

BRICS a promising group for Global South to have its voice heard

GT: What are your expectations for the summit?

Garcia: This is a very important and unique moment for BRICS, as it's the first summit since its expansion with new members taking part in negotiation during this summit. At the same time, BRICS has received an increasing number of applications, and has now established itself as a group that really attracts many countries in the Global South.

It's really important for countries to join forces to boost cooperation. I think Brazil has a leading role in this process. It will be up to Brazil next year to further move forward with the propositions at least in two main areas. One is the consolidation of fixed expansion, and the other is to move on with more concrete measures to increase the use of local currencies and lessen the dependence on the US dollar.

GT: An increasing number of countries expressed a desire to join BRICS this year. What are the reasons behind this surge?

Garcia: I think each country has its own reasons, but a commonality I observe is that BRICS is attractive to countries who feel unheard in Western-based institutions and values.

The world order is changing, and the post-WWII period is now over. Many countries are seeking different types of cooperation. They see advantages in being part of BRICS. Also, every country has a pragmatic reason for joining, to cooperate closer to China, or to be closer to other

regional powers, such as India, Brazil and South Africa. BRICS is a promising cooperation group for the Global South to have its voice heard.

GT: You once mentioned that BRICS has the role of seeking an equilibrium to relocate international relations and construct a consensus that is different from those established by Western powers. What does the "consensus" refer to in this context?

Why should BRICS construct a consensus that differs from that of Western powers?

Garcia: BRICS countries do not always agree in some instances because they have different histories, cultures, religions and positions. For this reason, we have to find those themes and topics of cooperation where there are common interests among the countries.

One of the main topics is the fight against climate change and the energy transition. Another area of consensus is the reform of the international financial architecture. One commonality among the BRICS countries during the 2008 crisis was the call for reforming the IMF to reflect the new economic order. The BRICS countries are significant economic powers, but they are not well represented in the Bretton Woods institutions, making this an important agenda item for them.

Editor's Note:

The 2024 BRICS summit is being held from Tuesday to Thursday in Kazan, Russia. It is the first summit after the bloc's expansion. What should we expect from this gathering? What are the reasons behind the surging willingness from more and more countries to join the BRICS mechanism? The Global Times invited experts from countries that are either members of BRICS or interested in researching this grouping to share their insights.

In the second article of the series, Ana Elisa Saggiore Garcia (**Garcia**), general coordinator and researcher of the BRICS Policy Center and Brazilian professor of the Institute of International Relations at PUC-Rio, shared her views with Global Times (**GT**) reporter Wang Zixuan. "BRICS is a promising cooperation group for the Global South to have its voice heard," she said.

traditional powers have historically done. China is open to the Global South, and has accumulated a lot of experience there, particularly in Africa.

China has a role to play as a major power in terms of finance, trade and investments, and is really helpful for the Global South. It does not impose conditionality, nor does it demand more than these countries can afford. China puts forward better terms regarding their development strategies.

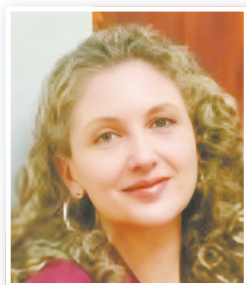
For example, Brazil received a significant investment from the Chinese automotive company BYD, which created manufacturing jobs. That's the kind of investment we need, and we could collaborate more with China in research and development.

GT: It has been reported that a working group has been established by the Brazilian government to analyze Brazil's participation in the Belt and Road initiative (BRI).

Why is Brazil now considering joining the initiative?

Garcia: This is a very important issue, particularly as this year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Brazil-China relations. This is the right moment to deepen the relationship with China.

I think that now it is time for Brazil to discuss and to negotiate the BRI. Colombia has expressed interest to join the BRI. This is very significant because Colombia has been a historical partner of the US, particularly in security and military cooperation. If it weren't to join, Brazil would be left alone in South America, despite being a recipient of Chinese investments. So why not join? I think that's the overall context, and I hope that things will move forward.



Ana Elisa Saggiore Garcia Photo: LinkedIn of Garcia

At the same time, the BRICS countries agree on the creation of new institutions, such as the New Development Bank. This also represents a common ground, where they find consensus on the need to reform the international financial architecture. I think that China has a role to play there. China is an important partner in the use of local currencies and could support other BRICS countries in developing a common mechanism of payments within BRICS that reduces reliance on US dollars.

GT: Some media outlets are slandering China's economic cooperation with Brazil and other Latin American countries, claiming that Chinese investment is a "threat." What's your take on this?

Garcia: One thing we need to understand is that China is a global power. It is a major player within BRICS and in the current world order. There are countries in the Global South that are in a position to establish dialogue with China, so that they understand its role, and understand that China can do things differently than the

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