

SOUTH-SOUTH RELATIONS: INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract

India and South Africa use South-South cooperation to protect and promote their national interest. Their relations are based on both idealism and realism and are dependent on the conditions and the issues involved. Both countries value human rights, expanding participatory democracy, and non-intervention in other countries' internal affairs. From the Indian classics to the present, India has used realism with Indian characteristics. Its objective in the Non-Aligned Movement focuses on the need to make independent decisions in order to have a more equitable international order. India's domestic success depends on how it addresses international challenges. These ideals have been noticed in the various administrations in India from Nehru to Modi. As middle power states, both India and South Africa use soft power in their attempts to transform international organizations and the Western-dominated world system. South-South relations between the two countries focus on increased commercial relations, exchange of technology, defense, maritime agreements as well as cultural exchanges and people to people interactions. But despite their strong relations, India is not among post-apartheid South Africa's top ten trading partners. It remains to be seen how South-South relations between India and South Africa will develop in the new and constantly evolving global order.

Keywords: Apartheid, BRICS, Business, Colonialism, China, Culture, Diplomacy, Hard power, Medicine, Middle Power, Military, Multipolar, Political Realism, Ubuntu, Soft Power, South-South relations.

I. SOUTH-SOUTH RELATIONS: INDIA SOUTH AFRICA

This article is about South-South relations between India and South Africa. South-South relations refer to political, economic, cultural, military and technological relations between developing countries, also referred to as the "Third World". We study relations between India and South Africa using the Political Realism theoretical framework. Political Realism argues that countries' power is defined as national interest. A country's power is multi-dimensional and includes the economy, the military and culture; it also involves safe-guarding the nation's population. Countries entertain relations with each other to protect their national interest whichever way they define it. Historically, relations between African countries and India can be traced back to ancient times. These relations involved the movement of people, goods and ideas from Africa to India and vice-versa. This was also followed by trade relations between the two regions. India and South Africa's relationship was based on the large Indian immigrant community that first settled in South Africa during British colonialism. Both countries shared a common history of British colonialism characterized by political, economic and social oppression based on white supremacy. India became independent in 1947, becoming the world's largest, non-Western democracy. South Africa eventually transitioned from apartheid to majority rule in 1994 based on a negotiated settlement that left the economy and the military/security apparatus firmly within the white minority's control. Indians—both at home and in South Africa—played a critical role in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid in South Africa with Mahatma Gandhi as one of the most prominent activists in this struggle. India's relationship with South Africa has continued to grow since 1994, though China has since emerged as the major challenger of India in South Africa. India and South Africa also engage in joint military training activities. Representatives from both countries continue to engage in trade, business, and medical relations. This relationship is expressed within the different bilateral organizations that involve both countries, for example the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China South Africa) and IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) that aim at increasing trade relations between all its members.

The article starts with a brief introduction of relations between the two countries that is followed by a discussion of both countries' major areas of cooperation. It concludes with an overview of the benefits, challenges and future prospects of relations between India and South Africa.

Relations between African countries and India which involved the movement of people and ideas can be traced back to ancient times. This was followed by trade relations between the two regions. From the late 19th-early 20th centuries, British colonialism in India, East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika) and South Africa transformed relations between these countries as the colonial government focused on importing labor from India into South Africa and East Africa. In the case of Indians in South Africa, Du Toit observes that:

After an eight-year period, the indentured labourers were free to work on their own or to return to India. There was another group of Indians in South Africa-traders. Traders were classified as passengers when they left for South Africa because they financed their own travel. Although the local government promised them equal treatment and protection under the law if they remained in South Africa, like other Indians, they experienced widespread discrimination. In light of this, Indian emigration to South Africa was halted between 1866 and 1871 (Du Toit, 1996: 644-645).

Mahatma Gandhi's struggle for equality and his philosophy of Satyagraha (non-violent protest) were first tested on South Africa's soil. The 1894 mass protest led by Gandhi resulted in the creation of the Natal Indian Congress which fought against racial discrimination and oppression. Other mass protests that followed influenced the development of the African National Congress which adopted a policy of non-violence against the colonial and apartheid regimes in South Africa. Throughout India's history, various governments have been concerned about the plight of the Indian diaspora in South Africa. During India's struggle for independence, the Indian National Congress issued various statements that condemned racism and imperialism. According to Jawaharlal Nehru who became the first Prime Minister of independent India, Asia was responsible for raising awareness about racism on the African continent. Nehru opposed Nazism and racism as well as colonial powers' domination over other countries. According to Payne:

India's fight against apartheid in the international arena was not one-dimensional. The principal actors who shaped India's policy were the Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and his cabinet. In keeping with Gandhi's non-violent philosophy, Nehru and other policy elites considered it their moral obligation to assist in the eradication of apartheid. Moreover, Nehru made a personal commitment to assist in the abolition of apartheid and forge greater links between the newly-independent countries in Asia and Africa (Payne 1992: 64)

In 1946, Nehru called for equality and tolerance across nations (Khan, 2010: 616). First, Nehru raised the issue of racism and imperialism at the United Nations. Second, India severed diplomatic and economic relations with South Africa with the introduction of articles ten and fourteen of the United Nations Charter which raised the issue of racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa. Both the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement conferences provided space for colonized countries to articulate a common agenda. As Alana O'Malley observes:

[T]hat the UN became inherent to the origins of what later became known as the Global South, because it provided a myriad of functions, which consolidated the group equally as quickly, if not with more effect, than transnational arrangements such as the NAM. The anti-colonial internationalism which emerged as a result of efforts to disrupt the existing world order challenged the liberal world by highlighting its discontents and inherently illiberal practices in the areas of self-determination and colonialism. Actors from the Global South transposed ideas about equality and morality by declaring that there was no room for imperialist or racist policies, especially those exemplified by the apartheid question (O'Malley 2020).

However, India's relationship with apartheid South Africa was more ambiguous than it appeared at the superficial level. Even though India recalled its High Commissioner from South Africa in 1947 (Bawa, 1982:5). Solomon and Theron remind us that:

[I]ndependent India and the Union of South Africa continued to conduct diplomatic relations through other channels, namely between their respective permanent representatives at the UN and High Commissions in London. This continued until the 1952 session of the General Assembly where the issue of apartheid was added to the question of the treatment of Indians in South Africa on the UN agenda.

These, largely informal, talks between South African and Indian diplomats illustrate a more ambiguous picture regarding India's stance on racial discrimination in South Africa and a degree of tension within the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on how to handle the issue (Solomon & Theron 2010: 106).

Nehru believed that "Idealism is the realism of tomorrow. It is the capacity to know what is good for the day after tomorrow or the next year to fashion yourself accordingly" (Nehru 1949-50: 265). His foreign policy reconciled both idealism and realism based on the conditions and issues involved. Nehru used morals to advance India's national interest. His belief in cooperation was demonstrated by India's active participation in the Non-Aligned Movement which combined both idealism and realism (Kamal 2022). India's active role in the NAM and the United Nations exposed the plight of apartheid's victims. In fighting against apartheid, India was also protecting its national interest by supporting the Indian population in South Africa. India's fight against apartheid in South Africa was based on both idealism and realism, with a focus on achieving its strategic goals of which the most important was to emerge as a leader of the Global South.

India was an active member of the Non-Aligned Movement which met in Bandung on April 18-24, 1955 and in 1961 when the NAM met in Belgrade during which time the Indian delegation worked very hard to place the issue of apartheid on the conferences' agendas (Khan, 2010:618). India was also active in supporting the African National Congress (ANC) which opened its office on 14th November 1967 in New Delhi. Indira Gandhi continued to put pressure at the Commonwealth conferences for the elimination of apartheid. She was also active in supporting the frontline states (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) against the South African apartheid regime. India's relations with South Africa were informed by idealism as well as practical needs. As Solomon & Theron observe:

For example, in 1984, a paper that was meant to be adopted at the World Conference on Religion and Peace that would have posed practical solutions to the apartheid problem, was derailed by objections from India regarding the use of the term 'untouchables' to refer to India's lowest caste in the same paper (Pretoria News 1984: 19). This demonstrates India's willingness to sacrifice a stronger stance against apartheid to avoid any damage to their international image (Solomon & Theron, 2010:109).

In 1986, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi proposed the creation of an Africa Fund to assist the Frontline States and African liberation movements. The government of India made an initial contribution of over US\$40 million to the Fund (Reddy 1995:13). Formal relations between India and South Africa were restored in May 1993. In November 1993 India and South Africa resumed diplomatic and consular relations. Since 1994, bilateral relations have developed between India and South Africa to protect their economic and cultural interests.

This article will focus on South-South relations between India and South Africa. By South-South we mean the exchange of ideas, knowledge, technology and resources between countries that are located in the Global South which are also referred to as developing or Third World countries. South-South cooperation is critical in building relationships between developing countries which they use to protect their national interest. National interest is defined as power according to Political Realism. However, one single theory cannot explain South-South relations since various factors influence these relations. These factors include disagreements between policy makers, economic development challenges as well as issues and conditions that influence the international system. In most cases countries combine idealism with Political Realism to achieve their strategic goals depending on the conditions and issues involved. Kenneth Waltz the father of Neorealism reminds us that "faced with unbalanced power states try to increase their own strength or they ally with others to bring the international distribution of power into balance" (Waltz, 1997: 915).

Relations between Northern countries and Southern ones are based on one-way in the sense that "foreign aid" is framed within political realism as an instrument of expanding and protecting the national interest of major northern countries. According to world systems theory, aid is a system of maintaining unequal relations between Northern and Southern countries. Furthermore, these relations constrain developing countries from achieving their full economic potential because they encourage dependency between Southern and Northern countries (Wood, 1986). South-South relations are based on equality. However, this does not mean that relations between India and South Africa do not aim at promoting each country's national interest. South-South countries use different methods, for example, culture—rather than military power—plays a critical role in these relations. Relations between South-South countries are not based on dependency and hierarchy. These relations are based on shared history, specific development policies not tied to the Global North and the rejection of North-South hierarchy. Both India and South Africa were British colonies:

In his address to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation in New Delhi in January 1995, former South African President Nelson Mandela eloquently stated: “I bring you greetings from the people of South Africa. In their multitude and diversity, they extend their hands across the miles and oceans to profoundly thank the people of India for helping set them free” (Mandela 1995a). A day later addressing the Indian Parliament, President Mandela even more forcefully stated, “(o)ur two countries are united by strong bonds of history and geography. It is a history of shared commitment and tolerance, to social equity and the eradication of poverty. It is a history of common experience of oppression and struggle for independence and freedom. It is a history of independence in struggle and mutual support” (Mandela 1995a, 1995b).

South-South relations provide a win-win opportunity for the countries involved. India’s effort since its independence to influence the international system as the leader of countries in the South has continued from Jawaharlal Nehru to Narendra Modi. India’s statecraft is based on its major epics: Ramayana, Mahabharata which is about the struggle for power between two cousins, Ramayana is about Rama who had to give up his wife and happiness for the sake of his subjects (Kumar, 2023). The Vedas, Upanishads classical texts on statecraft like the Arthashastra which emphasizes offensive realism also inform India’s statecraft. In Arthashastra, Kautilya outlines the components of an efficient, and just state. In so doing he highlights the duties of leaders, law, gender relations, what to do during calamities, dealing with invaders, relations with conquered nations as well as diplomacy. The state’s goal must be universal through expansive wisdom, culture and religion (soft power). There are seven pillars of the state: ruler, minister, workforce, fortified towns, treasury, military and allies. Each department must play its key role to have an efficient state (Kautilya, n.d.). According to Chandavarkar, India’s statecraft is also influenced by habits of governance inherited from the colonial order whereby the colonial government held an executive position which promoted selected interests that were immune from pressures of the society at large based on a government that was aloof from the needs of the society (Chandavarkar, 2007:448). Apartheid and colonial South Africa’s statecraft was based on Western ideas of governance based on white supremacy and the exploitation of the majority of the population. Statecraft in post-apartheid South Africa focuses on promoting equality, human rights, reducing economic inequality while promoting a just world based on the philosophy of Ubuntu—we affirm our humanity by affirming that of others (Muiu 2023).

Both South Africa and India are middle power countries. By middle power we mean the intermediate position in world power based on hierarchy. These countries are stronger than weak states but weaker than dominant powers (Ipek, 2021). Middle power countries are neither super nor military powers. Most Southern countries are former colonies of countries in the Global North whose economies are based on service industries and exploitation of natural resources from the Global South. Middle power countries are not all at the same level of development politically, economically, socially or militarily. Some countries like China, India, Brazil and South Africa are more developed than their peers in the Global South but they are not strong enough to be at the same level as countries that dominate the Global North based on their political, economic and military power. Hence the use of the term “middle-power” to refer to these countries.

India showcased its diplomacy during the COVID epidemic which focused on debt relief for the worst hit countries, technology, and commercial transactions to outdo China. India’s global Covid-19 outreach program was to a considerable extent couched in the language of South– South cooperation and gift giving. India’s South-South cooperation is based on “daanam”—sharing with others as part of one’s dharma or duty based on partnership and solidarity among developing countries. The act of giving presents a social bond between the donor and recipient (Venkatachalam, Nielsen Modi, 2022: 602). One commentator noted how “Partnership and mutual benefit are core tenets of India’s foreign policy and development cooperation. The COVID crisis presented India with an opportunity to put these principles into practice, demonstrating that it has the knowledge, expertise, and capacity to make significant contributions to global public goods in times of crisis” (Venkatachalam, Nielsen Modi, 2022: 605). India also made major contributions to the U.N. agency responsible for aid to Palestinians, the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA).

South-South cooperation seeks alternatives to the multipolar system that is dominated by Western countries and organizations, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund the World Trade Organization. A case in point is Nehru’s focus on the Afro-Asian relations to strengthen this cooperation. The priority in South-South relations is not military domination (hard power) but soft power that uses culture, politics, and pressure on the international system to transform political and economic conditions in their favor. India and South Africa typically use soft power. Joseph Nye notes that there are two different types of power. Hard power is “the ability to get others to act in ways” (Nye, 2011:11). This is the ability to coerce, through threats and inducements (“sticks” and

“carrots”). On the contrary, soft power is the ability to get “others to want the outcomes that you want” (Nye, 2004a: 5), and more particularly “the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion” (Nye, 2004a: x). Soft power is one way of explaining a complex world where power is understood as achieving one’s goals. Finally, Nye introduces smart power as the “balance of hard and soft power” (Nye, 2005; Gomichon; 2013:1).¹

Nehru believed that the best way for South-South countries to insulate themselves from exploitation was through cooperation. Alternatives to the multipolar system would provide Southern countries with space to voice their concerns and interact with each other effectively. According to Prime Minister Narendra Modi: “India’s approach to development partnership is mainly human-centric. India had undertaken projects that were diverse – commerce to culture, energy to engineering, health to housing, IT to infrastructure and sports to science.”² There are nine essential principles of Indian development cooperation: non-interference in the internal affairs of the countries it deals with. There are no conditionalities for the loans that the Indian government provides and the relations are based on equality. The other principles are: respect for other countries’ independence, national ownership, mutual benefit, respect for national sovereignty, and solidarity. All activities are demand-driven based on the needs of both countries. In India, South-South relations are promoted by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations and Indian technical and economic cooperation. India engages other countries by offering lines of credit which introduce Indian firms to foreign markets.³ All these aim at promoting India’s political, economic, and geostrategic interests overseas. On the other hand, South Africa’s foreign policy aims at:

[C]oordinating and aligning South Africa’s international relations; monitoring international developments; communicating government’s policy positions; developing and advising government on policy options, and creating mechanisms and avenues for achieving objectives; protecting South Africa’s sovereignty and territorial integrity; contributing to the creation of an enabling international environment for South African businesses; sourcing developmental assistance; and assisting South African citizens abroad (South African Government).⁴

South Africa’s foreign policy also aims at playing a critical role in advancing both its national interest and the African agenda:

Accordingly, over the medium term, South Africa planned to continue promoting and advancing its foreign and domestic policy imperatives, which include advancing the African Agenda on peace and security, human rights, and economic and social development, as well as supporting the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.⁵

The following sections highlight the areas of cooperation between India and South Africa, as well as between these two countries and Brazil.

II. INDIA SOUTH AFRICA: BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

In spite of India’s strong support of South Africa during its struggle against apartheid, Britain, other European countries and the U.S. are among post-apartheid South Africa’s top ten trading partners (Khan 2010). The only Southern country among its top ten trading partners is China. Although ninety (90) percent of world diamonds are cut and shaped in India, that country cannot buy diamonds directly from South Africa. India and South Africa cooperate in the areas of nuclear energy and oil. In 1994, both governments set up the India-South Africa joint Commission which provided a forum for foreign ministers from both countries to hold sessions to identify areas of mutual benefit and cooperation. During the 7th session—held in February 2008 in Pretoria, South Africa—, it was agreed to provide free travel visas for all diplomats.

On June 2, 2003, foreign ministers from Brazil, India and South Africa met to set up a forum for regular dialogue between the three countries. This dialogue was upgraded to a Summit meeting in 2006 which led to five more summit meetings on health, agriculture, education, and human settlement. In addition, both India and South Africa

¹Maxime Gomichon, “Joseph Nye on Soft Power” March 2013 available at <https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/34119.5/16/2024.>)

²(https://www.ris.org.in/sites/default/files/Publication/Indian_Development_Cooperation-75yrs-NEW-PRINT-11-APRIL-2022-Web-1.pdf.)

³see (https://www.ris.org.in/sites/default/files/Publication/Indian_Development_Cooperation-75yrs-NEW-PRINT-11-APRIL-2022-Web-1.pdf.)

⁴<https://www.gov.za/about-sa/international-relations>

⁵<https://www.gov.za/about-sa/international-relations#:~:text=AccessedJune13,2024.>

encourage cultural and tourism exchange between their citizens. IBSA was created based on shared potential of cooperation in the areas of trade and security (Vieli Alden, 2011: 507). It is one key forum that both India and South Africa use to advance their national interest in the areas of culture, trade and politics. Brazil, India and South Africa share common features. They are all democracies with multi-ethnic, multi-religious populations that face similar socio-economic challenges such as socio-economic class inequality as well as other development challenges. IBSA also provides a regional forum for South Asia, South America and Southern Africa (Vieli Alden: 2011). IBSA also provides a forum to counter China's increasing economic influence. Its goals include protecting human rights, expanding democracy while making an impact on the global system. Globally, IBSA leads the South. However, its regional goals are not clear. This leaves a gap between regional and global aims. IBSA manages economic and security issues while facing constraints to influence the international arena. Such constraints include weak economies and military power compared to the dominant power of the United States. There is also inter-regional competition within IBSA members (Vieli Alden, 2011: 509). IBSA holds regular ministerial and head of government summits in Pretoria, South Africa (2007–2011), New Delhi (2008), and Brasilia (2010).

IBSA is based on three pillars: political coordination, trilateral cooperation and cooperation with other developing countries through the IBSA Fund:

Cooperation in IBSA is on three fronts: First, as a forum for consultation on global and regional political issues, such as the reform of the global institutions of political and economic governance, WTO/Doha Development Agenda, climate change, terrorism etc.; second, trilateral collaboration on concrete areas/projects, through fourteen working groups and six People-to-People Forums, for the common benefit of three countries; and third, assisting other developing countries by taking projects in the latter through IBSA Fund. IBSA's success demonstrates, most vividly, the desirability and feasibility of South-South cooperation beyond conventional areas of exchange of experts and training.⁶

IBSA allows weaker states to unite so as to influence strong ones. Flesmes observes that IBSA has had an impact in five areas. It provides a forum for its members to discuss common ideas and values. IBSA is also a system of balancing of power based on middle power states that use soft power such as dialogue and pressure to have a greater voice in international organizations like the United Nations and specialized agencies. IBSA also provides a forum for agenda setting and a coalition-building space for weak states that do not have the military capacity to change the international system. However, within IBSA members there is no common sectoral coalition in trade, nor do their economies complement each other. The goal of IBSA members is to influence the global order as a driver for change so it can shift the balance of power in its members' favor. IBSA has changed the character of multilateralism by introducing procedural values in its focus on trade and security. Cooperation between states places them in an advantageous position in the global order (Flesmes, 2009: 402)

Indians make up 2.6% of South Africa's total population, with most of them living in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. India and South Africa hold high level talks about defense policy and cooperation and defense technology, as well as promoting economic, military and space relations. Other areas of bi-lateral cooperation include maritime security, skill development, agriculture, information technology as well as the Gandhi-Mandela Freedom Lectures which are organized within IBSA. Both countries have increased vocational training opportunities for their respective citizens. South Africa is a member of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). In February 2008, India launched a program of regional maritime security to increase cooperation between the two countries. The following section focuses specifically on the benefits of India, Brazil–South Africa relations.

III. BENEFITS OF INDIA, BRAZIL–SOUTH AFRICA (IBSA) RELATIONS

IBSA promotes strong South-South relations. It provides a forum to lobby for reforms of the United Nations and other international organizations. The Brasilia declaration works within the present world order which IBSA respects but also pressures it for changes in its favor. IBSA aims at reforming the United Nations and such specialized agencies as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund/IMF and the World Trade Organization/WTO to create more space for its members and for the Global South countries by gaining leadership positions. IBSA privileges diplomacy for strong security relations in the international order. Its members prefer an international system based on a multipolar order rather than the unipolar one dominated by Europe and the United States (Flesmes, 2009: 403). IBSA's main goals are to expand, shape the environment and national interest, and good

⁶"India, Brazil, South Africa Forum" available at <https://www.ibsa-trilateral.org/>. Accessed 5/15/2024)

governance based on multilateral solutions for international problems. It is committed to democracy, peace, development and a common political identity. IBSA plays a balancing-of-power role which is not a threat to the U.S. It uses non-military methods to undermine and frustrate unipolar/unilateral policy, as for example in the use of culture, sports and politics. IBSA acts as a “buffer” by providing room for its members to strengthen their economic positions. It is based on three preconditions (Flemes, 2009:407):

1. Superpower military is not a threat to weak states
2. Superpower source of public goods, economic and security which cannot be replaced.
3. Superpower can't retaliate since weak states balancing efforts are not overt.

As Flemes rightly observes, “From a realist perspective, a multipolar system can only be achieved by the emergence of regional unipolarities that build coalitions to balance the super power” (Flemes, 2009: 406). IBSA develops ties to ward off retaliation using binding strategies that restrain strong states such as bilateral agreements between the U.S., Brazil, India South Africa as well as between the U.S., the Organization of American states (OAS) and the Southern African Development Community/SADC's Customs Trade areas. However, IBSA does not introduce a new geopolitical landscape (Flemes, 2009: 408). Trade is directed away from non-member states. Another advantage of an IBSA membership is its ability to engage in soft power. According to Joseph Nye:

Soft power lies in the ability to attract and persuade. Whereas hard power—the ability to coerce—grows out of a country's military or economic might, soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. Hard power remains crucial in a world of states trying to guard their independence and of non-state groups willing to turn to violence. It is soft power that will help prevent terrorists from recruiting supporters from among the moderate majority. And it is soft power that will help us deal with critical global issues that require multilateral cooperation among states (“Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics” 3/16/2004).

IV. THE BRICS: BRAZIL, RUSSIA, INDIA, CHINA SOUTH AFRICA

The post-cold War world order was based on three goals: creating a capitalist world system; regional and global collective security systems; and strengthening the global trade regime. To achieve these goals, the United States became the protector of Western interests in order to protect its own security. At first glance, the system appears open, but in reality it is based on conditionality as policy (Xing 2014). According to Xing, the United States' domination of the international system does not aim at achieving economic development and democracy, but to defend gross inequalities of wealth (Xing, 2014: 5). The international system is marked by “Profound dislocations throughout the global system [that] are causing the narrative of world politics to become an increasingly fragmented and disjointed story” (Schweller, 2014: 9). As a result, there were no economic blocks to protect the interests of more than 40 percent of the world population.

The BRICS' political and economic block emerged to contest the Western-dominated international order. The original idea to create four emerging economies was first introduced by a Goldman-Sacks economist. Thus, BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India China) was first created in 2006. “In the global reordering of international affairs (see Xing Shaw, 2014), the BRIC's mission is to promote a “multipolar, equitable and democratic world order” (BRIC 2010, n°. 2; Van Noort (2017: 121) observes: “During the first BRIC Ministerial Meeting in 2006 encouraged by the Russian Presidency, the four Foreign Ministers expressed their interests in a new consultation platform. The dialogue propelled various ministerial meetings and the first BRIC Summit with Heads of States in Yekaterinburg, Russia” (BRIC 2009; Van Noort 2017: 121) opines “These emerging powers took major roles in the global economy, and were indispensable in the negotiation of development issues” (cf. the Heiligendam Summit in 2007).

BRIC members control 40% of world population (Kakonen: 2014: 87). Its goal is to influence the international system not to transform it. The BRICS' presence has resulted in a power shift in its favor at the United Nations where they formed the group of three in the General Assembly. It also contributed to the failure of the WTO talks in Cancun. In 2006, three Presidents met in Brasilia to coordinate voting in the Non-Aligned Movement conference. During the 61st U.N. General Assembly meeting of 2007-08 South Africa became a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. President Jacob Zuma visited India on June 2-5, 2010 with cabinet ministers. Three Memorandums of Understanding were signed during the visit: First, cooperation in agriculture; second, air services and cooperation between the Foreign Affairs Institute of India and the Diplomatic Academy of South.

Africa. South Africa joined BRIC (renamed BRICS) in 2010 after several high-level meetings and state visits by top parliamentarians and business people to South Africa. The business community from both India and South Africa was represented. During the BRICS Summit in August 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa, it was agreed that the membership should be expanded. On January 1st 2024, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) joined the BRICS. “According to estimates, BRICS+, as the organization has been informally called since its expansion, now accounts for 37.3 percent of world GDP, or more than half as much as the EU (14.5 percent)” (Europa Briefing 03/15/2024). The European Union (EU) deals with BRICS members individually with strategic agreements with Brazil and

BRICS’ members value their economic relations. Exports from India to South Africa include chemicals, footwear, gems, medical supplies, rice and textiles. India’s imports from South Africa include steam coal and a wide array of minerals, including gold, copper ores and concentrates, phosphoric acid, manganese ore, aluminum. India’s Tata invests in the automobile industry in South Africa and hospitality services. South African products that are sold in India include South African Miller beer while ACSA (Airports Company of South Africa) is in charge of the airports with Sanlaam and Old Mutual investing in insurance products and Adcock in medical-related products. Rand Merchant Bank and First National Bank also invest in India. Investments from BRIC members to South Africa is lagging. In South Africa, challenges to investment by BRIC members center around policy, regulations and cooperation. There have been three BRICS agreements: Trade Investment Cooperation Framework, 2013; BRICS Trade Investment Facilities Action Plan, 2013; BRICS Economic Partnership 2015 (Mazenda Masiya 2021). According to Mazenda and Masiya, South Africa has not benefited as much from its membership in BRICS because of challenges in its foreign direct investment (FDI) policy. There is low domestic demand which investors dislike. Despite South Africa’s good infrastructure, democratic governance and macroeconomic stability, FDI is still a major challenge. South Africa’s high crime rates, social discontent, service delivery challenges and corruption add to the low FDI rates. Furthermore, Mazenda Masiya observe that there is no policy clarity while legal uncertainties worry investors. Tables one, two and three show India-South Africa commercial relations from 2007 to 2024.

Table 1: *India–South Africa Commercial Relations, 2007–2013*

Figures (US\$ millions)	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
India’s Exports	2,669.7	1,980.3	2,058.5	3,985.02	4,731.17	5,106.46
India’s Imports	3,605.3	5,513.6	5,674.5	7,140.55	9,973.11	8,074.05
Total Trade	6,266.0	7,493.9	7,733.0	11,125.57	14,704.29	13,180.51

Source: Ministry of Commerce, cited in Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, *India–South Africa Relations*, https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India-SouthAfrica_Relations.pdf, accessed April 2, 2024.

Table 2: *India–South Africa Commercial and Economic Relations, 2013–2018*

Figures (US\$ millions)	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18 (Apr–Aug)
India’s Exports	5,074.29	5,301.99	3,588.74	3,545.95	1,488.30
India’s Imports	6,075.26	6,496.52	5,948.42	5,833.75	2,688.30
Total Trade	11,149.55	11,798.51	9,537.15	9,379.30	4,176.60

Source: Department of Commerce, Government of India (GOI), *India–South Africa Relations*, available at https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/36_South_Africa_December_2017.pdf, accessed April 19, 2024.

Table 3: *India–South Africa Commercial Relations, 2018–2024*

Figures (US\$ millions)	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24 (Apr–Dec)
India's Exports	4,067.20	4,108.17	3,934.20	6,085.29	8,474.42	6,263.23
India's Imports	6,517.33	6,969.79	7,570.79	10,965.81	10,397.83	8,266.95
Total Trade	10,584.54	11,077.97	11,504.99	17,051.10	18,872.25	14,530.18

Source: Ministry of Commerce, India, cited in High Commission of India, Pretoria, <https://www.hcipretoria.gov.in/docs/>, accessed April 2, 2024.

V. CONCLUSION

India and South Africa South-South cooperation is used by both countries to protect and promote their national interest. One single theory cannot explain these relations since they are based on the conditions and the issues involved. In most cases relations are based on both idealism and realism. Both countries value human rights, expanding participatory democracy and non-intervention in other countries' internal affairs. From the Indian classics to the present, India has used what Kamal (2022) calls realism with Indian characteristics. Its objective in the Non-Aligned Movement focuses on the need to make independent decisions in order to have a more equitable international order. India's domestic success depends on how it addresses international challenges. These ideals have been noticed in the various administrations in India from Nehru to Modi: "the ideals of democracy that define us as a nation and also shape the ways we engage with the world translate into five: respect, dialogue, cooperation, peace and prosperity" (Kamal, 2022: 141).

As middle power states, both India and South Africa use soft power in their attempts to transform international organizations and the Western-dominated world system. South-South relations between the two countries focus on increased commercial relations, exchange of technology, defense, maritime agreements as well as cultural exchanges and people to people interactions. The Gandhi-Mandela lectures augment these exchanges. Despite the strong relations between India and South Africa, India is not among post-apartheid South Africa's top-ten trading partners. It remains to be seen how South-South relations between India and South Africa will develop in the new and constantly evolving global order.

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