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BRIC-Africa cooperation in the multilateral system

IBSA – BRICS: rivals or allies

This paper represents an effort to look at different levels of cooperation and through that focus tries to make a conclusion of the compatibility of IBSA and BRICS on a current world arena.

There were concerns about BRICS overshadowing IBSA expressed when South Africa was joining BRIC powerhouse. Although there are evident overlapping, in the core issues that IBSA is dealing with and BRICS are aiming to cope there is no conflict of interests. BRICS focuses on economy but it is slowly moving towards other areas. However, IBSA is based on democratic values and other similar causes which are common to the three countries and “has a personality of its own”.

Thus, it seems as IBSA can remain to be an instrumental and practical mechanism of the three countries of the three different continents sharing their interests and intertwining their economical cooperation to pull up the interests of the South. When BRICS’s main role seems to become a counterbalance of the power axis on the world scene with a broader economical and political goals. IBSA is a more appropriate platform for South Africa and the region than BRICS. It is a more substantive partnership with a real focus on each other. The question now, of course, will be whether BRICS are IBSA’s rivals or allies.

What is IBSA?

«Dialogue Forum India, Brazil, South Africa» (IBSA) has arisen as a result of negotiations between the leaders of India - Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Brazil - Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and South Africa - Thabo Mbeki during a summit «Great Eight» in 2003 in Evian. Officially, the establishment of a «Dialogue Forum India, Brazil, South Africa» was announced on June 6, 2003, by signing of «Brasilia Declaration» by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of South Africa, Brazil and India. The Declaration focused on issues of common concern including the reform of the United Nations, threats to security, social equity and inclusion, racial discrimination and gender equality. Thus, IBSA comes from the capitalization of three countries.

The institutional mechanisms of the Forum include consultations at Senior Official (Focal point), Ministerial (Trilateral Joint Commission) and Heads of State and/or Government (Summit) levels. In addition, the Forum also facilitates interaction amongst academics, businessmen and civil society. IBSA keeps an open and flexible structure. It does not have a branch nor a permanent executive secretariat nor a formal document promulgating its organizational structure. The last Summit was held in Brasilia on the 15th of April 2010. Seven meetings of Trilateral Joint Commission and several meetings of the 16 Joint Working Groups have been held.

IBSA countries have an important geostrategic position, each on different continent. All three have ambitions of playing a leading role in their respective regions, as well as an important role in global affairs.

The main objectives are: the promotion of the «South-South» dialogue, cooperation and elaboration of joint positions on significant matters of international relations, the development of investment and trade between the three regions; trilateral exchange of information, technology and expertise, joint support and development of the competitiveness of the participating countries; cooperation in agriculture, global climate change, culture, defense, education, energy, healthcare, information technology, science and technology, social development, trade and investment, tourism and transport.

IBSA supports the activities and the role of UN in the world. IBSA's member states have quite a coherent policy in its activities in the organization. All three are supporting the international system in resolving the challenges of a globalizing world, in particular regarding the UN role in maintaining security and stability in the world, sustainable development. IBSA countries follow the «Millennium Development Goals», and actively develop joint positions in order to achieve its goals in the international arena.

IBSA's one of the main priorities in a political sphere is the reform of UN Security Council. Each of the Member States wants to take a permanent seat in the UN Security Council for its region. IBSA believes that the UN Security Council does not meet the modern realities of international politics and supports the view of South Africa, expansion of the Security Council members in both permanent and non-permanent members. In doing so, in their

view, the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America must be part of the permanent members of UNSC.

IBSA member countries are standing in favor of increasing the availability and competitiveness of markets of developing countries, as well as of improving the foreign debt of poor countries. In addition to its increasing impact in the multilateral institutions all member countries are strategic partners of the European Union (EU).

IBSA, as an alliance of three highly diverse democratic societies, might best be viewed as a laboratory for exploring the future of democracy and international cooperation in the South.

IBSA's achievements can be distinguished by four poles - political achievements, working groups achievements in their respective areas of cooperation, IBSA Fund for Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger, and achievements in other issues.

The political results are evident in the joint positions that are expressed in the declarations of Heads of State and Government and Ministerial communiqués. Although the countries do not agree on everything, they agree on many things. Co-ordination is most evident at the UN, where there is a 96% vote convergence among IBSA countries and the reform of global institutions, especially the Security Council. IBSA countries lobbied for the reform of the UN to provide a stronger role to the developing countries, which comprise the majority of the world.

IBSA member states contributed crucially to the upset at the World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting in Cancun by pressing for fundamental changes to the developed world's agricultural subsidies regimes. Although the WTO negotiations showed the different, sometimes controversial approach of each country of IBSA forum to the issue it can be stated that IBSA's functional leadership in WTO negotiations and the UN reform debate offers a countervailing force to the current global order.

One of the main indicators of the effectiveness of the forum is trade indicators. It has grown impressively from \$3,9 billion in 2003 to just over \$10 billion in 2008. By this IBSA achieved its task to overpass the \$10 billion barrier by 2010. The new goal is set to an even more significant growth in trade within IBSA - \$25 billion in 2015.¹

To reinforce the joint positions in the fields of mutual interests there were held some meetings among IBSA representatives at the multilateral forums, such as Human Rights Council, WIPO, Antarctic Treaty etc.

The three countries are in a position to make a significant contribution to global debate and engagement as was achieved at the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change in December 2009, where IBSA countries, together with China (BASIC), played an important role in reaching agreement on the Copenhagen Accord. During the IBSA summit at Brasilia this

¹ Alexandra A. Arkhangelskaya. India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum. A bridge between the three continents? Challenges, achievements and policy options. NAI Policy note. November 2010. ISBN 978-91-7106-679-4.

year it was agreed to work closer together within the BASIC group towards elaborating a common position at the COP meeting in December 2010 in Mexico.

Sixteen working groups have been established in areas varying from science and technology to human settlements. The objective of these working groups is to find the projects in the established areas in which there can be effective exchange of knowledge and / or experiences.

There has been considerable progress in the areas of science and technology and energy cooperation. The cooperation in the field of ocean research, space science and Antarctica has expanded. The three countries participated in a joint naval exercise, IBSAMAR. The second exercise is planned to take place in South Africa later this year.

The Brazilian Revenue Service, for example, has offered training on the IT technologies to its partners, and, in exchange, it has learned from the South African experience of setting up a specific unit to deal with large tax payers. This exchange complements the traditional cooperation established between the Brazilian Revenue Service and that of countries like United States and France, because some of the problems Brazil's Revenue Service faces are more similar to those faced by India and South Africa.

IBSA micro-satellites projects also deserve to be noted. South Africa is pushing with the IBSA satellite project due to the fact that it offers an opportunity to expand trilateral cooperation into advanced technology, increasing collective scientific and engineering capacity.

The India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Trust Fund demonstrates true potential of IBSA grouping. It was created in 2004 within the IBSA Dialogue Forum. Projects under the IBSA Trust Fund are carried out in collaboration and consultation with partner countries, through South-South Cooperation mechanisms. The fund, managed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), allows the IBSA countries to initiate and finance poverty reduction projects in other developing countries.

Each IBSA country contributes with US\$ 1 million per year to the Fund. The United Nations honoured the governments of India, Brazil and South Africa in New York by awarding IBSA the 2010 Millennium Development Goals Award for South-South Cooperation for its innovative and successful projects of the Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund). This type of cooperation was recognised as «a breakthrough model of South-South technical cooperation». The Fund, administered by the United Nations, has created success stories in Haiti, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Burundi, Palestine and Cambodia.

1. Development of Agriculture and Livestock in Guinea-Bissau. A new rice seed that IBSA capacity builders introduced in Guinea-Bissau allowed the country to have a second harvest every year, which helped to combat hunger. This case is going to be analysed further on in more details.

2. Collection of Solid Waste as a Tool to Reduce Violence in Carrefour Feuilles, Haiti. It has developed a culture of waste disposal, collection and recycling, therefore generating

employment, reducing the incidence of disease, preventing flood risk from garbage-clogged canals, and reducing environmental impacts.

3. Support to infrastructure in the island of Sao Nicolau, Cape Verde. The refurbishment of two local, isolated health care clinics through the employment of local workers was executed.

Furthermore, HIV/Aids testing and counseling centre in Burundi, a sports complex in Ramallah, in Palestine and a school in Gaza.

It can be said that IBSA is not just another Third World initiative, but a new type of South-South coalition with inter-regional dimension. Through parallel academic, parliamentary and business for a, IBSA is also linked to civil society interests.

India has made much progress in the area of inclusive economic growth by adopting rural employment guarantee schemes, where in every family at least one person is guaranteed 100 days of employment annually. This is one of the examples of the beneficial exchange of experiences between IBSA member countries. Other practices involve human resource development, equitable infrastructure, short term distress mitigation, grass roots institution building, environmentally – sound strategies, and integration into the knowledge economy.

As an example, IBSA Business forum has shown considerable results in developing a comprehensive dialogue. The small business forum is creating a database of all small and medium businesses in all three countries.

Although we see considerable results there are also some important challenges:

IBSA has a large potential but converting it into results beneficial to the common man is the real challenge. There are several obstacles to achieving the intended goals - trade restrictions of other associations in which they are participating, the size of the economy of South Africa which is rather smaller than of the other members, the need to standardize internal processes, simplification of visa regime, the language barrier, the distance etc. For example, it is difficult to meet each other due to the distance but it is even difficult to organize a trilateral teleconference call due to the time differences.

There are some internal challenges in each country that can create obstacles to further integration of IBSA countries. For instance, India is directly involved in conflicts with its neighbors; South Africa is obligated to determine its policies with regard to the policies of SADC and AU.

Differences in approach of national positions of the three Southern powers became clear in WTO Doha Round negotiations. India's position on trade related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) and non-tariff barriers separates it from Brazil and South Africa. Agricultural imports are the issue of concern, where New Delhi wants a protection while Brasilia advocates for liberalization. In addition, the national interests of member countries tend to clash with the interests of the countries of the South they tend to represent. The

latter cannot be interested in the reduction of the agricultural subsidies in Northern part of the world.

That arises another challenge that is common to all three countries of IBSA Dialogue forum. None of them are clearly identified and respected to the fully as a regional representatives. For instance, Brazil's position is challenged by the leadership ambitions of Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez, India is in permanent conflict with other countries of its region, South Africa is challenged by Nigeria, Egypt and others.

The economies' different sizes and degrees of global integration lead to different trade benefits. There are limited complementarities between the three markets, due to the fact that India, Brazil and South Africa produce similar goods and compete for access to the markets of the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Although all of the IBSA members support the reform of the UNSC South Africa has to abide by African Union guidelines, which prevent it from fielding its candidacy on its own. India and Brazil, on their turn are pushing for the permanent seats in UNSC, and agreed to support each other's candidature. Apparently Brazil serves on the UNSC for the period of 2010-2011, and India will put forward its candidature for 2011-2012. South Africa (with the support from SADC and AU) is elected for a non-permanent seat to the UNSC 2011-2012.

The agenda of IBSA forum also envisions the signing of trilateral agreements on free trade, although at present it seems unlikely. South Africa and Brazil are members in SACU and MERCOSUR, which forbid individual members to sign a free trade agreement with any other country without the free trade zone and its benefits to other members. This is one of the main obstacles to development cooperation within IBSA. MERCOSUR comprises Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, with a population of 250 million people; SACU - South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia, with a population of 51 million people. ²

Brazil proposed to unite the South American Common Market, the Southern African Customs Union and India in a single commercial space. It can be assumed that this will strengthen the role of India, South Africa and Brazil as the largest developing countries in international organizations. However, it is evident that the formation of such a union - a complex and lengthy process, which would require an agreed position of all stakeholders. The success of this project will completely reform the system of international relations. In particular, the countries of the South, provided that a single market of these countries will be able to compete with markets of the North, and if they will not dictate the terms, then they will have to talk on an equal footing. Thus, this process is unlikely to cause the approval and support from the North, in addition to its creation would require substantial resources.

² Ibid.

There has been a number of discussions concerning the other emerging poles of power such as China and its inclusion in IBSA, the BRICs, as well as other groupings such as the STICS, BICK, BASIC etc.

China is the biggest trading partner of all three IBSA countries, and there has been some discussion about inviting China to join the IBSA club. In many views it could threaten the achievements made. The forum is recognized as an important and influential platform and a credible voice of the people of the South. China could invade the markets with its goods, there are some concerns about the human rights etc. All these issues would have to change the initial IBSA agenda. As it seems it is more likely to develop an IBSA-China dialogue.

The rise of Brazil-Russia-India-China (BRIC) as a coalition of emerging powers in the face of divergent views on IBSA's development also brings to the discussion a number of questions. BRIC's role is very different from that of the IBSA. BRIC grouping attracted a lot of attention, and it is accepted that it will try to achieve certain broad level economic reforms as well as restructure the global financial architecture. Therefore it is evident that BRICs goals differ from that of IBSA – it has an economical priority and not the development, political co-operation and integration as IBSA. On business level - 15 April 2010, for the first time a joint BRIC/ IBSA Business forum was hosted with the business delegations from Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China, and South Africa joined together to discuss issues related to commercial interests of these major emerging economies with a view to further their commercial ties. Therefore it seems that a effective dialogue between the grouping could be more effective than an integration of such blocks.

Thus from 2003 the Forum progressed from the free partnership aimed for the decision of political problems at macro-level, to an alliance which discusses the main features of the South and represents developing countries on a world scene. It has achieved to put in place mechanisms for exchange and cooperation. As a result IBSA can be seen as an emerging “bridge” between three continents of the South.

What is BRICS?

BRICS is a group of five fast-developing countries - Brazil, Russia, China, India, South Africa. For the first time an acronym BRIC was proposed by analysts from Goldman Sachs in November 2001 in a research note from that bank. According to experts of Goldman Sachs, by 2050 economies will exceed the total size of the economies of the richest countries (the Group of Seven). In December 2010, South Africa acceded to the BRIC countries and the formation has been transformed into BRICS.

Today BRICS combines three billion people (43% of the population) in the territory of 39.7 million sq.m. (more than a quarter of global land surface), producing almost 13 trillion. U.S. gross domestic product per year (21% of world production). Each of these five countries on three continents, has influence in their respective regions in particular and in the world.

It should be noted that analysts of Goldman Sachs did not assume the existence of economic policy coordination between the BRIC countries. Especially since it was not

assumed that the BRIC countries would form an economic bloc. But over time, there were signs that the four BRIC countries are seeking to form a political club or formation to convert its growing economic power into greater geopolitical "influence." The first summit at the foreign ministers level was held in 2008 in Ekaterinburg, Russia, as well as the first Summit of leaders of BRIC countries in 2009, in 2010 in Brasilia, in 2011 in China.

BRICS members are characterized as the most rapidly developing major economies of the world. Large number of important resources for the global economy provides an advantageous position for the states. The main common feature was that they are all developing countries with growing economies and influence, and they all strive for a free and more equitable agreement on global leadership, in which they and others will play an important role.

South Africa is one of the leading countries in Africa, its reputation is growing worldwide. November 12, 2010 at the G20 summit in Seoul, Republic of South Africa, formally expressed its wish to join the BRIC countries. South African President Jacob Zuma, in 2010 made an official visits to all four BRIC countries, expressing the priority of South African foreign policy - the inclusion of South Africa in the BRIC.

December 24, 2010 Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane said that she has received notification by telephone from her counterpart Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, according to which China, then chairman of the BRIC, in consultation with other member states invites South Africa to become a full member of the BRIC (BRICS). President Hu Jintao sent invitation to South African President Jacob Zuma, to take part in the BRICS summit in China in early April 2011.

"Interaction between the BRICS countries is open and non-discriminatory. This is a very important part of the overall South-South cooperation and an important bridge in North-South cooperation." This was stated on March 7, 2011 at a press conference in Beijing at the Fourth session of the NPC by Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi. Head of the Foreign Ministry also said that the BRICS summit is going to be held in Sanya (Hainan Island province) in April 2011.

Thus, the BRIC became a union, which now integrates into itself new states. It seems possible that in the near future BRICS will be even more expanded - countries which can be invited to the "club" - Indonesia, Turkey, Australia, Nigeria, Mexico.

"According to South Africa, BRICS can play a crucial role in the increasing influence of developing countries in the changing global political, economic and financial architecture - said the foreign minister of South Africa. - It is designed to be more fair and balanced. BRICS brings together the most vigorously developing nations of the planet against the background of economic decline in America and Europe. "

South Africa's new economic policy is based on the experience of those countries that were able to maintain GDP growth above 7% per year for two decades - such as Brazil, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Indonesia, South Korea and others. "New economic policy growth in South Africa needs to create the country's 5 million new jobs and reduce

unemployment from the current 25% to 15% by 2020 ", - said Minister of Economic Development of South Africa's Ebrahim Patel.

According to President Jacob Zuma, a country can adequately represent in the "club" the entire African continent. However, South Africa compared with other BRICS countries differs by considerably weak economic performance (in terms of production). The volume of South African GDP is a quarter of Russia's, which was the lowest in the BRIC countries. Even more obvious gap appears between South Africa and China, the second economy in the world after the United States. However, some Russian economists say, and the presence of Russia in the group of developing countries rather artificial, particularly since Russia does not have an excess of labor, which in many respects provides a typical BRICS high rates of economic growth.

A lot of criticism was expressed regarding the economic, demographic and even territorial lag of South Africa from other BRICS members. Indeed, South Africa lags behind in many respects, but it is understood that South Africa is the most influential political force, a developed and growing economy on the continent, which has recently attracted increased attention of the international community. South Africa has access to the markets of African countries and more importantly, to raw material resources of these countries.

South Africa's accession to the BRICS will help the relationship of the new structure - BRICS - with the African Union and other organizations such as the Non-Aligned Movement in which South Africa has a great reputation, said Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich.

Acceptance of South Africa in this group reflected the fact that in recent years there has been increasing global attention to the problems of Africa. The continent is of particular importance in connection with the sprawling economic problems in the world. Africa becomes a zone of strategic interests of new poles of power. Thus, the interaction of BRICS, both individually and as an association with African countries is an important aspect of foreign policy activity. Thus, in the last decade, there has been a surge of economic activity in China and India, and Brazil in the continent. It should be noted that South Africa is the largest supplier of mineral raw materials to developed countries, has significant scientific and technical potential. South Africa is regarded as a gate of the continent. The involvement of this country in a "club" is a confirmation of the importance of the African component in the modern system of international relations.

The entry of South Africa in BRICS allows the country to raise its international status and increase the role of so called "powers" in the emerging new world order, as well as to strengthen its position as a representative of the African continent, as well as possibly increase the inflow of foreign investment into the country.

The inclusion of South Africa was a political maneuver, which further can enhance the power and status of the BRICS formation. Although the new member has the most advanced economy in Africa, in the worldwide list it occupies 31 place, nearly 20 points away from China. The country is also behind other developing countries such as Turkey, Mexico and South Korea, but the African powers are important in geopolitical terms, which

gives BRICS presence, influence and trade opportunities on three continents. China is the largest trading partner of South Africa, India and Brazil want to expand its trade ties with Africa.

South Africa needs to take serious steps to significantly accelerate its economic development to keep pace with the other BRICS members.

BRICS countries also expressed their firm commitment to national sovereignty, allegiance to the concept of a multipolar world in which there should not be any predominant power, with respect for authority and powers of the UN.

The BRICS summit was held in 14-15 of April 2011 in Sanya on the Chinese island of Hainan: the leaders of Brazil, Russia, China, India and South Africa - after the talks adopted a declaration containing an assessment of the main aspects of cooperation of the association. In the presence of the Summit participants also under the written agreement on financial cooperation within the inter-bank mechanism of the BRICS.

An important event of the meeting - is the adoption of long-term plan of action. The emphasis is placed on the development of economic ties, the cooperation within the G-20, as well as more active involvement in the cooperation of civil society.

Estimation of results of BRICS Summit differ to the exact opposites. On the one hand, the existence of BRICS and declared major activities are defined as positive. On the other, many experts argue that BRICS - is nothing more than hot air, another reason for the Heads of States belonging to a virtual merger, to "light up" on the world stage.

Undoubtedly it is important that the "five" BRICS declared themselves as an obvious international counter to G7 (U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Italy and Canada), which since the mid 70-ies has always been the backbone of the global U.S. leadership and the Jamaican currency system, which determines the status of the U.S. dollar as a world reserve currency.

The summit called for the revision of the distribution of votes in the governing bodies of international financial institutions - the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Most analysts are skeptical of the intentions of BRICS to stop using the dollar - an agreement on the use of national currencies of the BRICS in trade between them. There are a couple of reasons. First, all member countries have enormous assets denominated in U.S. dollars. China alone has government bonds in the U.S. Treasury amounting to billions of dollars. All the political elites in Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa have significant deposits (including private) in U.S. currency. Thus, when the current status of the weakening or collapsing of the dollar seems unlikely to be the desire of the BRICS. Secondly, China, which plays an important role in the alliance. In China's tightly regulated all capital transactions, transactions with the yuan is also very limited. This can affect the amount of future settlements in national currencies. Third, at least three of the five countries BRICS - South Africa, Brazil and India - are suffering from the current account deficit meaning that the growth of their economy depends on foreign investment. Therefore, it would be difficult to agree on cross-rates with China and Russia. Fourthly, the existence of serious differences in policy on exchange rates. In addition, the

currencies of BRICS can not themselves determine their relationship, because China has a strict system of monetary management. In addition, the financial markets of Brazil, India and Russia have not yet considered sufficiently developed, and their currencies - sufficiently liquid. In addition, they are often subjected to external scrutiny. From this perspective, the South African rand is the leader among the national currency units of the BRICS. However, despite all of the above statements the intent has important political significance.

The second important result of the summit is the unified position of BRICS on the Libyan issue. It should be recalled that resolution 1973 was adopted by the UN Security Council because Russia and China did not use the veto power they possess as permanent Security Council members (South Africa, a non-permanent Security Council member, voted in favor). In a joint statement, leaders of BRICS disagreed with the fact that the military operation has gone beyond the mandate. In a joint declaration they emphasized the need to deal with the Libyan problem by peaceful means through dialogue, in which the UN and regional organizations should play a crucial role. BRICS also expressed their support for the high-level Initiative group of the African Union in Libya. This, in turn, means forming a political component of the BRICS.

In 2011 all BRICS countries are represented in the UN Security Council (Brazil until the end of 2011, India and South Africa - after the end of 2012, Russia and China - permanent members).

India, South Africa and Brazil stand in favor of reform of UN structures, in particular the expansion of permanent membership of UN Security Council, each in turn claim itself a permanent seat. However, there are certain difficulties in the issue of representation in the UN Security Council. For instance, China opposes strengthening of India, which is a potential threat in the security sphere, objecting to its permanent seat in the UN Security Council. The text of the document adopted on this issue clearly demonstrates the existing differences, there are no promises about the permanent membership of the Security Council: "China and Russia reaffirm importance. They attach to the status of India, Brazil and South Africa in international affairs, understand and support their desire to play an important role in the UN. "

The third result – strengthening of China's role. Many experts have criticized the BRICS formation, calling it a front for China. China at government and corporate levels has signed with other member countries over 300 bilateral agreements on economic cooperation: from building of new power plants in Brazil and the purchasing of Embraer license company to build a new model of business aircraft Legacy 600/650 to investment in the mining industry in South Africa. Thus, it became apparent that with the help of BRICS mechanisms China maximizes its zone of influence.

Summit results indicate the presence of common political and economic interests of BRICS countries, which are the driving forces behind the strengthening of their cooperation. But we should not forget about the contradictions that exist between team members of the BRICS. For example, in trade - competition between China, on the one hand, and India and Brazil, on the other hand, especially pronounced in the African continent. Russia is

dissatisfied with the structure of bilateral trade with China. There is a preserved and unresolved territorial issue between India and China.

Among the positive trends, the BRIC countries are making effort to coordinate their action in order to increase the influence of BRICS on issues of global security. For example, in a declaration adopted by the leaders of the BRICS there is a call for "a more equitable and just world," which "should be characterized by peace, harmony. Cooperation and development on the basis of science." Among many other initiatives of the BRICS summit is the proposal of Russia to its BRICS partners to form a mechanism of mutual aid during emergencies, this proposal emerged due to the tragic events in Japan this year.

The Differences: Complementary or Mutually Exclusive?

The rise of Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) as a coalition of emerging powers in the face of divergent views on IBSA's development also brings to the discussion a number of questions. BRICS role is very different from that of the IBSA. BRICS grouping attracted a lot of attention, and it is accepted that it will try to achieve certain broad level economic reforms as well as restructure the global financial architecture. Therefore it is evident that BRICS goals differ from that of IBSA – it has an economical priority and not the development, political co-operation and integration as IBSA. On business level - 15 April 2010, for the first time a joint BRIC/ IBSA Business forum was hosted with the business delegations from Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China, and South Africa joined together to discuss issues related to commercial interests of these major emerging economies with a view to further their commercial ties. Therefore it seems that an effective dialogue between the grouping could be more effective than an integration of such blocks.

The degree to which a shadow of BRICS will fall on IBSA seems to be very dependent on SA which is "sitting on two chairs". China's role in BRICS as well as in the world economy is undoubtful. Some analysts argue that IBSA versus BRICS, represents India versus China, but it seems that this opposition is more artificial of nature thus the grouping are more likely to find themselves on a different levels of South-South multilateralism.

BRICS does not yet have its own agenda, it represents more a platform for dialogue between member states, than their consolidated voice on international arena. Competition between BRICS countries is very strong, particularly in Africa, SA is also competing for African market with all the other BRICS members. Therefore it represents a very fragile structure, the future of BRICS in practical view is very dubious, it seems that there are more obstacles than common grounds for the future of this bloc, although BRICS represents the tendency of the global power shift.

Although there are evident overlapping, in the core issues that IBSA is dealing with and BRICS are aiming to cope there is no conflict of interests. BRICS focuses on economy but it is slowly moving towards other areas. However, IBSA is based on democratic values and other similar causes which are common to the three countries and "has a personality of its own".

Thus, it seems as IBSA can remain to be an instrumental and practical mechanism of the three countries of the three different continents sharing their interests and intertwining their economical cooperation to pull up the interests of the South. When BRICS's main role seems to become a counterbalance of the power axis on the world scene with a broader economical and political goals. IBSA is a more appropriate platform for South Africa and the region than BRICS. It is a more substantive partnership with a real focus on each other.