

UNIVERSIDAD[®]
BERNARDO
O'HIGGINS

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**BRICS, STRENGTHENING MULTILATERALISM FOR
GLOBAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

BRICS



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INTRODUCTION

In the last years, the world has witnessed the phenomenon of tension and displacement of the hegemonic global economy from the Atlantic to the Pacific zone. Thus, the rise of new emergent powers, such as the BRICS group, has evidenced the beginning of a transition process from a world dominated by North Atlantic West powers to a multipolar world. In this new configuration, more and more international actors play a leading role in social development policies, technological transfer, and trade.

Considering the challenges of multilateralism and the economic and political dilemmas of the 21st century, the University Bernardo O'Higgins, as an autonomous institution committed to the international reality, sought to contribute to the academic reflection on this matter. Hence, it has hosted the "BRICS, Strengthening Multilateralism for Global Security and Development" conference. Distinguished members of the diplomatic corps of different countries, academics, and students participated in the event.

Due to the significance of the conference, this document gathers and synthesizes the main ideas and reflections of the participants regarding the geopolitical context, aiming to provide readers with the keys to understanding the new century.

THE BRICS CONTEXT

BRICS: A MULTIPOLAR WORLD BEYOND WESTERN DOMINANCE.

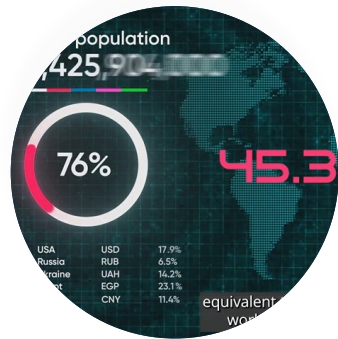
The BRICS group was created in 2009 as a conglomerate of emerging Eurasian countries from the global south that aimed to counterbalance the political and economic hegemony of the West North Atlantic. Specifically, the strengthening of the BRICS after the economic crisis of 2008 opened a viable alternative to the trade and financial system originated by the Bretton Woods Agreements and the unipolar hegemony achieved by the USA and the G7 countries once the Soviet Union fell in 1989.

Nowadays, the shift of the economic hegemony of the G7 countries to associations, such as G20 or the BRICS countries, has marked the beginning of a new stage, which is characterized by the efforts of emerging countries to create an increasingly multipolar world and the enabling of more symmetrical trade relations in different regions. It is worth noting that, at present, BRICS countries comprise **more than 40% of the world's population**. Furthermore, the economic volume of the groups is up to 37% of the global GDP.

Among its main initiatives, the BRICS group seeks to create alternatives to the dollar as the dominant currency in international trade, consolidating the yuan, the rupee, the ruble, or other national currencies. Moreover, the BRICS countries are promoting the strengthening of alternative financial institutions to the World Bank (headquartered in Washington D.C.) by creating a new bank entity, such as the New Development Bank.

Finally, some critics of the BRICS have stated that this association has a considerable risk of becoming unsustainable over time due to the cultural heterogeneity of its members and the economic differences between the national markets that make up the organization. Nevertheless, since its creation, the BRICS association has become an organization of global weight and reference; thus, it will shape the trade and political processes of the near future.

FIGURES



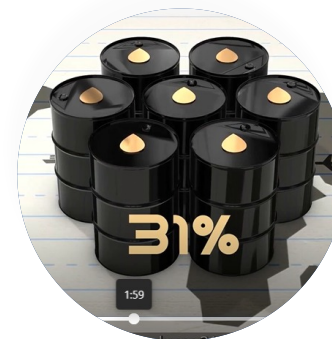
45%
Of the world population



35%
Of world GDP



30%
Of the earth's surface



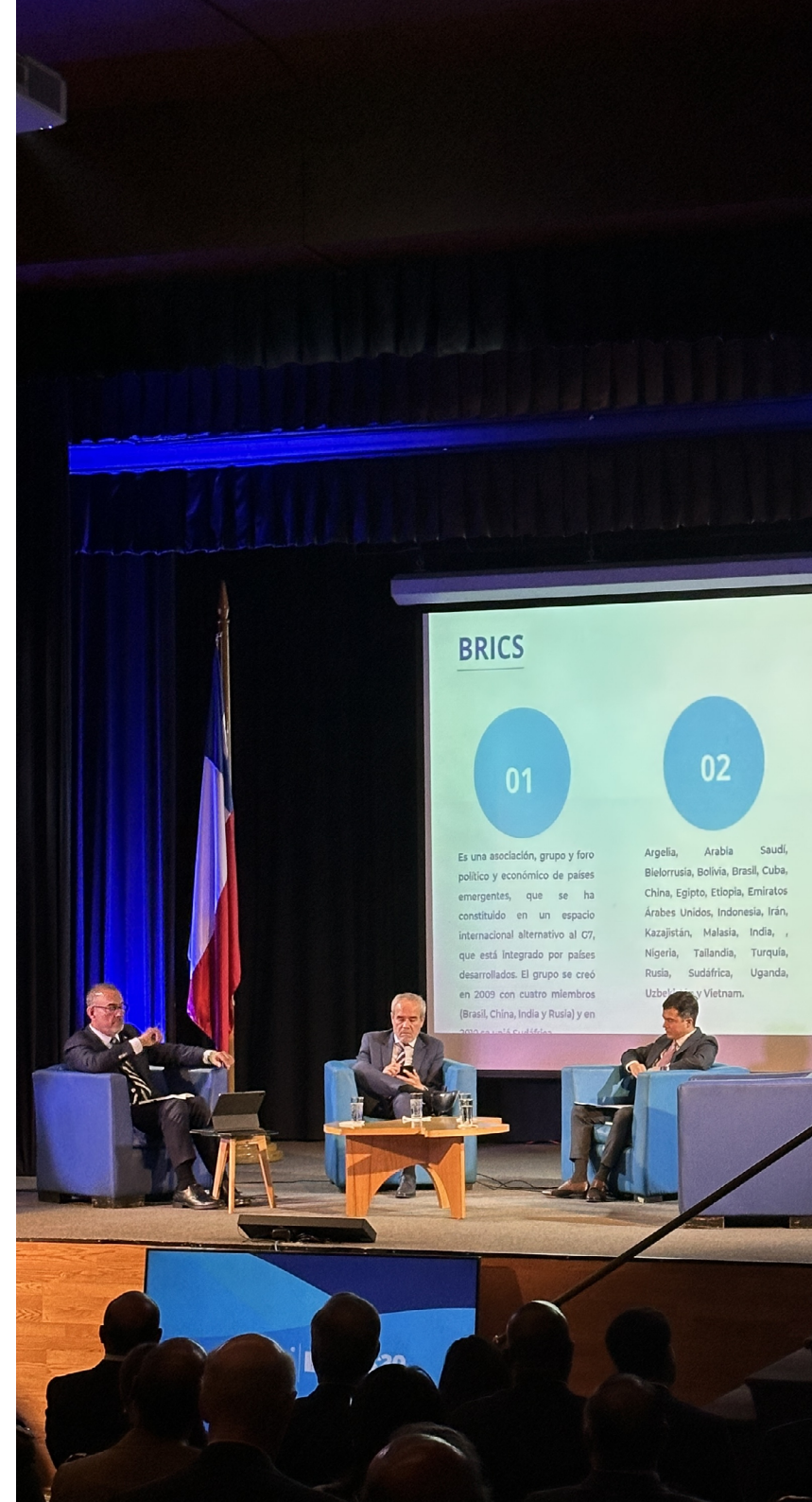
31%
World oil production worldwide

THE CONFERENCE

The main goal of the conference was to generate a space for dialogue and reflection on a highly significant topic: the emergence of the BRICS countries in the international economic concert and its impact on Latin America. After the welcoming remarks given by the Rector of the University Bernardo O'Higgins, Dr. Claudio Ruff, the event started with the outstanding intervention of the ambassadors of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. Afterward, the event continued with the participation of a panel

of experts, who discussed the possibilities of the BRICS in Latin America in areas such as technological transfer, food policies, and international trade, among others.

It should be noted that the diplomatic representatives of fourteen countries attended the conference, and it allowed the audience to participate through an interactive application. With this application, they could channel their questions to the panel.





THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AMBASSADOR

The intervention of Ambassador Vladimir G. Belinsky, who provided the view of Russia, examined the origins and development of the BRICS during the last few years and the focus and progress of this association under the pro-tempore presidency of Russia. It also delved into the future implementation of initiatives that favor all the member States. The Ambassador referred to the accelerated growth of BRICS countries and their increasing importance in the global market, thus allowing the development of a new trade focus in the Asia-Pacific region. In this context, BRICS is an association that seeks to assure the well-being and the constant development of the member countries, which, despite their differences, have equal development opportunities.

Furthermore, His Excellency Vladimir Belinsky commented on

the priorities established for the BRICS countries during the Russia pro-tempore presidency, a period in which the challenges and threats of terrorism, narcotraffic, informatic crime, corruption, and money laundering were addressed.

Regarding the projections for the BRICS countries, the Ambassador pointed out a few propositions contained in the Kazan Declaration, which the State members signed in October 2024. In the Declaration, the commitment of the association to raise the prominence of the global south and east was reassured. Moreover, the search to promote a fair system in the matter of economic relations was stressed. Additionally, issues related to culture and sciences, cooperation in the media, and the development of nuclear medicine were discussed. Finally, His Excellency Vladimir Belinsky addressed the pursuit

of BRICS countries to create a reliable and stable financial infrastructure by developing an alternative payment system that uses the national currencies of the associated countries. This initiative would significantly impact cross-border transactions since it would allow simpler international transfers with lower costs.

In conclusion, the vision of the Ambassador of the Russian Federation regarding the BRICS alliance shows an interest in the equal participation of all its members and future partner states that share similar interests and seek economic growth and international cooperation.



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DATOS SE



Embajador Niu Qingbao



THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AMBASSADOR

At the beginning of his intervention, the Ambassador of China, His Excellency Niu Qingbao, focused on the role that BRICS fulfills as a platform for cooperation that will allow emerging economies to undertake initiatives to reform the dominant financial system. Niu Qingbao also defined the BRICS as a conglomerate that would allow integral collaboration among countries, both in growth policies and technological transfer initiatives.

Furthermore, the intervention of the Ambassador was structured around the five commitments that BRICS stipulated during the last summit of the organization held in Kazan (between October 22nd and 24th in Russia). The following is a brief reference to the five commitments adopted by the BRICS: First, BRICS countries are committed to ensuring peace and the security of the nations. Second, the association seeks to strengthen innovation and development policies with high human and technological quality standards. Third, the association is committed to sustainable development and environmental protection policies. Fourth, the organization aims to promote justice and reform to the global governance system. Fifth, the BRICS countries aim to strengthen the exchange between people and countries as a mechanism for building a harmonious coexistence between nations.

Finally, His Excellency Niu Qingbao informed the audience about the initiatives undertaken by China regarding educational cooperation and the promotion of an artificial intelligence research center. This center will cover the development areas of industrial skills, digital literacy, and networked cooperation systems.





PANEL DISCUSSION

The panel was chaired by Dr. Claudio Ruff, Rector of the University Bernardo O'Higgins (UBO), and was formed by the economist Tomás Flores, UBO academic and former Undersecretary of Economy (2010-2014); the lawyer Luis Lescano, an expert in education law and current president of the National Council of Education of Peru; and the second secretary of the Brazilian Embassy in Chile, Felipe Caetano, who has a distinguished career in international relations management in defense and public security. From their areas of expertise, each participant expressed their perception of the relationship between the BRICS and Latin America.

The intervention of Tomás Flores sought to bring the BRICS agreement closer to Chile, to which end he raised three key ideas: the first is the need to diversify the countries to which Chile exports, in particular, to open up to BRICS members such as Russia, since today, the two main trading partners of Chile are the US and China. As a result, the country could connect with

new markets and increase its economic growth. The second key was to project the idea of a common currency, an alternative to the dollar, to manage trade between countries that do not issue that currency. The third key idea was based on the potential relationship that could exist between Chile and the BRICS, a still distant association, according to former Chilean foreign ministers consulted directly.

Luis Lescano focused on the relationship between BRICS and education, specifically on the importance of internationalization in countries such as Peru through initiatives like promoting student mobility to BRICS countries and the intensive development of educational technologies and digitalization spaces that increase access to higher education. He also referred to the importance of promoting innovation in the educational community and fostering the insertion of Latin America in global trends.

The last intervention was in charge of Felipe Caetano, who presented the Brazilian



vision concerning Latin America, as well as the challenges Brazil faces in international trade and in solidifying relations with the BRICS members.

He also referred to the importance of BRICS for Brazil, as it allows for updating the global governance system and turning towards multipolarity and multilateralism. Caetano also mentioned strengthening a financial system that favors trade with alternative local currencies to foster the development of the countries. Finally, regarding the rest of Latin America, he highlighted the importance of the relationship that Chile has with Brazil in economic matters and referred to other instances of international cooperation, such as the bioceanic corridors in Peru and Chile.

To close the panel of experts, Dr. Ruff gathered the key ideas that emerged in this instance. These were related to the economic possibilities offered

by the BRICS for the development of Latin American countries. In this respect, the central ideas that crossed the conference were strengthening trade partners, diversifying exports to different countries, incentivizing alternative payment systems other than the dollar, and promoting internationalization and student mobility. Dr. Ruff also referred to the need to respect and value the local particularities of the countries related to the BRICS since they can be an advantage when considering a multipolar system.



CONCLUSIONS

From the conference “BRICS, Strengthening Multilateralism for Global Security and Development,” the interventions of the participants, and the dialogue generated between the panelists and the audience, it was possible to conclude that the BRICS allows the participation of countries with different characteristics, aiming to generate a more equitable and just world. Thus, with a strong focus on economic growth, the BRICS countries have shown their potential as trading partners in importing and exporting different products and services. In this regard, initiatives such as creating a solid alternative financial system and using national currencies are particularly important in facilitating and reducing the costs of international transactions.

On the other hand, international cooperation among BRICS members has enabled the creation of initiatives in diverse areas such as technology, innovation, education, and food security.

The rising importance of the BRICS in the global economic concert opens opportunities for emerging countries, such as those in Latin America, so that economic exchanges and the diversification of trade partners can be promoted. Likewise, the presence of Brazil makes it possible to manage more significant links between Latin American countries and promote international cooperation in the region.

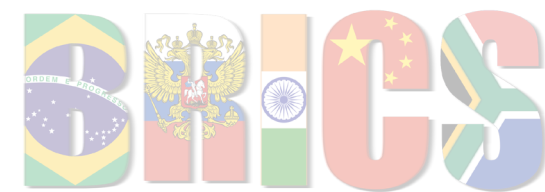
The BRICS represents a significant opportunity for

Latin American countries, including Chile, to diversify their trade partners, foster student and academic mobility, and explore new forms of collaboration in strategic areas. This alliance offers opportunities for partnerships in research, technology transfer, and sustainable development, which is crucial for emerging economies seeking to strengthen their position in a multipolar world.

Chilean universities can strengthen their relationship with the countries of the BRICS through academic networks that promote cooperation in key areas such as artificial intelligence, sustainability, and educational technology. Establishing centers of excellence in collaboration with BRICS universities would foster joint projects, while student and professional mobility programs would facilitate knowledge exchange. This would enrich the academic profile of Chilean universities and contribute to the development of innovative solutions to global challenges. Hence, academia could continue to be the ideal meeting point to generate these instances of collaboration and mutual growth.

In sum, meetings such as this conference are relevant for reflecting on our present situation and considering the prospects that will make possible the more significant development of regions that have played a secondary role in the current world economic exchange.





THE COMMITMENT

The commitment of University Bernardo O'Higgins to dialogue and international cooperation

This document represents the commitment of the Institutional Research Center of the University Bernardo O'Higgins to the values of academic excellence, autonomy, and the promotion of critical thinking. Therefore, this activity is part of a network of initiatives the University organizes to strengthen republican values and the cultural integration of Chilean society with the rest of the world.







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