

Analysis of the Impact of Indonesia's Membership in BRICS: Opportunities and Challenges in the Global Era

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ABSTRACT

BRICS, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, represents over 40% of the world's population, 25% of global GDP, and 17% of international trade. As a leading ASEAN economy, Indonesia's membership offers opportunities for greater market access, foreign direct investment (FDI), and cooperation in technology and infrastructure. This research analyzes the impact of Indonesia's BRICS membership on foreign policy and national growth using a qualitative, case study approach with data from literature reviews and online sources. Findings show that Indonesia's formal membership, commencing on January 6, 2025, is a strategic effort to strengthen its global economic and political influence and counterbalance Western hegemony. Key benefits include expanded market access (non-oil and gas exports to BRICS reached \$84.37 billion in 2024), investment diversification, technology collaboration, and alternative financing through the New Development Bank (NDB). Participation also enhances Indonesia's negotiating leverage in international forums and aligns with its "free and active" foreign policy. However, challenges remain in maintaining diplomatic balance, particularly in managing differing interests among BRICS members (e.g., Russia and China) and addressing perceptions of bias toward certain Western blocs. Economic disparities and integration obstacles within BRICS also constrain cooperation. In conclusion, Indonesia must strategically manage its relations with both BRICS and Western partners while navigating internal dynamics to optimize the advantages of its membership.

Keywords: *BRICS, Indonesia, Geopolitics, Economy, Diplomacy*

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INTRODUCTION

BRICS is an assemblage of developing nations comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, which has collectively ascended as a significant influence in the global geopolitical and economic arena, serving as a counterbalance to Western hegemony (Razzaq, 2025; Wso & Mahmood, 2025; Youvan, 2024). The predominance of the West is manifest in its governance of major global institutions, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the pervasive utilization of the US dollar as a worldwide currency, and its narrative sway via entities such as NATO and the G7. BRICS, encompassing around 40% of the global population and accounting for 25% of worldwide GDP and 17% of international trade, has emerged as a symbol of defiance against reliance on the Western-dominated system, despite its aggregate GDP exceeding that of the G7 nations, to establish a more equitable, inclusive, and multipolar global order (Rachman, 2025).

On January 6, 2025, Indonesia officially attained full membership in BRICS, signifying a strategic advancement to enhance its economic and political power globally and broaden its strategic alliances (Heriamsal, 2025; Rahmatulummah et al., 2025; Tampubolon, 2025). This membership, a tangible manifestation of Indonesia's proactive free policy aimed at bolstering developing nations, presents substantial long-term potential in economics, trade, and international diplomacy. These opportunities encompass access to expanded markets, diversification of investments, collaboration in technology and innovation, enhanced influence on the global stage via a more prominent role in international policymaking, and access to alternative financing from the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) for infrastructure initiatives (Satya, 2025). Indonesia's collaboration with BRICS possesses significant potential to elevate its international standing, both economically and politically (Setiawan, 2025; Syamsudin, 2025; Zubaidi, 2024).

BRICS provides extensive market access to over three billion individuals, facilitating the augmentation of exports for Indonesia's principal commodities, including palm oil, coal, and textiles, as demonstrated by Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports to BRICS totaling \$84.37 billion in 2024. This collaboration enables Indonesia to secure foreign direct investment (FDI) for infrastructure development and industrialization, enhance technology and innovation partnerships, and obtain funds from the NDB. The diversity of trading partners is essential for diminishing reliance on conventional markets such as the United States and the European Union while concurrently enhancing Indonesia's standing in the global value chain. Notwithstanding issues such as divergent interests among BRICS members and reliance on wealthy nations, the prospects presented by BRICS in trade, investment, technology, and diplomacy could substantially benefit Indonesia's economy in the future (Bakti et al., 2025). Indonesia's inclusion in BRICS markedly enhances the nation's negotiating leverage in international discussions and offers a crucial venue for articulating the concerns of developing nations on global matters such as climate change, trade, and security (Aisyah & Pratisti, 2025).

The primary objective is to alter the governance of global organizations, including the IMF, World Bank, and UN Security Council, to enhance representation for poorer nations and to advocate for a multipolar world order. Essential advantages for Indonesia encompass access to development financing entities like the NDB and the Contingent Reserve Agreement (CRA), which provide financial support without stringent policy stipulations, alongside initiatives to facilitate trade in domestic currencies to mitigate the volatility of the US dollar. This membership aligns with Indonesia's free and active foreign policy, enhancing diplomatic networks and reinforcing solidarity within the Global South while remaining neutral toward any specific bloc—consistent with Indonesia's aim to balance economic prospects and geopolitical challenges in a multipolar landscape. While the advantages of direct trade are not presently emphasized due to free trade agreements with China and India, the prospects for substantial future trade expansion remain promising as BRICS membership grows and larger regional FTAs, such as BRICS–ASEAN, may be established (Aisyah & Pratisti, 2025).

Indonesia's interest in joining BRICS encompasses economic ambitions to diversify partnerships, access alternative financial instruments such as the NDB, and attract investment, alongside geopolitical factors aimed at enhancing its influence in global governance as a representative of developing nations. This approach poses considerable obstacles, including the possibility of diplomatic strain with Western nations, especially the United States, which could contradict Indonesia's longstanding "free and active" foreign policy and may be perceived as partial. Indonesia must also address the divergent interests among BRICS members, including the conflicts between China and India, and evaluate whether the prospective economic advantages will surpass the geopolitical risks, considering its robust economic connections with BRICS and involvement in other platforms such as the G20. Consequently, the decision regarding BRICS membership will serve as a pivotal indicator of Indonesia's strategy to reconcile national interests, economic pragmatism, and geopolitical alignment in a swiftly changing multipolar landscape, potentially positioning it as a diplomatic intermediary between BRICS and Western-led institutions (Journal of Law, Politic and Humanities, 2023).

Although several studies have discussed BRICS and its implications for global governance and economic development, few have focused on the specific impact of Indonesia's membership in the bloc, especially after its formal admission in 2025. There is a noticeable gap in research regarding Indonesia's strategic maneuver to integrate into BRICS while maintaining its traditional diplomatic approach and navigating the geopolitical complexities within the bloc.

The purpose of this study is to assess the economic and political consequences of Indonesia's BRICS membership, particularly in terms of its potential to bolster Indonesia's

global position, both economically and diplomatically. This research will explore how Indonesia can leverage its BRICS membership to advance its national interests, achieve economic diversification, and contribute to shaping the global order in a way that aligns with its foreign policy objectives.

This research aims to provide a strategic model for Indonesia's engagement in BRICS, offering insights into how the country can balance its economic growth and diplomatic priorities. By examining Indonesia's role within BRICS, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of multipolar global governance and offer policy recommendations on managing Indonesia's relationships with both BRICS members and traditional Western powers. Ultimately, the expected contribution is to provide a comprehensive framework for Indonesia to navigate the complexities of global geopolitics while maximizing the economic and diplomatic benefits of its BRICS membership.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative methodology to examine the effects of Indonesia's BRICS membership, focusing on the economic and political dimensions that affect foreign policy and national development. The employed methodology was a case study, analyzing Indonesia within the context of BRICS membership to identify the potential and problems encountered by the nation in the realm of international cooperation. The employed data gathering methods encompass a literature study, wherein the researcher gathers and examines diverse sources, including academic journals, books, and pertinent publications regarding BRICS and Indonesia's foreign policy. Furthermore, online media was employed to acquire the most recent information regarding foreign policy and the implications of BRICS membership, along with popular opinions and expert analysis in this domain. This study uses analytical approaches such as thematic analysis to discern emerging themes and patterns from the acquired material, and content analysis to assess documents and media pieces. This study aims to offer profound insights into the effects of Indonesia's BRICS membership on foreign policy and national development, along with its contributions in a progressively intricate global landscape.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Economic Prospects via Multilateral Collaboration

Indonesia's consideration of joining BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) is a significant decision pertinent to its endeavors to enhance its worldwide standing. Established in 2009, BRICS has evolved into one of the most significant economic and political coalitions globally. The five BRICS nations account for over 40% of the global population and provide over 25% to the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Indonesia's accession to BRICS is regarded as a strategic opportunity to enhance its international cooperation network and augment its impact in an increasingly interconnected global landscape. Indonesia's accession is anticipated to provide enhanced access to diverse economic, political, and social opportunities that can facilitate national development (Bakti et al., 2025).

BRICS incorporates Indonesia, the fourth most populated nation and the seventh largest economy globally. The BRICS nations account for a far greater portion of the global economy compared to the G7, the coalition of seven Western countries that conquered much of the world and possesses the seventh-largest economy. BRICS currently comprises 10 full members: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates. It comprises eight partner countries: Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan. This statistic accounts for 41.4% of global GDP (PPP) and encompasses half of the world's population (Norton, 2025). The BRICS alliance,

spearheaded by Southern nations, has expanded once more. Indonesia, the most populous nation in Southeast Asia, has been formally admitted as a full member of the group. The 18 BRICS member nations and affiliates account for 41.4% of world GDP, assessed by purchasing power parity (PPP) (Bakti et al., 2025).

Data According to the International Monetary Fund:

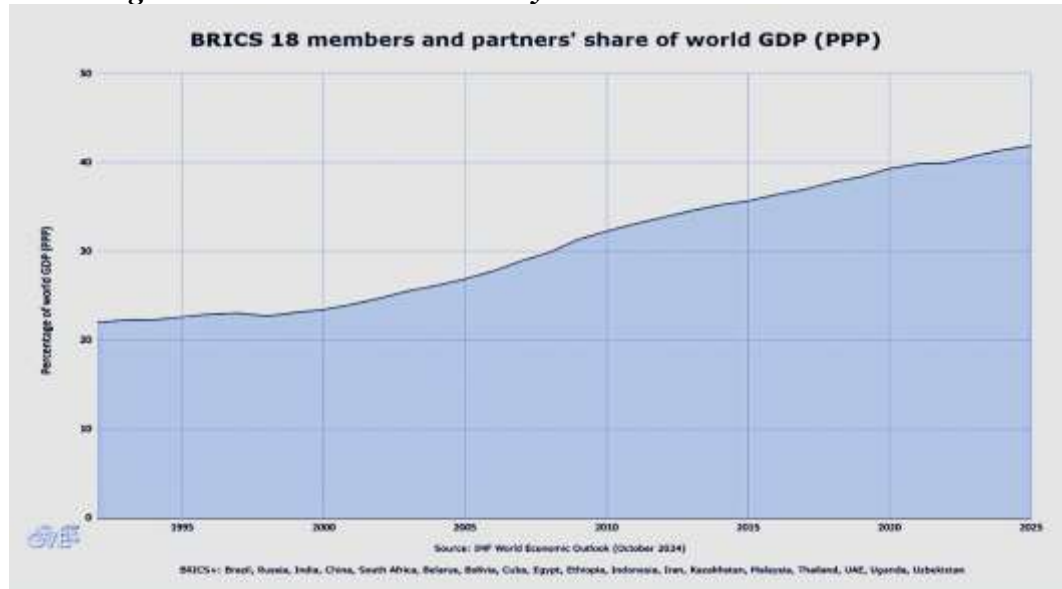


Figure 1. BRICS 18 Members and partners' share of world FDP (PPP)

Source: (Norton, 2025)

The BRICS nations account for a far greater portion of the global economy compared to the G7, a coalition of seven Western countries that historically engaged in colonization across most of the world. The BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) now represent a significantly bigger share of the global economy compared to the G7 nations (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States). In 2024, BRICS accounted for around 41.41% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based on purchasing power parity (PPP), whereas the G7 provided roughly 29.08%. This movement signifies a transition in global economic dominance from Western nations to the developing countries of BRICS, propelled by the swift economic advancement of China and India, alongside the growing influence of other member states. Although the G7 continues to be a center of innovation and global financial stability, the BRICS are progressively exhibiting supremacy in the global economy, showcasing substantial development potential ahead.(Norton, 2025).

Data According to the International Monetary Fund, BRICS VS G7 OF GLOBAL ECONOMY:

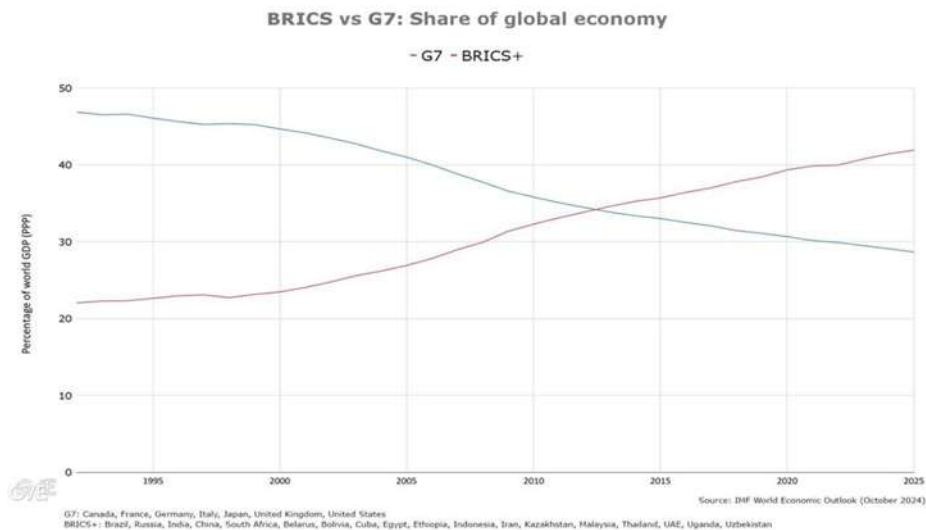


Figure 2. BRICS vs G7 of Global Economy
Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Indonesia's inclusion in BRICS may facilitate substantial potential for augmenting economic collaboration within a multilateral framework. This encompasses the prospect of enhanced trade and novel market access, enabling Indonesia to broaden its export markets, especially towards BRICS member nations with substantial and swiftly expanding markets like China, India, and Brazil, which is vital for Indonesia's economy and facilitates growth opportunities in non-Western markets. In 2024, Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports to the five BRICS nations were 84.37 billion US dollars, representing roughly 33.91% of Indonesia's overall non-oil and gas exports for that period. Exports to China were predominant at US\$60.22 billion, with principal commodities including iron and steel, mineral fuels, and nickel. This was followed by India at US\$0.32 billion, primarily exporting mineral fuels, animal fats and oils, and iron and steel. Brazil's exports amounted to US\$0.72 billion, featuring animal fats and oils, electrical machinery and equipment, and vehicles and parts as key commodities. Russia reported US\$0.31 billion in exports, with main commodities comprising animal oils, cocoa, and coffee and spices. South Africa's exports totaled US\$0.78 billion, primarily consisting of animal and vegetable fats and oils. Indonesia achieved a trade surplus of US\$31.04 billion in 2024 due to substantial export performance (Bakti et al., 2025).

According to data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency:



Figure 3. Indonesia's Non-Oil and Gas Exports to BRICS Nations in 2024
Source: DDTC News

Indonesia's inclusion in BRICS can augment economic collaboration and fortify national economic security. This collaboration can immediately enhance export prospects for Indonesia, particularly to substantial markets such as China and India, which are significant consumers of Indonesian commodities including coal, palm oil, coffee, rubber, and agricultural products. Consequently, Indonesia has the potential to enhance market access and augment its export volume to BRICS nations. This membership can facilitate Indonesia's introduction of its agriculture and eco-friendly manufacturing products to a broader international market, aligning with global sustainable consumer trends (Muslim & Permatasari, 2024). Collaboration in technology and innovation can be enhanced, providing Indonesia the opportunity to access new technologies and exchange knowledge with member nations, particularly China and India, recognized as leaders in digital technology and Industry 4.0. This can be achieved through research and development partnerships to expedite advancements in critical sectors such as renewable energy, information technology, manufacturing, and human resource development (Bakti et al., 2025).

Participation in BRICS enables Indonesia to champion the interests of emerging nations in global decision-making arenas. BRICS was established to reform global institutions to more accurately represent rising nations and enhance their involvement in international matters. This group aims to enhance international political dialogue and collaboration while promoting a multipolar world order through the reform of global financial organizations such as the IMF and World Bank, as well as the UN Security Council, to increase their representativeness. Indonesia perceives BRICS as a mechanism for representing impoverished states in global decision-making processes. Indonesia can enhance collaboration with other rising economies through equality, mutual respect, and sustainable development with this initiative. The 2008/2009 Global Financial Crisis catalyzed the formalization of BRIC, as its members scrutinized liberal economic institutions and their political frameworks, advocating for reforms in the IMF and World Bank to more accurately represent poor nations. The New Development Bank (NDB) and Contingent Reserve Agreement (CRA) provide financing devoid of stringent policy stipulations for economic and financial matters. However, BRICS has broadened its

agenda to encompass agriculture, science and technology, culture, internet governance, health, and tourism, demonstrating the potential for global collaboration. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia committed to advancing economic resilience and food security via the BRICS agenda. Indonesia can join BRICS to advocate for the political and economic autonomy of developing nations on a global scale (Muslim & Permatasari, 2024).

1. Impact on Foreign Policy

Indonesia's accession to BRICS can substantially bolster the nation's diplomatic and negotiating stance on the global stage, as BRICS is an international entity designed to advance economic collaboration, facilitate equitable global governance for developing nations, and cultivate political cooperation to amplify collective influence in tackling global challenges. Indonesia, a developing nation with significant economic potential and international significance, has long been regarded as a prospective candidate for BRICS since the organization's inception on June 16, 2009. Joining BRICS will afford Indonesia a more robust platform to champion justice inside the international system and align its stance on regional and global matters of mutual concern, hence enhancing its diplomatic influence. Despite Indonesia's commitment to a "free and active" foreign policy that eschews alignment with any bloc, contemplating BRICS membership is a deliberate strategy to harness the organization's resources in advancing its national interests, including maximizing economic potential and sustaining equilibrium in global governance. This membership enhances Indonesia's recognition in global forums and broadens its diplomatic network beyond reliance on Western nations, coinciding with BRICS' objective of diminishing the influence of conventional powers and reforming the international order (Aisyah & Pratisti, 2025).

BRICS participation allows Indonesia to advocate for developing nations in global decision-making platforms. BRICS was founded to restructure global institutions to better represent emerging countries and give them a bigger role in international issues. This group also seeks to improve international political discourse and coordination and foster a multipolar world order by reforming global financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank and the UN Security Council to make them more representative. Indonesia views BRICS as a tool to represent poor nations in global decision-making. Indonesia can improve partnership with other emerging economies on equality, mutual respect, and sustainable development with this move. The 2008/2009 Global Financial Crisis spurred BRIC formalization as its members questioned liberal economic institutions and their political models and called for IMF and World Bank reforms to better represent developing countries. The New Development Bank (NDB) and Contingent Reserve Agreement (CRA) offer financing without strict policy conditions for economic and financial issues, but BRICS has expanded its agenda to agriculture, science and technology, culture, internet governance, health, and tourism, showing the potential for global coordination. Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs pledged to promote economic resilience and food security through the BRICS agenda. Indonesia can join BRICS to fight for developing nations' political and economic independence globally (Tampubolon & University of HKBP Nommensen, 2025).

Indonesia's prospective accession to BRICS may profoundly impact its foreign policy trajectory, highlighting its aspiration to enhance its participation in global governance and address local developmental requirements. Indonesia's accession to BRICS is perceived as a means to augment its influence in global governance and to participate more effectively in international decision-making platforms by aligning its interests with other growing nations. This will enhance Indonesia's standing in international discussions, and notably, this membership offers a forum for Indonesia to articulate and elevate the interests of developing nations or the "Global South." This encompasses promoting essential global matters, like climate change mitigation, sustainable development, equitable trade policies, and reforms in global governance to amplify the voices of developing nations. Consequently, Indonesia's

choice about BRICS membership will signify a comprehensive approach to reconcile national interests, economic pragmatism, and geopolitical alignment within a multipolar and dynamic global framework (*Journal of Law, Politic and Humanities*, 2023).

2. Challenges in Maintaining Diplomatic Balance

Indonesia's participation in BRICS poses considerable challenges in sustaining diplomatic equilibrium, especially in managing relations with prominent member states like Russia and China. These nations frequently possess divergent, or even potentially antagonistic, geopolitical and economic objectives, both in relation to the interests of Western nations and Indonesia's own national priorities. China's robust desire for global infrastructure initiatives via the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) does not consistently coincide with Indonesia's economic priorities, which emphasize inclusive and sustainable growth in Southeast Asia. Consequently, Indonesia must recalibrate its foreign policy to better align with the internal dynamics of BRICS, as the global priorities of BRICS frequently emphasize economic or geostrategic concerns that may not consistently correspond with Indonesia's domestic agenda, which prioritizes social welfare and sustainable development. This necessitates a meticulously cautious and adaptive diplomatic strategy, encompassing the formation of strategic alliances with other BRICS nations that hold analogous perspectives, while ensuring that Indonesia's foreign policy remains congruent with national interests and the "free and active" principle, without compromising relations with traditional partners or becoming ensnared in conflicts of interest (Rahmatulummah et al., 2024).

It is true that Indonesia's membership in the BRICS group has the potential to give the impression that the country is favoring a specific bloc, particularly China and Russia. This, in turn, may result in a negative reaction from Western nations, particularly the United States of America. This shift has the potential to complicate Indonesia's relations with traditional Western partners and to challenge Indonesia's long-held "free and active" foreign policy. This is because it could be interpreted as choosing a side in the increasingly heated battle between the United States of America and China. Although membership in the BRICS group has the potential to bring about economic benefits such as increased trade opportunities, access to alternative financial mechanisms such as the New Development Bank, and diversification of partnerships, there are concerns that these potential benefits may not be sufficient to outweigh the geopolitical risks that could cause Western partners to become disinterested. Given the potential impact on economic cooperation, investment, and security alliances that have been well-established with Western countries for a long time, it is necessary to strike a careful balance in order to combine economic pragmatism with geopolitical strategy (*Journal of Law, Politic and Humanities*, 2023).

The disparity in political systems, economic development levels, and national interests among BRICS members presents serious obstacles since it frequently slows down and makes it more difficult to make decisions and carry out coordinated initiatives. Deeper cooperation is also hampered by economic integration obstacles like high trade costs and poor infrastructure. However, Indonesia is in a strategic position to support the more equitable and inclusive global governance transition promoted by BRICS because it is a developing nation with a strong economy, the fourth-largest population in the world, and a dedication to international collaboration. In addition to being a member of the G20, Indonesia has a wide range of diplomatic and commercial connections throughout ASEAN, which can increase the geopolitical and economic might of BRICS. Being a non-aligned nation, Indonesia can offer new insights for strategic decision-making and assist BRICS in navigating the intricate geopolitical environment. Indonesia can push for global governance reform through BRICS to achieve more equitable representation in organizations like the IMF and World Bank, fortify South-South cooperation for technology and capital transfer, and use the New Development Bank (NDB) for infrastructure development in order to guarantee that its interests are not

sidelined by China and India's economic dominance and to allow it to play an active role. Additionally, it can focus on pertinent global concerns like climate change and sustainable development, strike a balance between geopolitical dynamics and autonomous and pragmatic foreign policy, and fortify economic integration by encouraging the removal of trade barriers within the BRICS. By doing this, Indonesia will be able to support its national well-being, improve its negotiating position, and play a significant role in determining the direction of global governance (Milia et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

Indonesia's accession to BRICS on January 6, 2025, marks a strategic effort to elevate its global economic and political influence through expanded market access, investment diversification, and technological collaboration, supported by alternative financing from the New Development Bank (NDB). This membership strengthens Indonesia's diplomatic voice for developing nations and aligns with its "free and active" foreign policy by advocating for more inclusive global governance. However, maintaining diplomatic balance amid diverse BRICS interests—especially between Russia and China—and potential Western perceptions of bias remains a key challenge. The varying economic capacities and integration issues within BRICS further complicate assessment of its overall impact. Future research should examine Indonesia's strategies in sustaining equilibrium between BRICS and Western partnerships, evaluate the long-term outcomes of NDB financing and technology initiatives, and explore Indonesia's potential as a diplomatic bridge in fostering cooperation through regional mechanisms such as BRICS–ASEAN.

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