-colonisation the "Movement for the Freedom of Nations!", and BRICS and the SCO should take the lead on these processes. This could be achieved through anti-neocolonial initiatives, particularly in financial security for developing countries, and a comprehensive reform of the IMF and the World Bank, aligning with BRICS' financial independence agenda. As can be seen, he tries to connect neocolonialism with contemporary economic and financial international order. Medvedev notes that the emerging "multipolar globalisation," which is rapidly "replacing the unjust Western-centric universalism, necessitates a new dialogue paradigm, the foundations of which have already been laid."⁴ According to Russia's BRICS Chairmanship, it is particularly noteworthy to continue BRICS' attention to the development of the African continent.

² С. Рябков, "«Сегодня БРИКС воспринимается в качестве одного из столпов нового более справедливого миропорядка»: интервью о перспективах БРИКС и его расширении в преддверии российского председательства", Пир Центр, Индекс безопасности 2023 No. 4 (47), <https://pircenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/SIRUS-4-47-Ryabkov.pdf>.

³ "Обращение Владимира Путина в связи с началом председательства России в БРИКС," Президент России, January 1, 2024, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/73202>.

⁴ Д. Медведев, "Время метрополий истекло: Человечество должно окончательно избавиться от наследия колониальной системы" RG.ru, June 14, 2024, <https://rg.ru/2024/06/14/vremia-metropolij-isteklo.html>.

From the practical point of view, ahead of the summit, it was anticipated that Russia would propose the introduction of a new investment platform within BRICS to support national economies, along with initiatives such as a grain exchange, an antitrust policy centre, a special international consultation mechanism for BRICS countries, and a dedicated BRICS platform for precious metals and diamonds. These measures were seen as another step towards reducing dependence on the US dollar, with discussions even considering the potential approval of an internal BRICS currency for mutual settlements.⁵

The Kazan Summit and the new historical spirit

The 16th BRICS Summit was a meeting of the heads of state of the BRICS alliance, held in Kazan, Russia, from 22 to 24 October 2024. At the time of the summit, nine countries had confirmed their BRICS membership: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Iran, the UAE, and Ethiopia. The summit organisers considered Saudi Arabia to be a full member of BRICS. However, upon arrival in Kazan, the head of the Saudi delegation stated that they were participating as a representative of a country invited to BRICS rather than as a full-fledged member.⁶ The UN Secretary-General António Guterres also participated in the summit. The event was the largest international gathering hosted by Russia since the start of the invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Argentina, which was invited to join BRICS but refused to join the alliance as of 2024, did not receive an invitation to the summit in Kazan. Afghanistan's representatives of the Taliban movement, banned in Russia, had also submitted application to take part in the BRICS summit, but the final decision was to avoid their participation. Anyway, it was a historic summit in terms of its symbolic meaning and scale, because it was the most representative summit in the history of BRICS and the biggest international forum in Russia since the beginning of the invasion of Ukraine.⁷ One of the most notable guests was the president of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who had previously announced his country's intention to join BRICS. In any case, according to Vladimir Putin, more than 30 countries have already expressed their desire to join the club "in one form or another," and therefore "it would be wrong to ignore the unprecedented interest of the countries of the global South and East" in the platform. At the same time, Putin noted that the current BRICS

⁵ "Итоги XVI саммита БРИКС в Казани," РАНХиГС, https://piu.ranepa.ru/news/itogi-xvi-sammita-briks-v-kazani/?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com.

⁶ O. Stuenkel, M. Treadwell, "Why is Saudi Arabia hedging its BRICS invite?", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, November 21, 2024, <https://carnegieendowment.org/emissary/2024/11/brics-saudi-arabia-hedging-why?lang=en>.

⁷ "Казанский сбор," Коммерсант, October 23, 2024, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/7249833>.

members should organise their admission to their ranks in such a way as to prevent a decrease in the effectiveness of BRICS.⁸ If before it had been the organisation of the three giant states of Eurasia and two from non-Eurasia, now the diversity of the organisation became much more complicated than ever.

Therefore, in Kazan, according to Putin's advice, a decision was made as to "partner state criteria" under which further expansion will take place, and a list of thirteen candidate countries was agreed upon. Its aim was to create a sort of a "filter" and allow to keep the countries which are eager to be part of the bloc but due to the objective reasons cannot be members rather than leave them in geopolitical uncertainty in the stage of competition between the East and the West. In other words, it is better to take up on a historic occasion if a country wants to be a member of BRICS and give them some status than give the West a chance to apprehend the abandoned state. Yuri Ushakov stated that the BRICS countries had discussed the list of thirteen states that would like to be members of the organisation, but due to negative outcomes with Saudi Arabia and Argentina in the future, the process of enlargement has been more consolidated and should decrease the negative consequences.⁹

One of the main results, in addition to the adoption of the final Declaration, was the announcement of thirteen countries as BRICS partner states. It shows that the enlargement has not violated the consensus inside the organisation. However, the expansion of the association is not to be expected shortly; back in June 2024, Russian Foreign Minister S. V. Lavrov had announced the BRICS' decision to "take a break" on the issue of new members joining¹⁰ and again mentioned the "stages" which the candidate countries must go through. On the eve of the summit, this attitude was confirmed by Deputy Foreign Minister S. A. Ryabkov.¹¹ Experts valued the messages of the summit that the West is now a "global minority"¹² and the aim was to show that all Western efforts to isolate Russia have failed dramatically.¹³ Yet, it was a joint understanding that BRICS is now a counterweight to the G7 on

⁸ "Новые партнеры, альтернатива доллару и шансы на мир. Постфактум о саммите БРИКС," БелТа, October 25, 2024, <https://belta.by/world/view/novye-partneryi-alternativa-dollaru-i-shansy-na-mir-postfaktum-o-sammite-briks-670945-2024/>.

⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁰ "Лавров сообщил о решении БРИКС «взять паузу» по вопросу вступления новых членов," Известия, June 25, 2024, <https://iz.ru/1718265/2024-06-25/lavrov-soobshchil-o-reshenii-briks-vziat-pauzu-po-voprosu-vstupleniia-novykh-chlenov>.

¹¹ Интервью заместителя Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации С.А.Рябкова для газеты Политика (Сербия), МИД РФ, October 22, 2024, https://mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1976992/.

¹² "BRICS is key to Putin's fight against the U.S. Not all members agree," *The Washington Post*, October 21, 2024, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/10/21/russia-brics-ukraine-america-india/>.

¹³ S. Rosenberg, "Putin gathers allies to show West's pressure isn't working," BBC, October 22, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cly3ylwg4eqo>.

the global stage and the summit in Kazan¹⁴ is the cornerstone in this historic trend – the rise of the new alternative to the West geopolitical centres locally (at the continental level) and globally. It should be made clear to understand the nature of this historical phenomenon that BRICS is mimicking the West not only within the traditional matrix of geopolitics, international economy, and finances, but also in culture, sport, science, education, etc. For example, in the summer of 2024, the BRICS countries held the 2024 BRICS Sports Games with representatives from thirty-six countries. Moreover, Kazan discussed the organisation of the analogy of Eurovision for the BRICS countries, which would be called “Intervision.” The basis for the sing competition would be the member countries of BRICS and the SCO.¹⁵ The Intervision Song Contest was held in the 1970s and 1980s in the countries of the socialist bloc, primarily in Poland. Moreover, BRICS is now promoting a pilot version of the BRICS university ranking and developing BRICS-orientated educational programmes.

The cultural factor is important and has long-lasting implications, but more significant are the projects that integrate the technological sectors of the member countries. For example, on 24 October, the BRICS countries agreed to create the Nuclear Energy Platform. The general director of the Rosatom Aleksey Lichachev stated that in the world in which the BRICS countries are the leaders in nuclear energy projects, the platform should help the BRICS countries maintain their leadership in the future.¹⁶ It is too early to state for sure, but it seems that the BRICS countries are aiming even to take the leadership over the West in cutting-edge technologies and in general to be the world industrial locomotive. It might be the main reason for the Trump Administration waging trade wars to slow down that process.

It seems that the BRICS leadership understood that the next step is the initialisation of the organisation. For example, special attention should be paid to the announcement of the BRICS’ plans to promote the institutional development of the association, which is noted in paragraph 5 of the final Declaration. It should be expected that such intentions will be implemented for the most part in the economic sphere.

The participation of Saudi Arabia attracted the most attention, because everyone is clear about the geostrategic consequences if this country is going to choose the sides in the upcoming geopolitical competition. Having received an invitation to join BRICS last year, Riyadh did not reject it (unlike Argentina),

¹⁴ “How BRICS became so much more than just a slogan,” Bloomberg, June 21, 2024, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-06-21/what-to-know-about-brics-now-doubled-in-size-quicktake?embedded-checkout=true>.

¹⁵ “Путин подписал указ о проведении в России аналога »Евровидения«,” ERR.ee, February 4, 2025, <https://rus.err.ee/1609595255>.

¹⁶ “Страны БРИКС объединились на Платформе по атомной энергетике,” Портал СНГ, October 24, 2024, <https://e-cis.info/news/569/122172/>.

and therefore automatically became a member of “the ten” on 1 January this year. Representatives of the Kingdom took part in several events of the association, and, for example, attended the meetings of the BRICS Sherpas/Sous-Sherpas more than once.¹⁷ The Saudis also acted according to the plan established at the recent summit in Kazan, but since Riyadh did not withdraw its application to become a BRICS member, it remains a member country of the association.¹⁸

The Kazan Declaration: International security and global governance

All countries signed the final Kazan Declaration, which has thirty-two pages.¹⁹ From the onset, the Declaration defines the pillars of the future and ongoing cooperation between the member states. The first pillar involves politics and security, the second one is about economy and finances, and the third one refers to culture and people-to-people cooperation. As can be seen, the BRICS countries are developing a comprehensive system that eventually aims to substitute many international platforms or fora that were leading the Western countries or the Western paradigm. The countries straightforwardly reveal their grand strategy goals, namely to reinvigorate the international order in order to make it fairer, to reform the international financial system, and to trigger the economic and financial cooperation within the Global South. For this, they need to create new financial and economic structures. It looks like the BRICS countries are on the way to the creation of such structures and offering a completely new matrix for the non-Western world.

The symbolical motto that was indicated in the Declaration deeply corresponds with the grand strategic vision of BRICS – “BRICS and Global South: Building a Better World Together.” BRICS is ideologically directing itself towards the Global South and considers it as the main source of future enlargement. As was mentioned, the BRICS Country Partner mechanism has been established. It seems that Russian experts were building the core skeleton of the Declaration, because the very structure of the text and its ambitious nature shows the document’s eagerness to go beyond the official diplomatic rhetoric. The Declaration notes the very fact of the emergence of the centres

¹⁷ Выступление заместителя Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации С.А.Рябокова на пресс-конференции по итогам заседания шерп/су-шерп стран БРИКС, Москва, 1 февраля 2024 года, МИД РФ, <https://www.mid.ru/ru/maps/sa/1929086/>.

¹⁸ С. Аров, “Саммит БРИКС в Казани: подводим итоги с акцентом на вопросах международной безопасности,” ПИР-Пост 2024, No. 26, October 25, 2024, <https://pircenter.org/editions/pir-post-26-2024-sammit-briks-v-kazani-podvodim-itogi-s-akcentom-na-voprosah-mezhdunarodnoj-bezopasnosti/>.

¹⁹ Kazan Declaration: Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security. XVI BRICS Summit, Kazan, Russian Federation, October 23, 2024, https://cdn.brics-russia2024.ru/upload/docs/Kazan_Declaration_FINAL.pdf?1729693488349783.

of power (geopolitically and economically) which will contribute to the “balanced multipolar world order.” Thus, this new formula of the world order, according to BRICS, will contribute to economic globalisation. It is an interesting feature of BRICS; they actually would like to see the continuation of globalisation as it is flowing so far but not to destroy it. The current status of globalisation is beneficial to the BRICS countries and the Declaration admits this, though it requires revision.

The next important moment is the demand for the reformation of the current global governance system, and this goal is quite an ambitious one. The Declaration claims that it is possible to achieve this through greater engagement of the countries which are representing the Global South. The reforms should also include the United Nations’ institutions. As it was stated above, BRICS avoids drastic decisions and moves, especially if it is afraid to harm the process of globalisation and hence positively reacts to the World Trade Organisation, but again asks for greater engagement towards the Global South. On the contrary, in the document, the countries are blaming the sanctions as a factor that undermines the international economic system. It should be noted that they see globalisation as a historic determinant that defines the future of the world order, and any process to harm this will be perceived as a counterstrategy that aims to weaken the emerging world.

Speaking of the geoeconomic agenda, BRICS is becoming more complicated than it had been before. BRICS searches for the ways to reform the Bretton Woods system, but what is more important is that it does not put forward revolutionary demands so far. They are referring to the existing lack of balance in the IMF’s quotas between the Global South countries and the West. Traditionally, the majority of the voting power in the IMF and the World Bank under the Western countries and the BRICS countries demand a revision of the old system within the international financial instruments. They directly state that BRICS is “the premier global forum for multilateral economic and financial cooperation that provides a platform for dialogue of both developed and emerging economies on an equal and mutually beneficial footing for jointly seeking shared solutions to global challenges.” In other words, BRICS is the only platform that guarantees the “just” distribution of the global wealth. Interestingly, BRICS connects the unilateral economic and secondary sanctions with human rights as such, and emphasises that the sanctions are there for the development of emerging economies.

Also, the Declaration says nothing about the de-dollarisation, but it is certain that it is exactly what the BRICS countries meant by spurring up the process of interbank transactions on the national currencies. BRICS carefully avoids internal and external reasons escalating the relations with the West. Therefore, Press Secretary of the President of Russia Dmitry Peskov stated that

“the cooperation within BRICS is not directed against anyone or anything – neither against the dollar nor against other currencies.”²⁰ This part is very important, because it shows that humanity is at the crossroads of whether to take the reformist path and smoothly restructure the global financial system and align it to the new geoeconomic reality, or go for a more dangerous road to escalate the international economic and political situation in order to gain full victory at the next stage of the global rivalry.

Despite the reformist rhetoric, it is feasible that BRICS is preparing for the red scenarios. One such platform that can play a historical role is the New Development Bank. In the Declaration, they emphasised the future role of this bank in facilitating international finances and trade in the national currencies. A new investment platform for BRICS and the entire Global South should be created. It is a financial instrument that not only BRICS discusses; it was mentioned in the Declaration of the Interbank Cooperation Mechanism, which focuses on facilitating and expanding innovative financial practices, including finding acceptable mechanisms of financing in local currencies. Finally, the Declaration encourages the member states to cooperate more closely in the process of conducting bank transactions in local currencies via the BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative (BCBPI) and BRICS Payment Task Force instruments.

All these mechanisms and instruments should be enshrined by the development of the BRICS insurance system. If it is going to be created, it will be more revolutionary than the BRICS Bank. A French economist stated after the summit in Kazan that “...trade requires insurance services (for both the contract itself and transportation); these insurance services involve reinsurance activities. With the BRICS (Re)Insurance Company, BRICS is building its independence from western insurance companies.”²¹ The insurance factor has played the most harmful role against Russia since 2022 and it is the main reason why Russia, China, and India developed the shadow fleets to avoid Western sanctions.

Russia was the major driver of this initiative. According to the MGIMO expert T. Urumov, the creation of a reliable settlement and payment infrastructure, independent of the US-centric system, is a necessary condition for the successful development of trade relations among the BRICS member states. At the BRICS finance ministers’ meeting, Russia proposed key elements for this infrastructure, including the BRICS Bridge cross-border payment system, the BRICS

²⁰ “Песков: сотрудничество стран БРИКС не направлено против доллара,” *Коммерсант*, October 22, 2024, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/7248440>.

²¹ J. Sapir, “An acceleration of global ‘de-Westernisation’ creeps upon the Western world,” *Pearls and Irritations*, October 31, 2024, <https://johnmenadue.com/an-acceleration-of-global-de-westernisation-creeps-upon-the-western-world/>.

Clear inter-depository interaction system, and the establishment of a BRICS Reinsurance Company. One of the key objectives of the summit is to provide the BRICS member states with greater flexibility in cross-border transactions by reducing dependence on the US dollar.²² Thus, in the Declaration, the direct mentioning has been avoided of these new mechanisms which should be equivalents of SWIFT. Nevertheless, efforts continued, and during the Kazan Summit, President Putin was presented with a prototype BRICS banknote.²³ As Putin remarked, "The dollar is being used as a weapon. This is a significant mistake by those who do this." He acknowledged that if an alternative to the dollar were created, it would likely be a gold-backed currency.²⁴ It is not the first time Putin has spoken about de-dollarisation, but it is certain from his message that BRICS will be forced by geopolitical repercussions rather than acting unilaterally.

Another component of the Declaration or theme that was discussed between the member states is the issue of the security of the supply chains. For the BRICS countries, this factor is of geoeconomic importance. Without establishing an alternative system of supply chains in the World Order, the entire discussion over the multipolarity from BRICS' side is a political statement without real grounds. Therefore, BRICS paid attention to this component. According to Russian experts, ensuring the security of supply chains and the integrity of value chains within the BRICS+ economic space will minimise risks associated with unilateral sanctions. This intertwined deeply with the creation of institutional, infrastructural, and motivational conditions for the broad integration of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) into the existing intra-BRICS production value chains as well as into new innovation-driven global value chains (GVCs) and global production networks (GPNs) (Paragraph 75). This process will help establish the institutional-infrastructural architecture of BRICS+.²⁵ It means that the BRICS countries will work out the question of the deepening of business-to-business cooperation.

International security was a crucial component of the summit and it was integrated into the final Declaration. In most of the items that were dedicated to international security, the BRICS countries presented their stance as separate

²² Т.Р. Урумов, "XVI Саммит БРИКС в Казани: торгово-финансовое сотрудничество" ИМЭМО, October 24, 2024, <https://www.imemo.ru/publications/policy-briefs/text/xvi-brics-summit-in-kazan-trade-and-financial-cooperation>.

²³ "Путин передал Набиуллиной «купюру БРИКС», а ей не понравилось," RBC, October 23, 2024, <https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/671918bd9a7947de9cfc3b5d>.

²⁴ "Putin calls for alternative international payment system at Brics summit," *The Guardian*, October 23, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/oct/23/putin-world-economy-bloc-brics-summit>.

²⁵ Н. Сенюк, "Какие решения для международной торговли предложил саммит БРИКС," Валдай Клуб, December 19, 2024, https://ru.valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/resheniya-dlya-mezhdunarodnoy-torgovli/?sphrase_id=760964.

centres of power that see international politics not as alien observers but as actors that have a voice. In the case of the crisis in the Middle East, the BRICS countries supported the independence of Palestine and supported the provisional measures of the International Court of Justice in the legal proceedings instituted by South Africa against Israel. Moreover, it condemned the “incidents of terrorist attacks linked with ICT capabilities in Lebanon.” As is known, these operations were conducted by the Israeli services. BRICS indirectly condemned the presence of the American troops. Ukraine was dedicated only one short paragraph that outlined that the BRICS states have already presented their vision regarding the “situation in and around Ukraine”, and appreciated all peace initiatives that have been made since 2023. It looks like it referred to the peace initiatives of the BRICS’ countries between 2022 and 2023. Furthermore, the Declaration mentioned the humanitarian situation in Sudan, Haiti, Yemen, Afghanistan, etc.

The Declaration no longer refers to chemical and biological weapons, which had been consistently mentioned in declarations since 2014. References to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological Weapons Convention (BTWC) have also been removed. This shift likely resulted from Egypt’s accession, as it has not signed the CWC and has only signed, but not ratified, the BTWC. Meanwhile, the rhetoric on the JCPOA has softened. While in 2023, the need for a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of Iran’s nuclear issue was emphasised, while in 2024, the wording was reduced to calling for a “constructive approach and comprehensive implementation” of the JCPOA. It means that BRICS is adapting to the new geopolitical realities and trying to find a common denominator that would unify the common security agenda of all members. However, after a long break, the Middle East’s nuclear-weapon-free zone issue reappeared on the BRICS’ agenda, reflecting the influence of the new members: Iran, Egypt, and the UAE. It is targeting Israel and remands the Soviet policy in the region. For the first time, nuclear non-proliferation was discussed beyond the US–Russia arms control framework. Initially introduced in 2020 amid uncertainty over the New START Treaty, in 2024 BRICS adopted a broader stance, calling for “strengthening the non-proliferation and disarmament regime” as essential to global stability, peace, and security, without tying it to specific events. Generally, it is possible to state that BRICS has abandoned the Cold-War and post-Cold-War international security regimes or tried to modify them to its interests.

The consequences of the BRICS summit in Kazan

The spectrum of opinions over the summit’s outcome and its impact ranged from aggressively negative to over-optimistic, but let us briefly take a sober assessment of what happened in Russia between 24 and 25 October 2024. The

dominant opinion in the West is that Russia failed to emphasise the anti-Western character of BRICS and, altogether, the summit was unable to address the most demanding security crises and economic challenges of today. Russia failed, in its anti-Westernism, to create an alternative payment system and to increase the security profile, and the new members only complicated the fragile balance inside the organisation.²⁶ Calling BRICS a “paper tiger”²⁷ sounds too simplistic and unprofessional. Moreover, the leading Russian expert Fyodor Lukyanov calls BRICS a community of the most influential non-Western states, but so far, it has been a rather amorphous club with a single unifying principle: creating a space for interaction that bypasses Western states and institutions. The summit in Kazan was the culmination of this compared with previous summits.²⁸

One of the key political takeaways from the BRICS Summit in Kazan is the failure of the West’s policy of isolating Russia and the formulation of the agenda for the rest of the world according to its own standards. The summit demonstrated that the idea of a multipolar world has not become a reality, but shows that the global pendulum is swinging in that direction. BRICS has attracted dozens of new partners, with many more eager to join, and membership in it is expected to continue to expand. As stated by French Minister for European Affairs Benjamin Haddad, “The BRICS Summit showed that the West no longer has a monopoly on global affairs.”²⁹ This mood is now strongly moving from the marginal to the mainstream among Western experts and politicians.

A notable diplomatic breakthrough occurred as Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi held their first bilateral talks since 2019 on the sidelines of the summit.³⁰ They made significant strides towards normalising relations following a four-year border standoff, marking this peace initiative as major. If the relations between the two potential superpowers stabilise, the hopes of the West that India can be an effective counterbalance in the world against China will face serious problems. It shows that the BRICS countries are capable of a diplomatic consensus over geopolitical contradictions.

²⁶ P.K. Baev, “Putin’s much ado about the BRICS Summit,” PRIO, October 29, 2024, <https://www.prio.org/blogs/1151>.

²⁷ H. Poenisch, “Brics looks increasingly like a paper tiger,” OMFIF, October 29, 2024, <https://www.omfif.org/2024/10/brics-looks-increasingly-like-a-paper-tiger/>.

²⁸ “The BRICS Summit 2024: An expanding alternative,” Council on Foreign Relations, November 07, 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/councilofcouncils/global-memos/brics-summit-2024-expanding-alternative>.

²⁹ “French Foreign Ministry: BRICS summit showed that West no longer holds monopoly in the world,” Report.az, October 24, 2024, <https://report.az/en/other-countries/french-foreign-ministry-brics-summit-showed-that-west-no-longer-has-monopoly-in-world/>.

³⁰ „Peace on border our priority: Modi, Xi after first bilateral in 5 years,” *Indian Express*, October 24, 2024, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/pm-modi-xi-jinping-hold-first-bilateral-talks-in-5-years-9635036/>.

There is certain criticism in the Western and democratic media that mostly concentrates on Russia rather than on the general picture of what actually happened in Kazan. For example, *Novaya Gazeta* stated that notwithstanding the statements made at the Kazan Summit, the chances of BRICS+ becoming a unified structure under Russia and China's leadership remain unlikely. Russia seeks to prevent the emergence of any single-country leadership or hegemony within BRICS, particularly that of China. Instead, it favours a structure resembling the UN-Security-Council-style or the Big Four format rather than a rigid hierarchical system. Ideally, Moscow envisions the establishment of a balanced internal configuration – one capable of serving as an effective geoeconomic and geopolitical counterweight to China within the BRICS framework. At least in the near future, the BRICS countries will not want any open confrontations and disagreements with the West, hence they are blocking the process of de-dollarisation as well as bolder moves of some BRICS countries, particularly Brazil and India.³¹ Currently, India has a much greater need for close relations with the West than China does, as the latter already took almost everything it needed from the West over the past decades.³² Russia, India, and China pursue dialectical strategies towards BRICS, which aim to gradually evolve into an alternative world order. It seems that each member state understands that without a consensus, it is impossible to achieve the primary goal of multipolarity.

The next important conclusion is that the summit did not achieve any breakthroughs in the creation of an alternative financial system, but, again, it is an illusion rather than reality, because BRICS is gradually building banking and other financial mechanisms and tools that eventually will be operational. If the economic wars under the Trump Administration are going to reach the peak in upcoming years, these instruments will be implemented immediately. As a Brazilian expert wrote, the BRICS leaders called for further work in this area and instructed finance ministers and central bank governors to continue reviewing local currencies, payment instruments, and platforms, with a report expected at the next chairmanship. Thus, one of BRICS' key tasks is to deepen the discussion initiated by Russia and reach an agreement on future steps. However, another challenge – possibly a more serious one – remains. The rather vague statements made by the BRICS leaders in Kazan on this issue likely reflect the lack of a consensus on Russia's initiative.³³

³¹ "Outcome of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia," European Parliament, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2024/766243/EPRS_ATA\(2024\)766243_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2024/766243/EPRS_ATA(2024)766243_EN.pdf).

³² Т. Бордачёв, "БРИКС перед саммитом в Казани: диалектика созидания и разрушения на фоне нового мирового устройства," Валдай, October 21, 2024, https://ru.valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/briks-pered-sammitom-v-kazani/?sphrase_id=760964.

³³ П. Ногейра Батиста – младший, "БРИКС: транзакции в национальных валютах, трансграничные платёжные системы и новая резервная валюта," Валдай, November 06,

The enlargement situation remains unclear. On the one hand, the countries proposed a new mechanism that gives any country the partner-country status, but on the other hand, the immediate membership of Indonesia shows deep underwater diplomacy inside BRICS, which can bring many surprises in 2025 in terms of both new membership and new initiatives. For now, it is known that the next tier of potential members includes Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Algeria, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Turkey, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.³⁴ Also, surprises should be expected on the financial tracks, because now chairmanship has been taken by Brazil and it is exactly this country that is the main promoter of de-dollarisation inside BRICS.

BRICS post-Kazan: The dangerous future

Thus, Brazil has taken chairmanship after Russia. The country has close relations with China and sometimes pursues more radical visions on the reformation of the international economic and financial system. Russia hopes that the alternative SWIFT and payment issues are going to take more material form under Brazil's presidency in BRICS. The President of Brazil Lula da Silva in his online speech in Kazan sounded quite aggressive and more radical than the Russians did. He blamed the rich countries for the current situation with climate change. Already in Kazan, he outlined the Brazilian Presidency priorities as follows: "In the Brazilian BRICS presidency, we want to reaffirm the bloc's vocation in the fight for a multi-polar world, and for less asymmetrical relations between countries."³⁵ According to him, BRICS is a global majority in terms of demography and global wealth, but financial flows continue to rich nations. The non-Western world is financing the existence of the rich world. Until the world is based upon this unfair foundation, he stressed, all BRICS' initiatives are destined to fail. Da Silva returned to his idea of the establishment of an effective BRICS currency and bank system. It should be noted that the head of the New Development Bank (NDB) is former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff. The very rhetoric of da Silva promises that 2025 will be a hot year in terms of BRICS' initiatives. Additionally, it will be impacted by the turbulences within the West itself and due to the Trump

2024, https://ru.valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/briks-tranzaktsii-v-natsionalnykh-valyutakh/?sphrase_id=758939.

³⁴ "Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand become partner countries of BRICS," CAN.com, October 24, 2024, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/asia/malaysia-indonesia-vietnam-thailand-brics-asean-global-south-russia-china-4699841>.

³⁵ "Transcript of President Lula's speech during the open plenary session of the BRICS Summit - Kazan, October 23, 2024," Gov.br., October 23, 2024, <https://www.gov.br/planalto/en/follow-the-government/speeches-statements/2024/10/president-lulas-speech-during-the-open-plenary-session-of-the-brics-summit>.

trade wars with the rest of the world. Da Silva openly says that the NDB was created to make possible the Bretton Woods. "Now is the time to move forward with creating alternative payment methods for transactions between our countries. It's not about replacing our currencies. But we need to work to ensure that the multi-polar order we desire is reflected in the international financial system."³⁶ Thus, it is possible to forecast that many initiatives that Russia hoped to be adopted in Kazan are going to be adopted in Brazil if the political situation is going to permit to organise such a global forum already with the membership of Indonesia, etc. The motto of the Brazilian presidency will be "Strengthening Cooperation in the Global South for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance".

* * *

In conclusion, BRICS will continue in 2025 to be reformist in relations with the West rather than introduce drastic strategies. However, it is visible that the BRICS countries are going to be much bolder, particularly if one takes into account the very fact of the unfolding global economic wars between the geoeconomic centres of the world. In Kazan's Declaration, the BRICS states envisioned that they are preparing for such a scenario and ready for it. The Trump Administration seems to have grasped correctly the changing global geoeconomic and technologic correlations of the forces, but the methods and policies that have been introduced in the first weeks of the new administration demonstrate a clear determination that the situation is going to escalate rather than deescalate.

The BRICS Summit in Kazan: Between old and new world orders

The BRICS Summit in Kazan marked a crucial moment in global geopolitics, highlighting the bloc's evolving role in challenging Western dominance while maintaining a reformist rather than revolutionary stance. The summit highlighted BRICS' commitment to economic and financial independence, including efforts to establish alternative payment systems and reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar, but again the general or mainstream policy is to avoid escalation in relations with the West. At the same time, it revealed internal complexities, particularly in balancing expansion with maintaining organizational cohesion. The Kazan Declaration emphasized multipolarity, demand for the fair global governance, and a restructured financial order, signaling a shift towards a more assertive yet strategically cautious global strategy. The BRICS' positioning in the post-Ukraine geopolitical landscape reflects broader transformations in deterrence, economic security, and the future balance of power in international relations. Generally speaking, the Kazan Summit revealed that the BRICS countries took reformist stance and avoid drastic decisions. They maintain a wait-and-see position and overall strategy while simultaneously

³⁶ Ibidem.

implementing structural horizontal and vertical changes within the organization to enhance its autonomy, resilience, and resistance in the event of an escalation of trade wars. In the upcoming 2025 summit in Brazil should be expected more decisive actions from the BRICS+ due to unfolding trade wars.

Keywords: BRICS, Russia, New World Order, global governance

Słowa kluczowe: BRICS, Rosja, Nowy Porządek Świata, globalne zarządzanie