

*Theme: Building A Fair World Order: Rule Of Law, Role Of International
Institutions*

Paper title: BRICS and the International Rule of Law

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Abstract

In all the BRIC/S Joint Statements and Declarations since 2009 the member states have emphasised two interrelated positions:

- *The centrality of the United Nations in International Relations, with particular emphasis on multilateralism in decision making; and*
- *The need for a democratic and just world order based on the rule of international law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, coordinated action and collective decision-making of all states.*

Although the wording differs slightly from Yekaterinburg (2009) to Fortaleza (2014), this commitment to the centrality of the UN and maintaining the rule of law has not wavered. What is, however, somewhat of a paradox is that, despite this allegiance expressed by the leaders of all five BRICS nations to the UN and its agencies, there has simultaneously been a call for the reform of institutions of global governance. This is the revisionist nature of the BRICS agenda that seeks a fairer and more just world order that balances forces of power.

This presentation will look at traditional definitions of the rule of law, whereafter some attempts will be made to unpack what BRICS' understanding is of the role of international law in global reform. As the group consolidates its position on the global stage, it is necessary to re-think how decision-making occurs in bodies such as the UNGA, UNSC, IMF, WB and WTO, and how the governance systems and structures could be reformed to be fair, just and democratic. It is also necessary to re-imagine how the international rule of law could be (re)interpreted in a way that would strengthen any attempts at changing the way the world as a whole cares for its citizens.