

MS THESIS

**BRICS DIPLOMACY OF INCLUSIVITY: PROSPECTS OF
ENGAGEMENT WITH INTERIM AFGHAN TALIBAN REGIME**



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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I MUHAMMAD UMAIR son of KAPTAN ULLAH, registration No: 253-FSS/MSIR/F23 hereby state that my MS thesis titled “BRIC DIPLOMACY OF INCLUSIVITY: PROSPECT OF ENGAGEMENT WITH INTERIM AFGHAN TALIBAN REGIME” is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN or anywhere else in the country/ world. At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after I graduate, the university has the right to withdraw my MS degree.

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Signature.....

Date...../...../.....

DEDICATION

I am maddened by thoughts,

I am tired of searching

but have only reached to this,

that I cannot understand anything

Ghani Khan

I dedicate this thesis to the pioneers of my family, especially to my beloved Father **KAPTAN ULLAH**, to my beloved Mother **GUL NARA BIBI**, to my beloved uncle **ZUBAIR ALI**, to my beloved brother **MUHAMMAD ATTEEQUE**, whose endless love and unwavering support have been the foundation of my achievements. In addition, I humbly dedicate this thesis to the great advocate of peace and Non-violence, **BACHA KHAN BABA**, whose lifelong struggle for justice, Education, and Humanity continue to inspire generation's.

MUHAMMAD UMAIR

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This thesis is dedicated to **Shaheed Maulana Khanzaib**, who was martyred in his unwavering pursuit of peace.

List of Abbreviations

BRICS: Brazil Russia India China South Africa

NDB: National Development Bank

CRA: Contingent Reserve Arrangement

OBOR: One Belt, One Road Initiative

BRI: Belt and Road Initiative

UAE: United Arab Emirate

USA: United State of America

EU: European Union

SCO: Shanghai Cooperation organization

RSCT: Regional security Complex theory

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

BRIC: Brazil Russia India China

G7: Group of seven

G 20: Group of Twenty

UN: United Nation

WTO: World Trade Organization

IMF: international Monterey Fund

ADB: Asian Development Bank

FDI: Foreign Direct investment

GNP: Gross National Product

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change

CBDR: Common but Differentiated Responsibility

SSC: South-South Cooperation

ASEAN: Association of southeast Asian Nation

FOCAC China's Forum on China-Africa

IDB: Islamic Development Bank

CPEC: China Pakistan Economic corridor

GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council

SAARC: South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

AFTA: ASEAN Free Trade Area

AEC: ASEAN Economic Community

RCEP: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

MCC: Metallurgical Corporation of China

CNPC: China National Petroleum Corporation

TIP: Turkistan Islamic Party

ISKP: Islamic State Khorasan Province

ANASTU: Afghan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University

CSTO: Collective Security Treaty Organization

ETIM: East Turkestan Islamic Movement

IMU: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

TPP: Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan

TIP: Turkestan Islamic Party

IMU: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

EAEU: Eurasian Economic Union

TAPI: Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India

CASA-100: central Asia-south Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade project

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the new approaches being adopted by BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) for its expansion. BRICS has changed its format of membership from economically affluent state to states having prospects of economic growth. This study is particularly focused about BRICS, s likely including Afghanistan as it's member in near future. This study looks into the potential of the BRICS diplomacy, particularly the inclusivity strategy of the BRICS, about the interim government of the Taliban. Inclusiveness gets attention in the context of BRICS' approaches to Afghanistan because it is one of the core principles of BRICS diplomatic practice after the Kazan summit that seeks to add more member states from developing countries like Argentina, Egypt, Iran, and now interested in Afghanistan. The study investigates how exactly BRICS can use this principle of inclusiveness about the Interim Afghan Taliban Government, taking into consideration the regional politics, economy, and security context. With a view to the relative historical experience of BRICS with respect to non-state actors and its other policies, this study predicts the chance of establishing dialogue prospects for cooperation, humanitarian intervention, and other political activities. Its goal is to analyze how BRICS member states different political stances and economic reasons may influence their united stance on the Taliban, primarily in relation to the humanitarian, political, economic, and military aspects of the region. The study will use qualitative data collection and analysis methods to reveal the role of BRICS in a world with multiple poles and how engagement with the Taliban may alter the political map of Afghanistan and offer a new global governance model.

Keywords: BRICS, Afghanistan, China, Russia, India, Diplomacy, Multi-polar world order, Non-Interventionism, Diplomacy of Inclusivity, Economic Integration, South Asia, Central Asia

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Introduction

The evolving role of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) in international relations, especially concerning Afghanistan, raises important issues concerning the transformation of the world order. BRICS Historically seen as an economic block that would promote cooperation among the emerging nations, now BRICS after the Kazan summit has gradually evolved to become a global player in international political governance.(Osypenkova, 2024) Despite its initial aim to promote economic integration, other great powers' attention has increasingly shifted to more global issues, such as divergent in their diplomatic efforts of inclusivity adding states from 3rd world countries, etc. (Osypenkova, 2024)

This paper examines how inclusive diplomacy within the BRICS has changed and predicts relations with Afghanistan's interim Taliban government. The research aims to fill this gap by analyzing critical areas of cooperation, policy orientation, conflict resolution, and security concerns in general since the formation. Its goal is to stylize a framework that depicts the potential role of this coalition in Afghanistan and how this role may impact regional and international geopolitics.

Evolution of BRICS:

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) was originally conceived in 2006 as BRIC, representing the emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China. The group aimed to foster cooperation among these nations to challenge the Western-dominated global order. In 2010, South Africa joined, expanding the group to BRICS. An economic block has also transformed over the years to a political and diplomatic bloc, where BRICS promotes multipolarity, structure of global governance, and increased representation of developing countries. The group has created attention in areas including sustainable development, trade as well as climate change and security as they have boosted intra- BRICS collaborations in various domains. (Bouras & Bekhouche, 2025a)

BRICS Policy Change in relationship with the Developing World nations:

One such major policy change that has occurred over the recent years in the conduct of BRICS in relation to the countries of the Third World is its shift toward an economic union to a more all-inclusive diplomatic and developmental super power. At the beginning of its activities, BRICS was concerning itself with the expansion of trade, investment, and infrastructure creation in members. Nonetheless, being aware of the evolving international system and the rise of the developing countries, BRICS has been increasingly trying to spread its influence beyond the boundaries.

The group presently campaigns on the increased political representation and the inclusion of the emerging economies in the world decision-making process. BRICS has also tried to contribute to the infrastructure and sustainable development of the Third World countries through such schemes as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA). Moreover, BRICS has focused on unity over matters like climate change, poverty reduction, and peace circulations whereby it acts as a representative of the Global South in the global fora.(Cooper, 2021a)

Inclusive Diplomacy of BRICS and their Interaction with the Interim Government of Afghanistan Taliban:

The BRICS has put a lot of focus on inclusive diplomacy by dealing with the interim Afghanistan Taliban government, trying to stabilize Afghanistan and foster regional security in the process. While the Taliban has raised fears due to its human rights violations and rule system, the BRICS members have expressed concern to engage in a diplomatic dialogue to avert the inclination of Afghanistan to turn into a safe haven of terrorism and lawlessness. The position of the group has been realistic to suggest that the Taliban should establish a broad-based government, embrace human rights, and work with the global community in order to overcome economic and humanitarian catastrophes. BRICS members have put a lot of emphasis on regional cooperation and highlighted the role of Afghanistan in connectivity and development of Central Asia. Although BRICS does not provide a full diplomatic recognition, it has demanded aid and support, especially in offering humanitarian relief to the country and has urged the

Taliban to live up to the expectations of the international community, especially in the areas of governance and dealing with terrorists. The inclusionary nature of diplomacy in BRICS is a game between bait and strong-arm tactics with the Taliban. (Dalek, 2023)

I. Background of the Study

Afghanistan's geopolitical landscape significantly changed after the withdrawal of the U.S. military forces, followed by the Taliban regaining control together with the formation of an interim government. This transition has brought a new set of power relations within Afghanistan's political structures and came with challenges for neighbors and the international community. Thus, the analyzed country has been identified as a promising partner and a security threat for BRICS. For this reason, Afghanistan holds a strategic position that, coupled with its mineral wealth and historic role as the link between Central and South Asia, is a spot of interest for the BRICS members interested in stability and development in the region. (Kim et al., 2024)

In the past, BRICS has adopted a stance of asserting itself as an opponent to Western organizations, and the voice and ideology it sells are anti-establishment regarding economics and security policies. Afghanistan is critical to BRICS members, especially China and Russia's regional security and economic cooperation frameworks. China's Belt and Road Initiative is the quintessential example of such a vision, as Afghanistan is geographically located in a strategic position within the main connectivity complex along the trans-Eurasia. For its part, Russia also has a stake in maintaining relations with the Taliban and stabilizing Afghanistan to eliminate probes of extremism that threaten Russia's national security from Afghanistan's territory. These motivations belong to the principles of BRICS diplomacy that deny international interference, sovereignty recognition, and economic cooperation. (Kim et al., 2024)

However, the Taliban has several issues, including the worriment of the international community over its human rights record, its extremism, and governance under the new order. While most Western countries have relatively withdrawn from the official acknowledgment of the Taliban government, some of the BRICS countries have purposefully taken a moderate approach to mediate and engage Afghanistan in economic relations without immense political pressure. This outlook is entirely consistent with BRICS' larger goals of fostering polycentricism and diversifying away from the Anglo-Saxon monetary and political frameworks. This approach is consistent with BRICS's general goals to enhance polycentrism and minimize using Western-

dominated financial and diplomatic institutions. Through these efforts towards engagement with Afghanistan, BRICS reaffirms its role in promoting a stable, inclusive, and integrated regional architecture in conformity with BRICS principles of respect for state sovereignty and common interest. (Kim et al., 2024)

Key Factor of the Study:

1. As a result of the Taliban's resurgence, BRICS has detached itself from the Western controlled order that was influential before when China and Russia were more passive in interacting with Afghanistan. Both recognize that political doctrines cannot be prioritized over security and economics.
2. Afghanistan's geostrategic location and its mineral reserves make Afghanistan a key beneficiary in the “One Belt, One Road” (OBOR) policy of China to develop infrastructure and trade links in and with Central Asia.
3. BRICS' diplomacy after Kazan represents the movement towards a more equal and subservient multi-centered world where assistance to emerging economies is placed at greater importance than governance institutions and power dynamics. This indicates a shift of focus from Western-tamed and dominated international politics and economy towards economic integration and inclusive governance that accommodates other rising powers including Iran Afghanistan, and other underdeveloped areas. The approach of the group dispels the view that diplomacy is a zero-sum game that encourages economic development rather than the imposition of geopolitics and the resolution of universal issues.

II. Statement of the Problem:

The inclusive shift of BRICS diplomacy, after the Kazan summit has changed BRICS attitude towards engagement developing countries and even with Afghanistan's interim Taliban government. Although initially, the focus of BRICS was on economic integration but after the Kazan summit BRICS member states started interest in diplomatic engagement in political governance highlighting an evolutionary shift to approaching global challenges including security and conflict resolution. Afghanistan's geographical location and mineral resources make it a determining factor in the interests of BRICS especially China and Russia for that purpose. This research focuses on understanding how the BRICS countries' principles of noninterference and inclusivity affect their engagement with Afghanistan and their position in the international arena in general.

III. Significance of the Study

This study explores the significance of BRICS diplomacy in fostering inclusivity through potential engagement with Afghanistan's interim Taliban government. It underscores Afghanistan's strategic importance in advancing regional stability, economic cooperation, and sovereignty. By examining coalition diplomacy, the research highlights BRICS' role in balancing Western dominance and promoting a multipolar global order. The findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and scholars, offering actionable strategies for addressing regional security and economic development while contributing to a deeper understanding of inclusive foreign policy approaches with non-conventional governments.

IV. The Objectives of the Study

This study has the following objectives:

- a. To examine the evolving nature of BRICS diplomacy as envisioned in its new policy shift.
- b. To evaluate the prospects of BRICS engagement with Afghanistan as part of its future expansion strategy.
- c. To analyze the impacts of BRICS engagement with Afghanistan at the regional and global levels.

V. Research Questions

Based on the objectives, here are the research questions:

- a. What does BRICS envision the new policy outlined in its recent policy shifts regarding expansion strategy?
- b. What are the prospects and challenges of BRICS engagement with Afghanistan in the context of its future expansion strategy?
- c. What are the regional and global impacts of BRICS' engagement with Afghanistan?

VI. Delimitation of the Study

Delimitations of the study include the fact that the scope of the study is limited to BRICS diplomacy on inclusiveness and its future socio-political interaction with the interim Afghan Taliban government from 2008 to the present. The research does not attempt to take its discussion beyond the BRICS member states and their related regions. It mostly uses sources in English, so research using local languages could be undermined.

Although it provides some attention to Afghanistan's internal context, the paper mostly focuses on how inclusive diplomacy applies to BRICS. It does not use quantitative data, relying more on qualitative data as well as policy analysis. It mostly focuses on BRICS-organizational-level diplomatic measures and may not necessarily look at member's subnational-level practices. Security aspects are limited to the open source data only and not the classified data points. Finally, international cooperation is reviewed based on the data available to the public only and it does not include secret diplomacy.

VII. Literature Review

A literature review for research based on questions describes the discussion and knowledge that would have taken place among the scholars who have carried out research related to a similar topic. Therefore, relevant literature is studied, including scholarly articles, Books, reports, etc. The overall literature on the study discusses BRICS expansion diplomatic efforts as a global power shift that aims for economic sovereignty and a polycentric world order. The additions of Afghanistan, Iran, Egypt, and the UAE, further expand its geopolitical influence. On the other hand, challenges, i.e. de-dollarization and internal conflicts, persist but are offset by financial integration and energy cooperation efforts. Afghanistan emerges as a strategic focus, with BRICS countries engaging diplomatically to stabilize and integrate the region economically through initiatives like China's Belt and Road Initiative. His approach prioritizes non-interference and sovereignty, countering Western dominance while fostering regional stability and development. The Kazan Summit underscores BRICS' evolving role in reshaping global governance. Here is some of the relevant literature the following:

VII.I Review of Related Literature

BRICS Expansion: A Comprehensive Analysis of Global Power Shifts and Economic Integration written by Niteesh Kumar Upadhyay, according to this literature on BRICS expansion, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and UAE are added, reflecting a rising tendency toward the economic and geopolitical re-alignment of the world. BRICS was initially intended to stimulate economic development and investment, but BRICS+ transitioned to a group of emerging economies, too. (Upadhyay, 2024)

As a rising contender to the G7, the writer puts forward BRICS+ as an organizer of financial integration through an independent payment system and suggests ways to resolve disputes. Gromova and Ferreira note that digital sovereignty is a clear priority for BRICS+ countries, including supporters like Russia, China, and India, which are the pioneers of legislation favoring digital infrastructure protection. The challenges of de-dollarization, however, are significant and complex, particularly in the face of intensifying U.S. sanctions. BRICS+'s security representation Aksanova's exploration into AI in fighting financial crimes – and Alrefei's SWOT analysis of the alliance underscore the depth of these challenges. BRICS+'s

ambitions of autonomy and resilience are emphasized as a robust alliance navigating sovereignty, finance, and digital regulation. (Upadhyay, 2024)

The BRICS Summit 2024: An Expanding Alternative: The literature discusses. An exceptional case is the BRICS summit that took place in Kazan, Russia, as the bloc phenomenon has expanded over time and controversially has become an important factor in altering the rules of the game in world politics. This development has a general background to other global relations in that several countries in the third world, particularly in Asia, are coming to compete with the Western world. (Lukyanov, 2024) New members such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates represent a shift in the dynamism of power relations in global governance since, as emerging economies; they are part of efforts to find new institution-based mechanisms different from Western-dominated institutions. Ikenberry, John G. claims that today's BRICS represents the rise of a new set of powers, a new global power demanding a new polycentric world order. The BRICS countries' stance towards the imposed liberal democratic Western ideological and political constraints echo Amrita Narlikar's stated that Global South's attempts to decrease the reliance on the Western economic and political models. (Shemetov, 2024)

This convergence focuses on energy cooperation, especially with extra-regional producers such as the UAE and Iran, and may suggest a change in the energy distribution regime. This can be corroborated by Ruchir Sharma, who postulates that today, emerging countries are designing models of economies other than those of the developed Western countries. According to David Held, it is imperative to create demand for reforms on the mechanisms of world governance to promote the increasing role of the new conditionally powerful states further; BRICS provides the opportunity to launch a call for such reforms, in particular at the IMF, World Bank, and the UN Security Council. (Shemetov, 2024)

Nonetheless, the issue of how the BRICS countries should manage their coherence when the block expands becomes problematic with Michael Cox who argues that internal conflicts such as those existing between China, India, and Russia may affect the unity and effectiveness of the block in the long run, especially within the G20 initiative. If India is at the center of the 2024 summit, it is also due to its aspiration to become a diplomatic link between the Global South and the West. As is appropriately highlighted by Ramesh Thakur, the emerging economy multilateralism India has been adept at maneuvering two-level diplomacy by using multilateral

diplomacy to manage its relations with the emerging powers and the West, which becomes relevant in light of the continuing growth of BRICS. India's drive for more cooperation in security and economic affairs is a clear example of new trends identified by scholars such as Bingqin Li as essential for enhancing relations among emerging countries and diminishing the role of traditionally developed countries. India is often involved in diplomacy, in issues such as the conflict in Ukraine and trade with Iran, which shows that it is playing double diplomacy to encourage people to talk in a volatile world. (Shemetov, 2024)

Therefore, the Kazan BRICS summit and the enlargement of the number of countries members demonstrate the dynamic evolution of the global governance system as the new actors who have grown their economies try to diversify and reform the system. The problems of internal polarization and geo-political rivalry still prevail, but the assertive dialogue suggests that BRICS is gradually turning into a decisive factor in the politics of the future. Consequent to Ikenberry and Narlikar, the formative process of BRICS creates agency and possibility for the Global South due to the defiance of the West and the proposition of a diverse world order.

BRICS plans 'multi-currency system' to challenge U.S. dollar dominance: Understanding Russia's proposal written By Ben Norton: The literature discusses that the idea of getting closer to a multiple currency system – initiated by the BRICS countries with Russia in the Kazan Summit 2024 – is a significant step in the diplomatic plan of the organization to attain economic sovereignty and freedom from the hegemony of the Western financial institutions. It seeks to reduce international payments, with dollar inevitability, and to reduce sanctions, especially over Russia after the Ukraine conflict.(Norton Ben, 2024)

There is more than an economic reason for such financial restructuring; it is a diplomatic shift to a more equitable global system, which the members of the BRICS support. By promoting domestic money circulation and considering creating a new payment system, BRICS demonstrates that it is ready to advance cooperation and strategic partnerships within the organization to increase economic sovereignty. As a result, this endeavor enhances the internal integration of BRICS as an emerging challenge to the conventional Western blocs. It boosts up its external diplomatic authority in the increasingly multi-polar world order. (Norton Ben, 2024)

Reimagining Afghanistan: Geostrategic Engagement with Major Powers written By Dr. Shweta: The scholar discusses As Afghanistan's strategic location and natural resource wealth draw regional and global actors to influence its development and secure its interests, Afghanistan's economic and social order has evolved. Afghanistan has often been a matter of engagement of Major Powers, which centered on stability, counterterrorism, and economic opportunities, but it has also carried the baggage of difficulty, mainly due to the rise of the Taliban. Afghanistan is a diplomatic challenge and a strategic opportunity for BRICS members like China and Russia. Their interest in stabilizing Afghanistan not only serves to curb terrorism but also opens the door for significant economic projects, including China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China's diplomatic interactions with the Taliban, part of a well-thought-out strategy, could serve as a model for BRICS.(Shweta, 2022)

The paper also explores how BRICS could further this coordinated approach by establishing working frameworks for engaging with a Taliban-led government, with a focus on economic aid, infrastructure development, and the provision of stability operations that could pave the way for Afghanistan's economic growth. If BRICS chooses to engage with Afghanistan under the Taliban, it will face complex diplomatic challenges. However, it also presents an opportunity to balance concerns about the Taliban's legitimacy with BRICS's geopolitical interests. As a counterweight to Western influence, BRICS can use its diplomatic channels to engage the Taliban with a development friendly agenda that emphasizes stability and mutual benefit. In the context of BRICS principles, such an engagement would prioritize non-interference and respect for sovereignty, while seeking ways to enhance regional stability and integration in a multipolar world. (Shweta, 2022)

"Political Economic Analysis of China's Foreign Policy Changes towards Afghanistan from 2014 to 2023." Written by Butar-Butar, Naomi Niken Agustina, and Shanti Darmastuti According to this research paper that the new geopolitical situation in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the United States has led to the rise of the diplomatic relations of BRICS countries, mainly China. The literature review that China has been one of Afghanistan's most engaged neighbors since 2014, mainly due to economic and security interests. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which aims at enhancing the interconnectivity of the trans-Eurasian region regards Afghanistan as a strategic partner owing to its location on the historical Silk Road

connecting Central, South, and West Asia. (Butar-Butar & Darmastuti, 2024) From a security perspective, the articles reveal that China sees Afghanistan as a key player due to its proximity to the Xinjiang region. In contrast to its previous position with the Taliban, which included freezing diplomatic connections in the 1990s, China has maintained to provide diplomatic support for Afghanistan's new Taliban-led government to ward off potential dangers. This involvement shows a change in strategy toward counterterrorism and excluding extremist groups while maintaining China's long-term economic benefits. BRI is instrumental in its Afghan policy to connect Afghanistan with regional development plans through projects and trade corridors, even though the Afghan economy has little strength to contribute to these projects actively. This change was because the BRICS countries have a greater interest in creating new relations with Afghanistan so that the latter can receive support from the non-Western world, especially in the economic sector, and enhance its regional connections.

Therefore, the BRICS model is consistent with this approach – to achieve stability through the economic cooperation model without interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. (Butar-Butar & Darmastuti, 2024) furthermore, the literature shows how BRICS may encourage the formation of a cooperative security community in Afghanistan by sponsoring state-building measures that enable Afghans to attain stability on their own. China's position in the BRICS as a reference for how the bloc may set the stage for relations with the Afghan government underscores the importance of sovereignty and non-interference while increasing economic ties as a means of conflict prevention. (Butar-Butar & Darmastuti, 2024)

The paper "China-Afghanistan Relations: Implications for China in the Post-US Military Exit from Afghanistan" was written by Dr. Azhar Javed Siddiqui and Sahima Naureen. This literature explores the evolving Chinese approach toward Afghanistan after the U.S. military withdrawal. It is vital to BRICS because China's strategic interests encapsulate the collective vision of BRICS countries to promote stability in the region and shape the economic and security agenda in the developing world. (Javed Siddiqui & Naureen, n.d.) After the withdrawal of the United States, Afghanistan has emerged as a critical source of security threats to BRICS neighbors, and China in particular. The paper focuses on the Sino Taliban diplomatic relations with the Afghan government, mainly to combat terrorism and extremism in the neighboring regions, including China's Xinjiang province. This is important for BRICS because stability in

Afghanistan is linked with the security politics of BRICS countries and their joint actions that may set the course for the BRICS' interaction with Afghanistan in the fight against terror and to maintain stability in the region. This paper addresses Chinese investment in the Afghan minerals and energy sectors, such as oil exploitation deals and Afghanistan's connectivity with the BRI.(Butar-Butar & Darmastuti, 2024)

As developing nations, BRICS countries are interested in tapping new markets and resources, and Afghanistan presents a chance for this. This can contribute to the BRICS's general economic objectives of diversification of resources and the development of infrastructure. This paper presents 'New Neighborhood Diplomacy' as China's strategic approach to neighboring countries. Through the "Community of Common Destiny" and the BRI, China is promoting economic interdependence and establishing security based on interdependence. For BRICS, this paradigm could entail members embracing the collective approach, providing different yet harmonized engagement strategies toward Afghanistan, security, and development. China's regional influence strategy, similar to the US Monroe Doctrine, is to ensure the stability of the regions surrounding China to secure the world for China. This strategic containment can be taken as a prototype for the BRICS, regarding how the regional hegemons utilize their power to contain and control neighboring regions to defend their shared economic and security goals. (Butar-Butar & Darmastuti, 2024)

A research paper titled Recognition of the Taliban Government in Afghanistan and International Community, written by Muhammad Faheem and Minhas Majeed Khan, discusses that China and Russia's engagement with the Taliban can be called a shared regional strategy of putting stability above democracy as would be desired by the West. Between the two, this logic translates into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which forms the foundation of the same approach in BRICS, with Russia and China uniting for practical diplomacy in Afghanistan anchored on an emphasis on security and economic integration. Afghanistan's stability is a BRICS priority, in line with China's Belt and Road Initiative, which provides economic ties to the region and an alternative to Western interventionist policies, with non-coercive support for the Taliban.(Muhammad Faheem & Minhas Majeed Khan, 2022)

Russia's Growing Ties with Afghanistan Are More Symbolism than Substance: written by Ruslan Suleymanov. The literature discusses Russia's engagement with the Taliban and

speaks to a wider, anti-Western strategic alignment with principles that are mirrored to some degree in BRICS' purposes. Although Russia's import volume from Afghanistan is small, and it has little to do with Afghanistan symbolically, Moscow views Afghanistan as a market for superpower. Understanding the pragmatic approach Russia employs (in contrast to conformance with human rights) indicates Russian desire to compete with the U.S. by siding with countries whose concern is the same as Russia's in regards to Western powers. (Suleymanov Ruslan, 2023)

Among BRICS, Russia and China are interested in the same thing within the region – stability and economic integration, with interest in projects like the Turkmenistan Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline and other regional trade routes. BRICS' aim to deepen ties with Afghanistan complements the group's drive to strengthen relations with a country that many see as critical to charting a non-Western development model, which could provide the Taliban with legitimacy and economic incentives in return for keeping the region stable. (Suleymanov Ruslan, 2023)

VII.II Research Gap (Gap of Knowledge)

The research gap in exploring BRICS' diplomatic engagement with Afghanistan lies in the limited analysis of how non-Western alliances, particularly BRICS, approach complex political environments like the Taliban-led Afghan government. The current studies primarily focus on Western international relations perspectives in Afghanistan, often highlighting interventionist policies and human rights concerns. On the other hand, there needs to be more research on how BRICS' non-interventionist and sovereignty-respecting diplomacy impacts regional stability, economic integration, and counter-extremism efforts. Additionally, the policies of BRICS including China Belt and Road Initiative and the Russian security outlook will have to be thoroughly evaluated with reference to Afghanistan. The given work aims at closing these gaps by developing a dissertation on BRICS and their pragmatic diplomacy as an alternative to the existing Western models and as the means of explaining how they create the multipolar world.

VIII. Theoretical Framework

Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) originally developed by Barry Buzan is very keen to elaborate that regional security is determined by the interplay of the relations between the states and non-state actors within a territorial region. It asserts that the security trends in a region cannot be comprehended in terms of isolation; rather, they must be seen as interconnected, with regional security complexes forming as a result of states' interdependencies, rivalries, and common security concerns. The theory given by Buzan is concerning the ways that regional patterns of power have some impacts on security policies of states and the behaviors of states are usually determined by some threat or opportunities shared by them. The main idea of RSCT is that regional conflicts, terrorism or instabilities are better ways to fight the security dangers and the regional cooperation is highly vulnerable to the role of the regional powers. (Samuel Elzinga, 2021)

This framework explains the importance of the role of regional actors, Regional alliance and their involvement in collective security actions in stabilizing their respective environments. The problem of BRICS expanding in role in Afghanistan has a possibility of analysis within the frameworks of RSCT as the organization tries to balance its way through the intricate security systems of Central and South Asia. Due to strategic position of Afghanistan, mineral deposit and geo-political significance of Afghanistan especially by China and Russia, it is a dominant actor to the security configuration of the region. The instability in Afghanistan as seen by the re-emerging Taliban acts as a security threat to all the countries in the region as well as the security and an opportunity to regulate future-security structure in the region by non-sector countries and predominantly by BRICS countries.(Samuel Elzinga, 2021)

In the case of BRICS, diplomacy that includes the Taliban government commits itself in line with the RSCT priority towards regional unity to resolve shared security issues. The BRICS countries, especially China and Russia along with India consider the stability of Afghanistan as critical to long-term security of the region, including fight against terrorism and extremism, which will potentially impact national security concerns of BRICS countries. With its diplomatic involvement with the Taliban, BRICS will attempt to make Afghanistan a member of the regional system, which values sovereignty, non-interference and collective security-based approaches as it tries to avoid the Western-led solution regarding Afghanistan that promotes

regime change. BRICS policy change to be more inclusive implies that they want to shape the security processes in the region and provide an alternative to the western led institutions. It also points out the wake-up call to BRICS how it has to tread carefully to maintain regional stability because the Taliban rule, though issues regarding human rights, is becoming a valid regional player. This change resembles the statement by RSCT that regional powers unite in effort to control security issues and BRICS finds its way as the new power in influencing the future of Afghanistan and the geopolitics of the region.

IX. Research Methodology

The present study adopts a qualitative, exploratory and analytical method. The qualitative research approach is chosen to gather and analyze information derived from diverse sources such as interviews, official documents, books, and research papers. This selection is based on the inherent strengths of the qualitative approach, which allows a comprehensive investigation of the subject matter by incorporating various perspectives from stakeholders and experts. The qualitative methodology proves valuable in offering nuanced insights into the research questions. To effectively analyze the gathered data, the study employs analytical analysis, a technique focused on identifying and examining ideas or arguments within qualitative data. This method involves the transcription and thorough analysis of the data to draw meaningful conclusions.

IX.I. Research Design

The thesis will utilize a qualitative research method, incorporating both primary and secondary data to thoroughly investigate the intricate dynamics of BRICS Diplomacy of inclusivity and its prospects of Its engagement with Afghan Taliban. The data collection process will align with the qualitative method's exploratory and analytical approach, facilitating a comprehensive exploration of the subject matter.

IX.II Data Collection

The study will make use of both primary and secondary data. Interviews with subject matter experts as well as official documents and government speeches will make up the primary data. In order to analyses BRICS Diplomacy of Inclusivity: Prospects of it its engagement with Afghan Taliban regime, researcher concentrates on existing knowledge or secondary data. For the purpose of this study, secondary data will be gathered from a variety of sources including

government reports, published institutional reports, articles, thesis, books, and online sources. The selection of secondary data will be based on its reliability and quality.

IX.III. Data Analysis

The study will be explorative and analytical, whereas, primary documents would be analyzed through content analysis approach. Secondary data of content analysis will be made through literature available. Findings and conclusions would be created and based on the content analysis.

IX.IV. Ethical Consideration

An important factor in this research is ethical considerations. The study will maintain standards of research ethics, and among these standards is the requirement of the study to be honest and have integrity and be transparent at all the levels of the research study. All the participants in the interview will receive informed consent, and be aware of the purpose of the research, as well as their rights (including the right of anonymity). All participants will remain confidential and any sensitive information will be addressed carefully.

X. Operational Definition's

- **BRICS:** The study has treated the acronym BRICS as Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, which are emerging nations that seek to create economic collaboration and political strength and question the pre-dominance of the international system of the West by the Western nations. This paper shall dwell on the diplomatic, security and economic relationship of the coalition with the current Taliban government of Afghanistan.
- **The Interim Taliban Government of Afghanistan:** This term is used to describe the government of the present ruling (dominant) power in Afghanistan including Afghanistan after the departure of the United States army in 2021. In this paper, the Interim Taliban Government is discussed as a critical actor in regional interactions in light of geopolitical stakes, risks, and opportunities for the BRICS countries.
- **Diplomatic Engagement:** Diplomatic engagement is the calculated process of states or alliances promoting cooperation, dialogue, and mutual gains. In this paper, BRICS diplomatic relations with Afghanistan's Taliban government are economic diplomacy,

security diplomacy, and diplomatic dialogue for maintaining regional stability without interfering in Afghan domestic politics.

- **Non-Interventionist Diplomacy:** Non-interventionist diplomacy involves the participation of two or more nations and does not tamper with the affairs of another nation. This study describes BRICS' diplomacy in dealing with the Taliban government of Afghanistan, emphasizing diplomatic relations and avoiding the imposition of political and ideological demands and instead concentrating on economic and security issues.
- **Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT):** RSCT is a theoretical model that holds that it is most beneficial to analyze security regarding regional subsystems in which states' security interests are related. To that end, RSCT is employed in this work to study the BRICS approach to Afghanistan as part of the overarching mission of preserving stability in the region and dealing with emerging threats non-aggressively and through cooperation.
- **Economic Integration:** This work defines economic integration as attempts to create economic relations that would contribute to the increase of trade, investments, and infrastructure interconnections between Afghanistan and the BRICS states. Such measures are China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), through which Afghanistan can be linked with regional and international markets and thus support mutual economic development and stability.

XI. Organization of the Study

An introduction: In the introduction, while presenting a picture of what will be presented in this research, research questions and research objectives are mentioned. The significance of the research, the Problem Statement, the delimitation of the research, the literature review, the theoretical framework, the research methodology, and finally, the organization of the research are components that make up the first chapter of the research.

Chapter 1: BRICS Diplomacy as its new Policy Shift: Historical Development of BRICS, from its inception to its current status. Moreover, an Analysis of the new policy shifts within BRICS, focusing on diplomatic relations and internal dynamics like Key drivers behind BRICS' diplomatic evolution (economic considerations, strategic priorities, etc.).

Chapter 2: BRICS Engagements with Afghanistan and its prospects: this is an important chapter that discusses the Strategic significance of Afghanistan in global and regional politics and Afghanistan's role as a crossroads of Asia and its implications for BRICS' policy. Moreover, in this chapter an Analysis of BRICS' past and present engagement with Afghanistan and Afghanistan's potential inclusion in BRICS: opportunities and challenges.

Chapter 3: Impact of BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan: Regional and Global Dimensions: In this chapter, the regional and Global level impacts will be discussed from the inclusion of Afghanistan into BRICS.

Finding and Conclusion: This chapter will evaluate and conclude the study and provide more comprehensive details of the findings with recommendations. At the end, a list of research sources will be written.

X.II. Work plan

The timeline of the activities of this Research study is as follows:

Activities	November 2024	December 2024	Feb 2025	March 2025	April 2025	June 2025	July 2025
Proposal Writing and Submission							
Data Collection							
Data Analysis							
Thesis Writing							
Thesis Binding/Submission of Final Thesis							

CHAPTER-I

BRICS DIPLOMACY AND POLICY SHIFT

BRICS is an acronym that refers to an organization of the five major emerging economies, which include Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. These nations have acquired huge populations, rapidly developing economies, and growing global political influence, a fact that has contributed to their deep impact on regional and international matters. Combined, BRICS countries constitute more than 40 percent of the global population, contributing some 25 percent of world economic output and are more significant players in global economic governance and geopolitics. The aim of the organization is to help develop mutual cooperation between emerging markets, enhance economic growth, and transform the institutions of global governance to be more representative of the current global power distribution. (Wang Hwi Lee , Sang Yoon Ma , Kun Young Park, 2007)

In the context of modern research, BRICS can usually be seen as a counterweight to the centuries-old domination of Western powers in international politics and the world economy. As a whole, the member states support a multipolar concept of the international system and strive to challenge the hegemony of such institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, which they perceive as too dominated by the western interest.(Birgül Demirtaş, 2016) BRICS is an informal multilateral association that aims to build cooperation within four interdependent spheres, namely in the domain of finance, trade, development, and diplomatic coordination. Under this structure, the member states hanker to give their fortified voice in international relation.

The term BRIICS was first mentioned during the early 2000s as a diagnostic term to capture the rapidly growing economies of some developing states. The term was coined in 2001 by British economist Jim O'Neill at that time working at Goldman Sachs, who considered Brazil, Russia, India, and China as the high-growth and potential emerging markets, which can rearrange the global economic order.(O'Neill, 2004; Wilson & Purushothaman, 2003) The scholarly work of O'Neill lists remarkable GDP growth patterns, middle classes brought to life, and increased engagement in international trade systems in the BRIC countries. This

transformation of financial market into political entity came with the first BRIC summit at Yekaterinburg, Russia, in 2009--an event that was held soon after the global financial crisis of 2008 that revealed the declining power of developed economies and highlighted the rising increased economic power of the emerging markets.

Brazil, Russia, India and China took this opportunity to draw the plans of coherent economic actions, promote changes in the international financial institutions and support multilateral approach to world governance.(Wilson & Purushothaman, 2003) BRIC became BRICS when South Africa joined in the year 2010. The addition of the south Africa to the organization was meant to increase the representation of the group to include the African continent and to promote global south philosophy. The phenomenon of the incorporation of South Africa was also alleged to expand territorial variety and reinforce the political legitimacy. Since then BRICS transformed into a formalized political and economic association that becomes visible in annual meetings and a new institutional framework.

1.1 BRICS and Its New Policy Shift

BRICS at first grew out of the four developing economies in early 2000s and in the year 2010, South Africa became the fifth member. As the bloc evolves, the name BRICS + has been coined, which implies that the bloc is willing to expand in the wider context of a pooled development approach where more member states, possibly a broader set of developing countries, are attracted to be within the bloc. This development is a clear attempt at building a different model of world governance against the existing western-orientated model. A contradictory interaction of internal and external factors promotes the development and strengthening of BRICS. At the internal level, the member countries encounter comparable development issues that compel them to work more closely. On the external side, they face a growing geopolitical tension caused by the two-pronged movement of great-power rivalry and American unilateralism. Taken together, these forces push the group to more ambitious policy coordination to transform multilateral institutions and practices. Prof. Dr. Miriam, 2024)

1.2 New Geo-political and Geo-Economics Trends and Expansion of BRICS

The organization took a different turn in August 2023 as it announced the expansion of BRICS at the Johannesburg summit. Other countries like Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and

UAE were invited to join it as part of a change to a more inclusive global order. BRICS is trying to be an alternative to the Western domination by giving representation to the Global South.(Kaura, n.d.) The October 2024 Kazan Summit put forward the strategic Russian effort in gaining geopolitical sway in the bloc, with an emphasis on multilateralism and developing a multipolar world order.(Osypenkova Olena , 2024) The recent expansion of BRICS presents a critical turning point in terms of not only geopolitical alignment but also to the economic incorporation of the involved parties.

The addition of new members to the bloc increases its total economic weight bearing in mind that the bloc is becoming a bigger share of the total world GDP as well as the overall number of oil- and gas-producing states such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates. These new states introduce different economic, political, and cultural paths into the organization which in turn increases the complexities of arriving at a mutual agreement in the organization.(Martynov, 2019) The geopolitical growth of the BRICS system cannot be discussed separately of the economic policies of the block. The new development bank (NDB) being formed by BRICS is a clear attempt to challenge the Bretton Woods institutions, especially International Monetary Fund, and any developing country has a chance to develop an alternative method of financial system. The further creation of BRICS+ has added even more complexity to the equation because the new bloc now needs to be able to reconcile the diverging interests of nations. The economic goals spelled out by BRICS+ include improvement of trade, increased financial integration, and facilitation of investment among the members.(Kaura, n.d.)

In the modern trade development BRICS has been tagged as one of the key players in promoting internationalization of domestic currency and reducing dependency on the US dollar. Russia and China, specifically, have been on the forefront promoting these initiatives where the BRICS platform has been used to implement a formal system on how bilateral and multilateral trade can be carried out using local currencies. However, some setbacks still exist. Despite the emphasis towards a comprehensive trading infrastructure, the high density of heterogeneity in economic structure of the various directors in the BRICS+ membership has been a major drawback to the accomplishment of a smooth functional integration.(Osypenkova Olena & Prys-Hansen Prof. Dr. Miriam, 2024)

1.3 Internal Differences and BRICS Expansion

Along with the expansion of BRICS there have been numerous challenges. Tensions among member countries, especially India and China, occasionally undermine the entire unity of the organization. Trade policy tensions, regional power rivalry and affiliation to the leading world powers exacerbate common decision-making.(Osypenkova Olena & Prys-Hansen Prof. Dr. Miriam, 2024) Moreover, the recent expansion of BRICS to include emerging states has raised concerns among the new member states such as Saudi Arabia on the possibility of BRICS taking on a sharply anti-western direction. This has been based on fears of adopting a highly critical stance against the west at a risk of losing strategic relations with the United States.(Abdelaziz Abdeldayem & Wadie Kswat, 2024)

The rapidly increasing economic might of China, the fact that it has been central to the BRICS+ agenda, as well as its increased prominence in global economic system in general, has created ambivalence among other member states. India, especially, has raised commendable anxieties over increased Chinese import dependence and the subsequent Chinese investment in Indian infrastructure building. This creates even more complex multilateral navigation required within BRICS+, with the respondents trying to preserve strategic autonomy, despite maintaining partnerships to challenge the dominance of the Western-lead economic order.(Abdelaziz Abdeldayem & Wadie Kswat, 2024; Martynov, 2019)

1.4 The Road Ahead: Economic Growth vs. Political Alignment

Future of BRICS+ depends on the ability of the collective to balance economic cooperation and political independence. With increasing membership, there is the possibility increased heterogeneity of its members that could strengthen its effectiveness or undermine its cohesiveness. The creation of an intermediate BRICS + category of partner countries is expected to absorb the states that are still not ready to become a full member, but at the same time it arouses questions of discussion regarding the future integrity of the organization.(Kaura, n.d.)

At the same time, a new geopolitical reality, most prominently involving Russian aggressive foreign policy and Chinese economic dominance, is about to shape the political outlook of BRICS+. In this regard, Russia, has employed BRICS to challenge the Western-led international order, a policy that took the form of anti-Western speeches and pushing de-dollarization efforts.(Abdelaziz Abdeldayem & Wadie Kswat, 2024)

BRICS is on a crossroads. The recent expansion of the BRICS+ is the indication of the broader aspirations of the Global South to gain the greater voice in the shaping of the international economic and political agenda. Not despite but because of such proactive development, the organization is forced to defend against unnatural inequalities and hostile external forces of influence spread by the Global North. As a result, BRICS+ has to work with a complex playing field of cross-purposes. To maintain its reputation as a feasible counterweight to dominant patterns of global governance, the bloc should balance its economic objectives against geopolitical interests, without losing its brakes. Future summits and high-level meeting among members states devoted to the topics of trade liberalization, monetary change, and institution reframe will determine the course of BRICS+ in the nearest future.(Abdelaziz Abdeldayem & Wadie Kswat, 2024; Osypenkova Olena & Prys-Hansen Prof. Dr. Miriam, 2024)

1.5 BRICS and Diplomacy

1.5.1 Diplomacy

Diplomacy is a major tool through which states can achieve their national interests, and govern their international relations with each other or with the international bodies. It involves the use of authorized representatives in negotiations, dialogue and other communicative axes to establish, maintain, or renew bilateral and multilateral relations. As an implementation of foreign policy, diplomacy plays an imperative role in building and projecting an image of a country in the global scene. It is performed in the forms of diplomatic conferences, official visits, formal agreement and negotiations, all aiming at realizing peaceful conflict resolution and common benefit. Therefore, diplomacy does not only encompass the exchange of information but also protects interdependence and acts as co-worker in the rapidly interconnected world.

1.5.2 BRICS Diplomacy

In the BRICS case, the bloc plays a central role in consolidating relationships and in furthering cooperation among the heterogeneous member states. Despite geographical disintegration, different political, economic, developmental trends, as well as varying cultural issues BRICs diplomacy attempts to converge these countries around common goals, the main one being challenge to western economic and political supremacy and design a more equal international order. In this regard, the BRICS platform acts as a platform of conducting high-level consultations, coordination of policies, formulation of common positions in multilateral forums like United Nations, the G20, and the World Trade Organization, and driving sustainable economic development.(Melya Putri et al., 2023) The diplomacy of the BRICS is based on a few fundamental ideas: the rights and equalities of consensus that focus on common decision-making and the respect to interests and sovereignty of each of the members; non-interference and non-confrontation that preserve the peaceful co-existence and the freedom of members to deal with the internal matters. These values create an environment of trust amongst each other.

Cooperation and partnership are thus prioritized to, with the focus being aimed at gathering resources, furnishing technology and expertise, and promoting shared developmental works. The key point here is the role of multilateralism to support this framework, with BRICS being an active participant in global governance to achieve more equal representation and joint answers to global issues. Justice, equality, and sustainability would also be given importance and BRICS members have been taking the lead in institutional reforms, conserving trade imbalances and sustainable development to fight climate change and social inequality.(Melya Putri et al., 2023) The diplomacy of BRICS is based through four key pillars namely political cooperation, economic diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and environmental diplomacy.

Member states will work together on a position that should be taken on regional and international matters, such as peace keeping and security reforms, which are politically sensitive. Economic diplomacy, BRICS nations strive to ensure trade implemented barriers are low, integration is improved, and investments through platforms like the New Development Bank. On cultural diplomacy, BRICS encourage people-to-people ties through festivals, academic exchanges and joint projects that further enhanced understanding. (Melya Putri et al., 2023)

On the environmental front, BRICS works together in mitigation of climate change, conservation of biodiversity and development of renewable energy.(Wilson & Purushothaman, 2003)Despite its significant advancement, the BRICS diplomacy faces various limitations, among which one can distinguish different national interests, diverse political systems, and different priorities that hinder the development of any common stances. The complexity of modern international affairs and the accelerating rate of change in geopolitical interactions force the necessity to constantly adjust the policies of diplomacy. However, BRICS still has significant potential, since its economic growth is strong, and its population is large and technologically advanced, as well as powerful militarily. As a result of increased cooperation, enhanced institutional frameworks, and the meaningful use of innovation, BRICS diplomacy will be able to enhance its role as a global actor regarding inclusive global collaboration and a more equitable world order.

1.5.3 Political Diplomacy

BRICS political diplomacy has seen a lot of changes, especially after its expansion and discussion during Kazan summit in 2024. The organization which was initially composed of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa has expanded to cover Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Such expansion is the significant strategy to transfer to a multipolar world order to undermine Western hegemony in world governance. One of the most important factors about BRICS diplomacy is that it has focused on the restructuring of international institutions in order to enable the Global South to get a more representative voice.(Viner Katharine, 2025)

As an example, the 2024 Kazan summit underscored the group commitment to multipolar world where the reform of the United Nations is sought so as to give developing countries greater voice at the UN. Moreover, the focus topics were the end of the usage of the U.S. dollar, and suggestions about alternative payment methods such as BRICS PAY to reduce rash effects of Western sanctions. Nevertheless, the bloc poses internal challenges. The failure of major stakeholders like Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin to attend the upcoming BRICS forum in 2025 in Brazil has cast a doubt on the unity and future path of the group. According to the analysts, the growth had already weakened the ideological unity in

BRICS, creating tension in the interrelation between member states that have different political regimes and priorities. (Thibault Harold, 2024)

1.5.4 Economic Diplomacy

Economic diplomacy can be defined as the art of utilizing diplomatic tools strategically in order to promote the economic interests of a country in international relations. It includes trade agreement, attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), international cooperation, use of economic intelligence to strengthen national competitiveness negotiations.(Paudel, 2023) In the past, only advanced economies e.g. the G7 have dominated this field and are also coupled with multilateral institutions such as Bretton Woods organizations (the World Bank and the IMF) and the WTO which have long determined the agenda of the global economics.

The rise of new powers, especially the BRICS nations indicates a reshaping of this order because these countries are acting more and more in simultaneously through economic diplomacy with the goal of enhancing their influence.(Uddin, 2022) Economic diplomacy has emerged as key tool used by the BRICS alliance to challenge US and western hegemony. Tools that are used are the investigation of possible alternatives to the US dollar in international trade and the idea of a common BRICS currency.(Paudel, 2023) The member countries are already promoting different economical-diplomacy approaches: Brazil is investing in regional integration and country branding, Russia is pursuing an energy diplomacy approach and reintegration of the former Soviet territories.

India has a mixed model combining traditional diplomacy with economic networking, and China is openly promoting its trade and outward investment, within a highly synchronized structure of ministries. As a whole, BRICS controls over 25 % of world GDP and 41 % of the global population, which makes its economic diplomacy more relevant than ever. In comparison with G7, BRICS has more population and economic-growth rates are higher, but the level of the per capita income is lower. Both the groups actively engage in trade negotiations and FDI activities but the G7 still has more global financial power. (Paudel, 2023)

1.5.5 Environmental Diplomacy

The BRICS approach to environmental diplomacy is a complex yet steadily integrated set of plans on achieving sustainable development and combating climate change. The BRICS Summits from 20011 to 2024 has taken a declarative approach that prioritizes on environmental stewardship over economic growth and had affirmed the pronouncements of multilateral environmental agreements, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. The BRICS members states acknowledges principles common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) that States have unequal capacities of development and concerns the fair division of responsibilities in reacting to common environmental challenges. The principle acts as a guiding framework of international environmental governance because it can help encourage co-operative action by involving joint and shared objectives.(Astakhova, 2024)

The BRICS member states have very different stands concerning issues related to the environment. China specifically has taken a leading position that is relevant to international relations as one of the major investors in renewable energies and encouraging clean technologies as well as being on the bandwagon to transform the economy into a low-carbon economy. India, Brazil, and South Africa also claim to join international efforts to counter climate change but translations in terms of domestic initiatives are not consistent across the board. Russia, on the other hand, has demonstrated a relatively low degree of ambition in energy-related emissions reduction and remains over reliant on an energy mix that remains emission intensive.(Paudel, 2023)

Despite its heterogeneous structure, BRICS popularizes collaboration in four interdependent aspects, which include technology exchange and capacity building, financial resources mobilization to provide sustainable projects, and, most importantly, the popularization of more innovative and systematic solutions to environmental-related issues. These attempts, which are frequently embodied by the establishment of institutions like the New Development Bank, aim at putting into practice a strategic paradigm premised around the privilege of integrative and adaptive as opposed to simply responsive approach to global governance.

This strategic approach to environmental matters can be conveniently described as strategic diplomacy, which, on the one hand, reflects the systemic/networked orientation of the organization, and, on the other hand, its prolonged commitment to a wider range of state and non-state actors. The key to this structure is what is called fractal governance, which integrates multi-scale collaboration with an investment in innovation to deal with interconnected problems in energy, biodiversity, oceans and urban sustainability. In this context, BRICS argues that global environmental governance has to be realigned with a paradigm of a race to the sky, emphasizing green innovation and disregarding the dangers of a race to the bottom in environmental performance. Overall, the BRICS approach to the environment attempts to balance the developmental needs and the climbing ecological obligations in order to develop fair world management and encourage a comprehensive pursuit of common climate goals.(Paudel, 2023; Uddin, 2022)

1.5.6 Health Diplomacy

Health diplomacy has become central in the BRICS external relations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The member states have chosen to react to global health concerns both bilaterally and multilaterally and have established themselves as the main players in global health governance. A significant part of this interaction takes place under the umbrella of South-South Cooperation (SSC), the key areas of which are the medical assistance, donation of vaccines, technical support, and infrastructural assistance to the developing countries, especially in the African continent.(Júnior & Dugo, 2024)

China as leading member of the BRICS considered as key player of health diplomacy during COVID-19 pandemics. The Chinese activities include provision of vaccines and medical machines, funding of hospital facilities and sending medical teams abroad. Such activities have had several outcomes: creating geopolitical alliances, supporting economic cooperation and building a soft power. In the period following the COVID-19 pandemic, Beijing took advantage of its efforts to improve its presence in the international community through delivering vaccines and essential equipment, especially in the African countries.(Cássia De Freitas Martins et al., n.d.) On the other hands India, as the recognized worldwide largest manufacturer of generic medicines, has brought to forward the export of cheap vaccines and off-patented drugs, development of telemedicine technologies, and monetary collaboration with African countries.

These efforts are supplemented by investments in medical infrastructure development, as well as the encouragement of medical tourism, which demonstrates emergence of India as a key health collaborator of the Global South. However, the unity of the BRICS has also faced limitations, such as internal bureaucracy, delay in common vaccine initiatives as well as geopolitical conflicts that do not promote concerted efforts. These differences and Geo-politics have limited the ability of this bloc, to fully exploit its potential of joint work on the development and production of vaccines, leading to a reduction in its role in global health multilateralism. Additionally, extreme differences in COVID-19 mortality rates and healthcare capabilities in the BRICS led to the revelation of gaps in concerted planning and responding to the pandemic.(Júnior & Dugo, 2024) BRICS health diplomacy presents a hybrid of humanitarian aid and strategic geopolitical interests, taking on an ever more significant role in the process of constructing global health governance due to the potential of South-South collaboration and contributing to the development of pandemic response capabilities.(Cássia De Freitas Martins et al., n.d.; Júnior & Dugo, 2024)

1.5.7 Digitalization and BRICS Diplomacy

As part of the BRICS expansion, digital diplomacy has taken a central role in informing international collaboration and progress as the digital changing landscape is slowly becoming a central platform in the economic, political, and social spheres. BRICS countries, which include Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa are each on different trajectories of digitalization and their outcomes are dependent on factors, which include research and development (R&D) investment, internet penetration, GDP growth as well as globalization in general.

With digital diplomacy emerging as a tool not only to enrich bilateral and multilateral connections, but also to utilize strategically as a means of promoting economic growth, innovation and global presence, these countries have kept true to a multi-faceted holistic approach towards the utilization of digital tools in their foreign affairs.(Audi et al., 2025) Economic globalization that takes place in the BRICS has caused huge technological spillover and knowledge sharing, which affects the rate and intensity of digital change.

As an example, China is known as a world leader in e-commerce and digital infrastructure due to its high growth rates in R&D spending and the speed at which it has connected to the internet. India has one of the fastest growing networks of internet users, as well as a thriving digital entrepreneurship culture, making it quickly become an innovation center. The trend is, however, different in Brazil, Russia, and South Africa; they are focused on policy changes and investments into the infrastructures that could back their digital industries. However, certain issues of imbalance in social and political impacts of globalization, regulatory issues, and infrastructure can be a setback to equal digital development between BRICS members.(Audi et al., 2025)

In addition to economic and technological collaboration, digital diplomacy as it is realized by BRICS nowadays is also associated with cultural and social spheres of collaboration, such as efforts to collaboratively digitize international sports. The BRICS+ coalition also uses digital diplomacy to complement the Olympic movement by utilizing the proxy of the digital economy such as e-government, internet penetration, e-commerce, and human-capital development. Russia and China being the first to do so utilize digital tools to promote Olympic education, marketing, and information services and thus depicting the interplay of digital diplomacy and soft-power as well as cultural exchange.(Ganeeva & Nikiforova, 2024)

Overall, the digital diplomacy of BRICS is a complex response that incorporates innovation in the field of economy, modernization in the sphere of governance, and collaboration among the international community. Long-term sustainable growth in digital space depends on wise strategic investing in building a digital infrastructure, matching policy frameworks, and multi-lateral arrangements to achieve an inclusive and sustainable future of digital development.(Ganeeva & Nikiforova, 2024)

1.6 BRICS Diplomatic Engagement in Different Region of the World

The diplomacy of BRICS is based on the balanced combination of the economic, political, and security relationships, where each aspect of interaction is developed depending on the peculiarities of the region to which it is targeted. In Africa, there is prioritization on extractive nature of natural resources found in the continent, as well as furthering their infrastructure growth and getting along the geopolitical conflict. In Latin America, there is, instead, a confrontation with a BRICS drive to find alternative sources of development funding and an intensification of trade ties, in which China takes the forefront. In Europe, the block is trying to harmonies between economic dependence and geopolitical stress, especially in the Ukraine war where Russia is still involved in conflict with some western European countries.

In Asia, BRICS integrates with South Asia by building infrastructure, including China Pakistan Economic Corridor and interacts with Southeast Asia, including ASEAN by developing trade and investment connections. The BRICS diplomacy to Middle East engagement is energy security and massive infrastructure investments. All of these modalities indicate BRICS ambition to reset global governance and economic integration through region-specific interventions that develop collective as well as individual member interests simultaneously.

1.6.1 BRICS Expansion Policy and its Diplomatic Engagement Africa

BRICS has significantly enhanced their diplomatic and economic interventionism in Africa hence transforming geopolitical and economic patterns within the continent. This trend has been driven by a combination of commercial interests, geopolitical considerations and desire to derive more international role, which indicates a major change in the external relations of Africa. BRICS states see Africa as an economic-strategic partner due to the immense natural resources available, fast growing consumer market and the large and growing rate of the middle-class. In particular, China and India have marked wide commercial relations with many African states, devoting their attention to the development of infrastructures, the sphere of energy, production, and telecommunication. China has since overtaken the United States as the top

trading partner of Africa in 2009 with imports of raw materials and exports of manufactured products (mainly machines and textile) being the primary catalyst towards such movements.(Soko & Qobo, 2016)

The BRICS countries have different geographical spheres and thematic focus on their interaction with Africa. In sub-Saharan markets, India focuses on consumer electronics and automobiles whereas Brazil focuses on manufactured goods, particularly Lusophone countries like Angola and Mozambique, and Russia is slightly less diversified but still very much concentrated on the energy and mineral sectors as well as arms sales and nuclear energy cooperation. (Soko & Qobo, 2016) These motivations of engagement are mostly dictated by the national interests of each state, and BRICS economic and diplomatic activities in Africa are aimed at gaining commercial gain and international legitimacy and do not work on non-self-serving development projects. This orientation can be illustrated by China's Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) as it, although having expressed a non-interfering line, effectively solidifies Beijing influence by keeping African governments on the same side as its political considerations (such as the concept of the One-China) and as such endearing itself to African governments fearing Western conditionalities.(Soko & Qobo, 2016)

As a strategic measure, the BRICS countries have been enhancing their political and security presence in Africa through defense pacts, joint military exercises and providing investment on military installations such as naval bases offshore and maritime high seas surveillance platforms. These have been seen as an expression to the readiness of the organization to gain access to essential energy sources and gain geopolitical advantage in the region, and this has posed a challenge to the historical dominance of the Western powers in the region.(Bamidele, 2024) The presence of South Africa in the BRICS family increases the group impact in the continent, but it is equally faced by suspicion because it is trying to balance its roles as Africa lead and its South African BRICS positions.(Shaw, 2015)

The African countries expect that high returns on macroeconomic indicators through increased interaction with the BRICS group; however, a number of hurdles remain, most prominently, uneven trade positions, the rising rate of foreign debt, and the negative pressure on the national production base, especially with the inflow of cheap Chinese manufactured products. As a result, policymakers are put at a dilemma to reap maximum benefit out of BRICS

partnerships without subjecting their economies to unnecessary vulnerability particularly through increased dependence on export of commodities and subsequent increase in the level of public debt.(Bamidele, 2024)

The diplomacy of BRICS in Africa is a complex interrelation of economic opportunities and the growing geopolitical conflicts. On the part of African states, the potential is high with regard to attracting capital, financing their infrastructures and enhancing the global collaboration. However, at the same time, the African governments need to bargain the competition within the BRICS and support the risks of accumulation of debts, the increasing economical dependency, and the change in political partners. The critical clarity of vision is thus unavoidable in the event of African continent utilizing BRICS exchanges to achieve sustainable growth, as well as an elevated status on a global basis.(Shaw, 2015; Soko & Qobo, 2016)

1.6.2 BRICS Expansions and Its Diplomatic Engagement in Latin America

The BRICS, have significantly increased both their diplomatic and economic interaction in Latin America thus challenging the domination of the traditional international financial institutions as the IMF and the World Bank. The decision to create the BRICS Bank, which is composed of the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) and the New Development Bank (NDB), is a strategic move towards offering Latin American states alternative funding on infrastructure and developmental projects. Its initial capitalization was US\$50 billion, and CRA was endowed with US\$100 billion to provide member states with short-term liquidity, with Brazil being the only immediate beneficiary of the CRA in Latin America.(Danns & Danns, 2015) In the BRICS macro-economic framework, China has established a pre-eminent position in Latin America, and this has been captured by a witnessed significant growth in the bilateral trade between 2000 and the year 2013 during which the number of commercial interactions has grown twenty-two time.

Trade between China and Latin America reached over \$261.6 billion in the year 2013 and was expected by the IDB to rise to more than 500 billion by the year 2019. Raw commodities such as copper, soybean, petroleum, iron ore, frozen meat, and aluminum are the major imports of China constituting about 73 percent of the total imports into China of the region. To the same effect, manufactured goods make up the major component of exports. Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in Latin America not only increased but there was a significant increase in the

value of the investment during the same period of observation, 2013, standing at 42.7 billion total Chinese investment in Latin America between 2010 and 2013 with the largest share focused on resource-based sectors such as oil and mining.(Danns & Danns, 2015; Jenkins, 2010)

India is increasingly gaining prominence in the region which can be seen in the eightfold growth since 2000 of Indo Latin America trade to about 20 billion dollars annually. At the same time, the Indian businesses stepped up their efforts to provide information technology and business process outsourcing services, as well as other knowledge-based services in Latin America. Brazil, the only BRICS who are geographically part of the region, play a twofold role as regional power-holder and BRICS partner as it maintains a strong business relationship to the surrounding states and other BRICS member states. China is also gaining an increasing deal of influence in terms of infrastructure financing; China loaned Latin America about 75 billion between 2005 till 2012, and this was more than what the world bank, Inter-American Development Bank and US Export-Import bank has loaned to Latin America in the same period. One of the most notable examples is the \$50-billion project of Nicaragua Interoceanic Canal that demonstrates that one of the projects of Beijing involves the development of infrastructure in the region.

Latin America faces deep challenges despite promising development with the economically engaging BRICS. The region ended up experiencing trade deficit with China of nearly 65-billion in the year alone in 2013, a deficit that was mostly sustained by Mexico with a shortfall totaling 54.8-billion.(Danns & Danns, 2015)The flooding of Chinese goods produced in factories has escalated the rate of competition that has affected the manufacturing industries in many states, thus causing introduction and implementation of anti-dumping (Jenkins, 2010). At the same time, China has increased its strategic partnerships and the spread of observation within regional groups, thus offering an alternative to U.S. influence in the region.

However, the scare of political dependence and the dangers of the resource curse is still mentioned. Simultaneously, BRICS presence across Latin America is re-shaping economic and diplomatic platforms with China at the centerstage assisted by India and Brazil. The creation of BRICS Bank that offers alternative sources of financing development activities spells out the possibility of shifting towards a more multipolar global economic system in the region. (Jenkins, 2010)

1.6.3 BRICS Expansion and Its Diplomatic Engagement with Europe

BRICS has continually desired greater influence and involvement in Europe mostly due to changes in global power balancing. A more recent expansion, to be effective in January 2024, adds the United Arab Emirates, Iran, Ethiopia and Egypt, with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of roughly 1.46 trillion which approximates to that of Spain, the fourth-largest economy in Europe. These trends have critical implications to the European and global strategic geopolitical, as Europe, in total, constitutes 14.5 % of global GDP but the expanded BRICS is estimated to represent 37.3 % of world GDP by 2024.(Gherghescu, 2025a)

The BRICS group and Europe have a vital aspect of bilateral diplomatic and economic relations in the form of FDI flows. The BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa states have policies of strategic flexibility in inward investment, which are fundamentally laid out to appeal to capital into infrastructure, energy, technology, and manufacturing platforms. On the other hand, the European Union (EU) has introduced more coordinated and tougher regulation policy, prioritizing transparency issues, and the protection of investors and national security, especially in the activities of the technological and energy sphere. As an example, Germany, France, and Italy have used the legal framework to regulate or ban some Chinese acquisitions that are believed to harm national security, especially in the telecommunications and power grid systems.(Gherghescu, 2025b)

China and Russia take especially high places among BRICS states in their interaction with Europe. Traditionally, Russia maintained deep economic relations with many European countries; in spite of the western European difference with Russia, tensions after the 2014 annexation of Crimea and the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, it has not lost them. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has created a divide between the Western block and the BRICS block, with many BRICS countries taking a recurrent pattern of a pro-Russian neutral stance by abstaining in a United Nations (UN) resolution condemning Russia and/or in favor of maintaining commercial relationship especially by importing energy. China has a significantly more subtle approach to Europe; its investments are carefully weighed but it also seeks to develop major deals in technology and infrastructure.(Apolinário Júnior & Dias Branco, 2022)

The diplomatic relationship of BRICS with Europe is complex. Despite existing divergences, especially on the model of governance and security paradigms, the European Union

keeps nurturing bilateral relations with Brazil, India, and South Africa by introducing strategic partnerships with these countries.(Gherghescu, 2025b) The expansion of BRICS and its demand to changes the global governance threaten the international order dominated by the West. The organization advocates increased multipolarity and institutional reform, especially the United Nations Security council to more transparently represent the interest of emerging and developing states. The media discourse portrays BRICS as a hostile faction, but, empirical evidence suggests that the BRICS organization is an attempt to restructure rather than to collapse the existing world order.(Petidis Pavlos, 2024)

The new economic landscape indicates a transforming allocation of power. The International Monetary Fund has projected that BRICS share in the global GDP will rise to 38.5% by 2028, as it expects the European Union share to decline to 13.7% which are alarming for European union and G-7. BRICS diplomacy with Europe is marked by the several interconnected phenomena: the growth of economic interdependence, the increase of the geopolitical competition, and the multifaceted regulatory landscape. The tension between relatively liberal investment regime of BRICS and restrictive regulatory environment of the EU organizes bilateral dynamics and the transnational changes, such as the war in Ukraine, transform political alliances. As a result, both sides have to move on this changing environment to encourage collaborations and protect their strategic priorities.(Patrick Stewart, 2024)

1.6.4 BRICS in Asia

Asia as consentient has strategic decisiveness in terms of BRICS diplomatic interaction, which averts the fact that the time and region are multicultural, blessed with an incredible economic resource and a significant geopolitical standing. Recent addition of new Middle East states- Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Iran to BRICS give an understanding into how Asia is an essential energy center with over half of the world's oil reserves. This energy hub is considered essential to BRICS member states that include China, India, and Russia, which seek energy security and strengthened infrastructure connectivity in projects like the China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Like in the South Asia the BRICS diplomatic engagement has been mega-infrastructure and economic integration projects, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the ongoing struggle to expand the regional trade despite intense geopolitical tensions between China and

India. The South East Asia economies are characterized with high dynamism and provide good opportunities in trade and investment. An ASEAN Member States growingly interact with the BRICS by increasing both the volume of trade and the implementation of new financing tools like the New Development Bank. The vast natural resources and geostrategic position of Central Asia as a geopolitical buffer zone and a gateway to Eurasia have attracted increased interest of the BRICS, especially China and Russia that use economic investment mixed with cultural diplomacy as a means to extend their impact. Central Asia, in this regard, is a key element of the broader BRICS global diplomacy policies.

1.6.5 BRICS Diplomatic Engagement and Middle East

BRICS diplomatic engagement with the Middle East has significantly expanded, like during 2023 expansion covering four nations in the Middle East: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, and Iran. This expansion highlights the geopolitical and economic importance of the region like the Middle Eastern region has around 55 percent of the world oil reserves, which are important for BRICS countries especially for China, Russia and India.(Malik et al., 2024) BRICS engagement is also based on energy security. Russia, one of the largest oil producers with approximately 12.2 % of the worldwide oil production, is highly engaged in the energy market in the Middle East with Saudi Arabia and UAE. China, the region largest oil importer has made significant investment in energy infrastructure and has entered into a long-term supply agreement with states in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Iran, most prominently a \$7 billion currency swap with Saudi Arabia (Noor, Yasmin & Liaqat, 2025).

The BRI further brings China and its neighbors closer due to the development of infrastructure, including ports and rails which increases connectivity on trade in the region and beyond.(Malik et al., 2024; Noor et al., n.d.) On a political level, members of BRICS are focused on multipolarity, and they oppose Western dominance, urging changes in the international governance system and providing a new means of development finance through the New Development Bank (NDB) that finances infrastructure projects without any western conditionalities.

China has adopted the cautious and a non-interventionist stand in regional conflicts focusing on economic diplomacy, whereas Russia pursued the more aggressive role especially in Syria to establish military positions and geopolitical power(Trenin Dmitri, 2016) BRICS

members continue to struggle to deal with numerous regional rivalries, especially between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which currently belong to BRICS while maintaining significant influence in the region. How BRICS manages to navigate between all these tensions in order to enhance economic cooperation will determine its future in Middle Eastern geopolitics.

1.6.6 BRICS Diplomatic Engagement in South Asia

BRICS has enhanced its diplomatic and economic diplomacy in South Asia, which is the region of great strategic interest because of its massive population, emerging markets, and geopolitical influence. It is especially noticeable that China is ever-growing with the form of economic diplomacy. China increased its investments in South Asia since it started the Go Global policy in 2002, investing in infrastructure, energy, transport, and telecommunications. The investments such as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which cost around \$45.6 billion indicate the interest of China in integration on a regional scale and economic growth.(Qais, n.d.) The economic diplomacy of China entails the establishment of formal diplomatic relationships, investments in infrastructure and expanding trade in the region. Chinese investments in ports, roads, hydropower and industrial zones have been beneficial to South Asian countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh enabling China to access Indian ocean and improving connectivity in the region.

China also wants to become a permanent member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) so that it can entrench itself in the South Asian regional economic cooperation although this has been opposed by India(Qais, n.d.) India as a member of the BRICS, a regional power in South Asia, holds complicated economic relations with China, which is characterized by trade and political rivalry. Indian exports to China are more of raw materials but China exports manufactured goods to India. both nations have working in regional settings such as the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) passageway regardless of their political tensions, which is a sign of practical money related relations.(Qais, n.d.)

The expansions of BRICS to BRICS Plus and the inviting of Middle Eastern nations creates economic and geopolitical prospects for Pakistan. The strategic alliance between Pakistan and China in BRICS Plus has the capacity to increase their trade, energy relations, and infrastructure development especially through CPEC. Pakistan is facing chronic energy shortages but access to members of energy rich group such as Saudi Arabia and UAE could solve the problem.

Furthermore, BRICS Plus membership will enhance the diplomatic power position of Pakistan balancing out the power of India in the bloc.(M. I. Khan & Hayat, 2024) Both the geopolitical obstacles created due to India opposing the membership of Pakistan and political and economic instability inside Pakistan may place a limit on its ability to leverage BRICS to its fullest potential. In order to gain maximum rewards, Pakistan should make its economic changes, diversify exports, and organize a diplomatic offensive styled to wider backing in BRICS. The BRICS diplomatic activity in South Asia is altering the relations in the region, and the most active actor is China. BRICS Plus opens a prospect to Pakistan to improve its economic growth and geopolitical positioning, provided that it succeeds in overcoming internal problems and hostile relationships in the neighboring region.(M. I. Khan & Hayat, 2024)

1.6.7 BRICS Diplomatic Engagement in Southeast Asia

Diplomatic engagement between BRICS and Southeast Asia has started to ramp up since both have been interested in deepening economic interaction and integration. Southeast Asia, encompassed in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), is comprised of ten countries with various economies such like emerging economies like Indonesia and Vietnam to more established economies such like Singapore and Malaysia.

Over the years, ASEAN has been focusing on regional integration, through projects valuing ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) all of which promote trade liberalization, investment and economic cooperation in the region.(Porca-Konjikusic et al., 2024) There has been a significant increase in trade between the ASEAN and BRICS countries and China is the biggest trading partner of ASEAN. In 2022, the value of ASEAN-China trade exceeded 975 billion, which proves the strong economic relations between the two unions. Nevertheless, intra-ASEAN trade remains relatively low at around 23 percent of the overall region trade and that shows potential of expanding the regional integration (Lee, Sims & Lee, 2025).

With the addition of Middle Eastern nations, BRICS now has a new name BRICS Plus, and covers 45 percent of the world population, 25 percent of global trade and approximately 28 percent of global GDP hence was a good platform to reach out by the ASEAN members wanting diversified economic relations.(Porca-Konjikusic et al., 2024) The financial mechanisms that are proposed by BRICS, such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve

Arrangement (CRA), provide ASEAN countries with alternative sources of financing, as well as infrastructure construction and financial stability. Whereas the current mechanisms at ASEAN focus on regional relations and non-interference, BRICS provides a wider entry to economic cooperation, covering emergent technology, renewable energy, and trade facilitation.(Setiawan, 2025) Some ASEAN members e.g. Malaysia and Thailand are looking to join BRICS, and this may affect the cohesiveness and future implications of ASEAN in regional activities. The fact that BRICS might use ASEAN-type mechanisms of integration presents potential opportunities as well as challenges to the economic outlook in Southeast Asia.(Setiawan, 2025)

1.6.8 BRICS Diplomatic Engagement with Central Asia

The diplomatic engagement between BRICS and Central Asia have a large influence on the geopolitical rivalry and cooperation between China and Russia as the two most influential BRICS in the region. Being located in the heart of Asia, this region is strategically important and region rich in natural gas, oil, gold, and uranium reserves, which can be used as a buffer zone between the key global powers and a crucial link to trade, and energy resources as well.

Both Russia and China use soft power and cultural diplomacy to increase their sphere of influence and instruments such as Confucius Institute and Russian cultural centers to capture the hearts and minds.(Gumilyov & Gupta, n.d.) China concentrates on working with its vast economic potential and market influence in infrastructure building and creating connectivity via the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is an important component of its soft power politics in Central Asia. By 2022, 13 Confucius Institutes had been established in the Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, and their task is to promote the Chinese language and culture to limit Sinophobia in the region.

The investments that China makes are aimed at a win-win cooperation where economic links are formed despite the fears of the debt and unequal growth.(Gumilyov & Gupta, n.d.) Russia, having rich historical and cultural relations with this region, uses its soft power in different ways, such as by its organizations like Rossotrudnichestvo and its reach in the media. In some countries of Central Asia, the presence of Russian language as same dialect testifies to our cultural strength of influence. Thousands of students in Central Asia travel to Russia each year to attain higher education, and this people-to-people contact increases regional ties, but the soft power of Russia has slightly weakened as a result of the conflict in Ukraine, which is burdened on the region. In

general, the BRICS activity in Central Asia was the mixture of economic investments, cultural diplomacy, and geopolitical rivalry, where the economic powers of China and the historical impact of Russia define the development direction of the region equally.(Gumilyov & Gupta, n.d.; Sarvar, 2024)

1.7 BRICS Diplomacy And its New Policy Shift

BRICS has boosted its diplomatic activities to a great extent with the mission of defying the old global financial order that is strictly the domain of the western powers. Initially established to tackle the underrepresentation of the emerging economies in international affairs, BRICS has now become a strategic actor that promotes the more multipolar world order. The most notable element of this transition is its efforts to achieve financial sovereignty and de-dollarization in an effort to lessen the U.S dollar dependency and establish alternatives to financial entities, such as the IMF and the World Bank.

This new policy focus of BRICS is evident by the establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) that finances infrastructure development and stability, respectively, with no conditionalities attached by the Western financial institutions. The new BRICS+ expansion (such as to the Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Iran) only further bolsters the blocs diplomatic capacity on the global stage. By 2023, BRICS+ is already responsible for 25 percent of the world GDP and occupies over 42 percent of the world population, which means that the block is strategically situated to influence the future of global finances.

Now BRICS diplomatic activity revolves around promotion of South- South cooperation, endorsement of diversified international payments system, and response to paramount international issues like climate change and global security. Nevertheless, internal differences, especially between China and India, offer a problem to this emerging diplomatic approach. In spite of these, BRICS remains committed to global financial reforms, enhancing its role as proposer of Global South voice in reforming the global economic governance.

1.7.1 BRICS and De-dollarization

BRICS de-dollarization processes are a determined attempt by the organization to minimize reliance on the U.S. dollar, a core step that would upset the U.S-controlled monetary

system. Introducing local currencies in an attempt to stabilize trading settlements, BRICS countries Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are moving toward financial sovereignty that would eventually alter the face of the world economy. The BRICS+ growth continues to increase the influence of the bloc to include currently more than 30 percent of the global GDP and a very considerable share of world trade. This strength of economic capability affords BRICS+ the bargaining chip to make the shift toward a de-dollarization-based world. In their policy, BRICS countries have also started currency swap arrangements and established other financial institutions such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA).

These measures are meant to ensure the development of intra-block trade in local currencies that will minimize dollar-based exchanges.(Arnold, 2024) The increasing de-dollarization pattern in the BRICS can be seen as a strategic reaction to American hegemony in the world financial system as well as the expression of the greater geopolitical change. Under the leadership of nations such as Russia and China, BRICS+ is determined to break the monopoly by the U.S. dollar, proposing a multipolar version of the world economy that signifies the multifaceted economic realities of the Global South. This transition may be the beginning of other reserve currencies as the role of the dollar in the global economy and financial systems is reduced. The prospects of BRICS are also inseparably connected with de-dollarization in question that makes the group a significant participant in the new world financial system.

The BRICS+ countries appear to be in the process of diversifying trade, achieving financial autonomy and improving regional integration, they can spearhead a revolutionary change in international economic governance, lessening the dollar grip and improving a more general world financial system.(Arnold, 2024) On the other hands Trump threats to introduce 100 percent tariffs on the countries that are keep trying to de-dollarize and introduce BRICS currency highlights the fears of the United States in trying to sustain economic dominance, yet they might unintentionally facilitate the speed of what they seek to avoid. nations like Russia and China have already started to trade in local currencies, whereas the BRICS countries are considering other financial systems. The aggressive position of Trump may drive these countries to be even more isolated out of the U.S. economic influence that may lead to undermining the dollar supremacy in the global economy.(Singh Maini Tridivesh, 2025)

1.7.2 BRICS Challenging Western Political Hegemony

The BRICS are literally posing a challenge to the Western domination of politics (especially the United States), both economically and geopolitically. The rise of BRICS is a clear transition to a new world order, without reference to the G7 countries especially the U.S. which has long been the global powerhouse in terms of global governance. This shift is mostly promoted by the blistering economic development of the BRICS states that have already contributed to nearly a quarter of the global GDP, trade, and resources. To illustrate, BRICS countries ranked above 32 percent of the global GDP, and 25 percent of the foreign direct investment inflow into the world economy in 2022.(Merino & Tianjiao, 2025)

The strengthening of BRICS as a response to Western hegemony has possibly one of the most significant effects on its agenda, which is the acquisition of a more multipolar world order. BRICS countries have been attempting to transform international organizations such as United Nations and World Bank, calling to have more developing countries voice be represented in institutions. They have established the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) which are alternatives to Western-dominated financial institutions in their support of this reform agenda. Moreover, the process of BRICS enlargement with such countries as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the UAE exerts its influence on the most important regions such as the Middle East and Africa, and even further does to the delegation of global power.(Adnan, 2014; Merino & Tianjiao, 2025)

BRICS+ is also questioning the U.S.-led financial system through promoting a diversified international currency system, which will depend less on the U.S. dollar. BRICS+ controls a lot of the world natural resources as 44 percent of all world oil reserves, and close to 50 percent of world wheat production making it have good bargaining power in global trade. This economic power of influence is important because the group becomes an alternative to the established Western economy, giving developing countries a new perspective of growth and economic stability. Moreover, the growing influence of BRICS+ on the process of global governance marks the end of a unipolar world and the beginning of a multipolar one when the power is not concentrated in the hands of several Western states anymore.(Merino & Tianjiao, 2025)

1.7.3 BRICS and Global South Cooperation

BRICS has become a major actor in the advancement of South-South cooperation and in confronting global governance system dominated by the West. BRICS was initially formed to provide a louder voice of the emerging economies in the global forums, but now it is a platform dedicated to financial sovereignty, inclusive growth, and development of the Global South. Another important project of BRICS is the creation of the New Development Bank (NDB) that can be considered as a parallel to the systems such as the IMF and World Bank. NDB finances infrastructure projects and green sustainable development projects usually with fewer conditions as compared to conventional lenders. This strategy shows the desire of BRICS to facilitate the world order being multipolar and more equitable.

The core strategy of BRICS surrounds the south cooperation. The addition of South Africa has greatly boosted the bloc in its interaction with the continent of Africa particularly in the BRICS Plus approach.(Diko & Sempijja, 2021; Vinicius & Freitas, n.d.) This agenda also includes the non-member developing nations under cooperation, with the focus on developing investments in renewable energy, transport, and digital infrastructures. It also takes care of the infrastructure shortcomings as well as economic integration in Africa. The BRICS members however vary on their measure of engagement. South Africa focuses on development of the region and more FDI has been invested in Africa.

Brazil on the other hand, is more inclined at balancing its relations with the Global South and North, and most of the FDI is still concentrated on Europe and North America. All this has resulted in unequal economic results of BRICS cooperation.(Vinicius & Freitas, n.d.) Internal disparities notwithstanding, BRICS still aims to be an opposition to the G7 and G20, through de-dollarization, local currencies in trade, and worldwide issues such as the climate crisis and green development. Its initiatives are based on the desire to revolutionize world governance and to enhance the bargaining power of the developing countries as a bloc. The future performance of BRICS will be determined by its capacity to coordinate efforts internally and produce positive outcomes in the interests of the most vulnerable parts of the Global South. (Vinicius & Freitas, n.d.)

1.7.4 BRICS Diplomatic Expansion an Alternate to International Financial Institutions

BRICS has developed to become a strong organization that has challenged the hegemony of the Western system-dominated financial entities such as IMF and World Bank. BRICS Strategic diplomatic expansion and institutional innovation aim at transforming the landscape of world financial governance in a way that favors the interests of the Global South. A major one is the establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB) that was launched in 2015 with an initial capital of 32.8 billion.(Nach & Ncwadi, 2024) NDB funds infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies, and provides them with an alternative to the Western financial institutions by allowing loans without conditionalities. Together with NDB, Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) offers members to receive short-term liquidity support, a financial safety net that competes with IMF relief.(Nach & Ncwadi, 2024)

Diplomatic expansion has also come into BRICS in the form of BRICS+ where other states like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iran have been admitted to it. This enlargement will increase the Global presence of BRICS that can then serve as a more representative voice of the global south. The BRICS countries represent a combination of 25 per cent of the world GDP and more than 42 per cent of the world population as of 2023, which increases their overall presence in the international economy with regard to the global economic policy making process(Bouras & Bekhouche, 2025b) De-dollarization is among the strategic intentions of BRICS and means to decrease its reliance on the United States dollar in the international economy. BRICS encourages local currency trade and establishment of the currency swap line, which fosters financial independence and increases currency stability among the members.

However, in terms of reforms in the international financial governance, BRICS have a common position despite internal variations in their political systems and economic models. Its increased reach, institutional plans such as NDB and CRA, expansion under BRICS+ make the bloc look a plausible alternative to established financial giants providing emerging economies with a platform that suits their developmental needs.(Petry & Nölke, 2024)

1.8 Challenges to BRICS Diplomatic Engagement and to Its New Policy Shift

BRICS, is a diverse organization of emerging economies which have more interest in disrupting the conventional international order that is dominated by the western powers. Though BRICS has been able to advance forming an alternative global economy structure, such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA). On the other hands BRICS domestic differences provide a major problem to its diplomatic expansion. The political differences of the organization, including authoritarian states i.e. China and Russia and democratic states like India and Brazil, tends to have conflicting interests, especially on matters relating to human rights, economic independence and regional security.(Ullah et al., 2022)

Moreover, differences between China and India in their geopolitical and economic interests contribute towards conflict in BRICS, and beyond, and this has affected the ability of the block to offer a collective voice in its approach to global governance policy.(Ullah et al., 2022) Such disparities, especially in terms of economic models and regional power, might impede the potential of BRICS to provide an acceptable alternative to the Western-centered financial system and reduce its potential as the voice of the Global South in global economic and political reform processes. Unless these issues are effectively addressed, BRICS might not be able to reinforce its unity and act as an influential voice in the global arena.(Cooper, 2021b; Verma & Papa, 2021)

1.8.1 Political Difference

Political differences of the BRICS members are a major issue that may disrupt the full integration and coordination of the BRICS members. The BRICS countries were initially brought together by common reservation towards the Western power but their political structure, strategic and regional objectives are not similar. Such differences especially in governance models makes collective action and policymaking very hard in bloc.(Ullah et al., 2022)

It is also interesting to note that BRICS countries possess different political systems. Five of its members namely China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Iran are authoritarian or authoritarian tendency countries. On the other hand, India, Brazil and South Africa are democratic countries with levels of political openness. This difference in political regimes causes a discrepancy in the alignment of policies. democratic countries tend to focus on democracy and human rights when democratic countries can take the lead in BRICS discussions and its possible

future expansion. In this respect, Brazilian leadership under Lula Da Silva is motivated by ideas of democracy and human rights which is contrasted to the approaches to government dictated by the central control and limitations of political freedom by the leaders of China and Russia.(Ullah et al., 2022)

1.8.2 Economic Challenges

BRICS also has some economic problems that might hamper its diplomatic growth and expansion. Although the bloc has acquired significant influence, its expansion to BRICS+ with countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Egypt will come with challenges because of differences in the economic levels of these countries, political stability, and governance setups. Disagreements between member countries of the BRICS have occurred in terms of policy mainly between the stronger members such as China and India and newer members which do not have the same economic profile(Obajinmi & Garba, n.d.) On the external level, the need to create alternatives to the financial system currently dominated by the west poses a great challenge.

The purpose of BRICS is to lessen its dependency on the institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, nevertheless, paradoxes within the group such as incoherence in policy or geopolitical aggressions among the members hinder the development of the common policies to achieve economic autonomy. Moreover, dedollarization, although being on the rise, is met with opposition by such established forces as the United States and the European Union, threatening to impose economic sanctions and retaliatory politics.(Lee & Sims, 2024) Moreover, the new members such as Saudi Arabia and Iran introduce their territorial political conflicts into BRICS, complicating the collaboration on the world scale of financial matters.(Obajinmi & Garba, n.d.)

1.8.3 China and India Divergences

The differences of interest between China and India portray major implications on the diplomatic involvement and capability of BRICS to provide a collective representation in international governance. Even though both nations have dreamed of becoming rising powers, they have a contrasting approach to global institutions and leadership, especially in relation to BRICS, given the geopolitical interests, security interests, and economic interests.(Verma & Papa, 2021) Among the main points of disagreement, there is a leading role of China in BRICS. Being the second-largest economy in the globe, China has utilized its economic influence in

making some of the important decisions in the group, especially in the issues that pertain to the New Development Bank (NDB).

This move toward increased Chinese influence in the NDB demonstrates the jostling over leadership in the group, with India, as a voice of equality, desiring to see that smaller BRICS members had a fair voice in decision-making.(Verma & Papa, 2021) Further to the issue of economics, there are geopolitical tensions which widen the split. India has raised concerns of opposition to the Belt and Road Initiative by China; which it says aligns it with Pakistan, its regional competitor.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passing through the territories which are the project of BRI India raised serious concern that the project is disputed further fuels the anxieties regarding Chinese role in her furthering of influence in the region.(Cooper, 2021b; Verma & Papa, 2021) Further, China is pursuing a strong foreign policy in the Indo-Pacific, which is also opposed to the increasing India and U.S. and Japanese security linkages and their partnerships, especially those led by the Quad (a strategic grouping that exist between the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia). This increasing rapprochement between India and the western world is in contrast to the Chinese desire of remodeling the world order and an outright approach on things like trade and security(Cooper, 2021b)

CHAPTER-II

BRICS ENGAGEMENT WITH AFGHANISTAN AND ITS PROPECTS

The BRICS has been an avid supporter of multilateral cooperation and regional stability over the years. The BRICS member states have shown some careful yet tactical involvement with the Afghan Taliban Regime notwithstanding the threats posed by the Taliban rule in Afghanistan. This interaction highlights a delineated interest in Afghanistan i.e. humanitarian aid, regional stability, and growth, and it bases moving the international agreements on human rights concerns about the Taliban government. The representation of Afghanistan in the BRICS Kazan summit in October, 2024 was very conspicuous, as it was among state of geopolitical tensions between the Western powers and the BRICS.

Although the Taliban was not included in the summit due to its repressive policies, which include the abuse of women rights, the BRICS declaration on Afghanistan was relatively supportive. The declaration stressed that only a peaceful resolution in Afghanistan can enhance security in the region and it is necessary that inclusive governance, economic stability, and respect to the human rights are observed. (Vereycken, 2025) It however also demanded lifting of the ban on the education of girls, which was the BRICS approach to human rights without using the isolationist approach. BRICS countries have always been supporting the sovereignty of Afghanistan against Western-led sanctions.

Particularly, Russia, China, and India have underlined the necessity to provide humanitarian aid and to develop the economy of Afghanistan. The BRICS diplomatic approach

is different from the Western nations, where they described the regimen of the Taliban, repression of the female population and the inability to develop an inclusive political government (Kealy Courtney, 2021). That's why West insists on sanctions, isolation, where on the other hand's BRICS say that sanctions only give a boost to the hardliners in the Taliban leadership, and this is counterproductive to the moderate voices in Afghanistan. moreover, Chinese and Russian leaders have already expressed the concerns regarding an unfreezing of Afghanistan assets, which had been frozen by U.S.

The BRICS countries view such resources, which played a central role in economic recovery of Afghanistan as essential towards assisting this country rebuild its war-torn economy and meet its dire human needs. BRICS states, especially China and Russia, are seeking economic relations with Afghanistan, especially in infrastructure building and energy sectors. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by China has been a major pillar in its interactions with Afghanistan. Beijing considers Afghanistan not just as the critical component of its overall approach to the region but also as the potential partner in constructing an energy corridor. Russia, however, has been engaged in diplomatic efforts that seek to promote peace and guarantee that Afghanistan is a productive economically instead of a threat to stability.

This economic participation is a component of the larger initiatives of Afghanistan stabilization through expanding its infrastructure, energy and trading opportunities. These initiatives will likely enhance the internal security within Afghanistan, although this will benefit the Central Asian region as a whole. Simultaneously, these nations are also keen not to sanction the Taliban government policies, especially in issues relating to jeopardizing human rights. BRICS have encouraged independence and economic growth of Afghanistan, but they have also insisted on the necessity of immediate humanitarian aid. In each of summit statements, BRICS explicitly requested the smooth provision of aid to the Afghan state, with special respect to the social condition of women, children, and minorities. The group has also encouraged the removal of sanctions hindering the provision of basic services, including care and education to the Afghan people (Kealy Courtney, 2021).

This is contrary to the position of western countries which hold that financial aid must be coupled with the respect of human rights and freedoms and democracy by the Taliban. The fact that Taliban has officially sought an invitation to global forums like the BRICS summit reveals that the group wants to be internationally recognized. However, the recognition of Taliban is under process if internal contradictions that are inherent in this group are eliminated and working for inclusive governance. In spite of this international recognition, the Taliban still imposes restraining laws such as the famous law on propagation of virtue and prevention of vice which restrict the freedoms of women and imposes conservative definitions of Islam.(A. Gul, 2024)

The BRICS countries have taken a favorable position regarding Afghanistan sovereignty but are careful in terms of diplomatic relations with the Taliban, urging the government to take practical measures toward broader governance. Through such a dual diplomatic tools of BRICS nations would want to create regional stability and at the same time make sure that Afghanistan will not be more isolated than it already is since the Taliban took over. The future of Afghanistan is potentially, therefore, old to lie in the response of international actors to achieve a balance between pragmatism and principle in their interactions with Kabul.(A. Gul, 2024)

2.1 China as Member State of BRICS and Its Engagement with Afghanistan

The Chinese as member of BRICS and its involvement in Afghanistan, has attracted special attention in recent years. The strategic geographical position of Afghanistan as a crossroad of Central Asia, the Middle East, and the South Asia region makes it an important ally of the broader Chinese geopolitical and economic interests. This location places Afghanistan as a significant avenue in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by China as the core of the Chinese foreign policy interest in the BRICS platform. The Silk Road has a long history in linking China to Afghanistan that has been reconnected in modern times under the BRI where the mineral resources of Afghanistan including copper and lithium have become important economic assets to Beijing.(Ali Anosh & Author2025;

Security issues, especially the unstable situation in Afghanistan and the threat of the Uighur militants to the Xinjiang province of China, have significantly influenced the interests of China in Afghanistan. China being a member of BRICS has used this advantage to boost the

position of Afghanistan in regional connectivity initiatives. An unstable security environment has weakened the desire of Beijing to have a large-scale foreign direct investment. Specifically, the Chinese government would be more reluctant to diversify its economy beyond China unless it can get the assurances of political stability. As part of its BRICS involvement, China aspires to bring Afghanistan into the regional infrastructure projects, especially in the Wakhan Corridor, which will play a vital role in connecting China with Central and south Asian regions. This will fit into the broader strategic interests of China not just in terms of economic growth but to increase its geopolitical leverage of the BRICS, which favors regional cooperation and development of infrastructure.

2.1.1 China: Political Engagement with Afghan Taliban Regime

Chinese political engagement with Taliban regime in Afghanistan is associated with its position in BRICS and its geopolitical strategy in Central Asia and south Asia. China is one of the major BRICS members and thus regards Afghanistan to be a high-stakes zone of regional stability, which not only affects its security but also affects the strategic agendas of the BRICS combination. After the Taliban returned to power in 2021, China has been cautious, providing de facto recognition to the Taliban without giving it full diplomatic recognition. This is the result of a delicate balance by China between protecting its interests and preserving unity among BRICS and not acting directly confrontational against other world powers.(Cox Michael, 2022; Fischer & Stanzel, 2021) One of the most important reasons why China has engaged the Taliban is to safeguard its security interests, specifically regarding its western province of Xinjiang that shares borders with Afghanistan.

The fact that the Taliban have good relationship with some extreme elements, including the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), is a direct threat to Chinese stability, China has urge Afghanistan stabilization specially to propel their security collaboration program. This will involve the cooperation with the other BRICS members, including Russia and India, in counter-terrorist activities and combating extremism spreading outwards to Central Asia and other countries out of Afghanistan.(Fischer & Stanzel, 2021) Moreover, the political influence that China has on the Taliban can be seen as a part of a larger agenda of BRICS to establish a multipolar world order and diminish Western involvement in the global governance.

By engaging with the Taliban on the diplomatic channel, China aims at securing that Afghanistan does not go into a failed state situation, which would destabilize the region and hurt the progress of various projects, such as the Belt and Road Initiative.(Sarwar Fareeha & siraj Uzma, 2021) The BRICS states particularly China and Russia have been worried due to the spillover of instability in Afghanistan and both countries try to cooperate the crisis in Afghanistan which shows unity in the group. The fact that China has been recognizing the Taliban guardedly and the influence in BRICS makes China a pivotal figure in determining the future of Afghanistan.

Using diplomatic channels and symbiotic relations as a part of the BRICS organization, China seeks to make sure that Afghanistan stays stable.(Umami & Cipto, 2023) The policy of China to support its interests in Afghanistan, build unity in BRICS and push its regional agenda in Central Asia. Using its power within the group, China will aim to shape the politics of Afghanistan to meet its regional security needs and wider geopolitical agenda, whilst also maintaining the relevance of BRICS on the future stability of Afghanistan.(Cox Michael, 2022)

2.1.2 Economic Interest of China in Afghanistan

The economic interests that China has in Afghanistan have become much more prominent since President Xi Jinping came into power and this especially in the context of BRICS involvement in the region. China, being one of the most prominent representatives of BRICS, seeks to incorporate Afghanistan to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the framework of its economic agenda, striving to build stronger ties between the regions and stabilize the economy in Afghanistan. Afghanistan, strategically located between South Asia and Central Asia, has played a critical role in the Chinese quest to establish transcontinental trading modes and further cements its role within the BRICS alliances.(Ali, 2022) China projects such as the BRI, is helping upgrade Afghanistan infrastructure, i.e. the Kabul Railway Network and the building of air corridors to facilitate easier trade exchange. these projects are consistent with BRICS vision of economic development in developing countries, which can help Afghanistan in its integration into the global economy.

Additionally, China has been especially keen on mining the abundant natural resources in Afghanistan, e.g., copper and oil through some of the state-owned corporations like Metallurgical Corporation of China (MCC) and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), to make economic use of the natural resources found in Afghanistan.(Clarke, 2016) China also has strategic security and political interests in Afghanistan, especially with Russia and India. The BRICS engagement focuses on regional stability, fighting terrorism, and economic growth between parties, and all of these are critical elements of the Chinese role in Afghanistan. The increased influence of China in Afghanistan is part of the BRICS plans to expand economic and security integration in the region to help stabilize Afghanistan in the long term.(Ali, 2022)

2.1.3 Wakhan Corridor and China Strategic Interest

The strategic interests of China in Wakhan Corridor also resonated with the greater involvement in the BRICS framework including that of China its relationship with Afghanistan. China, being a member of BRICS, has focused on regional connectivity and economic integration which it has been doing in Afghanistan. The Wakhan Corridor is a narrow corridor connecting Afghanistan to Xinjiang, a region in China, and it stands as the crossroad between China, Central Asia, and wider. It is a key corridor of China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which aims to strengthen trade routes linking China to Europe and Middle East, thereby strengthening regional connectivity.(Sarbiland & Stanikzai, 2024)

The infrastructural projects being done by China in the Wakhan Corridor including road, energy projects, is helping Afghanistan integrate into the other parts of the world in terms of trading, where they will have access to important markets. It is important because BRICS countries focus on economic cooperation and development, and Afghanistan is a strategic position an important transit point when moving trade and resources. Enhanced connectivity and infrastructure will be not only an economic boost to China but also benefit Afghanistan, in giving it a platform to grow economically, and may ultimately place it on a higher level when it comes to its BRICS involvement with Afghanistan.(Sarbiland & Stanikzai, 2024) In term of the geopolitical implication, China increased its presence in the Wakhan Corridor, emphasizing its voice in BRICS as its economic power plays on the security situation and foreign policy of Afghanistan.

This strategic engagement emphasizes the Chinese aspiration of a Central Asia with increased integration through enhanced economic and political proximity to the BRICS member states. (Sarbiland & Stanikzai, 2024) The role of China in Afghanistan also plays a significant role in the framework of its wider strategic interests. The security dynamics of Afghanistan have a central role in the Chinese relations with its BRICS counterparts and in the quest to achieve regional stability. China attempts to stabilize Afghanistan as part of their global security ambitions, to protect its investments in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its interest in the Xinjiang region.

2.1.4 China Security and Terrorism Response to Afghanistan

The resurgence of the Taliban has increased concern in China regarding the TIP and ISKP, but also the prospect of Afghanistan acting as a haven to militant organizations that destabilize the entire region and potentially impact Chinese economic initiatives. Afghanistan was not initially a major part of BRI because of its security risk to the projects, but has gained traction as China seeks to secure a corridor to connect Afghanistan with Pakistan and other parts of Central Asia, which are essential part of regional connectivity and successful projects such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). (Deon Canyon & Sitaraman, n.d.; Kam, 2022) On other hands the role of BRICS states in Afghanistan, especially Russia and China, is two-pronged, aimed at combating terrorism as well as developing the Afghan economy.

The China role in BRICS platform offers an avenue to Afghanistan to participate in multilateral diplomacy china international diplomacy for Afghanistan, such as promoting the removal of the international sanctions on Afghanistan, contributes to the battle against the terrorism and extremism within Afghanistan. This is not just to reduce the presence of militant organizations like TIP, and ISKP but also to enhance its economic interests in the long-term, especially, in infrastructure development and trade-corridors using Afghanistan. (Deon Canyon & Sitaraman, n.d.) In addition, the strategic involvement of China in the BRICS highlights its eagerness in ensuring regional security as the need of mutually assistive strategies in counterterrorism and political stability in Afghanistan. Hence, the Afghanistan offers China both a challenge and an opportunity: on the one hand, it has to handle the security issues of

Afghanistan, but on the other, it applies its status to multilateral solutions that cater to its own strategic interests in the geopolitical and economic perspectives.(Kam, 2022)

2.1.5 China Humanitarian Efforts to Afghanistan

China has played a steady humanitarian role in Afghanistan, given their massive aid whenever natural catastrophes and other socio-economic issues arise. In June 2022, China promised to give a rescue fund of 50 million Yuan (about 7.5 million US dollars) after a disastrous earthquake in Southern Afghanistan caused more than 1,000 deaths. In this assistance, they provided tents, folding beds, blankets and other necessary supplies through various flights to Kabul International Airport.(Xinhua, 2025)

The ceremony was also attended by Chinese Ambassador Wang Yu and led by Afghan officials who also acknowledged bilateral cooperation between the two countries even in times of crisis. Besides emergency relief, China has also offered support to Afghan refugees. In February 2025, China donated tents and other humanitarian aid to Afghan refugees fleeing Pakistan. A returning exile also shared gratitude that the tents provided by the China Aid group provided an element of comfort and security during their resettlement. Moreover, the Chinese aid process has played a critical role in food security. At the end of 2024, almost 250,000 Afghan citizens have been provided with food packages with wheat flour, vegetable oil, yellow split peas, and salt in different provinces. These efforts demonstrate the willingness of China to promote humanitarian interests in Afghanistan and enhance good relations as well as to stabilize the region.(Xinhua, 2025)

2.2 India As BRICS Member and Its Engagement with Afghan Taliban Regime

The Indian diplomacy in relation to Afghanistan, especially related to the rise of the Taliban to power in 2021, is highly impregnated with strategic, political, and humanitarian considerations. The fact that India is an active BRICS member and a very valuable part of the picture creates a level of complications to its strategy. India has historical friendship with Afghanistan and the relations were good since 2001-2021 during the administration under Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani whereby India extended a lot of developmental aid and infrastructure developments. These ties were however tense in the time of Taliban during their first regime (1996-2001), the time fraught with ideological and geopolitical variance a mantle that still affects the approach of India towards Afghanistan.(Ganaie & Ganaie, 2022)

India's diplomacy towards Afghanistan has primarily relied on a soft power approach, emphasizing economic, cultural, and humanitarian diplomacy rather than military intervention (Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.). Post-9/11, India focused on rebuilding Afghanistan's infrastructure through projects like the India-Afghanistan Friendship Dam, the Zaranj-Delaram Highway, and the Afghan Parliament Building.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.) India also provided extensive scholarships and training programs to Afghan students and public servants, fostering positive sentiments towards India among ordinary Afghans.

The re-emergence of the Taliban in August 2021 posed a serious problem to India, especially when viewed in the backdrop of the BRICS, as India had never directly confronted the group because of its relation to Pakistan as well as its connection with terrorism.(Verma, 2021) Nevertheless, India had to be relatively influential, even by allowing the collapse of the Afghan government, because it invested heavily in the non-military enhancement of the country long before. The Indian reaction to the return of the Taliban was the humanitarian supply of food, including wheat and medical supplies, indicating that BRICS was oriented toward humanitarian aid and development.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.; Ganaie & Ganaie, 2022)

India is worried about the Taliban regime having friendly relationships with Pakistan and they are likely to be more terrorist in India especially in Kashmir.(Verma, 2021) Irrespective of all these concerns, India has shifted on the more pragmatic path of ensuring that it has to deal with the Taliban to protect its interests in the region. It can also be seen in the fact that India supported the UN security council resolution that recognized Taliban as a state actor despite the unwillingness to support the group in its entirety.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.) The policy of India towards Afghanistan particularly during the leadership of the Taliban is the act of balancing of interests between strategic, regional and humanitarian goals.

Although the revival of the Taliban is a problematic issue, Indian soft power, aimed at economic and cultural interaction, remains an essential aspect of interaction between India and Afghanistan, being simultaneously aligned with the overall initiatives of BRICS, which are related to the development, and multilateral communication.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.) Traditionally, Afghanistan has enjoyed a centralized location, being geographically placed within a crossroad

of South Asia and Central Asia. The Indian involvement in Afghanistan has been in terms of diplomatic relations but has changed from one regime to another. Following the collapse of the Taliban regime in 2001, India turned heavily involved in the reconstruction of Afghanistan, investing in development projects and giving huge amounts of financial assistance. Nonetheless, after the Taliban regain power in 2021, it presented difficulties to India with its traditional approach, particularly as it adjusted relationships.(Ganaie & Ganaie, 2022)

2.2.1 The Geo-strategic Interests of India in Afghanistan After the Taliban Regime

The Indian involvement in Afghanistan with Taliban rule can be viewed as an encouragement of Indian geostrategic interest as well as its role in BRICS. Initially, India shut its diplomatic missions in Afghanistan when the Taliban rapidly took over power in August 2021, as it was considered a proxy of Pakistan. But soon India realized how the Taliban had come to have its own autonomy especially in its foreign policy, and this became an opportunity to India to re-establish itself and exert its influence in Afghanistan.(Ahmed & Ahlawat, 2024) The major interests of India in Afghanistan are the stability of the region, preventing the influence of Pakistan, and making sure that Afghanistan will not be used as a platform to attack India, specifically in Kashmir through terrorism. Moreover, India aims at ensuring that the country will gain access to Central Asia by meeting through the advantage of the geographical position of Afghanistan, which can benefit India in terms of a strong geopolitical position in the framework of BRICS.

India has also been collaborating with other members of the BRICS such as Russia and China who also have interest in Afghanistan. Indian involvement in Afghanistan is predetermined by its interest to reduce the strategic depth of Pakistan especially in the expansion of the Chabahar Port in Iran, which offers India a second trade route to Central Asia.(Datta, 2021) This changing landscape in Afghanistan poses a lot to BRICS intervention in the Taliban regime. Members of the BRICS, especially Russia and China, have taken realistic paths in relations with the Taliban since they have their political and economic interests in Afghanistan, including energy and regional stability.

Although India is being cautious, it should be noted that the involvement of India in BRICS would provide a platform to leverage against its soft power-based involvement of Afghanistan with comparison to the hard power-approach that is also being employed by the

other members of BRICS. India is still contributing to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan by extending aid even as it finds unity with the BRICS partners to ensure stability in the region and combat extremism.(Ahmed & Ahlawat, 2024) Additionally, the united BRICS approach on the situation in Afghanistan (afghan-led peace process) coincides with Indian traditional approach on what India has always insisted on, a stable and independent Afghanistan. India development schemes in Afghanistan such as the construction of roads, and humanitarian supports still consider India to hold some of its influence even under the Taliban regime, helping to counter the strong connection between the Taliban and Pakistan.(Ganaie & Ganaie, 2022)

2.2.2 Political Diplomacy of India and Recognition of Afghan Taliban

The political diplomacy of India towards the recognition of the Taliban, is driven by a number of strategic and geopolitical interests. Although Afghanistan has been experiencing an economic crisis after the Taliban regained control in August of 2021, India has been cautious. In the past, India is an important trade partner of Afghanistan, and the exports of India constituted 47 percent of the total exports of Afghanistan in 2019. These relations were however destabilized by the emergence of Taliban as trade declined because of the instability. Nonetheless, India has taken a diplomatic approach to Afghanistan, opening its embassy in Kabul in June 2022, an indicator that India is ready to restart their ties with careful considerations.(Sajid Nadwi Mohamed, 2022)

The Chinese however have welcomed the Taliban with a greater focus on stability to advance their Belt and Road Initiative that affects Indian Ocean geopolitical situation. The reluctance of India to openly acknowledge Taliban, is based on the cross-border terrorism fear, in particular the connection between Haqqani network and Pakistan. The presence of the Taliban in the Afghan government and their connection with the Pakistan intelligence services has also made the Indian situation difficult. Even though India has been reluctant to give formal recognition, it has been active in diplomacy and balancing between its interests in Afghanistan and the political and security costs involved. India will tread this tricky path very carefully putting at counterbalance the interests of regional security and the necessity to preserve its presence in Afghanistan.(Sajid Nadwi Mohamed, 2022)

2.2.3 Economic Diplomacy of India

Economic diplomacy between India and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan has changed considerably since the Taliban regime moved back into power in August 2021. Before this transition, India enjoyed a positive trade relationship with Afghanistan, with the exports amounting to 825.78 million at the end of the fiscal year 202021 and imports worth 509.49 million. But as of 2023-24, Indian exports to Afghanistan had dropped to a 16-year low of \$355.45 million, whilst imports soared to an all-time high of \$642.29 million, leading to a record Indian trade gap with Afghanistan.(sharma Harikishan, 2025) The major imported good to Afghanistan is the agricultural goods like figs, asafetida, raisins, apples, garlic, saffron, fennel seeds, almonds, apricots, onions, pomegranates, and walnuts. Significantly, during 2023-24, India imported 29,123 tonnes of fig with virtually all the supply coming in through Afghanistan.

Moreover, Afghanistan has become one major apple supplier to India being ranked third after Iran and Turkey in the same financial year.(sharma Harikishan, 2025) Notwithstanding this trade imbalance, India has maintained its diplomatic relations with the Taliban regime. In January 2024, the Indian Foreign Secretary, Vikram Misri, travelled to Dubai to meet the Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi. The conversations centered on using greater trade ties and examining the use of the Chabahar port of Iran, geographically positioned waterway that enables the Indian to skip Pakistan seaports, dealing directly with Afghanistan.(sharma Harikishan, 2025)

On the other hand, the economic relations between India and Afghanistan has played a great role towards the development of the region. Other major initiatives like the India-Afghanistan friendship Dam, the Zaranj-Delaram Highway, and the Afghan Parliament building among others exemplify the Indian interest in developing the infrastructure in Afghanistan. Such contributions did not only enhance the development of Afghanistan, but also caused divisions within the Taliban ruling group as the moderates urged the government to maintain finances ties with India against the fundamentalists who wanted ties cut. Focus on economic assistance has enabled India to exercise influence even though presence of the Taliban since the overthrow of the former regime posed political problems.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.)

2.2.4 India Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy has also been an important aspect of India engagement with Afghanistan which has led to educational reforms and fostering person to person contacts. India

has granted scholarships and vocational training to Afghan students, constructed educational institutions such as the Afghan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University and sponsored training programs to Afghan public personnel. This cultural outreach has not only enlightened the Afghan youth but also transmitted democratic principles and values creating the long-term development of the country. Through its cultural power, India has also contributed to the evolution of the educational system in Afghanistan, which is likely to become instrumental towards political change in the future.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.)

India has significantly contributed towards capacity building and education provisions in Afghanistan to facilitate sustainable development. India has added value to development of skilled manpower and better human resource through different programs like scholarships, training programs and educational infrastructure projects. This has been boosted by programs such as the India-Afghanistan Small Development Projects whereby many educational opportunities have been opened especially in the rural areas and the establishment of educational centers like the Afghanistan-India Friendship School. This emphasis on education sustains long-term sustainability and self-sustainability of Afghanistan.(Raja & Rani, n.d.)

2.2.5 India's Humanitarian Aid Efforts in Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, India has been quite active in offering humanitarian assistance, especially during the different crises, such as natural disasters and continuing conflicts. India has also contributed more in terms of food and medical supplies to Afghanistan, such as 1 million tonnes of wheat in 2008 and high-protein biscuits to Afghan schoolchildren through the World Food Programme, over the years. After the Taliban took power once again, India also helped them by donating 40,000 metric tonnes of wheat in early 2022 and more medical supplies in 2023 as part of combating the humanitarian crisis. India too is sending disaster relief items, anti-TB drugs and vaccines. Moreover, India had supplied 28 tonnes of emergency materials following a disastrous earthquake in June of 2022. The objectives of India in providing aid are to reduce suffering, immediate humanitarian support and the resilience of Afghanistan communities. Such initiatives show that India still remains concerned about the well-being of Afghanistan despite the complicated political and security landscape.(Raja & Rani, n.d.)

2.2.6 India Interest in Afghanistan and its Regional Dynamic:

The interest of India in Afghanistan is strategic, economic and security oriented depending on regional dynamics. The major issue of India is to counter the Pakistani influence particularly after Taliban regained control. Pakistan is a regional competitor with long-established relations with the Taliban, which is a security threat to India(Bibi Hamida et al., 2024). India has invested in the development of infrastructure in Afghanistan and aids Afghanistan through humanitarian interventions to build goodwill as well as access to Central Asia, using Afghanistan as a trading route to resources of energy and goods. Increased Indian involvement with Afghanistan, despite the Taliban influence, demonstrates India striving to protect its presence and overcome its strategic block by Pakistan. The natural resources of Afghanistan up to the value of 1 trillion are another source of the competition with China due to their infrastructure investments using the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)(Bibi Hamida et al., 2024)

2.3 Russia As BRICS member and Its Engagement with Afghan Taliban Regime

As one of the founding members of BRICS, Russia has always operated its foreign policy in a way that enables it to increase its power in the region and around the world. The initially established BRICS, an organization of emerging economies, has since expanded to become a substantive geopolitical and economic block.

The participation of Russia in BRICS no longer only contributes to having the status of a world power, but also provides an opportunity to take on influence over economic growth, matters of security, and political communication, especially regarding Afghanistan. (Janse, 2021) The Russian relations with the Afghan Taliban show its overall regional and security interests, especially the interest in Central Asia. Although the takeover of the Taliban in 2021 presented a considerable challenge to stability in the region, Russia has acted with pragmatism in this mindset. In contrast to most Western states, Russia did not rush to condemn the Taliban and chose a more context-sensitive stance, striving to retain influence and stability in the region.

The relevance of Moscow is that it does not want to see Afghanistan turn into a hub of extremist groups, especially the ISIS-K, which directly threatens the security of Russia and its allies in the region of Central Asia.(Kaura, 2021) Russia diplomacy with Taliban involves the promotion of dialogue along with a counter-terrorist collaboration and a balancing of strategic

interests. Russia does not want any slippage to chaos in Afghanistan since that would destabilize its borders and raise the possibility of spill over jihadist activities in Central Asia. Russia also wants to establish itself as a regional power, as the U.S. looks to exit the region, by keeping ties with the Taliban.

Moreover, Moscow also exerts political pressure on the Taliban with a view to affecting the political and security situation in Afghanistan, especially regarding the Central Asian republics bordering Afghanistan.(Sullivan, 2023) Being a part of BRICS has enabled Russia to extend its diplomatic leverage and deal with such nations as China, and India which have considerably vested interest in the future of Afghanistan. Such a collaboration helps Russia to shape the greater regional reaction to the destabilization of Afghanistan as well as to establish itself as a major regional player in the whole endeavor of stabilizing the region.

Although the Taliban is not an officially accepted government by Russia, Russia-Afghanistan relations are strategically based upon a long-term perspective of regional influence, economic partnership, and security stability.(Janse, 2021; Kaura, 2021) Russia as a central power in BRICS has enhanced its status in the global order hence it has been able to deal with Afghan Taliban as a power. The main goal of Moscow is to limit the threat of security generated by Afghanistan, especially the risk of destabilization of Central Asia, and defend its hegemony in constructing the future of the region as well.(Sullivan, 2023)

2.3.1 Russia Geo political and strategic Interest in Afghanistan

The reason Russia may have to be involved in Afghanistan is based on its regional ambitions and geopolitics. Traditionally, Afghanistan has been of great interest to Russia especially with regard to the wider plans of the country to preserve its dominance in Central Asia. Russia considers the region as its near abroad and tries to make Afghanistan part of Russia sphere of influence. The collapse of the Soviet Union and its attempts to intervene in Afghanistan in the 1980s continues to frame the Russian approach, albeit to a lesser extent because Russian policy has become more apprehensive and realistic since that time(Sharan & Watkins, 2021). With the U.S. withdrawal in Afghanistan, Russia realized a chance to play a greater role in the region. Moscow has also been keen on redefining itself as a major influencer in Afghanistan peace talks holding peace talks and cultivating contacts with the Taliban. Russia, through its involvement with the Taliban, seeks to consolidate its influence in Afghanistan

weakening the role of the Western powers, especially the U.S., in the determination of the future political landscape in Afghanistan.(Lewis, 2020; Sharan & Watkins, 2021)

Moreover, Russian strategic interest is not limited to Afghanistan only. Afghanistan is perceived by Russia as a potential outreach to its influence to South Asia, Middle East and Central Asia. This is especially relevant as Russia is keen to increase its place in global power and challenge U.S. supremacy. The fact that Moscow is actively involved in the diplomatic affairs of Afghanistan enables it to improve its relations with the states of the region, including Iran and Pakistan, and to solidify its role in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which plays a leading role in regional adjoining in the scope of economy and security.(Mankoff, 2023)

The geopolitical importance of Afghanistan can also be seen as the location at the cross point between South Asia, Central Asia, and Middle East. Because of increased involvement in Afghanistan, Russia will now be in a better position to control the situation in Central Asian countries thus securing its control of the region and minimizing influence of western countries. Hence, the Russian involvement in Afghanistan is encompassed in its wider campaign to establish its influence on major regional and global power balances, reduce the U.S. presence in this region, and protect its strategic interests in Central Asia.(Mankoff, 2023; Sharan & Watkins, 2021)

2.3.2 Economic Diplomacy of Russia With Afghan Taliban

Russia has been actively engaged in economic diplomacy in relation to the Taliban rule in Afghanistan, especially in terms of oil trade and the economic affairs of that region. Since the takeover of power by Taliban in 2021, trade relations between Afghanistan and Russia have widened, although both countries face numerous global sanctions. In 2022, Afghanistan imported 246,000 tons of Russian oil and in 2023, this number tripled reaching to more than 710,000 tons. The trade in oil has grown above 300 million, and the deals to import more gasoline, diesel, and liquefied petroleum gas have been agreed upon.(Dawi, 2023) Despite banking sanctions limiting its financial transactions, the Taliban has been able to continue trading with Russia in huge amounts, avoiding the financial systems of the west. The Taliban attempts to diversify its

business have been supported by immense oil and gas demands of Afghanistan, coupled with economic hardships as a result of the withdrawal of international support in the wake of the U.S. exit.(Krivosheev Kirill, 2024)

The involvement of Russia in Taliban can be considered to be strategic as the two states are currently in a state of diplomacy but cannot afford a direct conflict with the western forces. It is remarkable that Russia has not provided aid to fund the humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, as the U.S. deeply contributed. The attitude of Russia to Afghanistan and the Taliban is referred to as ambivalent, as the country tries to balance its geopolitical interests of the sphere to counter U.S. influence along with minor trade activities.(Dawi, 2023; Krivosheev Kirill, 2024)

2.3.3 Russia security and Counter-Terrorism efforts with Afghan Taliban

As Russia continues to face rising instability by the various militant groups, such as ISKP, it has formed a complex security engagement with Taliban. Russia has kept a close eye and has been dealing with the Taliban in an attempt to control the extremist influence by reducing any possible terrorist attacks that may spill beyond its borders, especially those of the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP). ISKP has escalated its activities with an increased number of attacks, involving foreign players, and presenting a serious security threat to other countries sharing a border with Afghanistan, like Russia. Nonetheless, the Taliban remain to attack ISKP actively which has restricted its operations in Afghanistan.(Brown Vanda, 2024)

In the context of countering terrorism, Russia, together with other regional actors such as Iran and China, has been keen to reach a diplomatic solution with Taliban. The purpose of this cooperation is to stop future destabilization and halt the growth of terrorism. Nonetheless, the impact of Russia is insignificant because internal governance of the Taliban has not changed extensively, and Moscow does not have extensive economic or humanitarian help to Afghanistan. Usually, the fact is that Russia has been focused on intelligence exchange, particularly, in the struggle against ISKP, as well as the enhancement of military preparedness in Central Asia, as on its bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (Brown Vanda, 2024) In addition, Russia counterterrorism diplomacy goes beyond its regional strategy, as it has found allies in Iran and China to normalize ties with the Taliban, object to Western sanctions, and closed their borders to terrorist attacks.

But this collaboration fails to include the encouragement of significant internal changes and humanitarian achievements through the Taliban since Russia and its allies focus on issues of security in the region rather than the inner politics of the Taliban.(Brown Vanda, 2024) After the U.S. left Afghanistan in 2021, it has turned its attention to Central Asia as a geopolitical focal point of an area that fits its interests. This vacuum created by the withdrawal of the U.S. gave Russia a chance to exert its influence, propping itself as a major security provider in the Central Asia region, notably through the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The issue of non-traditional security threats, caused by Afghanistan and short-lived in Moscow, is extremely deeply rooted in the fear there; namely, about terrorism, drug trafficking, and even the possible spread of the unstable situation in the region to Central Asia.(Stepanova, 2022)

2.3.4 Russia Interest in Afghanistan and its Implication for Central Asia

When the Taliban came to power again, this caused concern to Russia, especially regarding proliferation of radicalism, militants and import of Afghan opiates onto Russian soil which emerged as a major health concern. Moscow has always valued regional stability, and underlined the necessity of group efforts form among the states of Central Asia to address those challenges. Nonetheless, Russia is also positioned to face challenges because of the strengthening relationship with the Taliban, which it seeks due to its pragmatic security reasons such as fighting against ISIS-K terrorist forces and dealing with drugs. In spite of such interactions, Russia is wary of the risk of further destabilization of the region by the Taliban. (Stepanova, 2022)

2.4 Comparative Analysis BRICS involvement in Afghanistan

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) can be seen as a strong force of emergent economies which seeks to reinvent global governance through economic coordination, regional stability, and multilateral diplomacy. Within the scope of Afghanistan however this interaction is extremely intricate due to the complexities of Taliban leadership since 2021. The BRICS have been strategic in their approach to the face of the future of Afghanistan through security, humanitarianism, economic interests, and political interests. This comparative study investigates the nature of BRICS member country interactions with regards to Afghanistan

following post-Taliban revival, the strategy of each BRICS member and that of the collective and individual stance of members state.

2.5 Geopolitics and Security Interests

2.5.1 Russia:

The geopolitical interest of Russia in Afghanistan can be explained by its historical legacy in the region, especially Central Asia. Afghanistan is strategically situated within the sphere of Russian influence, in its closer abroad, and the stability of this country is viewed as a major key to sustaining the control of the regional powers. When the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan in 2021, Russia faced a major strategic dilemma, yet it has chosen a pragmatic path. Russia has been keeping its diplomatic relations with the Taliban in an attempt to ensure that Afghanistan does not become a center of extreme groups and particularly those inclined towards destabilizing Central Asia. The issue of ISIS-K (Islamic State Khorasan Province) and other jihadist groups that represent a direct threat to the southern borders of Russia is the key concern of Moscow (Kaura, 2021). The diplomacy of Russia is being cautious by engaging in peace negotiations and making sure that Afghanistan does not through terrorism breeding activities which may have spillover into Central Asia. Russia will remain a major player in the Afghan security considerations through an involvement with the Taliban especially that the U.S and NATO troops have pulled out of the region. Moreover, the participation of Russia in BRICS gives it the possibility to seek a more equitable model of regional security, which lowers the presence of the West and enhances the multipolar world.(Kaura, 2021)

2.5.2 China

The Chinese interest in Afghanistan is based on both security and economic reasons. The geographic position of Afghanistan establishes it as a strategic pivot in China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a mega worldwide infrastructure development strategy that seeks to advance connectivity in regional economies. Beijing has been eager to assimilate Afghanistan into its overall economic plans and views the state as a key participant in the establishment of a transcontinental commercial pathway. Nonetheless, Chinese involvement in Afghanistan is conditional to security considerations especially with respect to the existence of East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a separatist group that attacks the Xinjiang region in China. Thus, the engagement of China with Afghanistan is a two-fold line of action, which implies economic

growth and stability in the area. It has taken a cautious approach in accepting Taliban as a de facto government without the full diplomatic recognition and has prioritized facilitating infrastructure projects e.g. Wakhan Corridor that will open a route to China through Central Asia and to South Asia. Although China is determined to stabilize Afghanistan economically, it also fears the security threat caused by the Taliban links with extremist groups. This cautious approach is found elsewhere in the overall Chinese approach to exercising power in the region, with using caution on its economic interests on the one hand and its security interests on the other hand. (Ali Anosh & Author, 2025)

2.5.3 India

India has a complicated relationship with Afghanistan due to its geopolitical issues and specifically its rivalry with Pakistan. India has always considered Afghanistan as counterbalancing the Pakistani influence in the region and as an opening to Central Asia. Traditionally, India contributed to Afghanistan development by its soft power initiatives, including issuing educational scholarships, constructing infrastructure, and supplying humanitarian aid. But the 2021 Taliban takeover has made India more complicated. India has not recognized the Taliban officially and has concentrated on preserving its influence by helping and diplomacy in the BRICS context. The main issues involving India is that Taliban have close contact with Pakistan, and Pakistan has always favored the rise of the Taliban to power. This relationship presents an aspect of security to India especially the continued insurgency in Kashmir. India, however, understands the need to engage with the Taliban in order to protect its greater interests in Afghanistan, including access to its trade routes into Central Asia, as well as its hold on influence in the region.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.)

2.6 Economy and Development

2.6.1 China

The Chinese economic-related interests in Afghanistan lie on resource extraction and infrastructure building, especially its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Afghanistan also has valuable mineral deposits in the form of copper, lithium, and rare earth metals that can be used in the Chinese industrial development. China has engaged in investments to develop trade corridors like the Wakhan Corridor that links Afghanistan to China and the rest of Central Asia. All these infrastructure projects would facilitate the incorporation of Afghanistan into the wider economic

system of China, benefiting Afghanistan and the region in general. China, through the BRI, is also seeking to improve the energy and transportation sectors in Afghanistan, one of which involves efforts to improve on trade flows and energy security. These projects are also in line with the BRICS objective to promote economic development of developing countries, most especially in strategic areas. The interest by China in economic cooperation can also be attributed to the fact that Afghanistan desperately needs infrastructural development that is critical to economic recovery of the country after the conflict.(Aliyev, 2022)

2.6.2 Russia

Economically, Russia has had less exposure to Afghanistan than China but its involvement has increased in recent years especially in the energy market. Russia has increased their trade relationships with Afghanistan especially in the energy fields such as oil and gas which is vital to Afghanistan energy needs. In 2022, Afghanistan imported 246,000 tons of oil from Russia, and in 2023, the purchase flow exceeded 710 000 tons. This trade relationship increased in spite of the international sanctions that has hit both Russia and Afghanistan. The economic diplomacy of Russia is based on its interests to achieve the access to energy resources as well as support its influence in Central Asia. In contrast to China, however, Russia has not engaged in megaprojects of infrastructure development in Afghanistan. It is more interested in its economic participation based on its desire not to see Afghanistan as an unstable partner in the region and also to constrain the role of Western powers in the economy of Afghanistan.(Dawi, 2023)

2.6.3 India

India has also been involved economically in Afghanistan, especially in areas of developmental assistance and infrastructural undertakings. India has also assisted Afghanistan in reconstruction through financing some of the activities like building of the India-Afghanistan Friendship Dam and the Zaranj-Delaram Highway and the Afghan Parliament building. These are the projects that were paramount to the economic growth of Afghanistan and facilitate India in sustaining its influence in the region, despite such political obstacles as the Taliban takeover. Nevertheless, India has since lost its interest in trade activities with Afghanistan since 2021, mainly due to the unstable conditions of Taliban domination. The political situation is also affecting the imports of India with Afghanistan which consists of agricultural items such as figs, saffron and pomegranates. However, India remains a humanitarian donor, which has been

supplying Afghanistan with wheat and medical supplies to exacerbate the current humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. Economic diplomacy of India would continue taking care of the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan and at the same time protecting its strategic interests in the region.(sharma Harikishan, 2025)

2.7 Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid

2.7.1 China

China has adopted a less open policy in regards to humanitarian work in Afghanistan as compared to other BRICS countries. China has been exercising some assistance such as food and medical supplies, but in overall terms its priority has been economic development. China has not been eager to join the wider human rights plan, especially the rights of women under the Taliban regime. Nonetheless, it has also advocated the removal of international sanctions that impede the delivery of humanitarian aid into Afghanistan, as it considers these sanctions as being opposed to the stability and recovery of the country(Sarwar Fareeha & siraj Uzma, 2021)

2.7.2 Russia

The involvement of Russia in the Afghanistan region has also been centered on the theme of regional stability, and less on the cases of human rights violations. Although Russia has been demanding the ongoing human relief, continuation of humanitarian aid as well as the support of Afghanistan sovereignty, it has been keen on its anti-terrorism efforts and security of the region. Russia has also been careful in its diplomatic relations between its geopolitical interests and little humanitarian assistance(Fischer & Stanzel, 2021)

2.7.3 India

India has played a leading role in offering humanitarian aid to Afghanistan especially following the re-emergence of the Taliban. Indian assistance has come in the forms of wheat supplies, medical supplies and disaster relief supplies. India has also been on the fore front to facilitate educational changes and capacity building in terms of scholarships and vocational training. These initiatives are congruent with the grander approach of soft power diplomacy that seeks to generate goodwill and long-lasting development in Afghanistan. India has also voiced its objections to the Taliban record on human rights, especially in the way it treated women and the ethnic minorities. Although India has not come out openly to interfere with the internal

affairs of Afghanistan, it has been articulate in the international circles to promote sense of respect to human rights and the administration of humanitarian assistance.(Ayaz & Jindal, n.d.)

2.8 Recognition and Political Diplomacy of the Taliban

2.8.1 China

The Chinese attitude towards the political legitimacy of the Taliban is more hesitant and practical. It has not officially called the Taliban the real government of Afghanistan but has interacted with the regime at diplomatic circles. The major focus of China is to provide stability in this region and to keep its strategic interests alive along the Belt and Road. China has not dared to criticize the Taliban governance style, but rather relied on practice-oriented collaboration with the new Taliban regime, especially in regard to infrastructure construction and security.(Fischer & Stanzel, 2021)

2.8.2 Russia

Russia has also been even careful on the Taliban recognition. Although it did not accept the Taliban government, officially, it used diplomatic relations and peace talks with the Taliban. The involvement of Russia reveals its interest in influencing the destiny of Afghanistan by using diplomacy to make sure that the country does not degenerate into anarchy and upset the region. The strategy of Russia is to engage in the multilateral frameworks to promote dialogue as well as a stable and secure partner in Afghanistan. (Ziegler Charles E., 2024)

2.8.3 India

India has not officially accepted the Taliban government and bases this on the fear of cross border terrorism and the Afghanistan-Pakistan relationship. Nonetheless, India has been conducting a diplomatic dialogue with the Taliban in order to protect its interests in respects of trade and regional stability especially. The Indian plan is to manipulate its strategic interests and the necessity of humanitarian aid and development in Afghanistan. The low-level diplomacy of India is an extension of its general policy towards Afghanistan of promoting stability and development but not complete support to the governance of Taliban.(Raja & Rani, n.d.)

CHAPTER-III

IMPACTS OF BRICS ENGAGEMENT WITH AFGHANISTAN: REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DIMENSION

BRICS ongoing engagement with Afghanistan is one of the driving factors of the development of the country in political, economic, and security landscape in the aftermath of the Taliban regime. As the geopolitical position of the Afghanistan is considered as a crossroad between South and Central Asia, BRICS countries, individual states interest, have much to say about the prosperity and stability in this region. This chapter discusses the complexity of effects of BRICS engagement with Afghanistan based on interviews and analysis conducted with experts. Politically, the BRICS as a bloc has been taking a different position concerning the recognition and legitimacy of Taliban regime over the years. Since Russia and China have been dealing with the Taliban, especially high-level diplomatic visits and economic activities, minor changes have occurred in the diplomatic position of Afghanistan.(Anonymous, 2025)

But there is increasing hope that the situation can be improved in the future as there is an interest in collaboration, as argued in the interviews conducted with such experts as Dr. Manzoor Afridi and Dr. Masood Khattak. However, the political discourse in Afghanistan is still very much placed in the context of the internal politics of power in Taliban and external national interests which tend to dominate over a cohesive diplomatic process lead by BRICS. The

possibility of Afghanistan joining BRICS-related organizations, including the New Development Bank (NDB), would enable the country to restore its economy. This would be possible with the help of infrastructure and resources mining projects. BRICS countries like China and Russia view Afghanistan as a big market full of natural resources. Broader projection of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to a country like Afghanistan by connection to projects such as CPEC would bridge South Asia and the Central Asian region. (Afridi Manzoor, 2025; Rehman Masood, 2025)

These developments are, however, related to the security issues in the region and that's why BRICS countries are concerned with the threat of terrorism and militancy posed by Afghanistan. BRICS involvement in Afghanistan is critical to the security implication of the region and the rest of the world. BRICS particularly Russia, India, and China have shown some progress in dealing with the issue of terrorism. This comprises anti-terrorism cooperation and sharing of intelligence. Nonetheless, sometimes the security agenda of BRICS does not always align with the interests of the regional power, including the U.S. and NATO. BRICS would be helpful in stabilizing the situation, as the geopolitical equilibrium in the region is altered. Nevertheless, there are still some issues because of the rivalries between adjacent nations such as Pakistan and India. This chapter draws these themes, relying on the expert opinion to comprehend what BRICS can bring to the political, economic, and security situation in Afghanistan. It explores the relations between Afghanistan and BRICS countries. The chapter gives ideas on how these engagements could influence the future of Afghanistan in the regional and the global order.

3.1 Political Participation: pathway to Conditional Recognition

The term of conditional recognition in Afghanistan by Taliban regime is a complicated process, involving the international forces. The BRICS as comprised of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa lacks a common position regarding the Taliban. The interests of each country are different. China and Russia interact with Afghanistan to minimize the presence of the West in Central Asian countries, as China pays special attention to trade with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Russia is worried about the stability of the region and combating global terrorism. India is more hesitating because of the connection of Taliban to Pakistan and Kashmir security problems. (Rehman Saeed, 2025) The involvement of India is even more reserved.

India has reengaged because of fears of Pakistani influence and regional terrorism and reopened its embassy in Kabul. Nevertheless, India links any possible official recognition of the Taliban to subsequent development in regards to terrorism management and minority rights and educational freedom, particularly to females. This is consistent with the more general position taken by BRICS at the 2024 Kazan Summit, where the group expressed strong support of Afghan sovereignty but sought the lifting of the Taliban's measure banning the education of girls. (Rehman Saeed, 2025)

Afghanistan may have a chance to be recognized since it has a chance of economic and political support of BRICS, particularly China and Russia. Efforts such as the BRI and infrastructure development might assist Afghanistan to rebuild. Nevertheless, this might also lead to the further involvement of Afghanistan in the world competitions. More instability may occur as the U.S tries to counter the influence of China and Russia.

Though BRICS economic assistance would benefit Afghanistan, rivalry between international factions would also negatively affect the state. (Rehman Masood, 2025) The involvement of Afghanistan in the BRICS associated economic activities such as the New Development Bank may provide stable funding, yet the conditions of the partnership may include political restrictions of Afghanistan. BRICS can assist Afghanistan to obtain an alternative to the Western influence, yet they may involve the country in geopolitical battles. How Afghanistan balances the interests of the BRICS members and the international community, in general, also determines the future of Afghanistan. Eventually, political involvement might result in conditional recognitions but this may also influence stability and sovereignty of Afghanistan. (Afzidi Manzoor, 2025)

3.2 BRICS Security and Counter-terrorism Efforts

Security has been recognized as one of the major problems facing Afghanistan. The revival of such organizations as the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) carries dangers, not only to the national level but also to the region as a whole. In this case, BRICS, especially China, Russia, and India, find something in common. The three countries consider terrorism as a red-line matter and have also tied their commitment with Afghanistan on their cooperation in terms

of countering terrorism. In case of India, the issue of security in terms of terror is directly associated with its traditional fears about cross-border militancy, especially those of Pakistan origin. India has also been under persistent attack by organizations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad who are based in Kashmir, and attack Indian soils. Such fears have influenced the Indian policies of countering terrorism, as it is one of the greatest proponents of regional security as well as cooperation in BRICS. (Tipu IhsanUllah, 2025)

India has also shown interest in more interaction with Central Asia and Afghanistan in dealing with the consequences of the influence of terrorist organizations and in gaining border security against regional instability. China on the other hand has their own security imperatives especially with the problem of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) a group based in Afghanistan and other regions that pose danger and threat to its territorial integrity in Xinjiang. The increased interest of China in this group has been the basis since China has sought to have some security commitments in Afghanistan through the Taliban to suppress ETIM. Also, China in BRICS is a way of aligning itself with the other world powers so that multilateralism is brought to the fight against terrorism in regions such as in Central Asia where China is at risk of militant expansion which can destabilize her western borders.(Rehman Masood, 2025)

Security concerns of Russia also coincide with the war on terrorism especially in Central Asia where terrorist organizations such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and ISKP have operated. Russia also considers Afghanistan a major defense line in combating the activities of these groups which have led to the instability of its other Central Asian republics. Russia has responded to this by getting more deeply involved in the region further collaborating with both China and Pakistan to make sure that the movement of the terrorist groups does not have a hold in the region. The stabilization of Afghanistan by Russia is also important to ensure that the ideas of extremism do not find its way into Russia.

Collectively, India, China, and Russia constitute an able trilateral convergence under BRICS in the context of counterterrorism and regional security. In spite of this variation, these countries had realized the need in collective security in combating terrorism, particularly in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Their unity in the fight against terrorism stabilizes their regions, and they form one force against the transnational threats. This strategic alignment does not only

benefit the countries involved, but also to the international community in general concerning the spread of terrorism and long-term peace and stability.

3.3 BRICS and Its Economic Impacts on Afghanistan

The interaction of BRICS with the interim Afghan Taliban government has a substantial effect on regional security and economic growth. The BRICS bloc, more specifically China, has understood that Afghanistan is a strategic trade hub linking Central Asia with South Asia, Europe and the Middle East.(Khanzeb Maulana, 2025)

3.3.1 Development of Wakhan Corridor:

Infrastructure and Connectivity: The Taliban government in Afghanistan is close to the completion of Wakhan Mountain Corridor, a road that is intended to boost economic links to China. It is a road connecting little Pamir in the province of Badakhshan, Afghanistan to the Chinese border, a distance of about 50 kilometers. The Wakhan Corridor is strategically located along the trade route between China, Europe and the Middle East. This is of great prospects to Afghanistan since it shall be a trade channel between Afghanistan and 41 countries, through which the cost of transporting goods between Afghanistan and China shall be drastically decreased. China has been eager to expand its Belt and Road Initiative by reaching an extension in Afghanistan with the use of the Wakhan Corridor as one major channel. (Khanzeb Maulana, 2025)

The corridor will give China a more previously established route to central Asia and greater access to the vital resources such as lithium, copper, and rare earth elements. (Rehman Saeed, 2025) Pakistan has also shown great interest in the Wakhan Corridor as a part of its interaction with Afghanistan. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is part of the BRI, also has a potential extension to Afghanistan, possibly enhancing greater trade and investment. (Khan Ihsan, 2025) China and Pakistan demand that Afghanistan risks fueling their security issues, such as the existence of militant organizations, notably the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP), in exchange of benefits through the Wakhan Corridor and infrastructure-related projects. (Khan Ihsan, 2025)

3.3.2 Economic Opportunities for Afghanistan

Natural Resources: Afghanistan is endowed with natural resources, with the estimates placing the mineral wealth at about 3 trillion dollars containing iron, copper and lithium. This gives Afghanistan a rich partner to other nations including BRICS members state such as China, Russia and India which have the need to get a constant supply of such resources in order to further their economic development. The experts such as Younis Mohmand, the chief of the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce highlights the potential of Afghanistan as an economic passageway between China and Central Asia. The Wakhan Corridor is likely to drive considerable economic development and address the main issues linked to imports and exports. (Khanzeb Maulana, 2025)

3.4 India Economic engagement and Its Impact on Afghanistan

The Indian role in the Afghan economy has been prominent, especially in the post-Taliban Afghanistan. India has invested in infrastructure development, education, and humanitarian aid with it having influence in the region. The following are some of the most important facts and statistics about the economic influence that India has on Afghanistan.(Rehman Masood, 2025)

3.4.1 Infrastructure Development

India has offered 3 billion dollars in aid to Afghanistan, and it has been investing in infrastructure development projects such as roads, power plants and hospitals. Key examples are the Salma Dam that powers the province of Herat in Afghanistan and the construction of a number of roads that boost internal connectivity within Afghanistan.(Rehman Masood, 2025)

3.4.2 Strategic Resources

India is focused on the rich mineral reserves of Afghanistan, especially the \$420 billion worth of iron reserves lying in province of Hajigarah. India also has interests in Afghanistan in terms of copper, lithium and rare earth minerals which are critical to India in developing the industrial and technology sectors. (Anonymous, 2025)

3.4.3 Regional Connectivity:

Afghanistan is considered by India as an important component of its policy to promote connectivity across its region. The Wakhan Corridor linking Afghanistan to China, may offer

India improved accessibility to Central Asian markets. The economic relationships that India tries to achieve with Afghanistan also fits with its larger objective; to gain access to resources and energy in the region.(Afridi Manzoor, 2025)

3.4.4 Soft Power of India

India has deployed the economic assistance and development projects as a strategy to gain a favorable reputation and sustain powers in Afghanistan. India plans to strengthen its diplomatic position through infrastructure projects and educational initiatives, especially in combating the influence that Pakistan has on the region. Following the Taliban reacquisition of power in 2021, India has maintained its humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan in the form of supplying essential food and medical supplies. This aid is very important in the survival of Afghanistan in the wake of economic turmoil.(Rehman Masood, 2025)

3.5 Strategic and Economic Interest of Russia in Afghanistan

Economic engagement of Russia with Afghanistan is based on strategic, security and economic interests. With the Taliban regaining control in 2021, Russia has become one of the main actors in the Afghan economy. Among the primary causes, it is the interest of Russia in the stability in the region. Russia regards Afghanistan as part of its backyard, and instability in the region can have a direct impact on Central Asia and Russia itself, in matters of security and economic welfare.(Tipu IhsanUllah, 2025)

3.5.1 Main Facets of Russia Economic and Security Cooperation with Afghanistan

Economic engagement between Russia and Afghanistan involve trade ties, energy ties, and investments in Afghanistan mining. Another major point of cooperation is the exploitation of the highly endowed natural resources of Afghanistan especially oil and gas deposits which have the potential of giving the government of Afghanistan a substantial share of revenue. Furthermore, there is also Russian interest in controlling terrorism, especially by organizations such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), which have resulted in security collaboration between Russia and Afghanistan. It is crucial in the case of Russia because both of these groups are associated with the Russian lands and have already been engaged in attacks in both Central Asia and Russian land itself.(Rehman Masood, 2025; Tipu IhsanUllah, 2025)

3.5.2 Economic Impacts of Russian Engagement with Afghanistan

The consequences of the Russian involvement in Afghanistan are diversified. Economically, Afghanistan can enjoy the benefits of potential investments in the extraction of natural resources, building of infrastructure facilities and trade agreements. Nevertheless, the Taliban regime, which remains to be recognized internationally to some extent, experiences difficulties in securing foreign investment. The relatively good relations between Russia and Afghanistan may be beneficial in stabilizing Afghanistan as it would give it an alternative to Western financial aid, albeit on the terms favorable to the Russian geopolitical and economic ambitions. (Khan Ihsan, 2025)

3.5.3 Global Power Balance and the Role of Russia in Afghanistan

In a larger sense, the involvement of Russia also shows the changing patterns in the international system of power. Russia, in partnership with China, is gaining leverage in the region as the Western world leaves Afghanistan. Getting involved in it gives Afghanistan an opportunity to diversify its economic relations but at the same time leaves the country at the disposal of geopolitical bargains dictated by Russian and Chinese interests. In general, Russian economic interaction with Afghanistan is vital to the stabilization of Afghanistan, and it is also a means through which Russia can exercise its interests and influence in Central Asia. (Khanzeb Maulana, 2025)

3.6 Impacts of BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan: Regional and Global Dimensions

Afghanistan is strategically located at the junction between Central and South Asia regions, which makes it key to politics in the region and globally. It has always been a matter of international concern and interests since it has geographical, natural resources as well as the political and security issues that bedevil it. As the United States withdraws from Afghanistan in 2021, and Taliban returns to power in the country thereafter, the influence of regional and global powers, such as the BRICS has been of the essence in determining the course of the future development in the country. BRICS approach to Afghanistan, especially on important issues, namely, geopolitics, economic cooperation, security, and connectivity, holds far-reaching ramifications to region and global stability.(Afzidi Manzoor, 2025) This section discusses the regional dimension of the engagement of BRICS with Afghanistan and examines five key areas: 1) influence of BRICS on the geopolitical balance in South Asia, 2) its collaboration with

regional strategies, 3) how it can emerge as a mediator to regional disputes, 4) its presence in the future regional connectivity projects, and 5) how Central Asian countries view the engagement of BRICS with Afghanistan(Afrid Manzoor, 2025)

3.6.1 BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan and Geopolitics in South Asia

The involvement of BRICS in Afghanistan is of great significance in terms of geopolitical equilibrium in South Asia. As a country in between Central Asia and South Asia, Afghanistan plays an important role in the security of the region, especially to India and Pakistan. The two countries have had a continuous concern over the stability of Afghanistan, which is viewed as a direct contribution into the regional dynamics of security. In the case of India, there is concern over the re-emergence of the Taliban in power especially given past suspicions of Pakistan and the perceived association of the Taliban with groups who are involved in militancy in Kashmir. Nevertheless, China and Russia, grow their interest in Afghanistan, there are possibilities of cooperation which could relieve these tensions.(Tahir & Hussain, 2021)

India, one of the most important BRICS players, also has strategic interests there, having invested heavily in infrastructure development, civil constructions, particularly relating to energy and transport. In the case of India, Afghanistan is a strategic entry point into Central Asia and adjoining territories, not to mention a strategic presence within a region traditionally dominated by Pakistan. On the other hands China and Russia take further interest in Afghanistan.

India could potentially collaborate with them in stabilizing the country, though reduce the risks involved in the restoration of the Taliban rule. Such a multilateral interaction may foster greater communication, set aside tension, and create lines of harmless collaboration.(F. Gul et al., 2023) Pakistan has adopted a conservative and supportive position towards the Taliban regime, largely because of its longstanding relationship with the Taliban as well as the fear of security threats. The emergence of terrorism such as the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), TTP and other militant groups is the great challenge to Pakistan. The attempts of BRICS to coordinate these security challenges are significant. Russia, China and Pakistan are similarly interested in cooperation on counterterrorism, and this may be useful in curbing the instability that occurs due to cross border militancy. The role of Afghanistan as the buffer state between Russia and China will be more significant as BRICS, in particular, Russia and China, become

increasingly involved with the country. This would transform the geopolitical balance in South Asia to greater cooperation.(Afidi Manzoor, 2025)

3.6.2 BRICS- Afghanistan Cooperation and Regional Strategies

The engagement of BRICS in Afghanistan is consistent with the regional initiatives of China and Russia. China in Afghanistan plays a major role in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). BRI is a connectivity initiative linking Central and South Asia and Europe by means of infrastructure, trade, and energy corridors. The location of Afghanistan is significant to connect the province of Xinjiang in China to Central Asia, Middle East and South Asia. China wants to enhance trade, secure its resources, and expand its power in the region. The construction of highways, railways or such projects as the TAPI gas pipeline can enhance the economy of Afghanistan and help China achieve its regional ambitions. (Rehman Saeed, 2025)

Similarly, The Eurasian strategy of Russia revolves around the stability of Afghanistan. The strategic outcome is that Russia views Afghanistan to be essential to its security in the region and especially in Central Asia. It desires to retain power by means of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Russia considers Afghanistan its strategic barrier against extremism and terrorism encroaching towards Central Asia. The Kremlin is similarly concerned about the safety of its southern borders, where various groups such as, ISKP, and the IMU are operating.(S. Khan, 2022)

China and Russia consider Afghanistan largely in economic and security terms. BRICS provides a mechanism that allows these countries to collaborate in the integration of regions. But at the same time, Afghanistan has been in the middle of rival geopolitical interests of China and Russia in particular, as well as the U.S. and India among other world powers. Afghanistan presents an opportunity and a challenge to BRICS to balance economic cooperation and Afghanistan stabilization within the changing power dynamics.(S. Khan, 2022)

3.6.3 BRICS Have Potential to Play Role as Regional Mediator

BRICS has never played the role of a regional dispute mediator but its role in Afghanistan might mean that it becomes a stabilizing factor in the region. Considering the divergence in the interests of the BRICS, the group has not embarked on a unified diplomatic strategy towards Afghanistan though the member countries especially Russia and China have

demonstrated the desire to contribute in their diplomatic leverage towards resolving the conflicts in the region. BRICS countries have the ability to contribute both politically and economically as long as Afghanistan is still struggling with issues of security, political fragmentation, and unstable economy within the country.(Afzidi Manzoor, 2025) Both China and Russia are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which already contributed to counterterrorism and security within the region, especially with regard to Afghanistan. BRICS will allow this cooperation to be extended to tackle larger regional security issues, such as cross-border militancy, drug trafficking and political stability.

BRICS would also serve as a means of promoting the dialogue between Afghanistan and its neighboring states and creating more friendly atmosphere where the development and peace are valued rather than competition and rivalries. However, one of the problems that BRICS has is to address the divergent political positions of the member countries. To give an example, whereas China and Russia have been more favorable to the idea of interacting with the Taliban regime, India has remained hesitating because of its fears regarding the Taliban connection to the Pakistan-based militants. These competing interests, therefore, define the role of BRICS as a possible mediator in Afghanistan, demanding a multisided approach to stabilization that aligns stability with geopolitical circumstances in the region.(Khanzeb Maulana, 2025)

3.6.4 Impacts of BRICS Regional Connectivity Projects

Perhaps the best effects of BRICS dealing in Afghanistan is on major regional connectivity initiatives. Afghanistan plays a vital role as transit country for energy and trade between Central Asia and Southern Asia, which is essential in regional economic growth. Several significant initiatives, including the TAPI pipeline and the CASA-1000 electricity transmission project, hinge on the geographic location of Afghanistan to link the energy-rich countries, including Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, with energy-starved markets in South Asia, mostly Pakistan and India.(Anonymous, 2025) Such projects can revolutionize the economy of Afghanistan and generate employment, improve infrastructure and promote trade with neighbouring countries. BRICS can be instrumental in funding and advancing these projects, giving Afghanistan the capital and technical skills to realize such projects. The interest of China as an investor in the BRI, alongside the collaboration of Russia in the integration of the regions in the EAEU, can help make sure that these initiatives are realized, and greater regional

integration and economic prosperity are achieved. The viability of projects such as TAPI and CASA-1000 would also decrease the degree of dependability of Afghanistan on foreign aid as this would make the country one step closer to economic independence.(Anonymous, 2025)

3.6.5 BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan and Central Asia

The participation of BRICS in Afghanistan is viewed by the Central Asian countries as very supportive since Russia and China are major players in the region and influence the region greatly. The stability of Afghanistan has been deemed to be vital to the security and economic prosperity of Central Asia, especially because terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking are threats. The presence of instability in Afghanistan has long plagued the governments of Central Asian republics like Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan to export terrorism and drugs into their states.(Rehman Saeed, 2025)

The role played by BRICS in Afghanistan gives these Central Asian states a prospect of participating in economic ventures such as the development of infrastructure projects that will bridge the gap between Afghanistan and Central Asia. The interests of both Russia and China in enhancing regional integration via the EAEU and BRI, respectively, are mutually advantageous as both countries will enjoy greater connectivity and cooperation on issues of security. But countries in Central Asia are also worried about how much competition the BRICS involvement may bring, especially should Afghanistan come closer to either of the Chinese BRI or the Russian Eurasian approach. Despite this, the overall objectives of stability and economic growth contribute to the overall support of the efforts of BRICS to Afghanistan.(F. Gul et al., 2023)

3.7 Impacts of BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan: Global Dimensions

The developing interaction of BRICS with Afghanistan has notable impacts on the geopolitics of the region and the globe. As BRICS continues to expand its influence, it has been redefining the discourse on Afghanistan, providing an alternative to the international order that the West has been championing and pursuing a multipolar world, where economic interdependence and independence are the key determinants. But this is not a step of diplomacy merely, it is an act of strategic adjustment involving mutual security considerations, economic demands, and the need to balance western influence.(Khanzeb Maulana, 2025)

3.7.1 BRICS and Afghanistan: Challenging the International Order led by the West

The BRICS Diplomatic Engagement toward Afghanistan constitutes one severe challenge to the conventional international system as led by the West, especially after the US withdrawal and the re-establishment of Taliban rule in 2021. In the past, Western powers especially United States and European Union have adopted a position of conditionalities, which pit aid and recognition to political reforms, human rights and governance systems. Such an approach was demonstrated by such institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who attached conditions related to politics to economic aid. (F. Gul et al., 2023)

BRICS however, especially at China, Russia and to some extent India, has maintained a broader view by focusing on non-interference and sovereignty. By using mechanisms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and bilateral ties, the BRICS member states have developed diplomatic avenues that no longer relied on Western conditions. It is important to note that the leading players have been Russia and China, Russia has hosted some series of meetings and China has formally recognized Taliban government as a de facto government. Afghanistan is a key connection along China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which runs across Asia, Africa, and Europe. The geographical position between Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East offers Afghanistan with potential capability in becoming a significant point of connection in terms of realization of Chinese global trade networks.(Khanzeb Maulana, 2025) These greater initiatives include the economic cooperation between BRICS and Afghanistan that are in direct comparison against the Western approach where the economy of Afghanistan still remains in isolation under sanctions and other political circumstances.(Tipu IhsanUllah, 2025)

3.7.2 BRICS and A New Diplomatic Framework to Afghanistan: Bypassing Western Conditionalities

Major principle of the BRICS involvement in Afghanistan is that it has facilitated the avoidance of the western-initiated diplomatic process that usually dictates political conditions to aid and recognition. Compared to the West, BRICS is engaged in pragmatism and there is more emphasis on the economic stability and security of Afghanistan. The non-interventionist foreign policy of China, and Russian urge to contain terrorism originating at the Afghanistan borders, have a strong weight on the position of this group. BRICS countries have avoided the direct imposition of western type of political changes as demanded by the United States and the

European Union to include issues of gender equality and democratic governance.(Khan Ihsan, 2025)

Rather, they have supported the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Afghanistan and it has been emphasized that the destiny of Afghanistan should be left to the people of the country and not to foreign influence. This focus on sovereignty is the part of the larger vision of BRICS to establish a multipolar world where focus is more on economic integration and collaboration on security matters than ideological alignment. China has led economic interaction efforts, including the offer of mega projects such as infrastructure development and commerce contract that expects to push on with its geopolitical approach. Due to its intense security interests, Russia has also been instrumental in developing a diplomatic friendship with the Taliban to maintain regional stability, particularly in Central Asia.(Khanzeb Maulana, 2025)

3.7.3 Western Narratives on Terrorism, Sovereignty, Interventions VS BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan

The BRICS engagement in Afghanistan is leading to the creation of world discourse on terrorism, sovereignty, and non-intervention. Although the Western powers, especially the United States have defended their military invasions in Afghanistan under the theme of counterterrorism, the BRICS believes in a more acceptable model, regional cooperation, sovereignty and non-interference. BRICS has shown significant interest in fighting terrorism in Afghanistan, specifically against the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISIS-K), Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP), and the Tehrik -E-Taliban Pakistan.(Khan Ihsan, 2025)

Nonetheless, the organization is concerned with the regional cooperation in terms of security, not external military interventions. Russia and China share the same interest in ensuring stability in Afghanistan because they also need to secure their borders as well as national interest in their countries at least in the Central Asia and in the Xinjiang region. Members of the BRICS have been concerned by the situation in Afghanistan, especially China and Russia, which perceive it as a direct risk to regional security, and subsequently to global security.(Rehman Saeed, 2025) By encouraging a dialogue with the Taliban and providing financial assistance to the country, BRICS is trying to stabilize Afghanistan without the use of military forces or some “Western type” of sanctions which would only contribute to the growing instability.(Afridi Manzoor, 2025)

3.7.4 BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan: An Alternative Western Development and Aid Norms

The BRICS interaction with Afghanistan can transform international development and assistance norms. The BRICS is more flexible compared to the IMF or World Bank and other institutions created in the West that carry rigorous conditions in political as well as economic aspects. The main focus of this interaction has been the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by China which seeks to integrate Afghanistan with Central and South Asian countries. The connectivity should bring with it a lot of economic opportunities including trade routes as well as resource extraction projects.

Furthermore, the creation of the New Development Bank (NDB) by BRICS is giving Afghanistan an alternative to the Western financial institutions with loans and investments disbursed free of the political conditions typical of the IMF, or World Bank.(F. Gul et al., 2023) This departure of the Western-dominated aid mechanisms provides the opportunity to Afghanistan to diversify its foreign relations and receive the investment of non-Western sources. The focus of BRICS is on stability and economic growth, which provide Afghanistan with an opportunity to get out of its stagnation, without depending on the alignment to the West.(Anonymous, 2025)

3.7.5 The BRICS+ Expansion Potential for Afghanistan: Strategic and Regional Consideration

The fact that Afghanistan may become a part of BRICS+ is a strategic opportunity and a challenge. BRICS + is a wider model of BRICS involving the emerging economies and trying to enhance global presence through the inclusion of Global South countries. Afghanistan is also a promising partner to the BRICS+ expansion, specifically to China and Russia, in terms of geographical location and mineral resources. By joining BRICS+, Afghanistan will be able to enjoy the economic, political, and security opportunities the group provides, such as infrastructure development, entry into new markets, and stability in the region. But its membership would also escalate hostilities with the West, especially the United States, which

considers the increasing influence of BRICS to be a threat to its geo-political and economic standing. (Khan Ihsan, 2025; Rehman Saeed, 2025)

The inclusion of Afghanistan in BRICS+ would also play a major role in power balance in the region. It would make China and Russia even stronger in the South and Central Asia, which can change the region balance of power and the traditional ties between the West sides and their allies in the region. That might result in heightened geopolitical conflict especially with nation states such as India and Pakistan who have a long history of having security issues concerning Afghanistan.(Anonymous, 2025)

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

a. Major Findings

The study BRICS Engagement with Afghanistan has equipped an important insight into the emergent geopolitical scenarios and its effects on regional and global governance. The results of the research can be generalized along several major themes and Findings

- a. BRICS has transitioned into a political bloc preaching the virtues of a multipolar world. It focuses on economic collaboration, stability in the region and sovereignty which is contrary to political conditionalities given to aid by the west.
- b. Strategic interest of China in Afghanistan is aligned with its geographical position around the belt and Road Initiative :(BRI) whose mandate is to develop better linkage between Asia and Europe. China pursues infrastructure building and trade, and it puts some interest on counterterrorism initiatives, especially when it comes to Xinjiang.
- c. The Russian interest related to Afghanistan is in the sphere of regional security, particularly the protection of terrorism entering Central Asia. The Russian strategy is

practical, aimed at economic cooperation and security collaboration without any political involvement.

- d. India interest in Afghanistan is influenced by its geopolitical interests in South Asia. Despite the tension with the Taliban, India wants to neutralize the influence of Pakistan in the region and support regional stability with development aid and infrastructure projects.
- e. BRICS has been helpful in the economic collaboration with Afghanistan, primarily on building its infrastructure and trading activities. China has its BRI, and the New Development Bank (NDB) can provide Afghanistan with development financing that will encourage economic growth without political conditionality imposed by the West.
- f. Humanitarian aid and stability in Afghanistan have been priorities of BRICS countries, with most of the efforts being put on food security, infrastructure, and public health. This is compared to the west where aid is associated with political reforms.
- g. BRICS in particular China and Russia will find Afghanistan to be a very important partner due to its mineral resources and strategic location. It provides an opportunity to implement the BRI, which raises the status of Afghanistan as a BRICS economic and security partner.
- h. Afghanistan is a potential member of BRICS+ because of its resources and strategic location. Inclusion would allow Afghanistan more economic opportunities, but also would have to consider geopolitical problems maintaining relationships with both BRICS and Western powers.
- i. BRICS is diplomatically flexible and supporting the idea of a multipolar world order. Its policies in engagement with Afghanistan are on regional collaboration, non-interference and economic integration, which is an alternative to the forms of governance dominated by the west.

b. Policy Recommendations

Based on the research findings and analysis of the BRICS engagement with Afghanistan, the following are some policy Recommendations that can be made:

b.a Recommendations for BRICS

- a. BRICS must maintain its policy of non-intervention in Afghanistan and concentrate on long term economic and security relations. It has the ability to support the integration of

Afghanistan into the international markets by launching Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the New Development Bank (NDB). BRICS need to promote the role of Afghanistan in the region trade relations and persuade the Taliban to comply with the international standards of governance.

- b. BRICS ought to incorporate Afghanistan in both regional and worldwide economic systems majoring in infrastructure, trade and investment. It must also facilitate cooperation among BRICS in economic growth, providing Afghanistan with an alternative to Western financial systems. BRICS can mutually benefit economically whilst aiding stability by developing the resources of Afghanistan.
- c. BRICS are encouraged to take an active front in issuing humanitarian relief through multilateral avenues whilst honoring the sovereignty of Afghanistan. The stability of Afghanistan depends on ensuring that aid is provided to the country so that food security, health, and education is achieved. BRICS is also expected to collaborate with Afghanistan in managing the refugee problem and in offering regional solutions that will bring in peace and development.

b.b Recommendation for Afghan Taliban

- a. Taliban should be concerned about how the state of Afghanistan recovers economically, with the creation of infrastructure, mining, and agriculture. The relationship with BRICS, particularly China, Russia, and India, will translate into investment and trade opportunities. There is need to focus on security to develop a stable environment for international investment and developments.
- b. The Taliban must approach diplomatic relations with BRICS and pursue a system of cooperation. Afghanistan should demonstrate its adherence to the fundamental international norms, such as human rights and inclusivity, without sacrificing sovereignty, even though full recognition requires time.
- c. The strategic position of Afghanistan must be utilized to build strong ties with other regions, particularly by BRICS to bolster its position relating to trade and security

b.c Recommendation for Future Academics

- a. Researchers ought to compare the non-interventionist practice by BRICs with western interventionism particularly in Afghanistan. It is also possible to study connectedly to

how the argument of multilateralism and regional cooperation by BRICS reconstitutes global governance.

- b. Further study needs to investigate the influence of BRICS diplomacy on the political dynamics of Afghanistan. This knowledge can provide challenges and opportunities of BRICS in Afghanistan based on its influence on Taliban and social consequences.
- c. Researchers should also consider the involvement of BRICS in the areas of regional security, counterterrorism, and solving conflicts in Afghanistan, which can be helpful in other regions. Further, an investigation into BRICS participation in other worldwide matters such as terrorism, migration, and economic inequality will provide an understanding of its increasing diplomatic footprint.

c. Conclusion

The evolving dynamics of international power relationships have created a world in which all past geopolitical orders as we have known them are continuously hemorrhaging. As the international system becomes multipolar with the emergence of new economies under groups such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), the world is slowly moving towards the multipolar order. The change indicates an increase in the concern about the necessity of inclusivity and equity in global governance. In this context, the interaction between Afghanistan and BRICS following the Taliban takeover has regional and international importance. This thesis examined evolving role of BRICS within the geopolitics, economic recovery, and security issues of Afghanistan. Through this, it emphasized the fact that BRICS had discarded its conventional dominance in the West-driven policies towards Afghanistan and it is inclined to non-intervention, sovereignty and economic integrations of the region.

The study has shed light on various aspects of BRICS policy towards Afghanistan that significantly differ with western powers approaches and policies towards Afghanistan and especially after 2021. The United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies have consistently enforced strict political conditionalities attached to economic aid, and diplomatic recognition in Western countries. The main areas of these conditions were in reforms of governance, human rights (including women rights), and instillation of democracies. Nonetheless, this conventional story has changed with the emergence of BRICS, whose call is that of dealing rather than isolation and not thrusting the political ideologies but pursue economic stability and regional relations.

One of the key arguments of this thesis is that BRICS involvement in Afghanistan disrupts the international system that is dominated by the West, namely, the way the international system is connected to how Afghanistan can be incorporated in the global governance. Afghanistan historically was a locus of the confrontation of international powers, in particular following the 2001 US invasion that redefined the political, economic, and social life of the country.

International organizations such as the United Nations pressured western countries to adopt a democratically oriented system of governance that incorporated a multifaceted counterterrorism strategy which involved constituent elements of civil society development and promoting human rights. However, the newer Taliban takeover of power and the consequent political transition has signaled a more global change in the international relations and especially how Afghanistan is perceived in the global context. The role of BRICS in Afghanistan could hardly be compared with the actions of the West. Western powers, especially the United States and its European allies, have taken steps to disengage themselves diplomatically after the Taliban recaptured power, but the BRICS member states have taken a more comprehensive outlook and this focuses on economic cooperation, regional security, and no use of military force.

This strategy poses a serious threat to the western sphere-dominated system, which the BRICS fosters diplomatic relations using mutually respectful sovereignty, non-interference, and economic integration instead of political conditionalities. The main axis of this involvement is

China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The position of Afghanistan makes it an important country in the integration of Central Asia, South Asia, and China. With BRI, China hopes to improve the infrastructure in Afghanistan, which, in turn, will put it along the larger regional trade corridors that have the potential to considerably boost the state economy. In the case of Russia, the stability of Afghanistan is essential to the security of the region, especially that of Central Asia. The engagement of Russia has been fueled by issues to do with terrorism, drugs and extremism and the lack of stability of Afghanistan is directly a threat to the national security interest of Russia.

China and Russia are thus concentrating on developing economic relations and regional stability based on pragmatic diplomatic relations rather than military based intervention and selective aid packages, methods employed by Western nations in the past. Unlike the focus of the West on political reform, BRICS concerns itself with economic recovery and collaboration in terms of security. This transformation signifies a more broadly altered geopolitical rebalancing, where international powers are on the rise in favor of a multipolar order. The integration of Afghanistan into such a system provides it with a chance to boost its economy without such political burdens that are normally allied with the western initiated development processes.

With the dominance of BRICS, an influential diplomatic actor in Afghanistan, a significant shift will be observed in the way Afghanistan establishes its external relations, as opposed to being greatly influenced by the West in the past. The thesis further addresses the manner in which BRICS has redefined global narratives on sovereignty, counterterrorism and non-interventionism. The United States and other western countries used the concept of countering terrorism as the reason to intervene in Afghanistan by targeting extremist forces such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Nonetheless, BRICS has tried to deal with security issues not by using force but by seeking regional cooperation and pursuing diplomacy. Its strategy towards Afghanistan shows that the group is keen on respecting national sovereignty, economic development to curb extremism, and regional cooperation, as opposed to enforcing western political agenda.

To Russia, Afghanistan is a security issue. Russia already has a presence in Central Asia and Afghanistan instability is a clear threat to her sphere of influence. It engages in Afghanistan due to the necessity to protect its borders against possible extremist groups that might spill over the border into Afghanistan. Russia has however implemented diplomatic/economic solutions instead of military intervention. Likewise, the security concerns of China especially in its Xinjiang region have been a significant reason to focus on Afghanistan, and China has been advocating stability and counterterrorist measures in coordination with its overall regional approach. The two nations have also collaborated under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to tackle security challenges and this acts as a display of shift in regional security cooperation as opposed to militaristic intervention of the security-related issues that previous Western powers had largely engaged.

It is not only a question of geopolitics that BRICS has adopted this new approach, but also a matter of redesigning global development and aid norms. Afghanistan has traditionally relied on traditional financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF as the main providers of development aid. Nonetheless, BRICS proposes a different model of development that is founded upon the respect of sovereignty and economic cooperation. In this regard, the establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB) by BRICS becomes of special interest. The NDB provides an avenue whereby Afghanistan can get the financial help it needs without waiving the strict political provisions usually stipulated by the western supported institutions.

This developmental strategy is further supplemented by the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that connects Afghanistan to bigger regional and global trading systems. By opening Afghanistan to major infrastructure projects, BRI may also provide it with the opportunity to develop its trade and stabilize its economy over time. In comparison to the conditional nature of the Western aid, the financial aid of BRICS will be done in terms of pragmatic economic relations between Afghanistan and BRICS, where the aid is oriented on developing the infrastructure and establishing long-term economic opportunities.

The introduction of a non-Western alternative to the dominated aid system is a different path to development, less focused on political conformity but rather more concerned with economic integration and collaboration in the region. The prospect of Afghanistan being added to BRICS+ further reinforces the importance of BRICS in reframing power equations in the

world. Due to the inclusion of new member countries, BRICS is acting more and more as an alternative to the current international system led by the West. Making Afghanistan a part of BRICS+ would provide the country with additional diplomatic and economic support, especially with China, Russia, and India.

It would also produce an enhanced status of Afghanistan on the international arena, providing it with access to new markets, investment prospects, and cooperation in terms of security. But the membership of Afghanistan would also have far reaching implications to its relations with the West, in case of United States that sees BRICS as a threat to its worldwide powers. The inclusion of Afghanistan in BRICS+ would also secure the role of the country in the multipolar world order. It would enable Afghanistan to participate more actively in the world economy and politics, giving it more space and expanding opportunities. In the case of BRICS, Afghanistan would allow enhanced strategic positioning of the group in Central Asia and the wider region, offering new trade, security, and infrastructure-building opportunities.

To sum up, the processes of BRICS involvement with Afghanistan provide the country with the chance to change its future radically. BRICS supports economic integration, regional stability, and respect of sovereignty over political reforms or ideological affiliation through its non-interventionist policy. This transition poses a fundamental threat to the international system of the West, which gives Afghanistan an alternative route to heal which is based on integration and economic cooperation in the region. The involvement of BRICS in Afghanistan will continue increasing as the organization remains strong and grows in influence, providing the nation with a chance to advance towards new levels of development, safety, and international relations. By joining BRICS+, Afghanistan has the potential to secure its position in a multipolar global system with access to greater voices in a global governance system where they can help to achieve a more equal and just world order.

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