"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.



MAINS MASTERY 2026 · GS PAPER II · QUESTION 10 · STUDENT EDITION

BRICS and the Global South Counterweight

THE QUESTION, AS SET IN UPSC CSE MAINS 2026

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

Directive: Explain | 10 marks | 150 words

International Relations: BRICS and global governance

1 **PYQ Deep Decode**
Demand, hidden demand, structure, form

2 **PYQ Intelligence**
2013 to 2026: multilateral reform and global groupings

3 **Additional information**
Five mechanisms, financial institutions and two debates

4 **Pitfalls and variations**
Six corrections, institutional precision and changed directives

5 **The model answer**
151 words: mechanisms, constraints and complementarity

6 **Other ways to write it**
Institutional, comparative and India-centred outlines

7 **Quick recall**
Sixteen verified facts for Mains and Prelims

8 **Write it yourself**
A seven-point self-check

Guranchal Ma'am, Founder, UPSC Gurus · upscgurus.in

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1 PYQ Deep Decode

Read the question the way the examiner set it: the demand, the hidden demand, the structure that follows from both, and how the answer should be presented, opened and closed.

1.1 The demand

The question makes a claim: **BRICS acts as a counterweight in global governance and amplifies the Global South's voice.** It then asks you to **explain how BRICS projects itself as an alternative to other groupings**. The answer must therefore connect representation with mechanisms: the aggregation of developing-country interests, demands for reform of established institutions, alternative development-finance arrangements and coordinated diplomacy. It must also recognise the limits of this collective influence. **"Explain"** requires showing how these mechanisms work, not merely naming summits, members or declarations.

Words in the question	What they ask you to do	What goes wrong if you miss them
BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight	Show how collective representation, economic cooperation and diplomatic coordination can offset the concentration of influence in established groupings and institutions. Treat "powerful" as a proposition to substantiate, not as proof of effectiveness.	Claiming that BRICS has already displaced Western-led institutions.
Global governance	Address the rules, institutions and decisions governing international finance, trade, security, development and emerging technologies. Distinguish reform of institutions from creation of additional mechanisms.	Writing only about bilateral trade or geopolitical rivalry.
Amplifying the voice and influence	Explain the route from coordinated demands and agenda-setting to greater negotiating leverage. Distinguish a declaration of common positions from implemented institutional change.	Equating numerical size with automatic diplomatic influence.
Global South	Examine representation of developing and emerging economies, particularly their development, financing, technological and institutional priorities. Do not treat these countries as a politically uniform bloc.	Assuming that every developing country belongs to BRICS or accepts its positions.
Explain the role	Show the causal relationship: BRICS pools demands, proposes reforms, creates additional financial choices and coordinates diplomacy, thereby projecting an alternative voice.	Listing the eleven countries, annual summits and historical milestones without explaining their significance.
As an alternative to other groupings	Compare BRICS with established arrangements such as the G7 and relevant aspects of the Bretton Woods system. Explain what BRICS offers differently while distinguishing it from the G20, SCO and other forums with different mandates.	Calling BRICS a replacement for the G7, G20, IMF, World Bank or United Nations.

THE DEMAND IN ONE LINE

Explain how BRICS combines Global South representation, institutional reform demands, development finance and coordinated diplomacy to offer greater choice and bargaining power in global governance, while recognising the limits of its cohesion and influence.

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1.2 The hidden demand

The word **"alternative"** contains the question's most important distinction. Does BRICS intend to **replace** established global institutions and Western-dominated groupings, or does it primarily seek to **rebalance influence within an international order that continues to exist**?

The evidence points more clearly towards **institutional reform, additional choices and greater negotiating leverage** than wholesale replacement. The July 2025 Rio Declaration reaffirmed the central role of the United Nations while demanding reforms of its Security Council and the Bretton Woods institutions. The New Development Bank explicitly complements existing multilateral development banks. India's January 2026 statement described BRICS as a constructive platform complementing the broader multilateral system.

Thus, the final part of the answer should distinguish **an alternative centre of representation and cooperation** from a completely separate international order. BRICS can challenge unequal influence without requiring its members to withdraw from institutions they also use.

These three contrasts turn the hidden demand into an examinable distinction.

Mechanism	Evidence	What it actually establishes
Reform from within	The Rio Declaration of 6 to 7 July 2025 demanded greater developing-country representation in the UN Security Council and reform of the IMF and World Bank.	BRICS seeks a stronger Global South voice inside existing institutions.
Additional financial choice	The New Development Bank, established in 2015 under the 2014 agreement, finances infrastructure and sustainable development.	An additional development-finance institution, not the abolition of existing banks.
Complementary economic arrangements	The 2025 Rio Declaration supported continued work on cross-border payment interoperability and local-currency financing.	A search for lower-cost, more diversified transactions, not an operational BRICS common currency.

WEAK

BRICS has replaced Western dominance and established a new financial order through its own bank, currency and global institutions.

STRONG

BRICS offers developing economies additional development-finance choices through the New Development Bank and demands greater representation in established institutions. The Rio Declaration's call for UN and Bretton Woods reform shows that its counterweight is principally institutional and diplomatic, not an accomplished replacement of the existing order.

1.3 The structure

The question contains **one explicit demand**, explaining BRICS' role as a counterweight and an alternative to other groupings. The hidden demand, **alternative or complement**, belongs in a smaller final part. The shares below concern the body between the introduction and conclusion; they are a teaching guide, not a UPSC rule.

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Introduction	1. Counterweight and alternative about four-fifths	2. Alternative or complement? about one-fifth	Conclusion

Part 1 BRICS as a counterweight and an alternative — about four-fifths

Representation	Expansion across Asia, Africa and the Middle East; participation of developing economies; partner-country engagement; Global South priorities.
Governance reform	UN Security Council representation; IMF quota and voice reforms; World Bank governance; WTO reform and development concerns.
Financial alternatives	New Development Bank; US$100 billion Contingent Reserve Arrangement; local-currency financing; proposals for more interoperable payment systems.
Diplomatic influence	Collective declarations on multilateralism, climate finance, development, trade, technology and international security.
Constraints	Divergent strategic interests, India-China differences, unequal economic weight, consensus decision-making and gaps between declarations and implementation.

Part 2 Alternative or complement to the existing order? — about one-fifth

Not simple substitution	BRICS supports UN reform, WTO-centred trade and more representative Bretton Woods institutions rather than their abolition.
Practical alternative	The New Development Bank adds financing options; BRICS provides another diplomatic platform and additional negotiating leverage.
Balanced judgment	A pluralising, reform-oriented counterweight is more defensible than calling BRICS a completed anti-Western world order.

1.4 How to present it

The question asks for an **explanation of mechanisms**, not a chronological narrative. The strongest form for 150 words is a **short holistic introduction, headed points showing how BRICS operates, a compact qualification on its limitations and a brief alternative-versus-complement judgment**. Each point should connect an instrument to the influence it creates. A single named institution or declaration is more valuable than a long membership list.

Form	Fit here	Reason
Mechanism-led headed points	**Best**	Representation, reform, finance and diplomacy become four clear explanations. Constraints and the hidden demand can be added economically.
Mechanism and impact table	Good	Displays how each BRICS instrument creates an alternative; efficient if the columns remain short.
Brief comparison with the G7	Useful support	Clarifies the word "alternative", but should not consume the entire answer or turn it into an ideological comparison.
Chronology of summits and expansion	Weak	History establishes context, but a list of meetings does not explain counterweight mechanisms.

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1.5 The introduction and the conclusion

The introduction serves the whole question. Introduce BRICS as a collective platform through which emerging and developing economies seek greater representation, institutional reform and additional forms of cooperation. Connect these aims to its alternative role immediately, rather than defining the acronym.

The conclusion settles the demand. Explain that BRICS' credible contribution lies in pluralising global governance and improving Global South bargaining power. Its effectiveness depends on internal cohesion and practical outcomes; its alternative role is mainly complementary rather than a complete replacement.

2 PYQ Intelligence 2013 to 2026

Why BRICS and the Global South were prominent in international affairs before the 2026 examination, how UPSC has repeatedly examined institutions and geopolitical groupings, and what this pattern suggests students should prepare next.

2.1 Why the subject was topical in 2026

BRICS evolved from a smaller emerging-economy consultation into an expanded forum discussing global governance, development finance, international security, trade and technology. The 2024 enlargement, Indonesia's accession announced in January 2025, the Rio Declaration of July 2025 and India's 2026 chairship made its alternative role particularly relevant. India chaired a series of meetings in 2026 on reform and practical cooperation. **GS Paper II was held on 22 August 2026.** UPSC does not disclose why it sets a particular question, so these are **context, not cause**. All developments in the table predate the examination.

When	What happened	Why it matters for this question
15 July 2014	At the **Fortaleza BRICS Summit**, the five members signed the agreement creating the New Development Bank and the treaty establishing a **US$100 billion Contingent Reserve Arrangement**. The official declaration presented both as additions to global financial arrangements.	BRICS acquired institutional instruments beyond political declarations. The complementarity was explicit from the beginning.
July 2015 to April 2016	The **New Development Bank** was established in July 2015 with headquarters in Shanghai and became operational in 2016, when its first loans were approved. It was created to finance infrastructure and sustainable development.	Demonstrates the difference between advocating reform and creating an operational alternative financing channel.
22 to 24 August 2023	The **Johannesburg II Summit** agreed to enlarge BRICS, inviting six countries. The resulting expansion increased the group's geographic reach and added significant economies from Africa and the Middle East.	Greater geographic representation supports its Global South claim, but more members also complicate consensus.
22 to 24 October 2024	The **Kazan Summit** adopted a declaration centred on stronger multilateralism, a fairer international order and economic cooperation. It established the **BRICS partner-country category** to engage additional countries without admitting them as full members.	Shows that BRICS projects influence through flexible outreach as well as formal membership.

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When	What happened	Why it matters for this question
6 January 2025	Brazil's BRICS presidency officially announced **Indonesia's accession as a full member**. It described Indonesia as an important contributor to global governance reform and Global South cooperation.	Extended BRICS representation into Southeast Asia and reinforced its cross-regional identity.
6 to 7 July 2025	The **17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro** adopted the declaration **"Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance"**. It called for UN Security Council reform, more representative Bretton Woods institutions, stronger developing-country participation in international decision-making, and cooperation on development, finance and technology.	The clearest direct evidence for both halves of this question: acting as a counterweight and amplifying the Global South.
6 to 7 July 2025	The Rio Declaration welcomed progress on **cross-border payment interoperability**, local-currency financing and discussions on the Contingent Reserve Arrangement. It also endorsed a **Climate Leadership Agenda** and a Leaders' Framework Declaration on Climate Finance.	Demonstrates alternative policy channels. These were not announcements of an operational single BRICS currency or a completed common payment system.
12 December 2025	Brazil formally handed the BRICS presidency to India. India's Sherpa identified **resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability** as the four themes for 2026, emphasising continuity, consolidation and consensus.	Shows India's preference for institutional effectiveness and practical cooperation rather than a confrontational bloc.
13 January 2026	External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** launched India's BRICS 2026 theme, logo and website. He described the grouping as **complementing the broader multilateral system** and outlined a humanity-first, people-centred approach.	A direct Indian statement supporting the alternative-versus-complement distinction.
14 to 15 May 2026	India hosted the **BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi**. External Affairs Minister Jaishankar chaired a session dedicated to **reforms of global governance and the multilateral system**. The meeting produced a Chair's Statement and Outcome Document.	Global governance reform remained an active diplomatic agenda, not merely a historical BRICS aspiration.

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When	What happened	Why it matters for this question
15 May 2026	At the New Development Bank's eleventh annual meeting in Moscow, its Board of Governors elected **Nirmala Sitharaman** as the next Chairperson. The NDB reported that, as at the end of the first quarter of 2026, it had approved approximately **US$42.9 billion for 140 projects**, including cancelled projects where applicable to its reporting.	Provides a dated measure of an operational development-finance institution, without confusing approved financing with disbursement.
23 June 2026	Prime Minister Narendra Modi met BRICS national security advisers and senior security officials in India, emphasising cooperation on **terrorism, cyber security and emerging technologies**, alongside Global South priorities.	Shows the breadth of political coordination, while not turning BRICS into a collective-defence alliance.
7 August 2026	The **16th BRICS Trade Ministers' Meeting in Jaipur** reaffirmed the WTO-centred trading system, special and differential treatment for developing economies and the need for a functioning dispute-settlement system. The ministers adopted guiding principles for export-oriented MSME credit and issued the **Jaipur Consensus** to study an invoice-discounting mechanism.	Precisely illustrates the combined strategy: reform existing rules while developing additional practical instruments for emerging economies.

Membership precision: Official sources are not fully consistent on Saudi Arabia's status. The Brazilian BRICS presidency and Indian government materials have listed eleven members including Saudi Arabia, while the Bank of Russia's BRICS page describes Saudi Arabia as an invited country. Avoid presenting a contested count or an undifferentiated membership list as the basis of the argument. Indonesia's January 2025 admission is separately confirmed.

2.2 The skill UPSC keeps testing

Across GS Paper II, UPSC has tested the **role, reform, comparative relevance and limitations** of international institutions and regional groupings. It moved from the Bretton Woods architecture and WTO negotiations to India's place in the global order, the SCO, BIMSTEC and competing strategic arrangements. The 2026 BRICS question combines these skills: **explain a grouping's alternative role by connecting institutional instruments with geopolitical influence**.

Year	The question as UPSC set it	What it asked of you	What changed in 2026
2013 GS II, Q25	The World Bank and the IMF, collectively known as the Bretton Woods Institutions, are the two inter-governmental pillars supporting the structure of the world's economic and financial order. Superficially, the World Bank and the IMF exhibit many common characteristics, yet their role, functions and mandate are distinctly different. Elucidate.	Separate institutions by mandate, role and functions.	The NDB and CRA require similarly precise institutional comparison with the Bretton Woods system.
2016 GS II, Q17	"The broader aims and objectives of WTO are to manage and promote international trade in the era of globalization. But the Doha round of negotiations seem doomed due to differences between the developed and the developing countries." Discuss in the Indian perspective.	Explain North-South differences within trade institutions.	BRICS articulates collective developing-country concerns on representation, development and trade rules.

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Year	The question as UPSC set it	What it asked of you	What changed in 2026
2018 GS II, Q19	What are the key areas of reform if the WTO has to survive in the present context of 'Trade War', especially keeping in mind the interest of India?	Identify reforms and relate them to India's interests.	The 2026 Jaipur meeting advocated WTO-centred reform, special and differential treatment and effective dispute settlement.
2019 GS II, Q19	'The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order.' Elaborate.	Evaluate India's relationship with developing countries amid strategic change.	India's BRICS chairship offers a concrete setting for examining Global South leadership and diplomatic bridge-building.
2021 GS II, Q19	Critically examine the aims and objectives of SCO. What importance does it hold for India?	Understand a grouping's mandate, strategic significance and limitations.	BRICS needs comparable institutional analysis, but its mandate must not be confused with that of the SCO.
2022 GS II, Q10	Do you think that BIMSTEC is a parallel organisation like the SAARC ? What are the similarities and dissimilarities between the two ? How are Indian foreign policy objectives realized by forming this new organisation ?	Compare overlapping organisations and explain the utility of alternatives.	The distinction between an alternative and a replacement now applies to BRICS and established global groupings.
2023 GS II, Q9	'Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO' In the light of the above statement point out the role of India in mitigating the problems.	Examine how internal conflicts impede collective action.	Expansion and divergent interests create a parallel cohesion challenge for BRICS.
2025 GS II, Q20	"The reform process in the United Nations remains unresolved, because of the delicate imbalance of East and West and entanglement of the USA vs. Russo-Chinese alliance." Examine and critically evaluate the East-West policy confrontations in this regard.	Analyse institutional reform against great-power divisions.	BRICS' demand for a more representative UN Security Council must be assessed alongside its members' divergent national interests.

Also related, verbatim: 2020 GS II, Q19: "'Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)' is transforming itself into a trade bloc from a military alliance, in present times – Discuss." 2024 GS II, Q9: ""The West is fostering India as an alternative to reduce dependence on China's supply chain and as a strategic ally to counter China's political and economic dominance." Explain this statement with examples." 2025 GS II, Q10: ""With the waning of globalization, post-Cold War world is becoming a site of sovereign nationalism." Elucidate."

CARRY THIS METHOD TO ANY "GROUPING AS AN ALTERNATIVE" QUESTION

1. **Identify** the existing order or grouping against which the alternative is described.
2. **Explain** the constituency and interests the alternative represents.
3. **Show** its instruments: institutions, finance, rules, diplomacy and practical cooperation.
4. **Test** actual achievements against stated ambitions and internal constraints.
5. **Conclude** whether the relationship is substitution, competition, complementarity or some combination.

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2.3 What to prepare next

INSTITUTIONS, GROUPINGS AND ARRANGEMENTS

G7 and G20	G7 as a smaller major-advanced-economy coordination group; G20 as a wider forum that includes advanced and emerging economies. India and other BRICS countries participate in the G20.
IMF and World Bank	IMF quota-based governance and crisis financing; World Bank development financing; BRICS calls for greater representation and institutional reform.
New Development Bank	2014 founding agreement, 2015 establishment, Shanghai headquarters; infrastructure and sustainable-development mandate; membership is separate from BRICS membership.
Contingent Reserve Arrangement	US$100 billion committed swap framework; originally five parties; 30% IMF-delinked access and 70% linked access under the treaty.
UN and WTO	UN Security Council reform, developing-country representation, IMF governance and the WTO's special and differential treatment provisions.
Partner-country modality	Created in 2024, implemented from 2025; distinguish full membership, partner status and invited outreach participants.

ANALYTICAL IDEAS

Multipolarity	Distribution of influence among several major centres rather than one predominant power or two opposing blocs.
Institutional reform	Change in representation, decision-making or rules within an existing institution; different from creating a replacement.
South-South cooperation	Cooperation among developing countries in finance, trade, technology, knowledge and development priorities.
Strategic autonomy	The ability to cooperate across several arrangements without exclusive alignment; particularly relevant to India's participation in BRICS and other forums.
Agenda-setting power	Influencing which issues are discussed and how they are framed, even without controlling final decisions.
Representation versus effectiveness	A larger and more diverse group may claim broader legitimacy while facing greater difficulties in agreeing on implementation.
Institutional pluralism	Additional organisations and mechanisms operating alongside established institutions and expanding countries' policy choices.

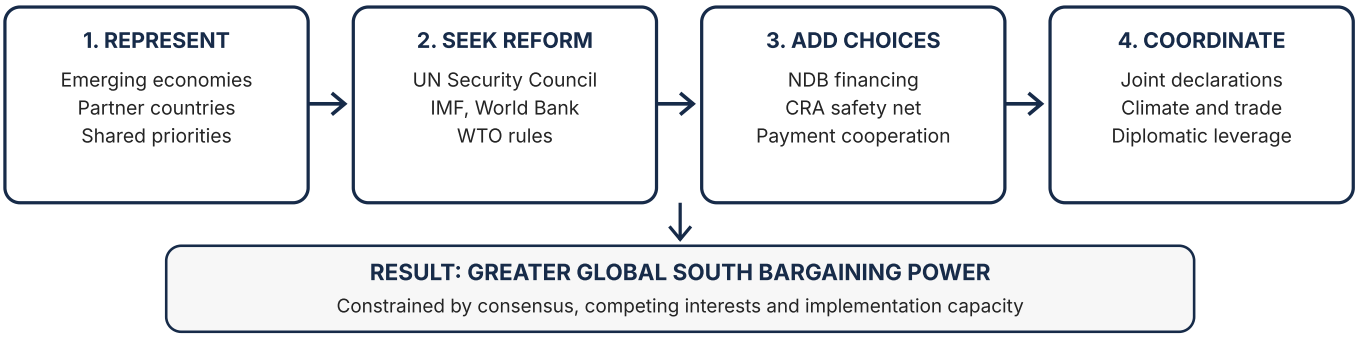
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3 Additional information

Everything needed to answer this question well. Tier 1 explains the mechanisms by which BRICS projects itself as a Global South counterweight. Tier 2 explores institutional evolution, India's approach and the limits of an alternative global order.

TIER 1 · ESSENTIAL: REPRESENTATION, REFORM, INSTITUTIONS AND DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE

How BRICS converts collective representation into influence



Teaching diagram: an explanation of influence, not an official BRICS decision process.

The five channels through which BRICS projects an alternative

Channel	Evidence and mechanism	What it contributes, and its limit
1. Representation of Global South interests	**Enlargement:** BRICS expanded beyond its original five to include major emerging economies across Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Brazil formally announced Indonesia's full membership on 6 January 2025. **Partner-country status:** created at Kazan in October 2024 and applied from January 2025. **Voice:** Rio 2025 highlighted developing-country concerns, including representation, development finance, trade, technology access and climate finance. Participation of member and partner countries creates additional channels for expressing shared concerns.	Broadens the geographical base of diplomatic engagement. It does not confer a mandate to speak for every Global South country, and members' interests remain diverse.
2. Global governance reform	**UN:** The July 2025 Rio Declaration demanded reform of the UN Security Council to increase developing-country representation. China and Russia reiterated support for Brazil and India to play a greater UN role, including in the Council. **IMF and World Bank:** BRICS calls for governance, voting and representation reforms reflecting emerging economies' greater weight. **WTO:** At Jaipur on 7 August 2026, trade ministers emphasised development, special and differential treatment and a fully functioning dispute-settlement system.	Creates a collective reform agenda and negotiating pressure. Demands for reform must not be described as reforms already achieved.
3. Alternative development finance	**New Development Bank:** established in 2015 pursuant to the 2014 Fortaleza agreement. Based in Shanghai, it finances infrastructure and sustainable-development projects in emerging markets and developing countries. The NDB's May 2026 release reported **US$42.9 billion in cumulative financing approvals for 140 projects as at end-Q1 2026**. Its financing has extended beyond the five founding countries. The Bank also develops local-currency lending and diversified funding arrangements.	A real, operational financing choice alongside the World Bank and regional development banks. Approved amounts are not equivalent to disbursed funds or completed projects.

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Channel	Evidence and mechanism	What it contributes, and its limit
4. Financial stability and payment cooperation	**Contingent Reserve Arrangement:** the 2014 treaty established a **US$100 billion** committed liquidity-support framework for the original five members. Access is through central-bank currency swaps, with IMF-linked conditions for the larger share. **Payments:** Rio 2025 acknowledged technical work under the BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative and called for continued discussion on interoperability. **Local currencies:** members encourage increased use in appropriate trade and financing arrangements.	Seeks to reduce exposure to financial bottlenecks and widen choices. The CRA is a contingent arrangement, not a permanently disbursed fund; payment interoperability remains a workstream, not a fully operational common system.
5. Collective diplomatic influence	**Rio 2025:** the declaration coordinated positions on UN reform, multilateralism, sustainable development, climate finance, technology and security. The Climate Leadership Agenda and AI governance discussions placed developing-country priorities on wider international agendas. **India 2026:** the chairship emphasised resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability. BRICS foreign ministers discussed global governance reform in New Delhi in May 2026, while security officials met in June.	Provides agenda-setting and diplomatic coordination across several policy domains. Statements cannot automatically be equated with uniform national positions or successful negotiation outcomes.
Constraint: cohesion and effectiveness	**Political divergence:** India and China have competing strategic interests, while members differ in their relations with Western states and in their approaches to major international disputes. **Institutional structure:** BRICS makes political decisions by consensus, has a rotating presidency and has traditionally operated without a permanent secretariat or constitutive treaty. **Implementation:** enlargement creates coordination burdens; several proposed financial initiatives remain under discussion.	Its representational reach may grow faster than its collective decision-making capacity. More members do not automatically produce more coherent positions or implementable outcomes.

What kind of alternative does BRICS offer?

Established institution or grouping	Where BRICS offers a different approach	Necessary qualification
G7	A platform bringing major emerging and developing economies together around a Global South-oriented agenda rather than the G7's smaller advanced-economy membership.	The G7 and BRICS have different memberships, histories and agendas; neither is a legal successor to the other.
IMF	Demands greater voting representation and supplements global liquidity arrangements through the CRA.	The CRA complements existing arrangements; much of the original framework remains linked to IMF programmes.
World Bank and other MDBs	The NDB provides another source of infrastructure and sustainable-development finance and encourages local-currency lending.	The NDB's own mandate explicitly complements existing multilateral and regional financial institutions.
UN Security Council	Collective advocacy for a more representative Council and a stronger role for developing countries.	BRICS has not created a substitute collective-security organisation, and its members do not hold a single position on every security issue.

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Established institution or grouping	Where BRICS offers a different approach	Necessary qualification
WTO	Collective support for development-sensitive trade rules, policy space and more effective dispute settlement.	BRICS advocates a WTO-centred system; it is not a replacement for the WTO's treaty-based trade rules.
G20	BRICS can help members coordinate positions on development and financial reform outside the larger G20 process.	BRICS and G20 overlap in membership. The G20 itself brings advanced and emerging economies together, so they should not be cast as mutually exclusive blocs.
SCO and Quad	BRICS focuses on broad political, economic, developmental and people-to-people cooperation.	The SCO has a different regional-security emphasis; the Quad has an Indo-Pacific partnership agenda. Their mandates cannot be treated as interchangeable with BRICS.

Three institutional distinctions that strengthen the answer

New Development Bank versus Contingent Reserve Arrangement. The NDB is an operational multilateral development bank that approves development projects. The CRA is a treaty-based contingent liquidity arrangement responding to potential short-term balance-of-payments pressures. **One lends for development; the other is designed as a financial safety net.**

BRICS itself versus the NDB. BRICS is a political and diplomatic coordination forum. The NDB has its own agreement, membership and governance. Bangladesh and Algeria, for example, became NDB members without being full BRICS members. **The membership lists are not identical.**

Proposed payment cooperation versus a common currency. The Rio Declaration of July 2025 welcomed technical work and discussions on more interoperable cross-border payment arrangements. **It did not establish a universal BRICS currency or a completed common payments platform.**

Collective declaration versus binding institutional reform. A summit declaration records agreed diplomatic positions and priorities. It does not itself amend UN membership, redistribute IMF quotas or change WTO treaty obligations. **Influence should be judged by subsequent action as well as stated demands.**

TIER 2 · EXTENDED UNDERSTANDING: THE WHOLE TOPIC AROUND IT

How BRICS developed

1. **2001:** BRIC first appeared as an economic acronym for Brazil, Russia, India and China; this was not the formal creation of the intergovernmental grouping.
2. **2006:** Foreign ministers of the four countries began political coordination on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.
3. **2009:** First BRIC leaders' summit, at Yekaterinburg in Russia.
4. **2010 to 2011:** South Africa was invited and subsequently joined, creating BRICS.
5. **2014 to 2016:** Fortaleza agreements established the basis for the NDB and CRA; the NDB began operations in 2016.

What makes BRICS distinctive?

1. **Cross-regional representation:** unlike a geographically limited regional organisation, its membership spans several continents.
2. **Three pillars:** political and security cooperation; economic and financial cooperation; cultural and people-to-people exchanges.
3. **Consensus-based diplomacy:** members are expected to negotiate common positions despite major differences.
4. **Development-finance capacity:** the NDB turns an alternative-finance ambition into project approvals.
5. **Institutional pluralism:** BRICS operates alongside institutions that its members also participate in.

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6. **2023 to 2025:** Johannesburg enlargement, Kazan partner-country modality and Indonesia's formal accession broadened participation.
7. **2026:** India's fourth BRICS chairship emphasised institutional resilience, innovation, development-oriented cooperation and sustainability.

6. **Outreach and partnerships:** the partner-country modality enables participation beyond the full membership.
7. **Agenda expansion:** health, climate action, digital governance, technology and supply chains have joined the traditional finance and geopolitical agenda.

Global governance reform: what must change, and why?

Institution or field	Global South concern	BRICS approach
UN Security Council	Representation and decision-making structures do not adequately reflect contemporary developing-country aspirations.	Advocates comprehensive reform, greater developing-country representation and a larger international role for countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Rio 2025 specifically recognised African aspirations reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration.
IMF governance	Quota and voting arrangements are seen as insufficiently reflective of emerging economies' weight.	Calls for reforms to make IMF governance more representative, credible, effective and accountable.
World Bank governance and development finance	Infrastructure finance, development needs, voice and financing conditions remain important concerns.	Advocates reform of Bretton Woods governance and supports the NDB as an additional financing channel.
Multilateral trading system	Developing countries seek policy space, fair treatment and accessible dispute resolution.	Supports WTO reform and special and differential treatment. Jaipur 2026 emphasised food and livelihood security and a binding two-tier dispute-settlement system.
Climate finance	Developing economies require accessible finance for adaptation, mitigation and just transitions.	Rio 2025 endorsed a Leaders' Framework Declaration on Climate Finance and reaffirmed differentiated responsibilities under the UN climate framework.
Technology and AI governance	Technological standards and access risk being shaped without adequate participation by developing economies.	Supports more inclusive AI governance, technological cooperation and digital development priorities.

Institutional numbers and their correct interpretation

Figure	Verified meaning	Do not confuse it with
US$100 billion	The original total commitment under the 2014 CRA treaty: China US$41 billion; Brazil, Russia and India US$18 billion each; South Africa US$5 billion.	Cash permanently transferred to a BRICS central fund or development loans disbursed by the NDB.
30% and 70%	Under the original CRA treaty, 30% of a requesting party's maximum access is IMF-delinked and the remaining 70% is IMF-linked.	Two different kinds of NDB development finance.
US$42.9 billion	NDB cumulative financing approvals as at end-Q1 2026, reported in its May 2026 annual-meeting communication.	Total cash disbursed, or the value of completed projects.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

Figure	Verified meaning	Do not confuse it with
140 projects	Number of NDB projects in that same dated cumulative-approval report.	Projects necessarily operational or completed. Reporting bases can include cancellations.
Three pillars	Political and security; economic and financial; cultural and people-to-people cooperation.	Three treaty-based divisions of a permanent BRICS secretariat.
Four priorities in 2026	India's chairship themes: Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability.	A new BRICS treaty or four independently established international institutions.

India's interest: reform without exclusive alignment

For India, BRICS provides a forum in which it can **advance Global South representation, seek reforms of international financial and political institutions, widen development partnerships and maintain strategic autonomy**. India also engages through the G20, Quad and other arrangements. These relationships need not be mutually exclusive because the forums have different memberships and mandates. India benefits from a BRICS capable of practical cooperation without becoming a rigid anti-Western bloc or an instrument of any single major power.

The Indian position is unusually clear in **S. Jaishankar's 13 January 2026 address**, which described BRICS as a constructive platform complementing the broader multilateral system. The 7 August 2026 Jaipur trade meeting likewise supported a **WTO-centred** system while advancing additional initiatives for MSMEs, trade finance and global value chains. These are concrete examples of reformist complementarity, not institutional withdrawal.

Limits that a sophisticated answer should acknowledge

POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC LIMITS

1. **India-China competition:** divergent strategic priorities can complicate unified positions.
2. **Different Western relationships:** some BRICS members maintain close ties with the United States or European countries; others experience severe disputes with them.
3. **Conflicting national interests:** energy, security, trade and regional rivalries do not disappear when countries enter BRICS.
4. **Representation gap:** BRICS includes important developing economies but cannot automatically speak for all countries of the Global South.

INSTITUTIONAL AND IMPLEMENTATION LIMITS

1. **Consensus:** decisions require agreement among countries with different priorities.
2. **Institutional design:** the rotating presidency and absence of a permanent BRICS secretariat complicate continuity and coordination.
3. **Scale:** additional NDB finance does not by itself substitute for the full resources or functions of existing global financial institutions.
4. **Unfinished initiatives:** a common currency is not operational, and cross-border payment interoperability remains under development.
5. **Outcomes:** agreement on reform demands is not the same as achieving changes in UN, IMF or WTO governance.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

Two debates worth knowing

Is BRICS an anti-G7 or anti-Western bloc?

One view: Its demands for a more multipolar order, criticism of unequal representation and creation of additional financial mechanisms challenge Western predominance. Some members favour reducing their dependence on Western-controlled financial channels. **The other view:** BRICS members have varied strategic alignments, share membership with Western states in wider institutions and explicitly call for UN, IMF and WTO reform. India describes BRICS as complementary to the wider multilateral system. **The balanced reading:** BRICS is a counterweight to concentrated influence, not a unified military alliance or a demonstrated replacement for the Western-led international order.

Does expansion strengthen BRICS or weaken its cohesion?

One view: Additional members and partner countries broaden geographic representation, markets, political reach and the legitimacy of demands made on behalf of developing economies. **The other:** More members increase differences in security interests, economic priorities and external relationships, making agreement and implementation more difficult. Consensus can become harder as diversity grows. **The balanced reading:** Enlargement creates potential bargaining power, but realised influence depends on institutional coordination, credibility, common priorities and measurable results. Representation is a necessary resource, not an automatic achievement.

4 Pitfalls and variations

The six mistakes that cost marks in this question, claims that must not appear, and how the structure changes if UPSC changes the directive or the institutional focus.

4.1 Six pitfalls, each with its correction

Membership replaces explanation

~~BRICS has many large countries, so it is a powerful alternative to the West.~~

Connect representation to concrete bargaining channels: UN reform demands, NDB finance, CRA support, trade coordination and summit diplomacy.

Counterweight means replacement

~~BRICS seeks to replace the UN, IMF, World Bank, WTO and G7.~~

Separate reform of established institutions from additional institutions. The NDB complements development banks; BRICS supports reform within the UN and WTO.

Financial mechanisms overstated

~~BRICS has established a common currency and its own alternative global payments system.~~

Describe the NDB and CRA as existing institutions, but local-currency settlement and payment interoperability as continuing cooperation and development work.

No comparative reference

~~BRICS supports emerging economies, development and multilateralism.~~

Show why these aims project an alternative: additional development-finance choices, a distinct Global South constituency and pressure for fairer global representation.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

Unqualified praise

~~BRICS members always speak with one voice and now determine the global governance agenda.~~

Recognise India-China differences, varying Western relationships, consensus constraints and the gap between joint declarations and implemented reforms.

Hidden demand omitted

~~BRICS is important, therefore the future world order will be multipolar.~~

State whether BRICS is an alternative or a complement: it pluralises bargaining power and financing choices while largely seeking reform inside the existing international order.

4.2 Never write these

- "BRICS has formally adopted a single common currency."
  The 2025 Rio Declaration discussed payment interoperability and local-currency financing; it did not establish an operational common currency.
- "The US$100 billion CRA is money already distributed among BRICS members."
  The CRA is a contingent commitment framework for currency swaps, not a permanently transferred fund or cumulative payout figure.
- "The New Development Bank has replaced the World Bank."
  The NDB is an additional multilateral development bank explicitly designed to complement existing financial institutions.
- "BRICS and the New Development Bank have exactly the same membership."
  The NDB has its own treaty and admission process. Bangladesh and Algeria have joined the bank without becoming full BRICS members.
- "All official institutions agree that Saudi Arabia is an unambiguously confirmed BRICS member."
  Brazilian and Indian official sources have listed it as a member, while the Bank of Russia has continued to describe it as an invited country. Do not conceal the discrepancy.
- "BRICS is a military alliance comparable to NATO."
  It is a political, economic and diplomatic coordination forum without a collective-defence treaty.
- "BRICS has secured permanent UN Security Council seats for India and Brazil."
  The Rio Declaration called for reform and recorded Chinese and Russian support for a greater role for India and Brazil; it did not confer permanent membership.
- "The BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative was fully implemented in 2025."
  The Rio Declaration called for continued discussions and welcomed a technical report on possible payment-system interoperability.
- "The BRICS Jaipur invoice-discounting facility was launched in August 2026."
  The Jaipur Consensus agreed to study a mechanism; the meeting did not establish a fully operating facility.
- "BRICS' 2026 New Delhi Summit had already adopted its declaration before the August Mains examination."
  The eighteenth summit took place in September 2026, after GS Paper II on 22 August. Use only pre-examination events when explaining the question's 2026 context.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

4.3 If the question changes

If it asks	The structure becomes	What must change
Critically examine BRICS as an alternative to the Western-led order	Case for counterweight; institutional achievements; limitations and contradictions; reasoned judgment.	Increase the weight assigned to internal divisions, limits of finance and the distinction between reform and replacement.
Examine the **New Development Bank** as an alternative source of development finance	Mandate and establishment; financing model and membership; results; constraints; relation with existing MDBs.	Focus on project approvals, local-currency financing, governance and complementarity, not a general BRICS history.
Discuss **India's role in BRICS** and its strategic autonomy	India's interests; reform agenda; 2026 chairship priorities; cooperation across forums; India-China challenges; conclusion.	Place Indian foreign-policy choices and its multiple partnerships at the centre.
Compare **BRICS and the G7** in global governance	Membership and origins; constituencies; institutional arrangements; finance and diplomacy; influence and limitations.	Use a balanced comparative table rather than calling one grouping the successor to the other.
Assess **BRICS expansion** and Global South representation	Stages of enlargement; membership and partner-country arrangements; benefits of diversity; coordination problems; assessment.	Emphasise representational legitimacy and the relationship between enlarged membership and effective collective action.
Discuss **BRICS and de-dollarisation**	Motivations; local-currency trade and lending; CRA and payment discussions; implementation constraints; financial stability implications.	Distinguish real local-currency transactions from a hypothetical common currency and avoid suggesting that dollar dependence has ended.
Examine **UN Security Council reform through BRICS**	Representational deficit; Rio declaration; India and Brazil's aspirations; positions of permanent members; obstacles; prospects.	Institutional reform becomes the main subject; NDB and CRA are peripheral.
The same question for **15 marks**	Representation; institutional reform; NDB and CRA; diplomacy and global public goods; cohesion limits; alternative-versus-complement judgment.	Add the mechanism diagram, a dated NDB figure, the 2025 Rio and 2026 Jaipur examples, and a fuller comparison with the G7 and established institutions.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

5

The model answer

One model answer, written to the UPSC Gurus house range of 150 to 153 words (151 words, counting every heading and label inside the answer sheet; UPSC's printed limit is 150 words). The form is mechanism-led headed points: representation, governance reform, finance, cooperation and diplomacy, followed by constraints and the alternative-versus-complement judgment. The introduction covers the whole question; the conclusion settles its demand.

Model answer ## Mechanism-led headed points

151 words

BRICS projects an alternative voice in global governance by coordinating emerging economies' demands for fairer representation, development finance and diplomatic influence.

1. Counterweight and alternative

- **Representation:** Expansion, including Indonesia (2025), gives developing economies a wider platform for collective bargaining.
- **Reform:** Rio's 2025 declaration demanded more representative UN Security Council, IMF and World Bank governance.
- **Finance:** The New Development Bank funds infrastructure; the US$100-billion Contingent Reserve Arrangement supplements liquidity safeguards.
- **Cooperation:** Members encourage local-currency financing and discuss interoperable cross-border payments, without adopting a common currency.
- **Diplomacy:** Joint positions on WTO reform, climate finance and technology amplify developing-country priorities.
- **Constraints:** Strategic rivalries, unequal influence and consensus requirements weaken effective collective implementation.

2. Alternative or complement?

BRICS differs from the G7 by emphasising Global South representation and seeking institutional reform without wholesale replacement.

Thus, BRICS can pluralise global governance and increase Global South bargaining power, provided its diverse members translate declarations into credible action.

DEMAND
Explain how BRICS projects itself as a Global South counterweight through representation, global governance reform, alternative financial arrangements and collective diplomacy, recognising constraints

HIDDEN DEMAND
Distinguish wholesale replacement of established institutions from additional choices and stronger Global South bargaining power within a reformed international order

STRUCTURE
About four-fifths on BRICS as a counterweight and alternative, including five internal mechanisms and constraints; about one-fifth on alternative versus complement

BALANCE
Introduction 21 words, conclusion 21 words; 151 words in all

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

Why it works: The introduction connects BRICS' alternative role with the representation, development-finance and diplomatic needs of emerging economies. Part 1, the largest, explains five mechanisms rather than listing members or summits. Indonesia's accession establishes recent expansion; the Rio Declaration supplies the reform agenda; the New Development Bank and US$100-billion CRA demonstrate distinct financial arrangements; local-currency and payments initiatives are accurately described as cooperation rather than completed institutions. The final point acknowledges cohesion and implementation constraints. Part 2 answers the hidden demand explicitly: BRICS seeks additional choices and greater influence within a reformed international order, not wholesale institutional replacement. The conclusion connects greater Global South bargaining power to the practical condition of collective implementation. The introduction and conclusion are each 21 words.

6 Other ways to write it

The model answer above remains the answer. These alternative outlines show how the same demand can be met using a different presentation form, evidence or organising principle. Every approach must retain the distinction between challenging unequal influence and replacing established institutions.

Approach	How it is built	When it works
Mechanism and impact matrix	Use two columns, **BRICS mechanism** and **alternative contribution**. Pair expanded representation with negotiating influence, governance reform with stronger developing-country voice, the NDB with additional financing, the CRA with liquidity support, and collective diplomacy with agenda-setting. Close with cohesion constraints and complementarity.	When you want to show the causal link between institutions and influence in the fewest possible words.
Institutional comparison	Introduction: BRICS as a Global South forum. Compare its role with the G7, Bretton Woods institutions and wider multilateral arrangements. Explain the NDB, CRA, reform demands and diplomatic coordination. Add internal limitations and conclude that the alternative is primarily complementary.	When the word **"alternative"** appears to be the strongest emphasis in the question.
Representation to reform	Organise the body as a progression: **expanded representation**, common demands, institutional instruments and international influence. Use Indonesia (2025), Rio (2025), NDB financing and Jaipur (2026) as concise evidence. End with consensus constraints and a reformist judgment.	When you want to explain how greater participation may become greater bargaining power.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

Approach	How it is built	When it works
India-centred illustration	Use India's 2026 chairship as a thread: resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability; support for UN and Bretton Woods reform; the NDB; and the Jaipur trade outcomes. Briefly explain India's simultaneous participation in other groupings and why BRICS need not demand exclusive alignment.	When you want contemporary Indian examples without turning the answer into a separate question on Indian foreign policy.
Open with a dated institution	Begin with the 2014 Fortaleza agreements establishing the NDB and CRA. Explain how BRICS moved beyond declarations through development finance, then add representation, reform and diplomacy. Finish with limitations and complementarity.	When institutional evidence is your strongest starting point. Keep the opening brief enough to address the entire question.
For 15 marks	Retain both main parts but add a compact BRICS-versus-G7 comparison, the NDB's **US$42.9 billion in approvals across 140 projects** reported in May 2026, the CRA's original 30% IMF-delinked access provision, the 2025 Rio payment discussions and the August 2026 Jaipur trade outcomes. Expand the analysis of India-China differences, consensus and implementation.	When the additional word allowance permits evidence, comparison and a fuller evaluation of institutional effectiveness.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

7 Quick recall and Prelims crossover

Sixteen verified facts, arranged in eight pairs, to connect the Mains argument with the dates, institutions, treaty provisions and outcomes that Prelims may test. Figures retain their original reporting dates.

1 **BRIC origins:** Brazil, Russia, India and China began diplomatic coordination in **2006**; their first leaders' summit was held at **Yekaterinburg, Russia, in June 2009**.

2 **South Africa:** Invited to join BRIC in **2010** and participated in the **2011 Sanya Summit**, establishing BRICS as the five-country grouping.

3 **Johannesburg II:** The **15th BRICS Summit**, held on **22 to 24 August 2023**, decided to expand membership beyond the original five countries.

4 **Indonesia:** Brazil officially announced its accession as a full BRICS member on **6 January 2025**, strengthening the grouping's Southeast Asian representation.

5 **Partner countries:** The category was created at the **2024 Kazan Summit**. Nine countries entered the category in January 2025; **Vietnam** subsequently became the tenth partner.

6 **Rio Declaration:** Adopted at the **17th BRICS Summit, 6 to 7 July 2025**, under the theme **"Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance"**.

7 **Three BRICS pillars: Political and security**, **economic and financial**, and **cultural and people-to-people** cooperation. BRICS is a coordination forum, not a collective-defence treaty organisation.

8 **India's 2026 chairship:** India's fourth, beginning **1 January 2026**. The four priorities were **Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability**; S. Jaishankar launched the theme, logo and website on **13 January**.

9 **New Development Bank:** The founding agreement was signed at Fortaleza on **15 July 2014**. The bank was established in **2015**, is headquartered in **Shanghai** and began approving loans in **2016**.

10 **NDB approvals:** Approximately **US$42.9 billion** in cumulative financing approvals for **140 projects** as at the end of the first quarter of 2026, according to the NDB's May 2026 announcement.

11 **Contingent Reserve Arrangement:** Established by the **15 July 2014** treaty with **US$100 billion** in initial committed resources for liquidity and precautionary support.

12 **CRA commitments:** China **US$41 billion**; Brazil, Russia and India **US$18 billion each**; South Africa **US$5 billion**, under the original treaty.

13 **CRA access:** Under the original treaty, **30%** of maximum access is IMF-delinked and the remaining **70%** is IMF-linked. It is not a permanently pooled cash fund.

14 **Payment cooperation:** Rio 2025 welcomed a technical report on cross-border payment interoperability and requested continued discussions. **No common BRICS currency was established.**

15 **NDB membership:** Separate from BRICS membership. **Bangladesh** joined the bank in **2021**, and **Algeria** joined on **19 May 2025**.

16 **Jaipur Trade Ministers' Meeting: 7 August 2026**. Supported WTO-centred reform, preserved special and differential treatment and issued the **Jaipur Consensus** to study a BRICS invoice-discounting mechanism.

THE ONE SENTENCE TO CARRY OUT OF THIS DOCUMENT

BRICS projects an alternative not by abandoning the international order, but by widening developing countries' representation, financial choices and collective bargaining power within a more plural global governance system.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

8 Write it yourself

Write the answer in 150 words without looking back. Check that you have explained the actual mechanisms of BRICS' alternative role rather than merely describing its expansion, and that your final judgment addresses complementarity.

	Check	Yes / No
1	Does the introduction connect **BRICS, Global South representation and its alternative role in global governance**, rather than merely defining the acronym?	
2	Does Part 1 explain how **expanded representation** gives developing economies a wider platform for collective bargaining?	
3	Have you shown demands for **UN, IMF and World Bank reform**, with a relevant dated declaration or institutional example?	
4	Have you distinguished the **New Development Bank and Contingent Reserve Arrangement**, and avoided treating proposed payment cooperation as a completed common currency?	
5	Have you explained **collective diplomatic influence** and acknowledged at least one constraint on BRICS cohesion or effectiveness?	
6	Does the smaller final part answer **alternative or complement**, with a defensible judgment and a conclusion roughly equal in length to the introduction?	
7	Is the answer **150 words or a little over**, counting headings and labels, without any unsupported claim listed in Section 4.2?	

Sources

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- **Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Outcome of BRICS Summit 2014, Press Information Bureau, 31 July 2014.** Confirms India's participation in establishing the NDB and CRA, their original purpose and related interbank cooperation agreements. PIB release.
- **South African Government, Establishment of BRICS Development Bank and CRA at Sixth BRICS Summit, 17 July 2014.** Explains that the NDB provides an alternative source of development financing while complementing existing international financial institutions, and clarifies that the CRA is a contingent financial safety net. Official South African statement.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

- **International Monetary Fund, Collaboration Between Regional Financing Arrangements and the IMF, Background Paper, 2017.** Describes BRICS origins, the CRA's structure, commitments, financial-safety-net role and relationship with IMF-supported arrangements. IMF background paper.
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- **New Development Bank, Members.** Official register distinguishing founding members, admitted members and prospective members. Confirms Bangladesh's accession in September 2021 and Algeria's accession on 19 May 2025. NDB membership register.
- **Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Launch of BRICS India 2026 Logo, Theme and Website, 13 January 2026.** Confirms the chairship theme, the four priorities and the India 2026 platform. Reproduced official MEA release.
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- **Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, India successfully concludes the 16th BRICS Trade Ministers' Meeting in Jaipur, 7 August 2026.** Official record of the WTO-centred approach, special and differential treatment, the Jaipur Consensus to study an invoice-discounting mechanism, export-oriented MSME credit principles and cooperation on digital trade and global value chains. PIB release.
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- **Union Public Service Commission, Civil Services (Main) Examination, Previous Question Papers, 2013 to 2026.** Official question-paper archive for the GS Paper II questions cited by year, paper and number in Section 2.2. UPSC question-paper archive.

"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

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