

BRICS GROUP MAY SOON BEGIN EXPANSION PROCESS, SAYS CHINA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Wang Wenbin

The Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping may for the first time begin an expansion process to include new developing country members, the Chinese government said on Friday.

China, which is the BRICS chair for this year, said the recently held meeting of BRICS Foreign Ministers "reached consensus on the BRICS expansion process".

"China will work on BRICS-related parties to continue to have in-depth discussions on BRICS expansion and determine the standards and procedures for that on the basis of consensus. We look forward to more like-minded partners joining the big family of BRICS," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said. The May 19 BRICS Foreign Ministers' virtual meeting this year also invited Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Nigeria, Senegal and Thailand to attend.

Enhancing cooperation

Both China and Russia have backed BRICS expansion, seeing the grouping as a useful platform to broaden their voice amid their tensions with the West.

"Facing the once-in-a-century changes and pandemic which are compounded by international hotspot issues," Mr. Wang said, "BRICS countries agree that it is important to enhance cooperation with other emerging markets and developing countries, further improve the representation of BRICS, make BRICS' voice in major international and regional issues more widely heard, join hands to meet challenges, and uphold the common interests and development space of emerging markets and developing countries."

Argentina, Indonesia and Egypt are among countries that have previously indicated their interest in joining the grouping. The "BRICS Plus" format was launched as a way for the five countries to broaden their outreach with other developing countries. The BRICS-backed New Development Bank (NDB), based in Shanghai, has already inducted new members, with Bangladesh and the UAE joining last year, and Egypt and Uruguay approved to join the financial institution.

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