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Peacebuilding as a Promising Vector of BRICS Strategic Communication: China's Experience

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Abstract. The fragmentation of the international peace architecture and the crisis of the traditional liberal model of peacekeeping highlight the need for new sustainable mechanisms for peacebuilding aimed not at the kinetic conflict resolution legitimized by just war ethics, but at their prevention through promoting equal intercultural dialogue, developing inclusive peace ethics, and stimulating the socio-economic development of Global South countries. In order to preserve peace, actors, including such weakly institutionalized organizations like BRICS, can employ strategic communication. However, despite having a clear peacebuilding agenda that emphasizes the central role of the UN and condemns unilateral interventions and sanctions, peace-development nexus, conflict resolution through dialogue between all parties mediated by regional organizations, BRICS's strategic narratives do not convert into mediation mechanisms. BRICS countries either delegate the discussion of thematic issues to other platforms or ignore them. Through a narrative and structural analysis of the strategic communication of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a BRICS member country, it has been shown that non-Western countries also face difficulties in developing individual peacebuilding strategies. This is primarily due to the need to balance between non-interference, which does not correspond to their status and interests, and intervention, which can be perceived as a manifestation of neocolonialism. Coordinated BRICS peacebuilding strategic communication could enhance its members' capabilities for conflict resolution and contribute to trust-building between BRICS and the Global South. This requires an intercultural philosophical study of non-Western ethics of peace as potential sources for the BRICS peacebuilding model, the development of mechanisms for resolving conflicts between BRICS members, a more dynamic interaction with regional organizations and research into the possibilities of digital peacebuilding.

Key words: international peace architecture, peacekeeping, conflict prevention, mediation, ethics of peace

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Миростроительство как перспективное направление стратегической коммуникации БРИКС: опыт КНР

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Аннотация. В условиях фрагментации международной архитектуры мира и кризиса традиционной либеральной модели миротворчества необходимо конструирование новых устойчивых механизмов миростроительства, направленных не на силовое разрешение конфликтов, легитимизируемое этикой справедливой войны, а на их предотвращение через равноправный межкультурный диалог, выработку инклюзивной этики мира и стимулирование социально-экономического развития стран Глобального Юга. Важную роль в поддержании мира на современном этапе, в том числе и для слабо институционализированных объединений наподобие БРИКС, играет стратегическая коммуникация. Тем не менее, несмотря на наличие у БРИКС четко выраженной повестки в области миростроительства (акцент на центральной роли ООН, осуждение односторонних вмешательств и санкций, увязывание мира с экономическим развитием, урегулирование конфликтов через стимулирование диалога между всеми участниками конфликта при посредничестве региональных организаций), стратегические нарративы объединения фактически не конвертируются в конкретные механизмы медиации. В большинстве случаев страны БРИКС либо делегируют обсуждение тематических вопросов на иные площадки, либо (что характерно для конфликтов, в которые вовлечены члены объединения) игнорируют их. Посредством нарративного и структурного анализа стратегической коммуникации Китайской Народной Республики (КНР) как страны — участницы БРИКС показано, что у незападных стран существуют сложности и с разработкой индивидуальных миростроительных стратегий. Это обусловлено необходимостью балансировать между принципом невмешательства, не соответствующим статусу и интересам ключевых стран Глобального Юга, и вмешательством, которое может быть воспринято как проявление неокOLONиализма. Создание общей миростроительной стратегической коммуникации БРИКС позволит расширить индивидуальное пространство стран — участниц объединения для урегулирования конфликтов и будет способствовать укреплению доверия между БРИКС и странами Глобального Юга. Для этого необходимы межкультурно-философское изучение незападных этик мира как потенциальных источников миростроительной модели БРИКС, разработка механизмов урегулирования конфликтов между членами объединения, более тесное взаимодействие с региональными организациями и исследование возможностей цифрового миростроительства.

Ключевые слова: международная архитектура мира, миротворчество, предотвращение конфликтов, медиация, этика мира

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Introduction

The peace deficit is a critical issue on the global academic and political agenda. For a long time, the focus of research has been predominantly on the Western liberal model of peacebuilding¹ and the international peace

architecture created on its basis. The liberal model assumes a certain conceptualization of

¹ In the literature on the subject and in peacekeeping practice, there is a traditional division of “peace operations” into five types: 1) conflict prevention, 2) peacemaking—efforts to establish dialogue between the parties involved in the conflict, 3) peacekeeping—monitoring the parties’ compliance

with the ceasefire, 4) peace enforcement—the violent end of the conflict, 5) peacebuilding—postwar activities to prevent re-escalation (for more details, see: Terminology // United Nations Peacekeeping. URL: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/terminology> (accessed: 26.01.2026)). At all stages of the conflict, actors can also carry out mediation, that is, assist the parties in finding ways to peacefully resolve the conflict. In recent decades, a broader understanding of peacebuilding has emerged, emphasizing the prevention and resolution of conflicts through the creation of an international security architecture and state-building. It is in this broad sense that peacebuilding is used in this study.

positive peace,² including “a victor’s peace focused on security, an institutional peace ensuring international governance, a constitutional peace guaranteeing democracy and free trade, and a civil peace protecting rights and freedoms” (Richmond, 2016, p. 57). An important part of the liberal model of peacebuilding is the ethics of war (primarily just war theory) as a normative basis for conflict resolution. However, an emphasis on this approach in the context of contradictions between leading actors has led only to fruitless debates about the legitimacy of armed intervention and to unilateral interventions bypassing the institutions of the international peace architecture. Even if actors managed to agree on peacekeeping operations, they did not always generate peace and stability, primarily due to the narrowness of the liberal approach and the continued Western discursive hegemony in the sphere of peacekeeping (Adu et al., 2023, pp. 421–426).

All this has led to the de facto disintegration of the liberal international peace architecture into a “multipolar order composed of various spheres, each with its own limited approaches to peacekeeping” (Richmond, Pogodda & Visoka, 2024, p. 143). Although these spheres are often conceptualized as the foundations of the structure of an authoritarian (or illiberal) international order, key non-Western countries can often support “liberal” norms (Jütersonke et al., 2021). The dichotomies of “liberal—illiberal” or “Western—non-Western” applied to global political actors do not provide an adequate understanding of the attitudes of leading powers toward the peacebuilding role of the UN in a multipolar world (Badache, Hellmüller & Salaymeh, 2022, p. 564) and the role of “peace operations” in the foreign policy strategies of these powers (Levorato & Donelli, 2024).

Therefore, it is more accurate to talk about various hybrid models of peacebuilding in this regard.

Regardless of how alternative models to Western ones are conceptualized, O. Richmond’s observation that peacebuilding currently faces serious ontological, methodological, and epistemological challenges is valid (Richmond, 2025, p. 1386). This necessitates the search for new tools for peaceful conflict resolution, as well as common ground between the liberal peacebuilding model and emerging non-Western approaches (Yuan, 2020, p. 37). An ethic of peace, which emphasizes conflict prevention through dialogue and socioeconomic assistance, could provide a fertile ground for the development of a hybrid peacebuilding.

Since an ethic of peace is associated with non-violent intervention, an important part of it is the study of the relationship between peace and communication. Conflicts generate certain narratives, which in turn exacerbate further iterations of the conflict. Analyzing these narratives and creating alternatives to them is a powerful tool for peacebuilding. At the same time, communicative peacebuilding practices face numerous challenges, ranging from a lack of attention to cultural narratives or practices prevalent in conflict environments (Atay & Berberoğlu, 2025) to a lack of discursive coordination among peacebuilders (Sandor, 2020).

In this regard, strategic communication (SC) assumes a special role in conflict prevention and resolution. This paper adopts the definition of strategic communication proposed within the framework of the integrative approach developed by E.N. Pashentsev (2020, p. 19), D.Yu. Bazarkina (Bazarkina & Pashentsev, 2021) and K. Paul (2011, p. 3): SC is understood as the projection of long-term values, interests, and goals by an actor into the consciousness of a specific audience through the appropriate synchronization of words (or strategic narratives), actions, and images to achieve

² The concept of positive peace was introduced by J. Galtung (1969). While “negative peace” simply means the absence of war, positive peace presupposes the implementation of certain norms and values that cement peace.

specific strategic objectives. This systems approach requires some methodological clarifications.

When analyzing the peacebuilding system, it is important to recognize that it is a complex system. In general, the literature on the subject (Holtzhausen, Fullerton & Lewis, 2025) typically distinguishes three levels of peacebuilding:

1. The macrolevel, at which the fundamental principles and key narratives of the thematic peacebuilding system are formulated. In the context of peacebuilding, these are narratives about the essence of the international relations system, acceptable paths to sustainable peace, the actor's role in strengthening global peace, etc. In terms of "actions," this level involves participation in the institutions of the international peace architecture.

2. The mesolevel: at this level, peacebuilding is implemented in conflict-prone regions and countries. "Actions" at this level manifest themselves, on the one hand, in the creation of (trans)regional peacebuilding institutions, and on the other, in interventions in conflicts.

3. The microlevel involves the implementation of specific peacekeeping operations. In peacekeeping operations, the IC is used for many purposes: from increasing the transparency of peacekeepers' actions to strengthening local communication and legislative mechanisms (Oksamytna, 2022). An adequate IC can be considered a critical factor in the success of strategic peacekeeping (Lederach & Scott Appleby, 2010), and therefore, the SC is becoming an integral part of UN peacekeeping operations.³

Thus, peacebuilding coordination takes various forms: from the establishment of certain

norms and institutions of the international peace architecture to the direct communicative activities of peacekeepers. In the context of a fragmented international peace architecture, the most important areas of peacebuilding coordination are preventing the degradation of global governance institutions, coordination at the meso- and microlevels, and its synchronization with coordination at the global level. In other words, second- and third-level coordination are themselves "actions" that confirm first-level coordination. For example, if an actor intervenes in a conflict out of self-interest or if its peacekeeping forces commit crimes, the global peacebuilding strategic narratives of such an actor will be viewed with extreme skepticism.

Both the study of strategic communication and its implementation are complicated by two factors. First, to implement effective strategic communication, it is necessary to consider not only the characteristics of the target audience, but also the fact that this audience may be represented by different groups, each requiring a distinct communication approach. Second, strategic communication must adapt to the context and be adjusted based on feedback from the audience.

This study aims to provide a narrative analysis of the peacebuilding approaches of BRICS and China, as presented in their key thematic documents (BRICS leaders' declarations and China's White Papers). It also aims to conduct a structural analysis of how these strategic narratives fit into the strategic communication system of the actors under consideration, if such a system can be considered at all. Due to the complexity and dynamism of strategic communication, more detailed studies of the individual strategic communication systems and strategic narratives of BRICS member countries and a comparative analysis of their strategic communication implementation strategies are needed to validate the findings and recommendations.

³ Sherman J. Strategic Communications in UN Peace Operations : From an Afterthought to an Operational Necessity. New York : International Peace Institute, 2022. URL: <https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/IPI-RPT-Strategic-Communications.pdf> (accessed: 12.09.2025).

BRICS Peacebuilding Narrative

Although BRICS is primarily an economic association, political and security issues have been declared as one of the three areas of cooperation among member countries. A narrative analysis of BRICS summit declarations from 2009 to 2025 reveals several key tenets of the association's peacebuilding narrative.

First, BRICS countries advocate for the peaceful resolution of international conflicts, with the United Nations playing a leading role. BRICS also declares its commitment to UN reform and the need for greater representation of countries from the Global South in the organization's decision-making mechanisms, although it has not developed a unified plan for such reform due to differences in the approaches of member countries (Petrone, 2021).

Second, BRICS countries condemn unilateral military interventions and economic sanctions. These actions, even when well-intentioned, destabilize the international system, delegitimize existing international institutions and principles, and pose a threat to global peace.

Third, BRICS links international security to the socioeconomic and political development of countries and regions. This approach emphasizes, on the one hand, conflict prevention and a "close link between peacekeeping and peacebuilding,"⁴ and, on the other, a broad understanding of security, in which peace issues are inextricably linked to sustainable development, counter-terrorism, etc.

Fourth, the member countries are convinced that military intervention in a conflict is only possible within the framework of UN peacekeeping missions or other organizations (for example, regional associations such as the African Union (AU)) with a UN mandate and

the consent of the authorities of the country affected by the conflict. Emphasis should be placed on establishing dialogue between all parties to the conflict and finding compromise solutions, taking into account the socio-cultural and political context (an example is the principle of "African solutions to African problems").

Fifth, deepening dialogue and cooperation among BRICS countries in itself contributes to the construction of a harmonious world. This is achieved both through reforming the international financial and international peace architecture, and through norm-setting in relatively new areas (such as the development of norms regulating information and communication technologies (ICT), artificial intelligence (AI), etc.).

At the current stage, BRICS's strategic peacebuilding communication is dual in nature. Members of the association have succeeded in constructing a unified narrative on security and peace issues, which they are able to promote in other international forums and, in some cases, implement in their own activities. Thus, the meeting of BRICS high representatives on security resulted in the BRICS Anti-Terrorism Strategy (2020) and the Action Plan for its implementation (2021). The New Development Bank is a key instrument of the BRICS peacebuilding system, one of whose main objectives is to assist countries of the Global South in infrastructure and financial and economic development.

At the same time, shortcomings in the BRICS peacebuilding system are also obvious.

First, the current narrative of the association is too abstract. The same formulations are repeated virtually unchanged every year in official documents, but they are not translated into any specific norms or mechanisms for conflict resolution.

Second, BRICS effectively delegates narrative development to other organizations or platforms. Discursive delegation itself can be considered a manifestation of SC, as it influences the norm-setting in global governance

⁴ Fortaleza Declaration (Adopted Following the Sixth BRICS Summit), Fortaleza, Brazil, July 15, 2014 // President of Russia. 2014. (In Russian). URL: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/41d4f1dd6741763252a8.pdf> (accessed: 24.06.2025).

institutions. However, attempts to shape a common narrative on thematic issues, such as the concept of “responsibility to protect” (R2P), appear more productive, where the closeness of BRICS member countries’ positions could lead to the creation of a more legitimate conflict resolution mechanism (Crowley-Vigneau et al., 2024).

Third, although some BRICS countries are involved in conflicts with third countries or even with each other, the association does not engage in mediation. Three main BRICS discursive strategies can be identified in relation to such conflicts.

The first strategy is discursive support. A striking example here is the condemnation of Israel’s aggression against Iran.⁵ This discursive unity was made possible by the similarity of the member countries’ positions on the Palestinian issue.

The second strategy is the delegation of narratives to other platforms. For example, BRICS does not formulate a common strategic narrative regarding the Ukrainian conflict and does not attempt to propose a de-escalation plan (for example, in the BRICS+ format), although it does support individual proposals by member countries on this track and the expression of their positions at UN General Assembly meetings.

The third strategy is silence. For example, the 2020–2021 border conflict between China and India has not received any attention in BRICS discourse. The conflict between India and Pakistan, as well as potential conflicts between Ethiopia and Egypt and China and Indonesia, are also being hushed up. Although the marginalization of differences between members during their meetings and the BRICS “summit diplomacy” play a certain stabilizing

role (Brosig, 2019; 2021), they will not be able to contain a full-scale conflict.

Thus, BRICS lacks mechanisms for resolving disagreements between its members or for global peacebuilding. Given the institutional amorphousness of BRICS, the BRICS peacebuilding system could become an important peacebuilding tool, necessitating an analysis of the individual peacebuilding systems of the member countries as sources for the formation of a common BRICS strategic communication.

Peacebuilding in the Context of China’s Strategic Communication System

The logic of China’s foreign policy strategy is largely determined by the dual nature of its modern identity. On the one hand, China, like most other BRICS members, has been shaped by its colonial experience (Call & de Coning, 2017, p. 256). This experience not only determines these countries’ sensitivity to the violation of their sovereignty but also fosters understanding between them and other actors in the Global South. On the other hand, China’s active development has led to the emergence of overseas interests requiring protection, as well as a need for regional and global stability to ensure continued economic growth. Furthermore, China, having effectively achieved great power status, seeks to maintain it through the production of international “public goods” such as peace, security, and development. These processes explain the need for some departure from the principle of non-intervention. In Chinese academic discourse, they have contributed to the emergence of a number of concepts (for example, “creative engagement” (*chuanzaoxing jiezhu*, 创造性介入) (Wang, 2017), which describe an influence on an actor that is not perceived as a violation of boundaries. These concepts have not been officially adopted by the Chinese leadership, but their emergence and active discussion in the Chinese expert

⁵ Rio de Janeiro Declaration “Strengthening Cooperation of the Global South for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance,” Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, July 6, 2025 // President of Russia. 2025. (In Russian). URL: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/gvTArkWauqwuryk9xzLt3HuuI7EBmqRC.pdf> (accessed: 24.08.2025).

community indicate that China is seeking a middle way between protecting its interests as a responsible power and adhering to the principle of non-interference.

At the same time, China, like several other BRICS countries, is the target of information campaigns by Western countries, which see China's desire to play a greater role in transregional and global governance as a threat to their positions and interests. It is therefore unsurprising that the current Chinese leadership attaches great importance to strategic communication. For example, in 2022, Xi Jinping declared the need to create a "strategic communication system with Chinese characteristics" (*zhongguo tese de zhanlüe chuanbo ti*, 中国特色的战略传播体). It serves to promote a variety of Chinese concepts (from the "new type of international relations" (*xinxing guoji guanxi*, 新型国际关系) and the "four global initiatives" (*si da quanqiu changyi*, 四大全球倡议) to "peace through development" (*fazhan heping*, 发展和平)), which formed the basis of global Chinese projects (One Belt, One Road), international institutions (the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) and platforms for dialogue with countries of the Global South (the Forum on China—Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)).

While peacebuilding is addressed in one way or another in most key documents and speeches by Chinese officials, the white paper "China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations" deserves special attention.⁶ Its core provisions closely echo the language of the BRICS declarations.

First, peace and harmony are important traditional values for China, reflected both in the concepts of classical Chinese philosophy such as "harmony without uniformity" (*he er butong*, 和

而不同), and in modern initiatives (for example, "a community of shared future for mankind" (*renlei minyun gongtongti*, 人类命运共同体)).

Second, China's development contributes to strengthening international peace and security, as China, having regained its status as a great power, recognizes the responsibilities that come with that status.

Thirdly, China's peacefulness and status as a responsible power are evidenced by its support for the UN as the most important institution of the international system in general and for UN peacekeeping in particular. For example, China's role in funding and staffing peacekeeping operations is increasing. Furthermore, China contributes to the development of conceptual frameworks for peacebuilding. Examples include China's participation in developing the norms of the "responsibility to protect" concept and its popularization of the complementary Brazilian "responsibility while protecting" (RwP) narrative and the Chinese "responsible protection" narrative (*fuzeren de baohu*, 负责责任的保护) (Garwood-Gowers, 2016) among others. At a more fundamental level, Beijing seeks to discursively transform the UN's "three pillars" (peace and security, development, and human rights) into a model more consistent with its identity (economic development, a strong state, and social stability) (Foot, 2020).

Finally, China is intensifying cooperation with other actors on peacebuilding through joint exercises and experience sharing. The white paper specifically notes the need to develop a peacekeeping cooperation system with relevant UN institutions and other countries to coordinate approaches to peacekeeping and improve the effectiveness of peace operations.⁷

Fourth, achieving sustainable peace requires using not only peacekeeping mechanisms but also preventive diplomacy and mediation tools, as well as promoting the socioeconomic development of countries in the Global South.

⁶ Full Text: China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations // The State Council of the Republic of China. September 18, 2020. URL: https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/202009/18/content_WS5f6449a8c6d0f7257693c323.html (accessed: 25.01.2026).

⁷ Ibid.

China's strategic peacebuilding narratives are embodied within a fairly extensive network of institutions. For example, China actively participates in the discussion of the full range of peace and security challenges within various international organizations and forums (e.g., the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Xiangshan Forum). Furthermore, China is creating a peacebuilding architecture, which currently includes the institution of special representatives and regional mechanisms with Chinese participation. In 2025, this was supplemented by the International Mediation Organization, which, in addition to China, included 32 other countries from the Global South.

One of the most important regions in China's peacebuilding efforts is Africa. Here, the main regional mechanism of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum is the Forum on China—Africa Cooperation. Although the Forum itself was established in 2000, its peacebuilding component was intensified with the rise of Xi Jinping to power. In 2012, the "China—Africa Partnership for Peace and Security Initiative" was launched, under which China pledged to increase funding for African peacekeeping operations and participate in the development of local peacekeeping forces. In 2018, the China—Africa Forum on Peace and Security was established on the sidelines of the FOCAC, and in 2022, China proposed the "Horn of Africa Peace and Development Framework." It emphasizes strengthening intraregional dialogue, socioeconomic development, and state building.⁸

In addition to expanding its participation in (trans)regional peace and security institutions, China has increasingly been directly involved in peacekeeping operations. Chinese peacekeepers

have participated in over 20 UN peacekeeping missions. China also plays an equally important role in international mediation. Beijing seeks to mediate in all key conflicts—from negotiations on nuclear programs in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Iran to the Russia—Ukraine conflict. One of the most notable achievements in this area is the settlement of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia in 2023.

Finally, not only "words" and "actions" but also "images" are becoming extremely important for the PRC. While Beijing previously emphasized "quiet diplomacy," over the past two decades, its peacebuilding efforts have been actively covered in most cases by Chinese media outlets (Paczyńska, 2021, p. 7). China has now created a multi-level system for disseminating strategic narratives, which includes a variety of media outlets, social networks, international organizations, and think tanks (Krivokhizh & Soboleva, 2025). Although an analysis of the "images" of China's peacebuilding SC requires separate research, a narrative analysis of documents on the PRC State Council website since 2012 for queries on "peacekeeping" and "peacebuilding" demonstrates that Chinese media emphasize two sets of images: improving the living conditions of conflict-affected populations with China's assistance and glorifying Chinese peacekeepers who died in the line of duty.

At the same time, despite the development of China's mediation system, it also suffers from a number of shortcomings that limit its effectiveness.

First, the conceptual underdevelopment of mediation means that it is unclear how China chooses which conflicts to mediate in and in what format. Consequently, the thesis has become widespread that China's peacebuilding activities are primarily aimed at realizing its foreign policy interests and strengthening its position in relevant regions or accessing the resources of recipient countries (Li, 2023).

⁸ Qin Gang Spoke about the Progress of Implementing the "Concept for Peaceful Development of the Horn of Africa" in Ethiopia // Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Vladivostok. January 11, 2023. (In Russian). URL: https://vladivostok.china-consulate.gov.cn/rus/zgyw_8/202301/t20230112_11006277.htm (accessed: 11.06.2025).

However, recent studies refute this thesis and demonstrate that the main drivers of China's peacebuilding efforts are the economic needs of the recipient countries and China's desire to establish itself as a "responsible great power" (Jung & Shyrokykh, 2024). Another factor influencing the decision to act as a mediator may be the presence of mechanisms establishing boundaries for permissible intervention (e.g., the FOCAC (Cheng, Mawdsley & Liu, 2023)). In any case, the lack of a clearly defined mediation strategy makes the PRC's strategic communication highly vulnerable to hostile communications campaigns. This problem is particularly relevant in the context of China's African activities, which are often conceptualized in Western narratives as neocolonialism.

Secondly, China is not always successful in converting strategic narratives into effective peacekeeping operations. For example, despite its active involvement in conflict resolution in the Middle East, Chinese "roadmaps" have failed to attract widespread international attention. This is largely due to their lack of practical solutions and focus on stabilizing rather than resolving the conflict (Karakır, 2022, p. 253). China is not always successful in positioning itself as a neutral actor in the eyes of the parties to the conflict. For example, in Ethiopia, a ceasefire between the parties to the civil armed conflict was achieved virtually without the participation of China's special representative, who, according to some participants, acted primarily in the interests of the Ethiopian government (Lammich, 2025, pp. 637–638).

At the same time, there have also been adjustments in China's peacebuilding and peacekeeping practices. Thus, the RwP concept, promoted by Beijing, has periodically clashed with China's peacebuilding strategy of supporting the security forces of a conflict-affected country through arms supplies and loans. While this strategy has led to regime strengthening in some cases, it has also often resulted in escalating violence and oppression of

the population (Ndawana, 2025). Consequently, China gradually began to move away from this strategy. On the one hand, it has imposed restrictions on arms sales in several cases when it suspected that they were leading to destabilization (Etyang & Oswan Panyako, 2020, p. 354). On the other hand, Beijing has started to focus more on interaction with local civil society and conceptualize it as an ally of a strong state (Jütersonke et al., 2021). For example, Chinese peacekeepers participating in UN operations actively provide humanitarian aid to local schools, shelters and medical facilities, and organize joint cultural events (Kwon, 2020).

Instead of a Conclusion: Prospects for the Development of a BRICS Peacebuilding System

The analysis shows that, in the context of a fragmented international architecture, strategic communication is gradually becoming an increasingly important part of the peacebuilding efforts of the BRICS countries in general and China in particular. However, even the highly developed Chinese system of strategic communication has some shortcomings, primarily due to China's attempt to navigate a path between non-intervention, which does not meet the demands of the peoples of the Global South and is incapable of protecting Chinese interests, and intervention, which requires fine-tuning and potentially provokes condemnation from non-Western actors, but is necessary in the face of discursive aggression from Western countries.

One solution to this dilemma could be the development of a common BRICS peacebuilding system. Since many residents of the Global South are suspicious of individual interventions in their internal affairs by BRICS member countries, mediation by BRICS as an association could significantly increase public confidence in conflict resolution measures.

To construct such a BRICS+ framework, several steps need to be taken.

First, a thorough analysis of non-Western ethics of war and peace, their applicability to contemporary political practice and the BRICS+ framework, is necessary. An intercultural-philosophical approach (Stepanyants, 2020) can be an important tool here. This approach implies not simply a comparative analysis of different traditions, but also an equal dialogue between them and the use of their intellectual resources to find answers to pressing problems.

Second, it is necessary to develop mechanisms for conflict prevention and mediation among the BRICS+ participants themselves. Indonesia's experience as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) can be extremely valuable in this regard.

Third, the possibilities of institutionalizing BRICS in the peacebuilding field should be explored. It would be advisable to create a permanent BRICS body that would focus on issues of conflict monitoring and prevention (Abdenur, 2017, p. 90), as well as the development of a common BRICS narrative.

Fourth, it is necessary to explore the potential for BRICS cooperation with regional

organizations, which could significantly expand the peacebuilding capabilities of associations such as the African Union and, at the same time, facilitate the translation of BRICS peacebuilding principles into concrete actions.

Fifth, since ICT is one of the most significant areas of BRICS cooperation, the association's embrace of digital peacebuilding holds great promise. AI technologies possess enormous peacebuilding potential. They can be used for a variety of purposes: predicting and early identifying conflicts, monitoring ceasefires, building trust between conflict parties (Hirblinger et al., 2024), identifying the most conflict-affected groups and more effectively and equitably distributing humanitarian aid, analyzing the effectiveness of individual and collective peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts by BRICS member countries, etc. A promising area of research is the use of AI for the joint construction of positive future scenarios with conflict parties (Hirblinger, Brummer & Kufus, 2024), including those based on non-Western peace ethics. Finally, AI can also become an important tool for constructing a common BRICS peacebuilding SC.

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