

Chapter 1: Editorial

The BRICS Peace, Security, and Economy Research Intersections

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In an era of shifting global power dynamics, the role of multilateral alliances in maintaining peace and security has become increasingly vital. The BRICS coalition – comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – has emerged as a significant player in global governance, advocating for a multi-polar world order that fosters cooperation, economic stability, and diplomatic engagement. The Peace and Security Symposium, funded by the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) and hosted in Johannesburg, provided a platform for distinguished scholars and diplomats to critically assess BRICS’ potential in shaping international peace and security.

At the symposium, the prominent ambassador, H.H.S. Viswanathan, Alexandra A. Arkhangelskaya, Kai Kenkel, Probal Ghosh, and Malte Brosig, explored the nuances of BRICS’ role in conflict mediation, international peace-keeping, and cyber security. The symposium was structured around several key themes, which this book seeks to expand upon:

1 BRICS and the United Nations Security Council

Siphamandla Zondi’s insights on BRICS cohesion in the UN Security Council highlighted the complexities of multilateral diplomacy. While BRICS nations

have made strides in advocating for more equitable representation in global decision-making, challenges remain in achieving a unified approach to security issues.

2 The Geopolitical Influence of BRICS in Peace and Security

Ambassador Viswanathan's keynote presentation addressed whether BRICS can be a stabilizing force in international conflicts. With diverse geopolitical interests, BRICS members bring unique perspectives to peace negotiations. However, their ability to act collectively remains a subject of debate.

3 Regional Perspectives on BRICS Security Contributions

Russia's Perspective: Alexandra Arkhangel'skaya provided an analysis of Moscow's approach to peace and security within BRICS, emphasising Russia's strategic objectives in global conflict resolution.

Brazil's Perspective: Kai Michael Kenkel examined Brazil's contributions to peacekeeping operations, particularly in Latin America and Africa, and how BRICS can expand its peacebuilding role.

African Maritime and Cyber Security Challenges: Philani Mthembu, Francis Kornegay, and Isaac Luthuli explored the emerging threats of cybercrime and the security framework for the Indian Ocean region – a strategic area for BRICS maritime cooperation.

4 The Future of a Post-Western Global Order

Malte Brosig's presentation addressed BRICS' response to large-scale armed conflicts and its role in shaping a post-Western order. As traditional Western alliances evolve, BRICS faces the challenge of establishing itself as a viable alternative in international diplomacy.

5 Challenges and Opportunities for BRICS Peace Initiatives

While BRICS offers a counterbalance to Western-led institutions, internal policy differences, economic disparities, and regional security concerns present obstacles to unified action. The symposium concluded with reflections on how BRICS can strengthen its diplomatic coherence to become an effective peacebuilding force.

The International Conference on the Nexus between Security and Economy: BRICS Perspectives, held on 15 August 2024, marked a significant milestone in the ongoing dialogue about the intricate relationship between security and economic stability in the BRICS (expanded) nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. This conference, which brought together leading scholars and practitioners, highlighted the importance of aligning security frameworks with economic priorities to foster sustainable development and resilience in an increasingly interconnected world.

The BRICS nations, with their diverse political, economic, and social landscapes, face unique challenges and opportunities. The conference highlighted how these countries, despite their differences, share common security threats – such as cybersecurity risks, energy insecurity, and socio-economic inequality – that have profound implications for their economic growth and stability. The discussions revealed that addressing these challenges requires not only national efforts but also regional and international cooperation.

One of the key takeaways from the conference was the recognition that *security and economic growth are deeply intertwined*. While robust security measures are essential for maintaining stability, overly restrictive policies can stifle economic activity by discouraging foreign investment and limiting trade. Conversely, economic instability which includes the challenge of youth unemployment in Africa but also further afield in the global South – can exacerbate security risks, creating a vicious cycle that undermines both national and regional progress. The conference emphasised the need for *strategic alignment* between security and economic policies, ensuring that they complement rather than conflict with each other.

Another critical theme was the role of *technology and innovation* in addressing security challenges and driving economic growth. Investments in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and renewable energy were identified as essential for mitigating risks and creating new economic opportunities. The conference also highlighted the importance of *socio-economic inclusivity*, particularly in countries like India and South Africa, where high levels of inequality contribute to social unrest and security risks. Addressing these disparities through education, healthcare, and job creation was seen as a prerequisite for achieving long-term employment opportunities, stability and prosperity.

The conference also shed light on the *geopolitical dimensions* of security and economic cooperation within the BRICS framework. As the global order continues to evolve, BRICS nations have the potential to play a pivotal role in shaping a more equitable and sustainable international system. However,

this will require a concerted effort to address internal challenges, such as political repression and human rights concerns, while fostering greater collaboration on shared security and economic priorities.

The insights and recommendations emerging from this conference are not only relevant for BRICS nations but also for the broader global community. In an era marked by rapid technological change, geopolitical uncertainty, and growing inequality, the need for integrated approaches to security and economic development has never been more urgent. The conference served as a timely reminder that *security and economy are two sides of the same coin*, and that addressing one without the other is unlikely to yield sustainable results.

As we move forward, it is imperative that BRICS nations continue to engage and upscale inter-, and transdisciplinary scholarship, research and dialogues, invest in innovation, and prioritise broad-based political, economic and social inclusivity in their policy frameworks. By doing so, they can not only enhance their own resilience and prosperity but also contribute to a more secure and equitable global order.

Drawing on the chapters and their abstracts, as usual, we provide a brief overview of select contributions at the 2018 symposium and the 2024 conference, and published in this special issue of *Alternation*.



The 2018 BRICS PEACE & SECURITY SYMPOSIUM

The chapter by **Mosud Y. Olumoye and Stanley O. Ehiane**, ‘**Cyber Terrorism and Cyber Security in Contemporary Nigeria**’, seeks to explore the concepts of cyber terrorism and cyber security in an overview format. It is done in the context of the evolution and the accelerated development, adoption and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT has transformed the modern world with both positive as well as negative impacts. Considering this fact, the one of the prevalent negatives, viz., cyber terrorism in Nigeria and its legislative response thereon. It covers topics such as elements of cyber terrorism; factors aiding cyber terrorism; techniques of attacks used by cyber terrorists; cyber terrorism in Nigeria; the impacts of cyber terrorism, and preventive measures for cyber terrorism. The chapter also addresses the effectiveness of cyber security to curb the threat of cyber terrorism. Methodologically, it is an explorative study that engages secondary data. The conclusion emphasises the

significance of effective cyber security strategies to maximise the benefits inherent in ICT for the growth and development of humanity.

E.A. Mantzaris's chapter, **'Corruption and Citizens' Financial Security in Public Service Medical Schemes: The Case of South Africa'**, reports on an empirical exploration of public service medical schemes governance, its variations and the dire financial repercussions and financial security for the members of such schemes in South Africa. Given the class-based 'dual nature' of the medical scheme terrain in South Africa through the existence of 'open' and 'restricted' schemes (the latter dominated by public-service ones), existing violations of good governance take a wide variety of forms and types, despite the existence of legislation such as the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 (PFMA), the Medical Schemes Act of 1998 and the regulatory body, the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS). Methodologically the research was based on a qualitative frame of research and included a scrutiny of primary and secondary documentary material as well as unstructured interviews with senior public service officials. In principle, the findings are that beneficiaries of public services expect affordable, honest, accountable and useful services and products that are in accordance with their needs and financial means and resources. In terms of the duality of the market, such services ought to be delivered in a transparent, accountable and responsible manner, where accountability and common respect of the partners make this financial relationship sustainable. In this instance citizens utilize such products and services with the hope of a provision of a corrupt free service that is realistic and sustainable and guarantee financial security to citizens.

The prominent ambassador, **H.H.S. Viswanathan**, in his **'Can BRICS Contribute to Global Peace and Security?'**, argues that peace and security is the sine qua non for progress and prosperity. History repeatedly shows that countries and regions prosper during periods of peace and stability. In BRICS (Brazil, Russia India, China and South Africa), as geo-economic entity, the increasing focus on geo-political peace and security has steadily grown in prominence over the last ten summit declarations. The question then arises as to whether the new emerging BRICS narrative from the Global South, can take a larger role in the maintenance of Global Peace and Security. It may do so, granted some seminal issues are addressed effectively, viz., i) BRICS is not a formal alliance; so how could the BRICS partners formulate and implement policies? ii) Given its geo-political diversity, BRICS countries may find common ground in Peacekeeping, Peace Building, anti-piracy, action against drug and human trafficking and anti-terror activities. iii) BRICS could also

address factors that lead to conflicts namely the non-traditional security threats like poverty, youth unemployment, non-inclusive growth, increasing disparity in the inequality gap, food and energy security. The creation of new global mechanisms and platforms and a new narrative may be vital for effectively dealing with these issues. Peace should be seen not only as absence of conflicts but also as absence of all factors that could lead to conflicts.

In **‘The Menace of Cybercrime, Cyber Security and Regional Response: The Case of Africa’**, Isaac Luthuli, explores the new untapped wealth of data and information mines, which is worth billions of dollars today. Focusing on cybercrimes or cyber-piracy the momentous digital revolution also experiences devastating attacks from cybercriminals. It is estimated that ‘spending on cyber security will escalate from \$86.4 billion in 2017 to \$93 billion in 2018’ (Cybersecurity Ventures 2017). Concomitantly, the chapter engages, i) the historical landscape on the need to enhance cyber security as countermeasure to cybercrimes and its evolving sophistication and complexity; ii) the usability and resourcefulness of the cyberspace as seminal to the digital revolution in all sectors of businesses, and irrespective of the dangers; iii) the trend of cybercrime and cybercriminals’ activities globally and in especially regionally in Africa; as the spot focus; and citing examples from the main fast growing economic centres on the continent. As internet usage for banking, money transfers, ecommerce and social media usage are blossoming, and are augmented by mobile telephony, to address personal and data safety and protection from cyber-piracy or cybercriminals remains critical. This must be done via the appropriate cyberspace policy and legal measure innovation, with a need to do this in BRICS as well as globally.

The chapter, **‘Brazil, South – South International Security Governance and Peace Operations (2003 – 2016)’**, by Kai Michael Kenkel explores Brazil’s recent contributions to South - South governance and a rethinking of cooperation between global Southern states, as they relate to issues related to international security. Humanitarian intervention – the use of military force to protect individual rights and uphold the principles underpinning the international system – stands as proxy in this instance for the country’s participation in collective security measures and the provision of peace and stability at the global level. Brazil’s contribution to a notion of security governance anchored in the Global South will be assessed through a focus on both material aspects – participation in United Nations-led peace operations (and non-participation in Western-led initiatives) – and ideational aspects such as debates on the norms governing intervention practice and those

regulating the practice of security governance in multilateral bodies. Here, the country's engagement with the 'responsibility to protect' is one example.



The 2024 BRICS SECURITY & ECONOMY NEXUSES CONFERENCE

'The Use of the Internet for Nefarious Security Purposes: Policies, Developments and Challenges of Terrorist Content on Social Media', by **W.J. Dayal & N.D. Gopal**, is a non-systematic desktop literature review that draws on publicly available sources and aims to provide recommendations to civil society, academic researchers, and policymakers tasked with combatting terrorist content on social media. It i) investigates the United Nations (UN) policy mechanisms by which members engage in counterterrorism and combatting terrorist narratives; ii) outlines the BRICS approach to combatting terrorism on social media through the lens of the last five (5) summit declarations, taken at the 10th to the 14th BRICS Summits from 2018 to 2022; iii) investigates terrorists' use of social media and the response from private companies to reduce terrorist content on their platforms; and iv) investigates how journalists and civil society are impacted by broad bans of terrorist content on social media by drawing on the case of an East African journalist. The research found that while the UN, BRICS and private companies combat terrorism through policy mechanisms and the development of technology, broadly banning terrorist content on social media can inadvertently intersect with journalists and civil society actors. The research recommends that restrictions on terrorist content on social media should offer protection to journalists and civil society who may share content without the intention to incite violence.

In his **'A Survey of Cybersecurity Issues in BRICS Countries'**, **Oluwafisayo Kaka**, assesses cybersecurity issues within BRICS countries and identifies policies and measures used to tackle identified cyberattacks. Global cybercrime mainly comprise of criminals stealing information, and using cyberspace for monetary gain, identity theft and to attack critical infrastructure. Since financial development with progressive financial growth of the BRICS countries are seminal for them, they are also targets for cybercrime. So, methodologically the study comprises of a systematic review of existing literature on the topic, that generated data from peer-reviewed journals,

government documents, reports, policy documents, and other relevant documents on the cybersecurity responses of BRICS countries. For countering cyberattacks, we need to know what these comprise of, what the existing policy and related technological responses and their implementation and evaluation are. The findings, are that some cybersecurity policies and regulations are dated; we have skill gaps in different organisations across governance, public and social sectors in society; and there is little cybersecurity collaboration between governments and private organisations in and between BRICS countries. Recommendations, including societal impact analysis and pointers towards future research are made.

The expansion of the BRICS adds to the diversity of economic and political systems amongst its members. **‘Fostering Good Governance and Human Rights in an Expanded BRICS: Challenges and Opportunities’**, by **Simbarashe Tembo** and **James Ndlovu** makes a contribution on this matter. With new and existing membership, ranging from liberal constitutional democracies to outright authoritarian regimes, the BRICS bloc will face a myriad of challenges in policy formulation and implementation. While diversity is often desirable, it is crucial for the bloc to establish normative principles for good governance, democracy and human rights and foster mutual respect and shared values among member states. They argue that as BRICS positions itself as an alternative to Western-led global institutions, a principle-based approach to its relations can bolster its moral authority in international affairs. A significant number of countries that have recently joined BRICS face significant challenges including repression, corruption and political and economic instability. They theorize that a shared commitment to human rights and good governance enhances economic development, peace and security, leading to more equitable and inclusive growth in member states. Relying on liberal theories of international relations and international law, the chapter firstly discusses the imperative for setting international human rights norms, tailored for context specific for BRICS countries, so as to enhance cooperation within the bloc. It then attempts to provide technical assistance by drawing from best practices to facilitate human rights-based cooperation and among member states. It argues that an expanded BRICS has potential to reinforce good governance, human rights and democracy.

In her, **‘An Exploratory Study on the Transnational Illicit Drug Trade and its Dangers to BRICS Countries’**, **Sandhya Maharaj** points out that drug addiction is a global scourge and is a threat to human survival. The United Nations in its World Drug Report (UNODC 2024a) states that almost

292 million people used drugs in 2022 – a 20% increase from 2012. This chapter examines the prevalence and impact of transnational illicit drug trafficking in the formidable political and economic alliance of BRICS. Methodologically, the study uses a scoping review that investigates the trade effects on public health, economic stability and social cohesion within BRICS jurisdictions, including how the inflow of illicit drugs is stopped. The production, trafficking, circulation and consumption of drugs like cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, and synthetic opioids impacts public health, including the spread of HIV/ Aids, and both national and global security. Corruption, resource constraints, and complex international trafficking networks exacerbates the situation. The main requirement is the formation of a cohesive partnership of BRICS nations, together with a strong and strategic alliance with a co-ordinated anti-drug strategy. A unified BRICS response, spanning the four strategically located regions is vital in combatting the rising drug threat.

Nontyatyambo Pearl Dastile’s ‘Cooperation in Countering Transnational Crime’, is a critical examination of the multifaceted domain of transnational crime, with a specific emphasis on strategies that hold promise for the mitigation and curtailment of such activities. The study delves into the exigencies of forming countering strategies for addressing the pervasive issue of transnational transgressions. Structurally, the discourse is partitioned into four chronological segments, initially focusing on contextualizing the ensuing argument through John Burton’s theoretical prism. The author explores proposed multi-stakeholder interventions before culminating in prescriptive recommendations advocating for the BRICS nations to forge symbiotic alliances with academic institutions and other entities, thereby facilitating sustainable solutions to the pervasive issue of transnational crime.

South Africa’s chronic and critically high rate of unemployment, particularly among youth, is cementing the country in a state of political, economic and social vulnerability. As one of the largest and most industrialised economies in Africa, it is perplexing that South Africa holds the highest level of youth unemployment in the continent. Notwithstanding South Africa’s robust legal frameworks and sustained job-creation policy initiatives which arguably hold much promise for dealing with youth unemployment, our analysis suggests that efforts to date lack a holistic, consolidated approach to meaningfully resolving the issue of youth unemployment, the consequences of which threaten national and human security. In **‘Youth Unemployment and the Threat to Peace and Security: The Case of South Africa’**, **Shanya Reuben and Shaida Bobat** adopts a literature review methodological approach and presents a syn-

thesised narrative review on the current evidence and knowledge bases in the context of South Africa's youth unemployment. The overarching purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of the multifaceted nature of youth unemployment in South Africa including the root cause, implications for national peace and security as well as an evaluation of the current strategies employed in tackling youth unemployment. Based on their analysis, they highlight the persistent challenge of South Africa's youth unemployment which pose significant political, economic and social threats to the nation. They provide some insights into potential pathways for dealing with South Africa's youth unemployment crisis, emphasizing in particular, a call for a unified, coordinated national strategy to maximise efforts in addressing youth unemployment.

The international community has experienced and witnessed a plethora of conflicts, violence, violent extremism, and wars, all leading threats to international peace and security. In **'Social Dialogue as a Vehicle to Address Peace and Security: An Analysis of the BRICS Formal Declarations'** **Nirmala Devi Gopal** and **Cresencia Nyathi** examines how BRICS have tackled global peace and security through formal declarations from Durban, Fortaleza, Ufa, Goa, Xiamen, Johannesburg, Brasilia, Moscow, New Delhi and Beijing, using a social dialogue approach. Throughout 2013 to 2022, these ten declarations indicate a transition from a focus on economic matters to encompassing broader social and political concerns. Using thematic analysis for content analysis, the findings suggest that the summits have expanded their focus from purely economic matters to encompassing social and political issues. It highlights the importance of a democratic UN Security Council, peaceful conflict resolution, cybersecurity, and international cooperation. It suggests the BRICS approach to peace and security should be enhanced through multilateral cooperation, gender integration, cybersecurity collaboration, conflict resolution, inclusive social dialogue, and global governance reforms.

The chapter by **Irina Yarygina** is titled, **'Institutional Investors in Russia: Security Problems and Prospects'**. The objective reasons for assessing the role of institutional investors as secure and valuable participants of the Russian financial market and forecast trends within the framework of various projects is explained by the necessity of optimizing their participation in serving the needs of national and international economy as well as using the tools of environmental policy promotion. The subject of the research is the activity of institutional investors in contemporary environment and possible ways of making them as secure financial intermediaries more effective in providing the

needs of the modern economy, especially in the fuel and energy complex as a key sector of the Russian Economy. The chapter provides a comparative analysis of the current set of factors and threats that affect the prospects of participation of institutional investors in financial markets. The complex analysis methodology, used in assessing the problems, involves considering the standpoint of the influence of a set of factors, subdivided into internal and external. Internal factors include the national market conditions and environmental issues. External factors reflect the long-term impact of a potentially adverse or favourable impact on the course of projects implementation, based on institutional investors' facility in spite of market turbulence or political sanctions.

Dating back thousands of years, India has traditionally been a maritime nation, owing to its expansive coastline of 7 500 kilometres. It also played a very significant role in its economy over millennia, and currently it includes and covers the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of nearly 2.7 million sq km. This EEZ contains a number of energy and natural resources, including oil, gas and coal. In **'India's Energy Security Vulnerabilities: Assessing Threats to Critical Offshore and Onshore Energy Infrastructure in the Indian Ocean'**, Gargi Sharma studies what India has categorised as Offshore Development Areas (ODAs) in its Exclusive Economic Zone to explore and exploit these resources for economic gains and a number of private as well as state owned companies have set up their installations in these ODAs for this purpose. On the one hand, the great waters serve as a gateway to prosperity in the form of trade and commerce opportunities, but on the other hand, they also pose a serious challenge to the peace and security of the country. In the context of this chapter, 'Energy Security Vulnerabilities' are defined as the susceptibilities and threats that compromise the stability, integrity, and safety of energy resources and infrastructure. These vulnerabilities encompass a range of non-traditional threats such as maritime terrorism, piracy and armed robbery which have been on the rise in the maritime space in the last few decades and can be attributed to the ignorance of littoral states as well as maritime law enforcement agencies towards maritime security (also known as 'sea blindness'). Perceiving maritime space as an extension of their theatre of operations, the illicit non-state actors such as maritime terrorists, pirates and armed robbers have been making good use of this sea blindness and targeting offshore assets including critical energy infrastructure as well as vessels for nefarious financial and political gains.

Fagbemi Adebimpe Saheed and **Nirmala Devi Gopal** present a review essay 'Form Global to National Views: Examining Intelligence

Gathering as an Intelligence-curbing Policy'. Pertinent to note is that insurgency has been a menace to the development of human capital and natural resources in globally. Every state is proffering solutions to curb the threat of insurgents' cum terrorists' groups mobilisation and activities. This chapter focuses on insurgency from the global, regional and national perspectives, in respect of three selected countries, Great Britain, Sri Lanka and France (globe), Kenya (Regional) and Nigeria (National). In addition, timely and accurate intelligence has been used by governments and security agencies to curb the activities of the insurgent groups. Yet the war against them still persist. The root causes of insurgency need to be addressed timely in order to curtail it. More so, some of the security agencies lack the required modern tools in gathering intelligence, such as measurement and signature intelligence (SIGMINT), signal intelligence (SIGINT), geospatial intelligence (GEOINT). The chapter concludes that insurgent groups operate differently based on their ideology, religion, political motivation, uneven distribution of resources, and secession. This requires in-depth study, with accurate, timely and prompt intelligence sharing between affected the governments and security agencies. It will so be able to combat and win the war against terrorists cum insurgent groups.

In **'Psychological Security: Exploring Community Engagement in Peacekeeping'**, **Matshupo Matoane**, argues that psychological security is intertwined with peacekeeping, based on the feeling of security. Community engagement is a practice that is employed in peacekeeping to ensure security of communities. Adopting a qualitative case study approach and community psychology as a conceptual framework, this chapter seeks to understand how community engagement ensures the psychological security of communities. The chapter argues that psychological security within peacekeeping is dependent upon the conscious and active participation of communities for which security is required. The chapter further argues that representations of community and positions adopted in understanding this concept, have a bearing on how communities are engaged with. The study reveals that a subjective representation of community is associated with community empowerment, while an objective or value free representation of community is associated with a partially empowered community. Communities who feel empowered may be more likely to perceive psychological security in their environment.

The COVID-19 pandemic, caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), swiftly became a global crisis, prompting the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it a pandemic in March 2020. Over the following two years, the virus evolved, leading to

numerous waves of infections and the emergence of the omicron variant by December 2021. The pandemic had profound impacts on healthcare, the economy, education, and public trust in ‘science’, the media and the authorities. In **‘The Mistakes made in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: How to Deal with Future Pandemics’**, **Gert Kruger** explores the governance mistakes made during the COVID-19 response and seeks ways to enhance future pandemic preparedness.



This *Alternation African Scholarship Book* volume #21 (2025), brings together some of the seminal chapters from the 2018 symposium and 2024 conference, and in fact extends the 2018 dialogue initiated at the symposium, and also captures seminal contributions at the 2024 conference. It brings together expert analyses and policy recommendations to assess and provide some pointers for BRICS’ evolving role in global peace and security. As the world navigates complex geopolitical landscapes, the contributions in this volume provide a roadmap for BRICS to enhance its impact in conflict resolution, economic diplomacy, and cyber security governance.

The volume also captures the key themes, discussions, and recommendations from especially the conference, which serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners seeking to navigate the complex interplay between security and economy.

It is our hope that the insights contained within these pages will inspire the further continuously developing BRICS dynamics, but also impact globally, in their inclusive and equitable multi-lateral research, collaboration, and collaborative action, so paving the way for a more secure and prosperous future for all.

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