



**THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA
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**INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND MOTIVATION:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BRICS AND MIKTA CLUBS**

Master's Thesis

KÜBRANUR ÖZMEN

Master Program in International Relations

January 2023



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STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I declare that all information in this academic study is original, obtained and presented in accordance with academic criterion and ethical rules. I have respected all materials used in this thesis which are not original to this work have been fully cited and referenced, and all knowledge, documents and results have been presented in accordance with scientific ethical principles and rules. I hereby declare that this thesis is written according to the writing rules of Social Sciences University of Ankara, Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences.

Name and Surname: Kübranur ÖZMEN

Signature:



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my supervisor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Resul Yalçın, for your patience, guidance, and support. I have benefited from your wealth of knowledge and attentive editing. Thank you to my dissertation committee members, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mürsel Bayram and Asst. Prof. Dr. MD Nazmul Islam. Your encouraging words and thoughtful, detailed feedback have been very important to my study. I would like to thank my family and best friends for their support and motivation throughout my research process. Special thanks are due to my husband, Aykut Özmen, for his continuous support and endless understanding.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a comparative study of two informal intergovernmental organizations. BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) was chosen as the sample because it represents the rising powers group and MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, Australia) represents the middle powers group. This study deals with the reasons for the integration of BRICS and MIKTA clubs, the priority topics they deal with as a group, and the bilateral relations of the member countries of the groups. During the study, the findings were obtained by descriptive and analytical research methods. Representing the rising powers, the BRICS club first came together with economic goals. As a result of these goals, the BRICS group has a bank and fund that supports developing countries. However, the changing global challenges in the 21st century have led the BRICS group to cooperate in political and social fields as well. Among the topics addressed by the BRICS leaders' summits, it has been seen that there are various topics such as increasing cooperation in international organizations such as the G20 and the UN, strengthening economic cooperation, making global economic organizations more fair and transparent, security-related topics, sustainable development, and combating the Covid-19 crisis. BRICS is not only an economic cooperation group, but also aims to support a strengthening Global South against the West. The MIKTA group, on the other hand, does not have a single and specific goal. It is seen that they aim to be a group of international cooperation, consultation and dialogue as a group of medium powerful states. There are seven topics that the MIKTA group primarily addresses. BRICS and MIKTA groups have also established subgroups to increase their academic, commercial and diplomatic cooperation. There are some conflicts of interest among the members of the BRICS group. It has been determined that the regional tensions between China and India, Russia's exposure to international sanctions and India's foreign policy close to the United States have increased the fragility of the group. On the other hand, China is dominant economically and politically in the group, and this dominant situation negatively affects the balances in the group. While there were more balanced relations in the MIKTA group, it was seen that the economic recession of the group members after the Covid-19 crisis may negatively affect their focus on the internal dynamics of the group.

The BRICS and MIKTA groups do not aim to change the global order, but aim to exist in global governance by increasing cooperation among themselves.

Key Words: Informal intergovernmental organizations, BRICS, MIKTA, global governance



ÖZET

Bu tez, iki informal hükümetlerarası organizasyonun karşılaşmalı çalışmasıdır. Yükselen güçler grubunu temsil ettiği için BRICS (Brezilya, Rusya, Hindistan, Çin, Güney Afrika), orta güçler grubunu temsil ettiği için MIKTA (Meksika, Endonezya, Kore, Türkiye, Avustralya) örneklem olarak seçilmiştir. Bu çalışma BRICS ve MIKTA kulüplerinin entegre olma nedenlerini, grup olarak ele aldıkları öncelikli başlıkları, gruplara üye ülkelerin ikili ilişkilerini ele almıştır. Çalışma süresince bulgular tanımlayıcı ve analitik araştırma yöntemleriyle elde edilmiştir. Yükselen güçleri temsil eden BRICS kulübü ilk olarak ekonomik hedeflerle bir araya gelmiştir. Bu hedeflerin sonucunda BRICS grubunun gelişmekte olan ülkeleri desteklediği bir bankası ve fonu vardır. Ancak 21.yüzyılda değişen küresel zorluklar BRICS grubunu politik ve sosyal alanlarda da işbirliği yapmaya yöneltmiştir. BRICS liderler zirvelerinin ele aldığı konular arasında G20, BM gibi uluslararası organizasyonlarda işbirliğini artırmak, ekonomik işbirliğini güçlendirmek, küresel ekonomik organizasyonların daha adil ve şeffaf olmasını sağlamak, güvenlikle ilgili başlıklar, sürdürülebilir gelişme, Covid-19 krizi ile mücadele gibi çeşitli başlıklar olduğu görülmüştür. BRICS sadece ekonomik bir işbirliği grubu değil aynı zamanda Batı'ya karşı güçlenen bir Küresel Güney'e destek olmayı da hedeflemektedir. MIKTA grubunun ise tek ve özele indirgenecek bir hedefi yoktur. Orta güçlü devletler grubu olarak uluslararası işbirliği, istişare ve diyalog grubu olmayı hedefledikleri görülmektedir. MIKTA grubunun öncelikli olarak ele aldığı yedi başlığı vardır. BRICS ve MIKTA grupları akademik, ticari ve diplomatik işbirliklerini artırmak için alt gruplar da kurmuşlardır. BRICS grubu üyeleri arasında bazı çıkar çatışmaları bulunmaktadır. Çin ve Hindistan arasındaki bölgesel gerilimler, Rusya'nın uluslararası yaptırımlara maruz kalması ve Hindistan'ın Amerika'ya yakın dış politika sürdürmesi grubun kırılganlığını artırdığı tespit edilmiştir. Öte yandan grupta ekonomik ve politik olarak Çin baskın durumdadır, bu baskın durum gruptaki dengeleri negatif etkilemektedir. MIKTA grubunda daha dengeli ilişkiler varken, Covid-19 krizi sonrası grup üyelerinin ekonomik gerilemesi grubun iç dinamiklerine odaklanmalarını negatif etkileyebileceği görülmüştür. BRICS ve MIKTA gruplarının küresel düzeni değiştirmek gibi bir hedeflerinin olmadığı, kendi aralarındaki işbirliğini artırarak küresel yönetişimde var olmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: İnfomal hükümetlerarası organizasyonlar, BRICS, MIKTA, küresel yönetim

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Table 1: BRICS Summits and The Topics of Meetings

Table 2: MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meetings and The Topics of Meetings



ABBREVIATIONS

G7	The Group of Sevens
G20	The Group of Twenty
G77	The Group of Seventy Seven
G4	Brazil, Germany, India, Japan
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Korea
MIKTA	Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Türkiye, Australia
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa
UN	United Nations
NDB	New Development Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
WB	World Bank
BAF	BRICS Academy Forum
BTTC	BRICS Think Tanks Council
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, definition of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) in the literature of international organizations has expanded, the IGOs are divided into formal intergovernmental organizations (FIGOs) and informal intergovernmental organizations (IIGOs). Since the 1990s, informal intergovernmental organizations have increased unexpectedly (from 27 to 140), while formal intergovernmental organizations have increased less (from 320 to 340). Formal intergovernmental organizations and informal intergovernmental organizations differ from each other in three main dimensions. While formal intergovernmental organizations have a binding foundation agreement, stable headquarter and regular staff, informal intergovernmental organizations do not have a binding foundation agreement, permanent headquarter and staff. Informal intergovernmental organizations are generally “soft” nature. Despite this, informal governance develops common and uniform patterns that organize members' continuous relationships. Informal intergovernmental organizations differ greatly from completely ad hoc policy coordinating because of this. (Manulak & Snidal, 2021) Informal organizations are groups of openly related states with clearly shared common expectations rather than binding agreements. (Vabulas, 2014)

IIGOs defined by international relations scholars as among group of states that are organized with common expectations, these organizations generally do not have permanent secretariat, staff, headquarter and orderly meeting program. (Vabulas & Snidal, 2011), (Stone, 2013) So, it is not an agreement text based on international law that holds the member states of informal intergovernmental organizations together. What holds informal intergovernmental organizations together is their shared expectations for global governance. (Snidal & Vabulas, 2020) More importantly, member states may be motivated to different motivations in the organization, but they have interest in the participation.

In informal intergovernmental organizations there is no fixed secretariat structure, each year a member country chairs the group and organizes the meetings. Meetings of informal intergovernmental organizations refer to sharing information, building consensus, agreeing on joint statements, discussing common topics. These common acts can be outcome like consensus about the issue, agreeing on a common informal idea over the guide future issue.

IIGOs have lower sovereignty costs, greater flexibility/avoid binding commitment, more control over information and access, lower costs of negotiation. (Vabulas & Snidal, 2011)

Vabulas defined IIOs in the article that “*explicit group of associated states having explicitly shared expectations (rather than formalized treaties)*”. (Vabulas, 2014) Vabulas argue that states to choose IIGOs because of five motives; to retain flexibility, to minimize bureaucratic centralization, to respond more quickly and with lower negotiation costs, to preserve their sovereignty and to maintain secrecy. Thus, flexibility can be valuable where uncertainty is high, while lower costs are required to maintain sovereignty when authority is low. Informal institutions are not subject to transparency policies, it may be easier for members to protect their privacy against each other. In some moments of crisis, it may be quicker for leaders to respond at lower costs. Finally, minimizing bureaucracy and eliminating rigid boundaries helps to reduce costs and to be able to act fluidly. (Vabulas F. , 2014)

Formal and informal grouping of states can be compared based on five different characteristics; flexibility, agility, confidentiality, autonomy and the scale. (Roger, 2016) Informal intergovernmental organizations are flexible than formal intergovernmental organizations. In the literature, the flexibility correlate with the binding treaties. For instance the G Groups (G7, G20, G77), MIKTA, BRICS, IBSA correlate non-binding relations, this citation led to more flexibility for the member states. The main reason why informal intergovernmental organizations are more flexible is their legal structure. Non-binding terms are more flexible instruments than binding agreements. On a non-binding agreement, states are quicker to adapt to the change. Or they can easily leave the organization when some member states do not accept the changes. Agreements that are not based on international law give them this flexibility. (Roger C. B., 2016) Another reason why informal organizations are more flexible structures is that they are less dependent on bureaucratic apparatus. (Roger C. B., 2020) Other important characteristic is agility, this term is used to explain that informal organizations react more quickly to events and take action more quickly. When we compare informal organizations with formal organizations, it is seen that there is less diplomatic pressure to slow down communication between officials of informal organizations. The third character that reveals the difference between formal and informal organizations is confidentiality. Informal organizations may act less publicly than formal organizations because they are not bound by an international agreement. (Roger, 2016)

Independence is other important characteristic between formal and informal intergovernmental organizations. Informal groups do not have binding agreements and are subject to a softer law.

Since informal intergovernmental organizations do not have a binding founding text based on international law, they can give more independent and flexible responses to the events they want to reflex. Because there is no obligation under international law, they have a more independent field of action. When states need independence, they act more comfortably within the framework of informal organizations. One of the differences between informal and formal intergovernmental organizations is the scope and scale of these organizations. The classic formal intergovernmental organizations have three or more member states. Yet informal intergovernmental organizations consist of a group member. (Vabulas & Snidal, 2011) For instance, the UN, which is a formal organization, has 193 member states and NATO has 30 member states. On the other hand, MIKTA and BRICS are informal intergovernmental organizations and they have only five member states. In other words, the number and scale of formal intergovernmental organizations is often larger than that of informal intergovernmental organizations.

"Informal" intergovernmental organizations, which offer more flexible administrative mechanisms in contrast to the "informal" intergovernmental organizations that have existed for a long time, come to the fore as an indicator of the changing global management. (Dal & Kurşun, 2016) It may be a strategy for states to turn to informal forms of governance. States are shifting their international actions from cumbersome, formal, costly formal international organizations to faster, smaller and less costly informal organizations. Different ideas and preferences can be managed more easily while seeking solutions to problems in these informal groups. Thus, reaching an agreement is faster and the cost is reduced. In other words, informal organizations are a response to the cost and clumsiness of large and universal organizations. Thus, informal groups are smaller, club-style organizations with shared ideas and goals. The speed and flexibility of informal groups is attractive to states faced with the uncertainty of global problems. (Oliver Westerwinter, Kenneth W. Abott, Thomas Biersteker, 2020) Informal organizations can take on the complementary roles of other international organizations they are members of, with the issues they deal with under the roof of the group. For instance, sustainable development has been one of the most important agenda items of the UN since the beginning of the 21st century. A set of development ideas involving political, social, environmental and political sustainability were presented as the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. With the

presentation of the 2030 Agenda, these goals have become a global consensus. Informal organizations such as BRICS, IBSA and MIKTA play a complementary role in the UN's achievement of these goals by putting the 2030 Agenda on their agenda. (Torresini, 2021)

In the literature, the BRICS group is defined as an informal intergovernmental organization representing the rising powers, while the MIKTA group is an informal intergovernmental organization representing the middle powers. Middle powers are countries that are candidates for being a big power even though they are not big powers in terms of their ability to take responsibility, their means, and their financial means. (Şahin, 2020) Middle powers are expected to be effective in solving the problems in their regions, to be effective in the peace and stability of the region, and to cooperate with global powers or organizations. (Zartman, 2013) In rising powers, the educated workforce is constantly increasing, the rate of young and dynamic population is high, the market potential is high and the growth rates are high. Rising powers aim to influence the power dynamics in the international system by developing policies through various international organizations and by making a common voice through international organizations. (Tüfekçi, 2016)

1.1. Problem Statement

BRICS and MIKTA are defined as informal intergovernmental organizations in the literature due to the way they come together and their group structure. The aim of this study is to reveal the reasons why these groups are integrated under an informal roof when there are formal groups. The aim of this study is to examine the expectations of the clubs of the rising powers group BRICS and the middle powers group MIKTA from the groups of their member countries. What these two groups have dealt with on the global agenda since the day they emerged and whether they have a concrete output is another subject of research. What are the aims of the BRICS and MIKTA groups and what are the topics they deal with? How are the bilateral relations of the member countries in these groups, what are the difficulties and strengths of the bilateral relations? The purpose of this study is to shed light on the existence of the BRICS and MIKTA groups, which are at different points in the global order, and the expectations of the member countries from these groups. The study aims to contribute to the academic literature by examining these two informal groups in a comparative way.

1.2. Research Questions

This thesis will attempt to look for answers to the following questions;

- Why were BRICS and MIKTA established as informal groups?
- What are the priority topics of BRICS and MIKTA informal organizations as a group?
- What are the roles and objectives of the member states of the BRICS and MIKTA groups in the groups?
- What are the expectations of MIKTA informal platform member countries from MIKTA cooperation?
- What are the expectations of BRICS informal platform member countries from BRICS cooperation?

1.3. Research Aims

The aim of this study is to investigate why the BRICS and MIKTA were established and what the priority areas of BRICS and MIKTA informal organizations are as informal groups. Also the this thesis aims to investigate the roles and objectives of the member countries of the BRICS and MIKTA groups in these informal groups. On the other hand, this study focuses on the bilateral relations of the member countries of the BRICS and MIKTA groups; to the challenges and positive aspects of the member states' bilateral relations.

1.4. Significance and the Purpose of the Research

In the international relations literature, mostly formal intergovernmental organizations are studied and defined. However, in recent years, besides formal organizations, states have also come together under the umbrella of informal groups, which is an extraordinary method to establish cooperation. This study deals with the BRICS group formed by the rising powers and the MIKTA group, which is a middle power group. This study will contribute to the literature of international organizations and international relations on informal groups dealing with the integration processes of these two informal groups and investigating the expectations of the member states from these informal groups.

1.5. Research Methodology

The descriptive and analytic research methods are used in the research process of this thesis. In the literature, academic articles, books, reports, research results, columns, information notes describing informal intergovernmental organizations were examined to assemble information needed for the study. Information from online resources related to the topic was gathered from various websites and were applied throughout the thesis. Also the websites of BRICS and MIKTA, the joint statements of these groups were examined to pull together relevant information necessary for the study.

1.6. Research Scope

This study examines the BRICS and MIKTA groups, which are defined as informal intergovernmental organizations, in a comparative way. It includes the emergence dynamics and processes of the BRICS and MIKTA groups, their the purpose of their emergence, the importance of both groups member states, their difficulties, and their relations with each other. This study examines the BRICS and MIKTA groups, and reveals the characteristics of BRICS, the informal group as rising group, and MIKTA the informal group as emerging middle powers.

1.7. Limitations of the Thesis

In this study, only Turkish and English sources were used for the literature review. Sources translated from the mother tongue into English, for instance Mexican and Korean sources, were also included in the study, as much as possible. However, some of the academic resources written in of the BRICS and MIKTA member countries and many of the statements made by the leaders in the local language were excluded from the study.

1.8. Structure of the Thesis

This study offers a general-to-specific perspective. The thesis consists of four sections. The introduction chapter include methodology of the study, research questions, limitations and scope of the study and aims of the thesis. The second chapter covers the integration process of the BRICS group, the issues they discussed as a group, and the motivations and roles of member countries to be in the group. Third chapter, discusses the reasons why the MIKTA group came

together, the issues they have discussed as a group until today, the place of the member countries in the group, and their motivation for membership. The fourth chapter, is the conclusion chapter. The conclusion provides a comparative discussion of two informal organizations, the BRICS and MIKTA groups, based on the information discussed in previous chapters.

1.9. Literature Review

- **Informal Intergovernmental Organizations (IIGOs)** the authors of article that Felicity Vabulas and Duncan Snidal. This article focuses on the definition of the informal intergovernmental organizations and the reasons behind the motives of the states choose to create them. The authors define informal intergovernmental organizations as shared expectation, group of states and regularized meetings with no secretariat. The authors of article argue that informal intergovernmental organizations are significant forms for international governance. States choose informal organizations because of they are more flexible, lower cost, more secrecy and more low cost of negotiations. So, informal organizations are good option for the interstates relations. (Vabulas & Snidal, 2011)
- **Informal Governance in World Politics**, they discuss informality in world policy with three themes; informality of institutions, within institutions and around institutions. Informality of institutions can defined with G7, G20 etc., these informal institutions have grown rapidly since 1990s. Second informality theme is informal modes of governing within both formal and informal institutions. These form of informality focus on informal practices, norms or arrangements. Third, there are numerous informal networks and institutions centered on the institutions of global governance. The authors argue that informal cooperation are an important topic for the future research. The authors claim that this study contributes to a better understanding of the complex relationship between formal and informal groups. (Oliver Westerwinter, Kenneth W. Abbott, Thomas Biersteker, 2020)

- **The Origins of Informality: Why the Legal Foundations of Global Governance are Shifting, and Why It Matters**, Charles B. Roger who author that is one of the recent books on informal organizations. The author argues that our world has faced different challenges in recent times, which in turn has created new actors in global governance. The author thinks that the adequacy of the old style in global governance is open to debate, so it is useful to examine how new searches work. The book first deals with the shift of global governance to informality, then presents the definition and map of the concept of informalization. It then discusses the theory of informalization and the analysis of its origins. In other sections, he supports what he has put forward with current examples, and in the last section, he discusses the effects of informality. (Roger C. B., 2020)
- **Emerging Power in A Comparative Perspective: The Political and Economic Rise of the BRIC Countries**, edited by Vidya Nadkarni and Norma C. Noonan, in general, the book consists of articles examining the power shift from established power groups (USA, Europe, Japan) to emerging power groups (China, Russia, India and Brazil). The book argues that as a result of BRIC member countries taking on a greater role in the global economy, they will play a more important role in addressing transnational problems such as terrorism, climate change and globalization. Zhao argues that China, one of the BRIC member countries, is holding back from contributing to international solutions and is making progress in defending its "core interests" against the West, so it is not ready to assume the role of global leadership, but it does not carry out a low profile policy either. Nadkarni, on the other hand, argues that India has strengthened both its economic and minimum potential in the 2000s. However, factors such as high poverty in the country, insufficient infrastructure and low level of education make it difficult for him to focus on his foreign policy ambitions. Moreover, Nadkarni argues that India is not yet willing to pioneer multilateral relations. In the section dealing with Brazil, it is claimed that since the beginning of the 21st century, Brazil has become a regionally and globally assertive country and has been more revisionist in its foreign policy behavior. In summary, the book argues that the global leadership of the USA is in a slow decline, but other great power contenders such as the BRIC member states are not yet ready to assume great power status and responsibility. (Nankarni & Noonan, 2013)

- **Global and Regional Leadership of BRICS Countries**, edited by Stephen Kingah and Cintia Quiliconi. The book is containing 13 chapters, aim of the book is to reveal the challenges that the BRICS countries may face in the regional and global arenas. In general, the book argues that BRICS has an important place in the international system because all member countries are rising politically and economically in their own regions and in the international system. In the first three chapters of the book, the capacity, weaknesses and strengths of BRICS in global governance are discussed. In the fourth and fifth chapters, Brazil's claim to regional leadership and its position in BRICS are discussed. In the sixth and seventh chapters of the book, Russia's claim to regional leadership is associated with the BRICS with both references to the past and examples from the present. In the second part of the book, the thesis of India's reluctance to become a regional power is tried to be disproved, and the author claims that India is an important Southern actor. In the ninth chapter, India's claim to be a regional actor is discussed by considering its relations with neighboring countries. In the tenth chapter of the book, it is argued that one of the biggest obstacles to China's becoming a global actor is the reluctance of its neighbors to accept China's leadership. It is claimed that the fact that regional problems such as the South China Sea cannot be solved in the regional arena and are still being discussed in the global arena weakens China's claim to be a global actor. The last two chapters of the book discuss the advantages and challenges of South Africa's strategy to lead the African continent. In general, the book reveals the enthusiasm, challenges and acceptance of the BRICS member countries to become an actor in their regions, not forgetting that the USA is still in a vital position in all regions. (Kingah & Quiliconi, 2016)
- **BRICS and Global Governance**, the book deals with the transformation of BRICS into a global summit institution. The authors first discussed the evolution of the corporate identity of BRICS, then the contribution of the group to global governance, and finally the interests of the member countries and the priorities in their cooperation. The authors underline that global governance has evolved into a new multilateral world order and informal organizations such as the G20 and BRICS have begun to play a major role in the understanding of global governance. BRICS advocates more egalitarian, democratic and transparent management in existing international organizations. If the existing organizations cannot provide equal conditions to developing countries, BRICS is ready to establish parallel institutions if necessary. The best example of this is New

Development Bank. The book basically argues that BRICS has two main characters; its catalytic effect, which supported reforms and changes, and the parallel effect that it created new institutes. Regarding the interests of the member states discussed in the book, it is argued that although the BRICS member states have different economic and political priorities, their own determination will be decisive in determining their future as a group. (Larionova & Kirton, 2018)

- **The BRICS and Coexistence, An Alternative Vision of World Order**, this study reveals that the concept of coexistence is a strategy for BRICS countries and motivates them to establish a rule-based global governance system. The common feature of all BRICS member countries is that they have been negatively affected by the US-based western order. The book claims that BRICS countries that want to realize their interests against the Western-based world order will achieve their goals with the coexistence approach. The authors discussed why the BRICS member countries are not satisfied with the current global order, how they can improve the global order through coexistence, and the commonalities and differences of the BRICS countries' goals. In conclusion, this study does not argue that the BRICS are a rival group to the Western-style liberal world order. They argue that only BRICS members gain influence by limiting Western hegemony through coexistence is enough to realize their version of world order. (Coning, Mandrup, & Odgaard, 2015)
- **The BRICS and the Future of Global Order**, this book was written with the aim of presenting a chronological academic study from the emergence of the BRICS acronym until it became a political group as it is today. It presents a theoretical approach to understanding how the term BRICS rose. The author argues that a good understanding of BRICS is essential for a healthier analysis of today's multipolar world order. Stuenkel argues that the 2008 economic crisis played a driving force in the historical development of the BRICS as it turned into a political group. The successful management of the economic cooperation of the BRICS countries has created a belief that cooperation can be made on security and other political issues. (Stuenkel, 2015)
- **The BRICS Fallacy**, with this article, the author highlights the misconceptions of the BRICS group. First of all, the most obvious aim of the BRICS group is to emphasize the need for a revision of the global order dominated by the USA in the second world

war. The biggest concern of the member countries is the existence of a US-based global government, so they want to work together in areas such as climate change and global financial management. On the other hand, the reason why this group came together is that these five countries are countries that continue to grow in the world economy and represent a quarter of the world economy. However, the author emphasizes that this is a big mistake, that Brazil, Russia and South Africa have regressed economically in recent years, and that India's economic reforms have failed. On the other hand, he argues that China has disrupted the balances within the BRICS group because it is far above the other four countries economically. He argues that especially China has manipulative economic policies on India, Brazil and South African countries. In international politics, there are points where these five countries differ from each other; While Russia and China want radical changes in the status quo, Brazil, India and South Africa have various interests if the status quo is maintained. If this group's claim to be a global leader is taken into consideration, it should first be discussed whether the member countries are leaders in their own regions. Another issue underlined in the article is that all of the member states have legitimacy problems with their neighbors in their regions. As a result, the author argues that the BRICS group cannot go beyond an artificial formation and faces many difficulties both within and outside the group. (Pant, 2013)

- **BRICS, Developing Countries and Global Governance**, the aim of this article is to address the effects of the rise of BRICS countries on the world and global governance, to reveal the historical flow of the reasons that bring the BRICS countries together, and to analyze the possible positive and negative effects of this rise of BRICS countries on other developing countries. The author argues that the BRICS group is not only an economically based group, but also five countries with common interests in the changing world order. In addition to economic factors, size and geography were also influential in the coming together of the BRICS group. The inclusion of the last member, South Africa, in the group can be explained purely for geostrategic reasons. If the rise of the BRICS group provides technological developments from other developing countries and supports their development, it will have a positive effect for developing countries, but if the rise of BRICS causes competition in the markets, it will have a negative effect. The BRICS group accepts multilateralism as a principle in global governance and its members also cooperate in various different groups. Thus, it is

thought that cooperation and coordination among them will contribute to the participation of other countries in global governance. (Nayyar, 2016)

- **How representative are BRICS?**, the purpose of this article is to describe the BRICS group, to examine its capacity to represent developing countries in economic matters, climate change and protection responsibility areas, to discuss the UN development system. For the BRICS, the most important opportunity to adapt is geopolitics. All of the member countries have interests against American hegemony; it is their biggest interest to try to overcome the US/Western and imperialist order by collaborating with other non-western powers. The biggest disadvantage of BRICS, which claims to represent all developing countries in various global sub-headings, is that it has difficulty in achieving in-group harmony. The interests of the group members in various fields conflict with each other. Whether the BRICS could overcome all these intra-group identity conflicts and become a powerful political and economic group is debatable. (Thakur, 2014)
- **MIKTA, Middle Powers, and New Dynamics of Global Governance**, The book consists of seven chapters and in all chapters, the formation of MIKTA is handled as an initiative that brings together middle-power countries. The aim of the book is to discuss the priority policies of these five medium-power states that are part of the G20 and their potential in global governance. It is argued that the MIKTA formation has three main priorities in getting together; international economic cooperation, economic-security links and traditional security cooperation. Under these three main headings, MIKTA countries try to develop economic cooperation under the umbrella of the G20, prioritize cooperation on issues related to economic security such as cybersecurity, food security, green development and climate change, maritime security, and address more traditional security issues such as nuclear energy and disarmament. The book argues that in addition to the current security threats, current global challenges such as resource competition, conventional weapons, regional new threats will emerge and the current global order will be insufficient to overcome these problems. It is precisely at this point that the MIKTA group consisting of middle power countries can contribute to global governance is the main discussion topic of this study. (Jongryn, 2015)

- **MIKTA: Current Situation and The Way Forward**, the book consists of articles written by academics from member countries of the MIKTA informal platform, which defines itself as a bridge-builder and agenda-setter in the global world. In the book, the approaches of the member countries to MIKTA and what they can add to the group are discussed. In addition, the difficulties of MIKTA are expressed as follows; MIKTA's agendas are not time-bound, the priorities of the member states are different, it is difficult for the group to define itself as a collective bridge-builder. In general terms, the book presents the position of the member countries in MIKTA and their difficulties as a group, and also offers recommendations for the future of the group. He argues that for MIKTA to be more visible globally, the seven identified priority topics should be addressed in more detail, more clearly articulated in which areas it will act as a bridge-builder, and improve its dialogue with the G20, BRICS, UN Secretary General and other regional international organizations. (Marsudi, 2018)
- **Exploring ‘Constructive Engagement’: MIKTA and Global Development**, the article focuses on the sustainable development goals that MIKTA has pointed out as one of its founding goals. The author divides the objectives of the MIKTA group into internal and external. The Group's inward goals on sustainable development are to share and exchange information, and to organize various workshops and seminars on this subject with member states. MIKTA's outward goals for sustainable development are to protect public goods, strengthen global governance around the world, and act as a bridge between developing and developing countries. The MIKTA group has particularly emphasized the UN 2030 Sustainable Development agenda in many statements it has published so far. Since the members of the group are from different geographies heterogeneously, it seems to be an opportunity for each group to be able to create an agenda for sustainable development in other groups. However, no concrete steps have been taken in this regard so far. In the article, the author also makes suggestions for the global sustainable development goal that MIKTA volunteers. In conclusion, the purpose of this article is to address the sustainable development goals, which MIKTA describes as one of the group goals. (Haug, 2017)

- **MIKTA and the Global Projection of Middle Powers: Toward a Summit of Their Own?** The purpose of the article is to examine the MIKTA group, which acts as a summit. The author argues that MIKTA was created like a dialogue process, that it is at the very beginning of the road to have a detailed club culture. The emergence of MIKTA is both a result of informalist movements in the 21st century and an effort to exist in global management. If MIKTA and its member countries want to benefit from institutionalization, they should position themselves as a forum that acts with a sense of common sense. The author does not agree with MIKTA's definition of a group where middle powers other than the G7 and BRICS members come together, beyond that he thinks that they share a common identity. MIKTA is still a group meeting at the ministerial level, and turning into a summit of leaders is a difficult stage of cooperation for mid-power states. The article argues that the G20 is the main target for MIKTA members, so MIKTA does not aim to replace the G20. The MIKTA group is an informal formation that facilitates concentration on the existence and ties of the G20. (Cooper A. F., 2015)
- **“Rising” States and Global Reach: Measuring “Globality” among BRICS/MIKTA Countries,** This article argues that while the BRICS group is more effective in achieving global reach, the MIKTA group is stuck in its own regional space and its capacity for global reach is more limited. The author's aim is to compare both the global reach capacity of the BRICS and MIKTA groups, as well as the trade profile, diplomatic profile and the course of official development assistance of these two groups. The author compared the BRICS and MIKTA groups on the basis of diplomatic access, and defined BRICS as a stronger group than MIKTA in this sense. However, Türkiye stands out in terms of diplomatic access among MIKTA members. According to the author, another globalization data is the trade profile. When the trade profile of MIKTA and BRICS members is compared, it is clear that BRICS has a stronger trade profile, although the trade volume of Korea is very large in MIKTA. The third data in measuring globality is the status of official development assistance. While China stands out as an important donor in the BRICS group, in MIKTA, Türkiye differs in this as well as in other data. Especially, due to the civil war in neighboring Syria, Türkiye's official development aid has a much larger volume than other member countries of MIKTA. (Cooper A. F., “Rising” States and Global Reach: Measuring “Globality” among BRICS/MIKTA Countries, 2018)

CHAPTER TWO

2. BRICS

2.1 BRICS As An Informal Intergovernmental Organization

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) is an informal intergovernmental organization. In this informal platform, BRICS member states hold various meetings and negotiations for cooperation in economic fields, and at the same time, the political participation of these countries is one of the topics discussed. (Lagutina, 2019) This acronym was first used by Jim O'Neill as "BRIC" in 2001. O'Neill also categorized Brazil, Russia, India and China with the abbreviation BRIC since they have 23.3% of the world's GDP since the 2000s. (O'Neill, 2011) These countries, which are defined as the fastest developing emerging markets in the world economy, draw attention with their remarkable speed in their economic growth, high domestic consumption capacities and many important features such as cooperation opportunities in many fields. (Sachs, 2001) Additionally, BRIC shortening bring to mind in English "brick" vocabulary. So, somebody think that these countries can create building block of the new economic order. (BRIC ülkeleri ile 10 yıl, 2011)

After O'Neill used the acronym BRIC in an article in an economic journal, the first meeting of BRIC as an informal platform was under the leadership of Russia. As a result of Russia's initiative, Brazil, Russia, India and China met for the first time at the ministerial level during the UN General Assembly in New York in 2006 and expressed their common approach to expanding their multilateral cooperation. (Lagutina, 2019) The name of the group as BRICS in its current form started with the inclusion of South Africa in this platform in 2011. In the continuation of this study, BRIC before 2011 will be expressed with the acronym BRICS after 2011.

The total GDP of the BRICS member countries corresponds to almost a quarter of the whole world. However, the economic situations of the member countries are very different from each other. BRICS can be defined as a "geo-economic" formation in general terms, its member countries have huge populations and rapidly developing economies, so this group is vital for

the future of the global economy (Panda, 2012). In fact, at first – in the absence of South Africa – the BRIC countries came together to suppress global governance and increase political and economic cooperation among member states. In 2006, member states began to come together at the ministerial level, with the participation of South Africa in the group, summits began to be held not only at the ministerial level but also at the level of heads of state. (Folly & Abdenur, 2015) With the 2008 economic crisis, the concept of globalization started to be discussed again. In the post-crisis period, globalization, liberal world order and global governance began to be reconsidered. As a result, the aims of BRICS are describe new world order as a ‘regiopolar world order’, the members of BRICS trying to reform the present liberal world order. (Lagutina, 2019) That is, although BRICS was an integrated intergovernmental informal group before the 2008 world economic crisis, their motivation to integrate increased after the 2008 crisis. The 2008 economic crisis had a catalytic effect for the BRICS member states. Because the post-crisis period has seen an increase in the bilateral trade relations of the BRICS member countries. (Patel, 2019)

Many researchers argue that the 2008 crisis caused the concept of globalization to be rethought, and globalization, liberal economic order and global governance started to be discussed again after the crisis. Countries such as India, Brazil and China also began to come to the fore in the world economy, the center of power began to shift from the North-West to the South-East. The western-centered global world is slowly shifting to a more pluralistic and diverse world order. (Lagutina, 2019) After the global crisis, developing countries created excitement beyond the platform of cooperation against the economic hegemony of developed countries on the way to establishing a multipolar world order. Developing countries, which look at global economic problems from their own perspectives, claim to be a new power center in the multipolar world order with the formation of BRICS. BRICS, which is seen as a new alternative bloc against western bloc dominated by Asian countries, creates an expectation for a fairer world order for developing countries. (Dilek, İstikbal, & Yanartaş, 2018) The main fields of activity of the BRICS group are to reform the existing financial systems, to increase trade relations between member countries, to develop economic cooperation, and to support international organizations in order to maintain global economic systems. Additionally, the group may aim to set global agendas. They can play a role in issues such as maintaining global peace under the leadership of the UN. (Toloraya, 2015) Although the interests of the members of the BRICS group are not homogeneous, they have a common basis.

With this cooperation, the members of the BRICS group aim to keep the US-West-centered global influence under control and to develop cooperation with non-Western states. (Thakur, 2014)

Although the BRICS group first suggests an economic cooperation, it has many purposes in the global sense. Some of the aims of the BRICS group are to have a greater say in global organizations such as the IMF, UN, WTO, and to raise a common voice on issues such as climate change, armament, health and space, which are the main issues of global management. In addition, to increase multilateralism in international relations and to prevent peace from conflict. Finally, it is to reduce the inequalities created by the West by increasing economic development and reducing poverty in the Global South, Africa and Asia. (Lipton, 2017) The BRICS group has two basic approaches; to develop a strategy for multi-sectoral cooperation in the political, economic and global governance areas of member states and to coordinate in international organizations and meetings. In this context, the BRICS group prioritizes cooperation under the G20 umbrella and argues that the UN and the Security Council need reform. (Islam, 2019) The targets set by BRICS as a group can be defined under two sub-titles; reform the management of multilateral intergovernmental organizations and maintain international peace and security. (Council, 2015)

Officially, the leaders of BRIC met during the G7 summit in the Toyoko, Japan in 2008. The BRIC's leaders decide their foreign ministers will determine the future summit and agreed to keep on the key economic issues, containing cooperation food problem and financial topic. (BRIC Leaders Meet, 2008) Namely, the leaders of BRIC firstly came together for economic issues. BRICS summits are a platform where country leaders meet once a year in one of the member states' cities. During the summits, the foreign minister, economy minister and central bank governors accompany the heads of state. These yearly events have expanded to include health, education, and national security ministries and officials, in addition to leaders from industry, academia, and labor organizations. (Lipton, 2017) The states that come together at these summits establish mutual communication within the framework of the principles of openness, transparency, solidarity, equality, mutual understanding, comprehensiveness, mutual benefit, and respect for territorial integrity, multilateralism, independence, sovereignty, political independence and non-interference in internal affairs. (Poyraz, 2019)

First leaders level summit of BRIC recognized in Russia on June 16, 2009. At the first summit, member countries debated over the current global economy and how to strengthen cooperation among themselves. BRIC' first joint statement underlined these; central role played by the G20 Summits in dealing with the financial crisis and the reform of international financial institutions. They indoctrinated that financial and economic architecture should be founded on the following concepts, among others; decision-making and execution processes at international financial organizations that are democratic and transparent, a firm legal foundation, the ability of effective national regulatory institutions and international standard-setting agencies to work together, improved risk management and supervision procedures. (Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders, 2009) Since the joint statement published at the end of the first summit is generally about economic issues, it can be argued that the priority of these countries' coming together is economic concerns. In the statement made after the first summit at the level of heads of state, it is striking that especially in international economic organizations, transparent decision-making and implementation processes were emphasized. (Panda, 2012)

BRIC countries met in Brazil on April, 2010 under the “Common Vision and Global Governance” themes. BRIC countries are distinct some points; first point was the world is going through a period of rapid change and therefore changes in global governance in many areas. Particularly, organizations such as UN, World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) are indirectly drawing attention to and demanding changes. (2nd BRIC Summit of Heads of State and Government: Joint Statement, 2010) The calls for reform in economic institutions, which were emphasized by the BRIC countries at the first summit, came to the fore among developing countries as well. Underlining the unfair practices followed by the IMF in voting processes, the BRIC countries emphasized the points they want to change in the global economic system at the first summit. (Houlton, 2009) Secondly, they decided to use national currencies in trade and investment, and to establish sectarian cooperation with the arrangements to be made to increase cooperation and trade among themselves. In this way, they can have the opportunity to expand their relations by developing cooperation among themselves. (2nd BRIC Summit of Heads of State and Government: Joint Statement, 2010)

The third summit is extraordinary for BRIC because of South Africa join the group in this summit in China on 14 April 2011. With the joining South Africa into the forum, BRICS has taken its final form. Consequently, the group bring together representatives of three continents. BRICS declared aims that contributing significantly to the development of humanity and

establishing a more equitable and fairer world. (Sanya Declaration, 2011) With this emphasis, it can be said that the BRICS countries think that the US-centered unipolar world system is no longer sustainable. BRICS is seen as a new bloc established against the west, where Asian countries are predominantly together. With this expectation, it is evaluated that BRICS will provide a fairer world order for developing countries (Dilek, İstikbal, & Yanartaş, 2018) BRICS countries emphasized vision of themselves with these sentences, “The 21st century should be marked by peace, harmony, cooperation and scientific development. Under the theme "Broad Vision, Shared Prosperity", we conducted candid and in-depth discussions and reached broad consensus on strengthening BRICS cooperation as well as on promoting coordination on international and regional issues of common interest.” (Sanya Declaration, 2011) In fact, the later participation of South Africa in the BRIC shows that the group has a global ambition. South Africa has a different outlook from existing countries in terms of demographics, population and size. Despite this, South Africa’s inclusion in the group as the fifth member reveals that the members of the group also care about the representation of Africa and their global claims.

The combination of BRICS in terms of countries; shaped by geography, economy and physical size. Brazil, India and China; It has taken place in this club with its economic and physical dimensions on geographical area, population and potential income. Russia; he took part in this club due to its geopolitical position, high income and being a former superpower of Europe. The reason why South Africa was included in the club rather than Indonesia in Asia was its geographical location. (Nayyar, BRICS, Developing Countries and Global Governance, 2016) Although the participation of South Africa in the BRICS may seem controversial to many, South Africa is the largest economy in Africa and the only African country that is a member of the G-20 Some scholars argue that South Africa's BRICS membership is a geographical representation and that South Africa's capacity and potential are not compatible with other BRICS member countries. (Tella, 2017). The reason for South Africa's participation in the club is controversial because it eclipses its economic size, population size and global position when compared to other member states. (Bezuidenhout & Claassen, 2013) The BRIC group's inclusion of South Africa in the team highlights the willingness of member countries to cooperate with African countries. It is a result of seeing African countries as long-term partners for South-South cooperation. On the other hand, for South Africa, inclusion in the BRICS has made it more visible as a rising power. (Stuenkel, 2015)

Although BRICS member countries have a quarter of the world's total GDP, it is seen that they cannot reflect this power as votes in the current economic areas. However, the search for alternatives to the existing economic institutions of these countries became concrete with the New Development Bank and Contingent Reserve Agreement. (Suchodolski & Demeulemeester, 2018) The agreement on the establishment of The New Development Bank (NDB) was signed at the fourth BRICS summit in 2014 and entered into force at the sixth BRICS summit in 2015. NDB is headquartered in Shanghai and has a regional office in Johannesburg. Its aims are to fund BRICS and other developing countries' infrastructure and sustainable development projects and to support regional and multilateral organizations for global growth and development. (Gonçalves, et al., 2018) The main purpose of the NDB is to close the Global South's financing gap for sustainable development and infrastructure. (Folly & Abdenur, 2015) NDB is the most concrete structure that emerged after the BRICS member countries came together. The development of the NDB global South shows that it aims to replace the World Bank. BRICS provides an alternative to the Western-centered economic order by funding Southern countries through the NDB. BRICS announced this bank that “BRICS-led South-South cooperation bank”. At the 7th summit of BRICS in 2015, another concrete output, the BRICS Contingent Reserve Agreement, was activated. The aim with this move is to get rid of the IMF and have insurance against global liquidity risks. This reserve was created with the contributions of all BRICS countries; China contributes 41 percent, Russia, India, Brazil 18 percent and South Africa 5 percent. (Monyae & Ndzendze, 2021)

BRICS emerged as a practical initiative, breaking away from the plurilateral mechanisms and linkages of the G7 and G20. Less transaction costs and more flexibility make all these informal groups overlap and compete. All BRICS countries are also members of the G20, and it remains unclear how this complexity of institutional processes will result. The emergence of informal organizations can be interpreted as a revisionist attitude and a transformative challenge to the current global order. On the other hand, it can be interpreted as a structure that provides flexibility to the members of the BRICS in the strategies of the rising global South. At the same time, BRICS can also be described as a lobby group trying to take advantage of the weight of emerging global actors (China, Russia, Brazil). BRICS members came together in a club-like diplomacy formation. BRICS member countries have been able to institutionalize by avoiding issues that will cause mutual friction and by strengthening their common agenda in global areas. (F.Cooper & Farooq, 2013) BRICS can be defined as an important platform representing developing countries and emerging markets. On the other hand, Russia and China see the

BRICS as a tool to counter Western hegemony and consolidate the bargaining position in global governance. (Duggan, Bas, Marek, & Ekaterina, 2022)

BRICS emerged as a practical formation with a shift from the multilateral mechanisms involved in the G7 and G20 dynamics. Known for their more flexible and lower transaction costs, these informal groups overlap and compete with each other. Members of the BRICS group are also members of another informal group, the G20. Therefore, how institutional processes can be intertwined is still a matter of debate. On the one hand, the existence of these groups can be interpreted as a transformative and revisionist attitude towards the current global order. From another perspective, the existence of BRICS can be defined as a hedging space that provides flexibility as an option to the rising powers of the global South. From another point of view, the existence of BRICS can be called a lobby group that is faulted by the weight of rising powers such as China, India and Brazil. (F.Cooper & Farooq, 2013) The definition of "informal negotiating structure" can be used for BRICS. The leaders of the five BRICS member countries use the BRICS as a platform for informal meetings and negotiations. These five countries develop dialogue for economic cooperation and discuss the political engagements of these five developing countries without any institutionalization. (Lagutina, 2019)

The purpose of the BRICS countries to come together is not to break or replace existing international organizations. Although they are anti-hegemonic groups, they aim to increase their influence in global governance rather than replacing established institutions. They stress the need for a multilateral, just and democratic international order. In the papers published after the summits, they state that they are not satisfied with the current global governance architecture and that these organizations cannot adequately respond to global problems. They are called an anti-Western bloc because their desire for change in international relations is different from that of Western countries. (Hou, 2014) The BRICS countries do not have high cohesion among themselves. Member countries do not have any goals such as institutionalization or having a common grand strategy. Rather, they proceed in the light of the issues they discussed at their summits. The relations of these five countries with each other are constantly changing. But what holds them together is a shared voice in global governance and the sense that the global order established by the West is unjust. (Duggan, Bas, Marek, & Ekaterina, 2022)

According to other point, two characteristic features can be defined for the BRICS group; catalytic character and parallel action. In other words, the BRICS group can create a catalytic

effect for existing intergovernmental groups and speed up the process of solving long-standing unresolved challenges. Either new organizations may emerge as an alternative to some existing international organizations. For example, NDB was established under the umbrella of BRICS as an alternative to the World Bank. It offers reform and various proposals and supports for international organizations that exist with a catalytic character. (Larionova & Kirton, 2018) Vabulas and Snidal argue that BRICS member countries establish an informal organization as follows; rising powers use redistributive methods that mix "power bargaining" negotiation techniques with "rhetorical coercion" argumentation techniques in an effort to increase their institutional benefits (as through the BRICS). In other words, the regularly BRICS summits allow the leaders of the member states to coordinate their beliefs and actions in the same direction in formal organizations. (Snidal & Vabulas, 2020)

The BRICS was originally established as an issue-based coalition on the demand for international economic reform, but later evolved into a club that tackles more issues at its summits. At this point, BRICS has become a club of countries focusing on economic and political initiatives and cooperation in order to increase their power in the international arena. (Castro, 2012) Fundamental changes took place in the world economic system in the 2000s. While developed countries have regressed economically, developing countries have made progress economically. On the other hand, BRICS countries thought that global economic institutions such as IMF and WB did not have a transparent and proper management. Therefore, it is a group that came together with global economic concerns at first. They promised a fairer and more transparent economic governance and aimed to support developing countries through CRI and NDB. However, later on, BRICS member countries have large populations, large territories, and the potential to cooperate in many fields, economic and social integration desires of BRICS countries' relations with each other at the political level has also led to its evolution to a different position. In the statements they published after the summits they held, they also mentioned many political topics such as climate change, sustainable development, and maintaining peace and security. (Aşçı, 2019)

Member countries through the BRICS club; They intend to challenge and change the international order, which is governed by informal groupings and multilateral formal mechanisms, by using their economic and demographic populations. BRICS members want to act collectively to increase their bargaining power. Thus, member states aim for a greater role in international politics through their active participation in the BRICS club. (Cooper & Pouliot,

2015) Most analysts describe the BRICS as a celebration of collective economic rise. The concentration on BRICS is based on economic rather than diplomacy. (Cooper & Stolte, 2019)

As can be seen in the table below, the BRICS leader summits covered a wide range of global issues between 2009 and 2022 years. Numerous global issues such as food and energy security, climate change, global governance, sustainable development and covid 19 were discussed at the summits. As it is known, since BRICS is an informal group that came together on basic economic policies, global financial issues, the fourth industrial revolution and global financial crises are also among the main discussion topics of these summits. Focusing on the meeting topics, it is clear that G20 and UN policies are also discussed. This points to the claim in the literature that informal groups can be complementary to other existing international organizations. There are various debates on the existence of BRICS among international relations authors. While some claim that BRICS has the power to rival the American-based international governance and especially the G7, others emphasize the inability and unwillingness to act together, citing the weaknesses of the BRICS. However, the point that almost everyone agrees on is that BRICS put important issues on its agenda, advocated the need to strengthen the G20, and discussed the reforms of the IMF and UN. (Spanakos, 2012)

Table 1: BRICS' Leaders Summits and the Main Topics of Meetings

BRICS' Leaders Summits	Date and Location	The Topics of Meetings
1st BRICS Summit	16 June 2009 Yekaterinburg	• International order • Global financial problems • G20 relations • BRIC Cooperation • Food and Energy Security • Climate Change • Development Aid
2nd BRICS Summit	15 April 2010 Brasilia	• International order • International and regional conflict areas • The international financial crisis • BRIC cooperation, G20 relations

		• Climate change • UN reform
3rd BRICS Summit	14 April 2011 Sanya	• South Africa participated • International order, economy and finance • Development issues • BRICS cooperation
4th BRICS Summit	29 March 2012 New Delhi	• Global governance • Sustainable Development
5th BRICS Summit	26–27 March 2013 Durban	• BRICS Business Council founded • BRICS Think Tank founded
6th BRICS Summit	4–17 July 2014 Fortaleza	• Political coordination • Sustainable development • Inclusive growth
7th BRICS Summit	8–9 July 2015 Ufa	• International political • Economic issues
8th BRICS Summit	15–16 October 2016 Benaulim	• International economic and political order • Global governance
9th BRICS Summit	3–5 September 2017 Xiamen	• International economic and political order • Global governance • Sustainable development
10th BRICS Summit	25–27 July 2018 Johannesburg	• Strategic cooperation, opportunities and challenges in addressing the Fourth Industrial Revolution
11th BRICS Summit	13–14 November 2019 Brasília	• International and regional order • BRICS cooperation • Global economic governance

12th BRICS Summit	July 2020 Saint Petersburg	• BRICS cooperation in combating COVID-19 • International and regional situations • Global economic governance.
13th BRICS Summit	June 2021 Videoconference	• Cooperation in combating COVID-19 • Promoting pragmatic cooperation • Addressing global and regional hotspot issues • 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
14th BRICS Summit	23-24 June 2022	• Global Governance • Covid-19 • Safeguarding Peace and Security

Source: BRICS Information Centre <https://infobrics.org>

When the statements made by BRICS after the leaders' summits are examined, the main purpose of the BRICS group can be defined under four subheadings. BRICS supports the appropriate balancing of the interests of global markets and global trade in developing countries. BRICS is skeptical of the fairness and morality of economic sanctions against states such as Syria and Iran. BRICS aims to comply with the rules of international law and defend human rights in all areas. Finally, BRICS is against the militarization of conflicts and tensions, especially against the militarization of historically rooted regional issues such as Kashmir and Tibet by Western intervention. (Thakur, 2014)

The BRICS group allows its member states to increase their influence over official organizations without being dependent on any international legal norms. However, this has been partially successful. Because these five states have very different political approaches, domestic politics and democratic values. Therefore, the political, military and economic expectations of the countries are different from each other. Strategically, these five countries have little in common. In other words, if this group comes together officially, different interests may undermine the group, but for an informal formation, these differences can be called incentives. The lack of a legal identity of the BRICS causes the statements from the summits to be broad

and vague. Nevertheless, these declarations enable states to make a common voice on common issues. For now, it provides BRICS members with an important and alternative mechanism to pursue their collective interests without being bound by costly commitments. (Vabulas, The BRICS and the Future of 'Informal' IGOs, 2014)

In other words, the BRICS countries have some controversial topics in their bilateral relations, foreign policy approaches and the balance within the group. For example, China and Russia are permanent members of the UN Security Council. On the other hand, while Russia, China and India were nuclear powers, Brazil and South Africa voluntarily gave up their nuclear armament programs. Member countries also have some disagreements among themselves. For example, there is an unresolved Indian Ocean dispute between China and India. The relations of the member states with the United States are also among the topics of discussion, and almost all of them have different approaches to this issue. (Daniel & Virk, 2014) However, the diplomats of the BRICS countries argue that the informal identity of the BRICS is an opportunity to overcome these differences and challenges. The immediate institutionalization effort of such a new coalition may prevent it from succeeding, and flexibility provides some benefits. So, at least in the beginning, a flexible group is a suitable platform for member states to meet on common ground. Flexibility brings a process of negotiation and harmonization rather than a rigid pre-agreed agreement, which helps member states to be more agile. This flexibility is seen as an advantage, especially in order to agree on tough issues such as international security. (Folly & Abdenur, 2015)

Despite the fact that the BRICS member countries may seem very different from each other in terms of demographic, sociological, political and economic, what basically brings them together is that they are not adequately represented in the current international economic system. While the economic growth of member countries has been rapid, their place in global governance has not improved at the same pace. Therefore, the main motivation that holds them together is their discomfort with the existing global governance. (Suchodolski & Demeulemeester, 2018) The BRICS group provides the potential for its member countries to make a common voice in a multilateral global world. (Nayyar, 2016)

BRICS have diverse cooperation forums. The BRICS Business Forum founded in 2010, the BRICS Business Council established in 2013, these forums act like bridge between the BRICS governments and business world. (Larionova & Kirton, 2018) BRICS Academy Forum (BAF)

and BRICS Think Tanks Council (BTTC) initiatives were established within BRICS. The aim of these initiatives is to build a bridge between the academicians of the member countries and to develop research and capacity among the academic communities. BAF was established in 2009 and BTTC was established in 2013. In both initiatives, discussion topics that are important for BRICS countries such as digitalization, education, development, energy, sustainability and cooperation are discussed. (BRICS Academic Forum (BAF) and BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC), 2021) The BRICS Think Tank Council presents its recommendations to the member countries on the development of BRICS through the scientists of the member countries. They argue that the development of cooperation has 5 main elements; facilitating economic development, maintaining global peace and justice, achieving social justice and improving the quality of life, increasing the influence of BRICS members in the economic and political spheres, and advancing innovation and economic knowledge. (Toloraya, 2015)

2.2. The Member Countries of BRICS

In the previous part of the study, some sub-titles such as the process of coming together as a group of BRICS, which is an informal organization, the issues they have dealt with so far, and their priorities as a group were discussed. What characteristically brings the BRICS countries together is not simply that they are economically developing countries or that they act as a common economic and political group. They have a common vision for a new world order, and as a strategic group coming together from Asia, Africa and Latin America, they have the chance to realize this vision. At the same time, the BRICS countries are a group negatively affected by the world order dominated by the USA and its allies. (Coning, Mandrup, & Odgaard, 2015) However, the point, purpose and importance of each BRICS member country in the group are different from each other. In this part of the study, the member countries of the BRICS group will be discussed one by one. The role, importance, weak and strong aspects of these countries in the group and their relations with other group members will be examined.

The total GDP of the BRICS member countries corresponds to almost a quarter of the whole world. However, the economic situations of the member countries are very different from each other. Brazil's current GDP is 1.61 trillion dollars, Russia's 1.78 trillion dollars, India's 3.7 trillion dollars, China's current GDP is 17.73 trillion dollars, South Africa's current GDP is 419.95 billion-dollars. The World Bank defines the economic situation of these countries in different ways, Brazil, Russia, South Africa and China classify as upper middle-income countries but India called as lower income countries. On the other hand, the member countries of BRICS have very different populations. Brazil has 213 million total population, Russia has 143 million total population, India has 1.39 billion total population, China has 1.41 billion total population and South Africa has 60 million total population. (World Bank Open Data, 2022) In the light of these data, China stands out as the strongest link of the group in population and GDP balance, while South Africa is considered as the weakest link.

The BRICS countries currently represent three billion people and \$16 trillion in GDP worldwide. BRICS is called the third giant after the EU and the USA, but the fact that its members are very different from each other and the synergy between member countries is low brings some difficulties to be a strong group politically and economically. The fact that the Chinese economy is very dominant in the group and in trade relations causes intra-group

imbalance. On the other hand, the trade volume between the member countries of the group is very low, it has been around 320 dollars a year until now, the trade relations with the EU and the USA are much stronger. On the other hand, all BRICS countries compete in third markets, for example, China, Brazil, and India compete in the clothing sector, while China, Russia and Brazil compete in the international aircraft and military ammunition market. As for the economic interests in the African continent, there is competition between China, South Africa, and India. As a result, the fact that BRICS member countries compete in third markets limits intra-group cooperation and information sharing. (Movchan, 2015) China's export policies in recent years have negatively affected Brazil's export figures. (Thakur, 2014)

There are some challenges in coexistence of BRICS member countries. The economic development, mobility and potential of the countries are very different from each other. This raises the possibility of competition within the group. Likewise, the Finance Ministers who met before the G20 summits could not agree on some issues. The democratization levels of the member states are very different from each other. As a member, China stands out a lot in BRICS, it is the backbone of the group. It is economically stronger than the combined economic capacity of the other four states. This may prevent balanced relationships in the group. Despite all these challenges, BRICS symbolizes the emergence of new power centers in global governance. (Erçin, 2014)

China and India have a more dominant position in the BRICS group in terms of economic development and population growth compared to other BRICS countries. (Nayyar, 2016) India has huge population power and second fastest growing economy in the changing world. China and India are treated as rivals in the Asia Pacific region. According to 2017 data, India's largest trading partner is the USA, the second United Arab Emirates and the third China. On the other hand, India plays a big role for New Development Bank. (Gasela, 2021) India's private companies in textile, informatics and pharmaceuticals are its strengths. However, the fact that the public economy in India is very weak compared to the private is one of the reasons why the Indian economy remains weak. (Hult, 2009) In general, we can say that India's approach to the BRICS group is to keep its economic growth under control and balance by approaching the wealthy economies of the global South, and to use BRICS as a tool to advance and protect its national interests. On the other hand, the fact that India maintains its relationship with the West economically and politically confirms the thesis that BRICS is not anti-Western but complementary to the West. (Gasela, 2021) Considering that BRICS is complementary to

existing international institutions, India underlines its commitment to UN principles, international law and ongoing globalization in all its official statements. (Kumar, 2018) For India, BRICS stands for four different functions. First, BRICS is a group for India where global issues are discussed and ideas developed. Second, it is an opportunity to develop cooperation in specific sectors. Third, it is a strong successor to Group 77 (G77), fourthly BRICS is a starting point for the establishment of multilateral, competitive and complementary intergovernmental organizations. (Wulf & Debiel, 2015)

Undoubtedly, China is the strongest country with its growing economy and its contribution to the BRICS compared to other countries. For example, China's contribution to the CRA is 40% of the entire reserve. (Monyae & Ndzendze, 2021) On the other hand, being a member of the BRICS group naturally supports China's national interests. China has been the world's largest exporter of textiles in recent years. BRICS countries are strategic partners of China to export these goods. While the trade volume between BRICS members was 567 billion American dollars in 2010, it was announced as 744 billion American dollars in 2017. Another significant point is that China sees South Africa's presence in the group as a strategic advantage to accelerate its economic relations with the African continent. Thanks to South Africa, BRICS believes that diplomacy will spread better on the African continent. (Shelton, 2021) China's economic rise in recent years has increased its weight regionally and globally. However, China still seems reluctant to become a global actor and set global agendas. (Thakur, 2014) So, China has two main objectives through BRICS; establishing an organization to reduce Western influence and access developing countries' markets and resources through a multilateral forum. (Kumar, 2018) China considers the BRICS as a group of countries that have important economic, military and political areas in their own regions. According to China, BRICS countries with common interests can have a say in global economy and security issues by influencing the South. (Odgaard & Daojiong, 2015)

There are some regional tensions going back hundreds of years between China and India. China's maritime activities, territorial disputes in the northeast of India, China's naming of a part of Indian territory as Southern Tibet, the problem of Tibetan refugees, and China's military cooperation with countries close to India such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, China and India are some of the regional events that will trigger tension at any moment. Despite all this, the BRICS forms the basis of cooperation for India and China, and both countries are willing to cooperate. In recent years, China has become one of India's largest trading partners. Besides,

China and India have common interests in various forums; BRICS, G20, climate change talks, UN Security Council, WTO's Doha talks etc. These tensions between China and India are crucial for the future of BRICS. If these two countries manage to defuse or keep these tensions secret, BRICS can play a powerful role in shaping the global agenda. (Wulf & Debiel, 2015) Border disputes between China and India are seen as the biggest obstacle to BRICS cohesion. Despite the possibility of the BRICS group turning into a formal structure, India may approach this idea with caution. (Kumar, 2018)

India is trying to exist in the international order with different foreign policy tools. It aims to strengthen its economic and political ties by being involved in regional and global institutions, at which point the BRICS complements the current Indian foreign policy. There has been a close relationship between India and the US in recent years, but they diverge on issues such as global governance and economics. On the other hand, although it has controversial issues with China, it also wants to establish a balance with China through BRICS. Indian foreign policy makers want to establish multilateral relations. Because, on the one hand, India wants to adopt a liberal identity by staying close to the West, on the other hand, it is trying to become an Asian power with the aim of becoming a global power. However, one of the biggest challenges for India is that despite being an IT giant, millions of its citizens are struggling with poverty. (Gupta & Chatterjee, 2014) It can be said that India's desire to exist in the BRICS is based on the balances in domestic politics, foreign policy and economic reasons. Anti-Western and anti-colonial rhetoric still continues to be used in the country. India explains its rapprochement with the USA with the balance policy by putting forward BRICS. Thus, they avoid critical discourse. In foreign policy, the fact that BRICS includes less economic and political costs thanks to its informal identity feeds the interests of India. BRICS gives India the opportunity to continue its maneuvers in foreign policy. India continues to develop relations with both Russia and India and the USA. Economically, India's agricultural and industrial infrastructure is very weak and therefore needs investments. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, established under the umbrella of BRICS, is seen as an opportunity for India. (Gabuev, Movchan, Topychkanov, & Vasiliev, 2016)

Bilateral relations between India and Russia have been progressing positively since the cold war years. There is no situation where the interests of the two countries conflict, but the foreign policy relations of the two countries with other countries are important. India did not accompany the sanctions imposed by the West after Russia's intervention in Ukraine. In fact,

in this process, India increased the level of oil imported from Russia. One of the biggest business items between these two countries is Russia's arms sales to India. However, the geopolitical priorities of the two countries have changed in recent years. Russia got closer to China after the Ukraine intervention. Another country close to China is Pakistan. In retaliation for the Sino-Pakistani rapprochement, India maintains a policy close to the United States. It can be said that around these geopolitical spirals, the relations between Russia and India are on the path of rebalancing. The relations between the two countries will be determined by the tensions and geopolitical balances in their regions. (Menon & Rumer, 2022)

In recent years, especially between 2003 and 2010, Brazil has revealed its desire to become a regional power and to reveal its global goals within the framework of its main goals, together with the government of Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva. (Deciancio, Brazil's Leadership Through Global Channels: Autonomy, Diversification and Acceptance, 2016) BRICS was important during the Lula government for three main reasons. First, the BRICS consolidated Brazil's identity both in terms of economic growth and as a rising power in international politics beyond South America. Second, it has acted as a catalyst to improve Brazil's economic relations with major economies such as Russia and India. Finally, China has become the main trading partner of Latin America and Brazil in recent years. The BRICS gave Brazil the chance to establish diplomatic relations with China on more equal terms. (Casarões, 2018) However, the military coup that Brazil experienced in 2016 caused it to move away from the BRICS agenda, and Brazil's lack of political stability is called a challenge for the BRICS. (Ramos, Garcia, Pautasso, & Rodrigues, 2018)

Brazil needs the BRICS for both politically and economically situations. Economically, China is one of Brazil's largest trading partners, as well as Russia's most important partner in South America. On the other hand, Brazil has great economic interests in South Africa. Politically, the political benefits of BRICS seem more critical for Brazil. Brazil's chaotic domestic politics and weak economy were obstacles to realizing its geopolitical ambitions. However, political, economic and local stability in the last 20 years has positively changed Brazil's international outlook. Brazil sees the BRICS formation as an opportunity to achieve long-term goals and step out of the US's shadow. At the same time, this formation is considered as an area that prevents Brazil from directly confronting the USA. (Gabuev, Movchan, Topychkanov, & Vasiliev, 2016) Brazil's presence in the BRICS indicates that it is seeking an alternative to American hegemony in global governance. On the other hand, Brazil is both a

country that seeks the reform of global governance and a country that benefits from the current status quo, which indicates that Brazilian foreign policy is in a dilemma. (Deciancio, 2016) While Brazil's presence is the gateway to South America for BRICS, for Brazil, BRICS is a platform that strengthens its desire to become a regional leader. (Pinheiro & Gaio, 2016)

There is a "strategic partnership" level bilateral relationship between Brazil and India. These countries are increasing cooperation in intergovernmental organizations such as BASIC, G4, G20, BRICS, IBSA, International Solar Alliance, Biofuture Platform. In 2020, Brazil and India signed 15 memorandums of understanding. The two countries decided to increase their cooperation in the fields of oil and natural gas, bioenergy, trade and investment, mutual legal aid in criminal matters, early childhood, health and medicine, traditional medicine and homeopathy systems, security and cybersecurity. (India - Brazil Relations, 2020) The strategic partnership of India and Brazil, the two key actors of the Global South, seems so far as a political solidarity. The economic side of this cooperation has not yet been strengthened enough. Increasing high-level diplomatic summits between the two countries in recent years point to renewed foreign policy priorities of both countries. (Singh & Misra, 2019)

The economic strengths and weaknesses of the BRICS member countries are different from each other. Brazil has economically abundant and diverse natural resources and a suitable workforce. On the other hand, it is very weak in the field of infrastructure such as energy, railways, highways, port investments and it is a country with a very high public debt. Russia has high-yielding natural resources, qualified workforce and energy resources that strengthen its regional position. However, the investment rate seems very low compared to other developed countries. (Hult, 2009) The fact that the BRICS countries are more prominent in different fields indicates that the members of the group can be complementary to each other. Brazil stands out in the agricultural sector, Russia in the energy and military field, India in the service sector, and China in the manufactured sector. While China and India produce, Brazil and Russia benefit from their natural resources. However, despite all this difference and complementarity, intra-group trade volume is not at the ideal level. (Kumar, 2018) Since the beginning of the 21st century, China's rising economy, strengthening military navy and presence in the international arena have begun to be defined by everyone as a rival to the existing major powers, especially against the USA. While Russia, India, and Brazil are associated with the next level of power, South Africa occupies a different position than these three countries. Brazil, India, Russia, and

South Africa have tried to bring their power to the fore in more regional areas compared to China. (Nankarni & Noonan, 2013)

Although the BRICS member countries initially came together for the purpose of common economic reforms, the motivations and expectations of all member countries are different from each other. For instance, Russia aims to make international monetary policies more fair and effective, to ensure peace and trust without interfering with the territorial integrity of other member countries, to develop privileged trade relations with BRICS member countries, and to expand its linguistic and cultural presence through the agenda items of the BRICS. (Toloraya, 2015) Russia went through a major recession in the 1990s, what might be called "shock therapy". After this decline, Russia turned to developing sectors based on natural resources rather than producing high-value products. At the same time, Russia developed a market-market economy, and Russian entrepreneurs have successfully modernized their equipment and technologies in recent years. (Council, 2015) Russia sees it as an opportunity to use the BRICS Bank and the reserve money pool in order to alleviate the economic problems it will experience in the future and to find resources for its military plans. Thus, he will not have to seek help from an institution such as the IMF on political grounds. Russia wants a system established by China, which does not scrutinize the domestic policies of its partners, such as the United States. (Gabuev, Movchan, Topychkanov, & Vasiliev, 2016)

In his statement made in 2013, Putin said that BRICS is one of the priorities of Russian foreign policy. Russia considers that BRICS will play an important role in economic, political and legal global governance in the medium and long term. Putin underlined the need for increased cooperation and dialogue between the BRICS and the UN, UN organs and other international organizations. (Putin, 2013) Russia's BRICS diplomacy is based on two main ideas; firstly, to convey Russia's "great power" position to the international community, and secondly, to emphasize the efficiency of the multipolar order instead of unipolarity in global governance and to show that there are alternatives to the existing economic and political organizations. According to the Russian Government, improving the global image and international reputation of BRICS is one of the most important topics of the Russian foreign policy agenda. (Grincheva, 2015)

After Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, Russia approached China due to the sanctions imposed by the West on Russia. On the other hand, the moves of the USA to increase its

presence in the Asia-Pacific and its Middle East policy have affected China's interests, so China has started to strengthen its cooperation with Russia in this region. China and Russia are member states of both the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the BRICS. The two countries aim to put the economy based on their strategic relations through these organizations. According to 2020 data, Russia sells 31% of the crude oil it exports to China. The importance of China for Russia in bilateral trade relations is increasing year by year. For example, 15% of Russia's total trade in 2018 was with China. One of the biggest economic items between these two countries is the defense industry. Russia, which was the largest arms supplier to China between 2014-2018, continues to export nuclear power systems, aircraft and missile warning systems. After the Ukraine crisis, the Chinese Foreign Minister underlined in a statement that they were determined to advance Moscow-Beijing cooperation and condemned the Western sanctions against Moscow, showing that Russia responded to the support and partnership demand it sought from China. However, China is one of Ukraine's largest trading partners, and on the other hand, the UNSC abstained in the vote to condemn the Ukraine Crisis, as it was concerned about the deterioration of its trade relations with EU countries. (Kurban, 2022)

Russia and Brazil have increased their bilateral relations to the level of strategic partnership since 2000. In 2010, the two countries signed a Strategic Partnership Action Plan. This plan includes the objectives, guidelines and strategies of the two countries for their bilateral relations. In 2021, Russia-Brazil trade volume reached 7.3 billion dollars. Russia is among Brazil's 15 largest trading partners. The commercial relations of the two states have so far been mostly in agricultural products. (Russian Federation, 2022) The geopolitical pressures and energy insecurity that emerged after Russia's intervention in Ukraine pushed Brazil and Russia to strengthen their energy-based relations. In February 2022, Brazilian President Bolsanora met with Putin on energy cooperation in Russia. The two states signed various agreements in the fields of liquid energy and nuclear energy. (Bnamericas, 2022)

South Africa joined to BRICS in 2010, the country's main goal is improve South-South relations based on their foreign policy . The main purpose of South Africa's membership in the BRICS is to strategically support the African Agenda. In other words, finding solutions to the stability, underdevelopment, hunger, poverty, peace and security issues in the founding text of the African Union are the primary policy agendas of South Africa. The entire African Union, through South Africa, will benefit from areas such as information, energy, railway, road, agriculture and food safety that BRICS member countries have identified as priority. (BRICS

(Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), 2022) BRICS financing provides support for capacity building, infrastructure development, research, education, and tourism opportunities. (President Ramaphosa To Participate In The Virtual 14th BRICS Summit, 2022) Although its existence in BRICS is controversial for some academics due to the economic and demographic conditions of South Africa, South Africa's soft power network is an important alternative for BRICS in a changing world where soft power is also a significant power. South Africa is a peacemaker for parts of the African continent; Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Ivory Coast, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Rwanda etc. (Tella, 2017) Although South Africa lags far behind the other four BRICS countries in terms of economic, population and growth rate, the fact that it is a member of the group also explains the goal of BRICS to be a diplomatic and economic actor in the global South. (Thakur, 2014)

While the Chinese economy has strengthened its power in recent years, Brazil, one of the BRICS countries, has entered a serious stagnation economically since 2015, while Brazil was trying to recover, it was negatively affected by the Covid-19 crisis. China became the only BRICS member to grow in 2020, so the gap between China and other BRICS countries is getting wider. Although the combined GDP of all BRICS countries accounts for 25% of the world's total, China's GDP is more than half of the other four member countries combined. These differences bring about the claims that BRICS has lost its former importance. However, BRICS is still a platform with the potential to strengthen South-South cooperation. (Duggan, Bas, Marek, & Ekaterina, 2022)

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project is the basis of China's grand strategy. China aims to encourage multinational organizations such as the BRICS and the NDB to support the BRI's existence. For example, some BRI-based agreements were signed between South Africa and China in 2017; “21st Century Maritime Silk Road” and “Silk Road Economic Belt”. China needs BRICS to realize its BRI dream because the BRI project is a controversial issue in the global arena. Thanks to BRICS, China aims to establish a new front by establishing relations with countries from different regions. (Singh A. G., 2022)

Another topic where there are controversial among BRICS members that is expansion of the BRICS. Before the BRICS leaders' summit held in May 2022, the Chinese foreign minister brought up his ideas about the enlargement of the BRICS and the admission of new members. Especially Argentina and Saudi Arabia are candidates who seem eager to join the group.

Actually, the idea of BRICS enlargement is not a new agenda. In 2017, China put forward the idea of BRICS Plus, but no progress was made in this idea. Because there are conflicts of interest with the BRICS member countries of the countries that have the potential to become a member and a common approach cannot be achieved. Brazil and India, for example, seem more reluctant to expand. There is a concern that Argentina's membership would run counter to Brazil's interests. (Daldegan, 2022) The main purpose of China in supporting the expansion of BRICS is to increase the number of countries that will positively approach the BRI project and to ensure the spread of the project. (Singh A. G., 2022)

BRICS International Forum President Purnima Anand made statements after the virtual BRICS summit held on 23-24 June. Anand explained that Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Türkiye's membership of BRICS was discussed at the summit, reminding that Argentina and Iran had made official applications before. A statement was also made by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the issue. The Ministry confirmed that they discussed the enlargement process of BRICS at the last summit. In the statement made by the ministry, it was noted that Moscow welcomes the interest in the union, but has not yet developed definite criteria for the participation of new members. According to the World Bank, in 2021, Türkiye's gross domestic product is 815 billion dollars, Saudi Arabia's is 833.5 billion dollars, while Egypt's is 404.1 billion dollars. (Türkiye BRICS'e mi katılıyor?, 2022)

CHAPTER THREE

3. MIKTA

3.1. MIKTA As An Informal Intergovernmental Organization

MIKTA is an informal “consultation and coordination platform” between Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Türkiye and Australia. The first Foreign Ministers meeting of MIKTA, which was implemented on 25 September 2013, within the framework of the general meetings of the 68th UN General Assembly, was also held on the aforementioned date. Since its inception, MIKTA has routinely convened three times a year at the level of Foreign Ministers. MIKTA does not have a secretariat, and the coordination of MIKTA meetings is provided by the country, the MIKTA Term President, who is elected by rotation every year. (MIKTA (Meksika, Endonezya, Kore, Avustralya), n.d.)

The absolute roles of middle powers have increased after the 2008 economic crisis and diminution of United State hegemony. After these changes, middle power countries have come forth with strong economic indicators to play a significant position in the global governance. In this manner, the decisive role and the material capacities of middle power countries are considerable determinates in the global governance and international relations. Middle power countries are significant status because of their global position and multilateral relations are determinate in the international affairs. The global world order has assigned middle powers to integrate themselves and accommodate actuating land for cooperation in global relations. Furthermore, the altering dynamics of today's political and economic discourse have pushed sophisticated narratives to the realm of middle power multilateralism. (Akram, 2021)

In addition, the international order is facing increasing challenges; such as climate change, land disputes, new conventional arms, cyber weapons, human rights violations. However, the current international order is insufficient to cope with these difficulties. As a result, the system needs multilateralism and transformation. At this point, middle powers like MIKTA are positioned to encourage a multilateral pivot. Although their positions, interests, and perspectives may differ, middle powers can help reform and strengthen the global structure.

(Wright, 2015) The biggest advantage of MIKTA is that although the member countries are based on very different regions, they also have common interests in various fields. In this way, it can act as an economic, political and geographical bridge for the resolution of multilateral international discussions. (Jacobson, 2015) The MIKTA group is against the "traditional bloc" and their strongest point is their aim to achieve the capacity to give quick reflexes against the rapidly changing global agendas in the global world. (Islam, 2019)

The vision of MIKTA have highlight that the World is chancing rapidly and new global challenges such as security, finance and economic, the environment and sustainable development are problems for the maintain of international community. Furthermore, the global distribution of power, the rise of regionalism, and the increasing presence of non-state actors are all having an impact on the effectiveness of global governance systems. To give realistic and constructive answers to these difficulties, the world needs to establish revitalized and innovative alliances. MIKTA was founded in September 2013 in New York, during a meeting held on the fringes of the UN General Assembly's Leaders' Week. (Vision , 2015)

MIKTA members are an informal advisory group that first met in 2013. The foreign minister of South Korea, one of the member states, defines this group as follows; a union of middle powers with common values such as free economy and democracy, with the willingness and ability to contribute to the international community. None of the MIKTA members are or aim to be permanent members of the UN Security Council. None of the members have nuclear weapons, nor are they trying to acquire them. (Nieto & Flores, 2016) MIKTA's secretariat was first awarded to Mexico, and in the first advisory group the topics of UN reforms, G20 governance, democratization, climate change and disarmament were opened for discussion. (Jongryn, G20 Middle Powers (MIKTA) and Global Governance, 2015) MIKTA comes together at the ministerial level at UN summits and G20 summits, reflecting a "club culture", reinforcing commonalities among different member countries and trying to reduce differences. MIKTA does not have a single or specific goal. It seems to have a rather complementary role within groups such as the G20. (Çolakoğlu, 2016)

The motivation for MIKTA foreign ministers to meet is that, in addition to the classic diplomatic channels, they see the MIKTA group as a "capacity-building" and a "network-scheme". In this way, they aim to increase their visibility in multilateral diplomatic relations. The reasons why MIKTA is attractive for member countries is that it is an informal and flexible

organization, so it brings low cost and less burden. (Kim, Haug, & Rimmer, 2018) On the other hand, global problems such as terrorism, environmental problems, cyber attacks, refugee crisis become more complex over time and cause an increase in tension in global governance. Therefore, countries need better communication and coordination. Complex global issues and the fluidity of power shift make room for "middle powers". Middle powers can play a role in reducing global tension and help ensure stronger coordination. MIKTA was founded precisely for these reasons. (Marsudi, 2018) The vision statement of MIKTA emphasize that *“MIKTA will act as a catalyst or facilitator in launching initiatives and implementing global governance reform.”* (MIKTA, n.d.)

MIKTA is a group that can be described as heterogeneous, the situation that defines challenge. Members of MIKTA are economically diverse, Indonesia is a low-income economy, Türkiye and Mexico are middle-income economies, and Australia and Korea are high-income economies. This difference may result in giving different reflexes to the global developments. However, MIKTA describes itself as a "constructive" entity. MIKTA explains the purpose of coming together in official documents as follows; “protecting public goods and strengthening global governance” in different international areas. (Haug, 2017) “MIKTA” (Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Türkiye, Australia) formed by medium-sized countries established in 2013, although it is an informal and low profile forum, their common goal is to protect their own interests in the global arena and also to serve for these interests. Rather than being a group of medium-sized power countries, it is the 5 main areas of interest that hold MIKTA countries together. These; *“G20 governance, UN reforms, climate change, nuclear disarmament and democratization”* (Snyder, 2013) Although the members of the MIKTA group look very different from each other, they meet on a common ground at the point of global governance. On the other hand, each member of MIKTA is middle power pivot for their region. MIKTA have member states from Eurasia, Americas, and the Asia-Pacific. They are not dominant over the political variables in their own regions, but they are indispensable actors in their regions for the great powers. MIKTA, an important product of the middle power concept, highlights the importance of the middle powers geostrategically. (Engin & Baba, 2015)

Indonesia is one of the member of MIKTA said that *“In Indonesia’s view, this cross-regionalism carries with it a new window of opportunities for advancing collaboration towards shared progress and creating common prosperity. In other words, MIKTA has great potential to act as hub of global network of stakeholders in reshaping global order.”* (Ruddyard, 2018)

Medium-powered countries are mostly perceived as supporters of multilateralism. The middle powers rely on effective global governance and rule-based international governance. Therefore, MIKTA, a medium-powered club, aims at a strong UN-based international cooperation. MIKTA is not a superpower group, but it has the potential to influence global agendas. For example, although the BRICS and G7 groups seem to be dominant within the G20 group, MIKTA also has a balancing role. The fact that MIKTA is a unique interregional actor also gives it a different identity. (Klingebiel, 2020) MIKTA also defines itself as; *“The MIKTA countries are responsible middle powers contributing to global peace and prosperity, while upholding the UN Charter and other universally recognized norms that govern international relations.”* (MIKTA Sourcebook, 2022) The fact that MIKTA did not have great power allowed it to have a noncompetitive identity. MIKTA's existing institutions do not seek to change the functioning but aim to act as a bridge for better coordination. Rather than focusing on solving a specific problem, the member countries came together to focus on solutions to global problems and to achieve power for good. (Kim, Haug, & Rimmer, 2018)

MIKTA member countries are economically dynamic middle powers that have the potential to facilitate international cooperation and negotiations and offer new perspectives and proposals for solving problems. This cooperation is especially valuable in these times; In the environment where the G20 weakened due to the increasing tension between the G7 and BRICS countries, and at the moments when the Eurozone crisis affected the multilateral relations of the European countries. These five countries came together in an environment that needed new collaborations globally. MIKTA member states are looking for alternatives to be more active in global issues. (Jongryn, G20 Middle Powers (MIKTA) and Global Governance, 2015)

BRICS, which is the most well-known group among informal groups, was first put forward as an abbreviation formed by the initials of the countries, and then put into practice. The coming together of the MIKTA group has been shaped entirely around their own collaborations and common interests. The MIKTA group is treated as a "grouping" or "advisory group", as opposed to groups that come together through official organizations or founding agreements. The fact that all MIKTA members are G20 member countries, that they are governed by a pluralistic system and that they are in the category of developing countries are some of their common features. Due to the contributions of each member of MIKTA to global governance and their work by increasing their performance in the important international

economic cooperation platform such as the G20, the formation has become more clamped and made a name for itself. (Lee, Chun, Suh, & Thomsen, 2015)

Australia is one of the MIKTA's member states defined their informal group that *"MIKTA is a diverse and cross-regional grouping of powers that brings together Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Türkiye and Australia. MIKTA aims to bridge divides in the multilateral system and build consensus on complex and challenging issues, drawing on the diverse perspectives of its members and their shared interest in an effective, rules-based global order."* MIKTA members are among the important economies of the G20 and member countries share important values; such as human rights, open economy, democracy and international multilateralism. The cooperation of MIKTA members creates a constructive effect in the international arena. MIKTA countries showcase how other countries and regions are addressing global challenges, their approaches, and provide different perspectives. Thus, MIKTA prepares for reconciliation for international problems and helps the international community to pursue their common interests respectfully and productively. (MIKTA – Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Türkiye and Australia, 2016) That is, MIKTA group members have commonalities that may also share similar ideas, goals and policies. At the same time, the presence of member states from different regions indicates that they can serve for both regional and global governance. (Schiavon & Domínguez, 2016) In fact, the fact that MIKTA is a cross-regional consultation group provides it with the opportunity to meet in common interests and avoid individual national interests. (Lee S. , 2016)

In fact, with the 2008 global financial crisis, the meeting of the G20 at the level of leaders was a turning point for the influence of the middle powers in global governance. (Cooper A. F., MIKTA and the Global Projection of Middle Powers: Toward a Summit of Their Own? , 2015) MIKTA is strictly a middle powers initiative as it does not involve any major powers. MIKTA is the last representative of the last middle power multilateralism. (Engin & Baba, 2015) Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu said that MIKTA can be shown as a good example of multilateral diplomacy. Turkish diplomat Volkan Bozkır stated that "harmonious multilateralism" was the foundation of MIKTA. (18. Kıtalar Arası Ekonomik İşbirliği (MIKTA) Dışişleri Bakanları Toplantısı, 2021) Multilateralism is explained by the coming together of countries with "like-minded". On the other hand, it also gives the member states of multilateral groups the chance to resist the coercive pressures of the great powers. (Lee D. , 1999)

In MIKTA member countries, Mexico defines the group as an informal dialogue and cooperation area based on the “political will” of the states in order to better contribute to global communication. Mexico values the idea that the group should be based on political will, dialogue among peers without hierarchical constraints or dominant forces. The absence of hierarchy provides an informal agility to ensure the status and promotion of member states and to set the agenda more easily. So, from Mexico's point of view, MIKTA offers Mexico the opportunity to develop dialogue with other emerging powers and access areas with which Mexico has weak diplomatic ties. Moreover, since it has an informal structure, it does not force the country into binding commitments and brings it closer to the understanding of multilateralism. (Maihold, 2016)

The absence of a dominant power or institution in global governance and the inadequacy of international organizations in solving global problems have pushed states to seek new alternatives. The middle powers are expected not only to fill this gap, but also to act as a bridge to stronger global governance. (Schiavon & Domínguez, 2016) MIKTA sees in itself the capacity to mediate solutions in UN, G20 and other international organizations. For this reason, they have identified a bridge or facilitator identity that will strengthen global governance. (Maihold, 2016) It is underlined that MIKTA wants to exhibit common attitudes especially with informal organizations such as the UN. MIKTA member states made many “joint remarks” in different UN organs; eight times at UN Assembly, twice at UN Security Council, 13 times at UN Economic and Social Council, 11 times at Human Rights Council and 11 times at other occasions. All joint remarks addressing an international issue are submitted on behalf of MIKTA. Counterterrorism, peacebuilding, humanitarian rights, technical cooperation, sustainable developments, finance, refugee are the subtitles of some of these remarks. (MIKTA Sourcebook, 2022)

In the table below, the titles of the meetings held by MIKTA at the level of the foreign ministry between 2013 and 2022 are listed. When the list is examined, it is seen that the topics suitable for the purposes stated in MIKTA's vision are discussed. Major global crises in the regions where member countries are located are discussed. UN agendas such as the UN 2030 Agenda were discussed. It is seen that ideas are exchanged on many global issues such as global security, health, economy, food security, climate change, democracy and human rights, energy gender equality, sustainable development, peace, trade and migration. (MIKTA Sourcebook,

2022) Since member countries are from different geographies and geopolitical regions, they dominate the global conjuncture of events in their own regions. Therefore, in addition to the seven global goals highlighted in the Vision Statement, at MIKTA summits, regional security issues such as Syria, Ukraine and Korea Island are also discussed. (Nieto & Flores, 2016)

Table 2: MIKTA Foreign Ministers’ Meetings and the Main Topics of Meetings

MIKTA Foreign Ministers’ Meetings	Date and Location	The Topics of Meetings
1st Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	September 25, 2013, New York	• MIKTA Foreign Ministers meet for the first time to establish MIKTA as the informal consultation forum
2nd Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	April 13, 2014, Mexico City	• Regional and global issues • Cyber security • Climate change
3rd Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	September 25, 2014, New York	• Ebola Outbreak • Global Health
4th Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	November 15, 2014, Brisbane	• Global Economy • Food Security • Climate Change
5th Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	May 22, 2015, Seoul	• Visibility of MIKTA • Its cooperative projects, the MIKTA Academic Network
6th Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	September 26, 2015, New York	• Agreeing to joint-MIKTA cooperation across six themes: energy, counter-terrorism and security, good governance, democracy and human rights, development cooperation and gender equality
7th MIKTA Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	September 22, 2016, New York	• Challenges of humanitarian crises • The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s nuclear test
8th MIKTA Foreign Ministers’ Meeting	November 24-25 2016, Sydney	• Humanitarian crises • Peacekeeping issues • Trade, e-commerce • Sustainable development

9th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	February 16, 2017, Bonn	• Counter-terrorism and security • Trade and economic cooperation • Energy • Sustainable development • Gender equality • Peacekeeping • Good governance and democracy
10th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	September 22, 2017, New York	• Korean Peninsula • Rohingya Crisis • Venezuela Crisis
11th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	December 13, 2017, Istanbul	• Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper • North Korean issue • Migration and asylum seekers • Venezuela and fight against terrorism
12th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	May 21, 2018, Buenos Aires	• Current Situation in the Rakhine State • Korean Peninsula Issue • The Challenge of Migration in the Context of the Syrian Conflict • New Paradigms of Trade
13th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	September 27, 2018, New York	• Combating Terrorism • Future of International Trade • Issue of Korean Peninsula
14th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	February 7, 2019, Yogyakarta	• New terrorist threats • Migration problems • 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
15th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	September 26, 2019, New York	• Need to strengthen multilateralism • Refugee Crisis • Climate Change
16th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	February 11, 2020, Mexico City	• Step up cooperation in the multilateral, cultural and economic sectors
17th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	July 17, 2020, Videoconference	• COVID-19 pandemic
18th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	February 3, 2021,	• COVID-19 pandemic

	Videoconference	
19th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	September 22, 2021, New York	• Myanmar • COVID-19 • Climate and low emissions technology • Gender equality
20th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	March 7, 2022, Videoconference	• Ukraine Crisis • Food Security • Global Health Effective Migration Management
21th MIKTA Foreign Ministers' Meeting	July 7, 2022, Bali	• Ukraine Crisis • Food Security • Migration

Source: MIKTA Official Website (<http://mikta.org>)

MIKTA has “bottom up” activities as well as diplomatic summits. The Initiative + Programs include academic network programs, exchange programs, workshops and outreach activities. (Jacobson, 2015) MIKTA member countries increase their international capacities and share their networks with different exchange programs. For instance, in 2018, as Australia prepared for the Commonwealth games, MIKTA provided overseas access networks to Australian missions from different regions. (Kim, Haug, & Rimmer, 2018) Exchange programs were organized for three different groups of journalists, graduate students and diplomats. These groups add dynamism to MIKTA. Thus, MIKTA offers societies the opportunity to interact easily in different fields and provides an area outside the foreign policy decision makers. The fact that member countries benefit from the rich diversity of MIKTA with these practices also prevents the group from remaining as a boring consultation group. (Nieto & Flores, 2016)

The fact that MIKTA, the middle-powered countries after the G20 and BRICS, came together indicates that multilateral diplomacy has increased in recent years. MIKTA countries contain both developed and developing economies. Thus, if such a collaboration succeeds, it could be a good example for global governance. But one of MIKTA's problems as a group is visibility. MIKTA countries can prioritize institutional links, R&D studies and inter-enterprise cooperation to increase the institutional capacity of their groups. (Malhotra, 2015)

MIKTA so far only gives the impression of a "middle powers" community. However, it can be said that MIKTA countries have the capacity to be "global policy brokers" economically and politically. For this, MIKTA countries need to go beyond "brainstorming" for common interests and goals. However, when the stance of the member states so far is examined, it is seen that their priorities are not MIKTA, but other international organizations. (Choiruzzad, 2018)

3.2. The Members Countries of MIKTA

The MIKTA that informal intergovernmental organization include five members from diverse regions of the world. Mexico is a country in Latin America, Indonesia in Southeast Asia, Korea in Asia continent, Türkiye is a bridge between Asia and Europe continents and Australia in Australia continent. Group member countries come together from different geographies and traditions, and their democratic and economic situations are different from each other. In this section, the importance of member countries for the group, the expectations of MIKTA member countries from the informal forum and their relations with each other will be discussed.

The economic situations of the member countries are very different from each other. Mexico's current GDP is 1.129 trillion dollars, Indonesia's 1.19 trillion dollars, Korea's 1.8 trillion dollars, Türkiye's current GDP is 815 billion dollars, Australia's current GDP is 1.54 trillion dollars. The World Bank defines the economic situation of these countries in different ways, Korea and Australia classify as high-income countries, Mexico and Türkiye define income level as upper-income countries and Indonesia called as lower middle income country. On the other hand, the member countries of MIKTA have very different populations. Mexico has 130 million total population, Indonesia has 276 million total population, Korea has 51 million total population, Türkiye has 85 million total population and Australia has 25 million total population. (World Bank Open Data, 2022) As a result, although the GDP and income levels of all member countries are different from each other, all of these countries are in the top 20 in the world's GDP ranking and they are all G-20 member countries.

Five MIKTA member countries with various dynamics from different geographies have different and common points of expectations from MIKTA. The dynamics of the relations between these five countries are also diverse. MIKTA member countries have different regional and international significance within the group. Mexico can act as a constructive power in

international organizations, Indonesia can play a mediating role between China and South East Asia, Korea is an important actor in the resolution of Northeast Asian and global events, Türkiye is one of the most strategic actors in the Middle East, Australia is both a good ally with the USA as well as a partner trying to include China in the regional order. (Wright, 2015)

Korea and Australia have a higher level of economic development than the other three countries. The commercial and strategic relations of these two countries have advanced. The largest trading partner of Australia is the Republic of Korea. Australia and Korea also have strategic aspects in common; Their relations with the United States, nuclear disarmament, common political interests in the Indo-Pacific region, and joint action in international organizations of which they are members (G20, MIKTA, APEC, ASEAN Regional Forum, The East Asia Summit). (Republic of Korea country brief, 2022)

The current government of South Korea has two priorities in foreign policy, support to deal with North Korea and diversifying foreign policy interaction outside of the US and China. At this point, the MIKTA platform seems to be in harmony with the foreign policy targets set by South Korea. Through MIKTA, it can diversify the relations it has established in foreign policy and gain more support on the way to an agreement with North Korea. By defining the Korean peninsula problem as a global problem with risks of nuclear armament, conflict and division, South Korea, as the middle powers group of MIKTA, can conduct a crisis diplomacy and leaders' summit diplomacy process to solve this problem. (Robertson, 2018) MIKTA offers Korea wide areas for the expansion of Korean diplomacy. Despite the lobbies that North Korea may establish in the international arena, South Korea needs to create new areas by being included in a "like-minded" group like MIKTA. On the other hand, since the positions of MIKTA countries in the international system are similar, Korea can establish a complementary cooperation with other countries. Another advantage of the MIKTA group for Korea is that it is a transregional consultation forum. With member states sharing information from their own regions, MIKTA provides a sub-link to events in other regions. With the emergence of new powerful actors such as China and India in the world and in the Asian region, Korea also needs new cooperation. At this point, Korea desires to establish trilateral relations through MIKTA beyond bilateral relations. Thanks to the tripartite relations, Korea can overcome the difficulties that may arise in its region, for example, Türkiye and Australia are natural partners to advance Korea's relationship with Central Asia and the South Pacific. (Lee S. , 2016)

It is seen that Indonesia and Korea have close political and economic relations. At the 17th G20 leaders meeting, Indonesia created a separate platform for Korea to discuss the Korean peninsula issues with the US and China. On the other hand, despite the side effects of the pandemic, the trade volume between Korea and Indonesia increased to 19 billion dollars in 2021. In 2021, the Korea-Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (KI-CEPA) was signed between the two countries. (Kim S. Y., 2022) 2022 is the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic activities of Mexico and Korea. These two countries are members of the G20 and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Mexico and Korea believe that global problems will be resolved through multilateral diplomacy. Mexico, Korea's first trading partner in Latin America and Mexico's fourth largest trading partner is Korea. Mexico is one of Korea's largest investment recipients with \$7 billion. Although Mexico and Korea are two distant countries separated by the ocean, they are countries that try to develop their bilateral political and economic relations and meet in common policies in global governance. (Figueroa, 2021)

Political relations between Türkiye and South Korea started when Türkiye recognized South Korea as an independent country on 11 August 1949. There is an emotional relationship between the two countries due to Türkiye's participation in the Korean War. Korea defines Türkiye as "blood brothers". Diplomatic relations have improved since 2012, and the two countries are establishing close dialogue through the UN, MIKTA and the G-20. (Relations between Türkiye and South Korea, n.d.) During the Turkish President Erdoğan's visit to Seoul in 2018, various bilateral agreements were signed in the fields of higher education, information, communication, space, industry and energy, and health. (Guder & Kabakci, 2018) In addition, the trade volume of South Korea and Türkiye has reached 7 billion dollars, and 180 South Korean companies are contributing to the export sector in Türkiye. (Gencturk, Turkey, South Korea reiterate strategic partnership, 2021)

Indonesia's presence is important for MIKTA because Indonesia, as an ASEAN member country, can act as a bridge between South Asian countries and MIKTA countries, thereby increasing multilateralism. For Indonesia, MIKTA can increase economic cooperation between member countries, increase intercontinental cooperation among MIKTA members in areas such as business, academic and civil sectors, and this platform can offer solutions to global and regional problems. Indonesia considers MIKTA to prioritize world peace and prosperity in general. (Pakpahan, 2018) For this reason, Indonesia drew attention to the Rohingya refugee

crisis at the foreign ministers meeting held by MIKTA in September 2022 and stated to other member countries that the refugee crisis worsened over time. (Yuni Arisandy Si, 2022)

The diplomatic, economic and social ties of Türkiye and Indonesia date back to the 16th century Ache Kingdom, which has a deep historical background. (Ankara, n.d.) Türkiye and Indonesia are the two countries of MIKTA with a predominantly Muslim population. Both countries have a multilateral diplomacy. In addition to establishing dialogues at the UN, MIKTA and G20, Türkiye and Indonesia are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. In ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, both countries have a dialogue. Indonesia is a member state of ASEAN, while Türkiye has a sectoral dialogue partnership with ASEAN. (ASEAN, n.d.) On the other hand, the trade volume of Türkiye and Indonesia is also expanding. While exports from Türkiye to Indonesia were 271 million dollars in 2021, imports from Indonesia to Türkiye were 1.6 million dollars.

Türkiye is at a geostrategic point for the MIKTA group due to its geopolitical location between the West and the East. This geostrategic position of Türkiye strengthens its relations with the West, East, Caucasus and Central Asia. In addition to Türkiye's geopolitical position, it is an important middle power for MIKTA with its young population and developing economy. He played a role in the mediation of many global problems in the Turkish region and internationally; Mediator between Israel and Syria in 2006-2007, playing an active role with Brazil during nuclear talks with Iran, member of UN Security Council in 2009-2010. (Dal & Kurşun, 2016) On the other hand, the global crisis that shook the world the most after Covid-19 is Russia's attack on Ukraine. The tension between these two countries has affected the countries of the world in terms of food and energy supply. Türkiye and the UN established a secure grain corridor by negotiating with Russia and Ukraine. Thanks to this mediation initiative of Türkiye, the tension of the food crisis in the world due to the Russia-Ukraine war has been reduced. (Wintour, 2022) Türkiye's goals as a middle power were to be a regional power, to act as a mediator and to be a responsible actor. (Dal & Kurşun, 2016) Türkiye is also trying to overcome some difficulties at home and abroad. While still trying to deal with security problems such as PKK, ISIS and the July 15 Coup Attempt at home, there are millions of Syrian refugees fleeing the Syrian civil war abroad, the Ukraine-Russia war in the north and provocative movements from the Greek front.

Türkiye is currently the term chairman of MIKTA and has identified the Ukraine crisis, food security and migration problem as priority topics. Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu argues that multilateralism in global governance has been deliberately weakened by some countries and organizations. Türkiye is a country in favor of multilateralism in global governance and MIKTA, a consultation group, is an instrument of this multilateral diplomacy. (Tarhan, 2022)

Türkiye and Australia have friendly relations with roots dating back to the Çanakkale Battles, and both countries strengthen their relations through the UN, G20, OECD and MIKTA. An agreement was signed with the Australia Industry Group (AIG) and Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye (DEİK) in 2014 in order to increase the commercial relations between the two MIKTA members. While 248 Australian companies invest in Türkiye with a budget of 700 million dollars, Turks have an investment of 18 million dollars in Australia. (Türkiye-Australia Economic and Trade Relations, 2022) Australia describes its relations with Türkiye as productive, warm and developing. Australia states that many global challenges, especially the fight against terrorism, have been addressed through MIKTA. *“Our relations are underpinned by strong people-to-people links and annual high-level visits.”* (Türkiye country brief, 2022)

The Australian ministry of foreign affairs argues that the purpose of MIKTA countries working together is to provide constructive responses to global problems. Australia emphasizes the fact that MIKTA members are from different regions is valuable to see the different approaches of various countries to global issues. Each country is an important economic and political actor in its region, MIKTA countries expect an open, transparent and multilateral global governance. (MIKTA – Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Türkiye and Australia, 2022) Australia is one of the middle powers closest to the USA militarily, politically and economically. However, after the 2008 economic crisis, it became economically dependent on China due to the mining industry. This dual dependency has led Australian foreign policy makers to identify an alternative "middle power" policy. Australia and Indonesia are emerging as two important middle powers that will balance China in the Asian region. Australia continues to support the maintenance of international peace in areas such as maritime security and cyber security. (Wright, 2015)

In recent years, Mexico wants to establish international relations in Latin America without being overshadowed by Brazil. On the other hand, the bilateral relations in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) forced Mexico to prefer an independent foreign policy. Mexico considers MIKTA as a group of "like-mindedness" countries that increase multilateralism. (Maihold, 2016) For Mexico, MIKTA offers opportunities to develop high-level bilateral relations with a group of geographically distant, non-politically privileged states. This group, which has different languages and cultures, coming together in different fields such as political, cultural, technological, academic and press, enables Mexico to establish strategic cooperation from different geographies. On the other hand, according to Mexico, the coming together of different sectors creates an opportunity for these societies to get closer. According to Mexico, it is an advantage that all five countries are from different regions for MIKTA to achieve its goal of setting the global agenda. In this way, each region's unique culture and political conjuncture can be discussed while discussing the problems related to the global agenda. (Nieto & Flores, 2016) From Mexico's point of view, MIKTA gives Mexico access to regions where its relations are weak, and enables it to develop strategic relations with other developing countries. Since it is an informal entity, Mexico does not need to sign binding agreements. On the other hand, Mexico wishes to act as a bridge between the industrial North and the global south in foreign policy. MIKTA can offer Mexico the space to realize this ideal. (Maihold, 2016) Mexico gave importance to three main topics in 2019, when MIKTA was the president; sustainable development based on the United Nations 2030 Agenda, stronger multilateralism and economic cooperation for social development. (Exteriores, 2020)

Mexico is Indonesia's second largest partner in Latin America, after Brazil. The heads of state of the two countries have made statements that they can be complementary rather than competitive in economic areas with the "comprehensive partnership" agreement published in 2013. Both countries have potential in the maritime field and cooperation can be developed in these fields. Bilateral relations can be strengthened in the United Nations, APEC, MIKTA, FEA-LAC, Indonesia-Pacific Alliance, WTO, and G-20 areas where Mexico and Indonesia are members. Both countries have open economy, secular and democratic governments. They aim to increase their diplomatic relations to the level of "Comprehensive Partnership" by increasing their cooperation in economic, social and political fields. (Sabaruddin, 2017)

The bilateral trade volume of Turkey and Mexico reached 1.5 billion dollars in 2021. There is a draft Free Trade Agreement between the two countries that is still being negotiated.

On the other hand, Mexico states that it is ready to share its experiences with Turkey on issues such as oil refining. Turkey and Mexico are members of the G20, MIKTA and OECD, and they want to improve their bilateral relations in these organizations. (Gencturk, 2022) Mexico and Australia cooperate in different areas such as food and agricultural trade, infrastructure agreements, mining technology, education and R&D. In addition, the police departments of these two countries cooperate in the fight against narcotics. Mexico makes 80% of its exports to America and Canada, but aims to diversify its commercial relations. For this reason, there are 13 free trade agreements. The first free trade agreement between Mexico and Australia is the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). (Mexico, 2022)

The common features of MIKTA member countries are all developing economies, they are in favor of democracy, they advocate multilateralism in global governance, and the member countries are “bridge countries” in their own regions. However, after the Covid-19 crisis, MIKTA countries showed economic decline and had to struggle with domestic problems such as unemployment. Therefore, MIKTA, which is an informal group, does not seem ready to be a model for global governance yet. Economic recessions and domestic problems prevent these middle-powered states from gathering their motivation to institutionally strengthen an informal group. (Kınık, 2020) On the other hand, it can be argued that the post-pandemic world order may create an opportunity for MIKTA. Informal structures allow states to react more flexibly in uncertain crises that the world will face in the future. Informal groups such as MIKTA, which are part of minilateralism, can play an active role in coping with crises. MIKTA members established close contacts in their bilateral relations during the covid-19 epidemic and emphasized solidarity in the joint statements they published. Middle powers can play a more active role in a world order in which America has withdrawn from the World Health Organization (WHO). (Karadeniz, 2020)

CHAPTER FOUR

4. CONCLUSION

The changing economic order in the 21st century, the new needs emerging in global governance, the thought that the existing international organizations of some states cannot solve the global needs have led the states to establish informal intergovernmental organizations. In the literature, the absence of a binding founding agreement text based on international law is cited as one of the reasons why informal groups are attractive to states. In this study, BRICS, which is the informal group of rising powers, and MIKTA, which is the group of middle powers, are examined.

Although the BRICS group was an informal organization that first came together for economic cooperation, it also acquired political and social priorities such as increasing cooperation in existing international organizations over time. In addition, although BRICS is an informal group, it also has concrete outputs that can offer solutions to economic problems such as NDB and CRI. The BRICS group aims to support developing economies, to develop the global South and to have more fair and transparent structures in the global economic order with these two economic instruments it has established.

The MIKTA group, on the other hand, defines itself as a consultation and coordination platform that comes together against new challenges in global governance. While the members of the MIKTA group are bridge countries in their own regions, the group aims to act as a bridge between the developing countries. The MIKTA group does not have a single and specific global agenda, nor does it claim to set a global agenda. The member states aspire to put forward common ideas in joint international organizations such as the G20 and the UN and to have close contact with middle-power states from different regions. While the BRICS group is a group that comes together at the level of country leaders, MIKTA still stands out as an integrated group at the level of foreign ministers.

The economic, socio-cultural and geopolitical priorities of the member countries of the BRICS group are very different from each other. This affects the harmony within the group.

Regional conflicts of interest, especially between China and India, and China's activities in South Africa and the African region for its own economic interests will affect the future of the group. On the other hand, although the members of the MIKTA group are in very different geographies. Since MIKTA group members are located in different regions, they do not have regional conflict situations. It can be defined as a more balanced informal group in terms of economy, population and regional weight. However, the fact that MIKTA group members have an economically more fragile structure in economic and global crises and the group is still at the level of foreign ministers shows that it is early to talk about the future of the group.

Although the BRICS member countries have different motivations to be under the BRICS roof, they all have economic expectations from the BRICS and have goals to strengthen the global South against the West. It is not seen that China, India and Russia, the leading countries of the BRICS, are eager for world leadership. The BRICS countries basically aim to strengthen the potential of the Global South by increasing integration among themselves. Each country wants to gain its own interests in its own region and take advantage of the economic opportunities that BRICS will offer them. Recently, a geopolitical environment has emerged in which Russia had to get closer with the BRICS member states after the Ukraine intervention. However, for example, China's intense trade relations with Ukraine and EU countries prevent it from being on the side of Russia with a sharp language. The flexibility brought by the informal structure of BRICS negatively affects the harmony between member states. On the other hand, it can be said that this flexibility reduces the possibility of possible Sino-India regional tensions to affect the future of BRICS.

When the main topics of the summits that both groups have realized so far are examined, it is seen that they have common approaches. Both groups aim to take a common stance in the G20 and the UN in their informal groups, emphasizing sustainable development and the continuation of global peace. Both groups are in favor of a multilateral global order. On the other hand, BRICS and MIKTA groups aim to increase the sharing of knowledge and experience within the group by forming economic, diplomatic and academic subgroups within their informal groups.

The assumption that the BRICS group will take on a new informal identity under the name BRICS Plus and the discourse that one of the new member countries will be Turkey raises

questions about the future of MIKTA. The fact that BRICS and MIKTA groups are so flexible due to their informal identities also reveals that these groups are fragile structures.

In summary, it is seen that the BRICS and MIKTA groups do not aim to dominate the global management. These informal clubs aim to make a common voice in other international organizations by increasing their cooperation within their own groups. On the other hand, although their in-group dynamics seem fragile, they are flexible formations in terms of group structures. Member countries of these groups are considered to be satisfied with this flexible structure. Because they both increase cooperation and dialogue with the states within the group, and they do not have strict rules to affect existing cooperation. However, it is still early to talk about the future of these two informal groups and their effects on global governance. MIKTA is still a ministerial group, there are conflicts of interest among the member states of BRICS. Other authors who will study BRICS and MIKTA can examine the behavior of cooperating in international organizations, which is one of the goals of these two groups.

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