

## Countries seek Brics membership, driven by desire for common currency

Representing over a quarter of the world's GDP, Brics is considered one of the most important economic groupings in the world - and all signs are showing it could very well expand in the near future.

 By [Katja Hamilton](#) 27 Jun 2023



Source: Reuters.

This, particularly in the wake of French president, Emmanuel Macron's request to South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa to attend the 15th Brics summit, which is due to be held in Johannesburg between 22-24 August 2023.

Questions have been raised as to whether Macron may, in so doing, be looking to join this influential global economic alliance.

Leaders from the five Brics nations: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa will be present, as will other guests from Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Indonesia.

Many are hopeful of becoming members, say some, particularly of the New Development Bank, which is the Brics' official bank headquartered in Shanghai.

And France isn't the first country to want to join Brics. Fourteen countries have applied to join the grouping with Egypt being the latest to have formally applied to join. Among those in the queue are countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

"It's absolutely one of the main assets that we can take advantage of; by joining Brics and by joining the New Development Bank. We need to facilitate our trade, weathering import and export challenges, and one of the things that hinders this supply chain in this process is the availability of foreign currency," said Ashraf Naguib, director of the Egyptian International Shipping Group.



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Katja Hamilton 11 May 2023

Part of what's fuelling so many countries knocking on Brics' door is that Brics member countries want to settle on a common currency they can trade in, bypassing the US dollar.

However, in lieu of Macron's request to SA to attend the Brics summit in August, Russian deputy foreign minister, Sergei Ryabkov criticised countries deemed hostile by Russia, stating that Macron would be an unsuitable attendee at the Brics summit, as reported by the RIA news agency.

“ [TODAY]: His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa at the Palais Brongniart participating in the Closing Ceremony of the New Global Financing Pact Summit in Paris, France. #NewGlobalFinancingPact #BetterAfricaBetterWorld [pic.twitter.com/jElrwylwAX](https://pic.twitter.com/jElrwylwAX) — Presidency | South Africa 🇿🇦 (@PresidencyZA) June 23, 2023 ”

### Macron's Brics summit request opposed

Ryabkov said, "Clearly, leaders of states that pursue such a hostile and unacceptable policy towards us, discussing with such emphasis and conviction that Russia should be isolated on the international stage, or share the common Nato line on inflicting a so-called strategic defeat on us - such a leader is an inappropriate Brics guest.

"And we are not hiding this approach of ours, we have told our colleagues from South Africa. We expect their point of view will be fully accepted."



ECONOMY

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So far Brics has only allowed one country to join after its formation: South Africa, which joined in 2011.

Brics is currently developing a mechanism to admit new members, as it currently lacks a formal process for expansion.

"Looking at the expansion of Brics, we haven't as yet got a useful document that we could place before the heads of state, so more work will need to be done on this matter. It is still to be processed, and once we have a document that we believe offers clear guidance, we will then take that to the summit in August," said Naledi Pandor, minister of international relations and co-operation for South Africa.

### Lavrov prepares to represent Putin

After a meeting with a delegation of African leaders to discuss their proposal for peace talks between Russia and Ukraine, in St Petersburg recently, it was decided that foreign minister Sergey Lavrov will stand in President Vladimir Putin's stead, if Putin does not make it.

Putin has a warrant of arrest issued against him by the International Criminal Court (ICC).

According to SA presidency spokesperson, Vincent Magwenya, Ramaphosa will soon provide an announcement concerning the hosting of Brics and all associated matters.

## ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

Katja is the Finance, Property and Construction Editor at Bizcommunity.  
View my profile and articles...

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>