

17TH BRICS SUMMIT 2025: INTERNATIONAL RELATION

NEWS: Rio de Janeiro Declaration- Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

The 17th BRICS Summit (2025) in Brazil marks the first major meeting of the expanded 10-member grouping, focusing on Global South cooperation, de-dollarisation, and institutional reforms. India plays a key role in shaping BRICS priorities like AI governance, strategic autonomy, and multipolar global order.

Context and Background

- Brazil is hosting the **17th BRICS Summit** in 2025.
- This is the first major summit of the newly expanded **11-member BRICS** bloc.
- The focus is on **Global South cooperation, inclusive development, and governance reform.**

About BRICS

- **Nature:** An informal intergovernmental grouping of emerging economies promoting political, economic, and developmental cooperation.
- **Original Members:** Brazil, Russia, India, and China (BRIC); **South Africa joined in 2010**, forming BRICS.
- **Recent Expansion (2024):**
 - New Members: **Iran, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia**
 - **Saudi Arabia:** Invited but membership not yet formalized.
 - **Argentina:** Withdrew its decision to join.
 - **Total Confirmed Members** as of 2025: **10**, pending one (Saudi Arabia).
- **First BRICS Summit:** 2009 in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

Demographic and Economic Significance

- Represents **46% of the global population.**
- Accounts for around **35% of global GDP**, expected to rise with potential inclusion of economies like **Indonesia.**
- Major energy producers (Russia, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia) and consumer economies (India, China).

Geopolitical Role

- Acts as a **counterweight to Western-led groupings** like the G7.
- Promotes a **multipolar world order** based on sovereignty, equity, and non-interference.
- Seeks to **reform global governance institutions** like the UN Security Council, IMF, and World Bank.

Key Priorities and Strategic Vision

1. De-dollarisation & Financial Sovereignty:

- Promoting **trade in local currencies**.
- Launch of **BRICS Pay** digital payment platform.
- Developing an **alternative reserve currency** or basket system.

2. Reform of Global Institutions:

- Advocates changes in **Bretton Woods Institutions** to give more voice to the Global South.
- Supports expansion and restructuring of **UNSC** to include developing nations.

3. Inclusivity and Sustainable Development:

- Focus on **health equity**, climate resilience, and **SDG-aligned financing**.
- Greater investment in **green technologies**, education, and infrastructure for the Global South.

4. Strategic Autonomy and South–South Cooperation:

- Encourages independent foreign policies, reducing reliance on any single power.
- Strengthens **horizontal partnerships** across the developing world.

17th BRICS Summit: Key Highlights

- **Host Country:** Brazil (2025 Chair).
- **Summit Theme:** “Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance”.
- **Priority Areas under Brazil’s Presidency:**
 - Global health cooperation (post-COVID resilience).
 - Trade, investment, and financial coordination.
 - Climate change mitigation and carbon neutrality efforts.
 - Governance of emerging technologies including **AI**.

- Peace and conflict resolution architecture.
- Strengthening BRICS institutional mechanisms.

India's Role and Strategic Significance

- As a **founding member**, India influences BRICS policy direction, especially on development, climate, and technology.
- Advocates a **rules-based multilateral order, reformed multilateralism**, and South–South solidarity.
- BRICS supports India's **Act East Policy**, **energy security diplomacy**, and **technology outreach** in AI, digital governance, and green transitions.
- India promotes **BRICS as a platform** for emerging economies to speak on global issues without Western mediation.

Conclusion

- The 2025 BRICS Summit is a landmark in evolving multipolarity.
- BRICS is transitioning from an economic grouping to a **comprehensive geopolitical coalition**, emphasizing **sovereignty, development, and reform of international norms**.
- With expanding membership and an ambitious agenda, BRICS could emerge as a **voice of the Global South** in reshaping global governance for the 21st century.

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