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## Issue Brief

*(Views expressed in the brief are those of the author, and do not represent those of ISSI)*

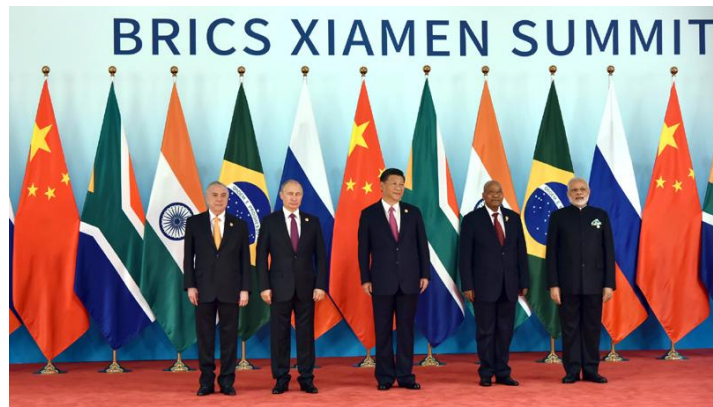
# BRICS Summit 2017: Turning Tides?

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The 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit concluded on September 4, 2017 in Xiamen, China. The three-day gathering began on September 3, 2017. It essentially brought together the five fast-growing economies i.e. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, who are seeking to play a greater role on the world stage.



The term BRIC was first coined by Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill in 2001 in their Global Economics Paper, "The World Needs Better Economic BRICs" where the acronym BRICs stood for a grouping of the countries of Brazil, Russia, India and China which were all deemed to be at a similar stage of newly advanced economic development. The grouping of the four member countries was finally formalised during the first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York in 2006. The first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, on 16 June 2009. It was later agreed to expand BRIC into BRICS with the inclusion of South Africa at the BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York in September 2010.

The motivation behind forming the group was to tackle the financial, as well as social needs of these large populated countries, both individually and collectively. The BRICS together constitute 43 per cent of the world population, having 30 per cent of the world GDP and 17 per cent share in the world trade.

The agenda of the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit was to:

- Deepen BRICS cooperation for common development
- Enhance global governance to jointly meet challenges
- Carry out people-to-people exchanges to support BRICS cooperation, and
- Make institutional improvements and build broader partnerships.

This time around, the leaders of the five emerging economic powers have, for the first time, named militant groups as a security concern in the South Asian region, while urging the United Nations to develop a “genuinely broad international counter-terrorism coalition” to combat militancy.<sup>1</sup>

“We, in this regard, express concern on the security situation in the region and violence caused by the Taliban, ISIS, Al Qaeda and its affiliates, including the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (ETIM), the Haqqani network, Lashkar-i-Taiba, Jaish-i-Mohammad, TTP and Hizb ut Tahrir,” the leaders said in the joint declaration.<sup>2</sup>

In the 43-page declaration, Chinese President Xi Jinping , Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Brazilian President Michel Temer and South African President Jacob Zuma said they would work together to improve global economic governance to foster “a more just and equitable international order”.<sup>3</sup>

The BRICS called for “comprehensive reform” of the United Nations and the UN Security Council, “with a view to making it more representatives, effective and efficient, and to increase the representation of the developing countries so that it can adequately respond to global challenges”.<sup>4</sup> The five nations also pledged their opposition to protectionism, a theme increasingly taken up by the host Chinese President Xi Jinping as anti-globalisation sentiment in the West poses a threat to China’s vast export markets. Indian foreign ministry official Preeti Saran told reporters on the sidelines of the Summit that wording in the communiqué was a “very important development” and that there was recognition that the world cannot have double standards when dealing with militant attacks.<sup>5</sup>

“You cannot have good and bad terrorists, and it is a collective action. Members of the BRICS countries have themselves been victims of terrorism, and I would say that what has come of today acknowledges the fact that we must work collectively in handling this [terrorism],” she said.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://moderndiplomacy.eu/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=2933:xiamen-brics-summit-triumph-for-indian-diplomacy&Itemid=128](http://moderndiplomacy.eu/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=2933:xiamen-brics-summit-triumph-for-indian-diplomacy&Itemid=128)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/brics-summit-2017-live-pm-narendra-modi-chinas-xi-jingping-to-meet-today-1746055?browserpush=true>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1355792/many-terrorist-groups-in-south-asia-responsible-for-extreme-acts-fo-on-brics-security-concern>

<sup>5</sup> <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/view-post-xiamen-message-to-china-is-loud-and-clear/articleshow/60383298.cms>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

The Pakistan Government has rejected the statement made by the BRICS members at the summit which condemned the country for being a safe haven for terror groups. Pakistan said that no terrorist organisation 'has any complete safe havens' in their country, with the Defence Minister Khurram Dastagir Khan saying that they were clearing out remnants of these organisations.<sup>7</sup>

The Xiamen summit is extremely important for Pakistan and its relations with its all-weather friend China. It is widely recognized that the two nations have a close friendship and each side has always supported each other in crucial times. Collaboration in military-nuclear arena and concerted efforts to combat terrorism are well-documented and recognized. Notions of any hiccup in China-Pakistan bilateral ties being caused by this development were soon rebuffed. On Khawaja Asif's recent visit to China, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi stressed that Beijing saw Pakistan as a close ally which was a key part of the solution to defeat international terrorism. Indication of certain groups that have already been proscribed in Pakistan will not affect the deep and strong relations between the two countries. The inclusion of Pakistan-based terror groups in the summit declaration is only an indication of a shift in the Chinese view towards terror groups in general. During the last BRICS summit in Goa, China had rebuffed Indian efforts to include Pakistan-based terror groups in the declaration, and the current stance must be read in tandem with the current China-India stand-off at Doklam.

Also, the One Belt, One Road and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor have raised the anti-terrorism stakes for China and it has sent a clear message to get rid of all such outfits that could poses risks to their projects.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.geo.tv/latest/156639-no-safe-haven-for-terrorists-in-pakistan-says-khurram-dastagir>