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## The Logic of the B(R)ICSAM Model for G8 Reform

Andrew F. Cooper

### Expanding the BRICs

The BRICs model developed by Goldman Sachs in its publication, *Dreaming With BRICs: The Path to 2050*, has attracted some considerable attention.<sup>1</sup> From an economic perspective, it has enormous attractions in lending attention to four countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) that are dynamic global motors of growth. On the basis of GDP/Purchasing Power Parity, China (4), India (6), Russia (11) and Brazil (12) all rank in the top 12.<sup>2</sup>

Yet, looking beyond material resources to diplomatic logic, the viability of utilizing this model weakens considerably. For this group is highly differentiated in terms of their positioning in the international arena. It contains two members of the Permanent 5 (P5) of the Security Council within the United Nations system (UNSC), one entrant into the Group of G8, and two traditional champions of the global South as expressed through the G77 and other forums.

One reaction against the unwieldy nature of this constellation has been to narrow the focus by privileging 'CHINDIA', that is to say, restricting the focus to the two massive Asian economic drivers, China and India.<sup>3</sup> Even this reductionist approach, though, has its conceptual flaws. The economic strengths of these two countries are quite different. China has been the recipient of far more foreign direct investment, and is better connected to global supply chains. Its growth is based mainly on goods trade. India's growth in turn is more internally generated thanks to its large services trade. And from a diplomatic perspective, China and India have as many unlike characteristics as they have features in common. To provide just the one most obvious example, India has campaigned as part of the so-called Group of 4 along with Brazil, Germany and Japan to break into the UNSC. By way of contrast, China has exhibited the prerogatives of a status quo minded P5 member along with the US, Russia, the UK, and France.

<sup>1</sup> Dominic Wilson and Roopa Purushothaman, "Dreaming With BRICs: The Path to 2050," *Global Economics Paper*, Goldman Sachs, no. 99 (October 2003), available online: [www.gs.com/insight/research/reports/99.pdf](http://www.gs.com/insight/research/reports/99.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> CIA, *The World Fact Sheet*. 2006 estimates in: <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html>.

<sup>3</sup> J. Lloyd and A. Turkeltaub, "India and China are the only real Brics in the wall," *Financial Times*, Comment (December 4, 2006): 17.



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Rather than contracting the BRICs model, it should be expanded to encompass the B(R)ICSAM model.<sup>4</sup> This would allow coverage of not only the core BRICs countries but Mexico, South Africa, and potentially a member of the ASEAN-4 (Indonesia) as well. The economic logic of this extended model is not as strong, as on the basis of PPP Mexico is ranked 15th, Indonesia 17th, and South Africa 24th. But this weakness is more than compensated by the convincing diplomatic logic emanating from the focus on a B(R)ICSAM group.

All of the B(R)ICSAM have demonstrated a global reach in terms of their diplomatic profile. The stretch of China's international influence has been well documented. To give just one illustration, Beijing's concerted charm offensive towards Africa has been conducted not only on a bilateral basis but multilaterally through the convening of the impressive China-Africa Co-operation Forum in November 2006. India has become a hub of diplomatic interaction, as representatives of India's old and new friends (above all reflected by the recent US-India strategic partnership) vie for attention and deals. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was chosen to speak on behalf of the South in Bandung on the 50th anniversary of the creation of Non-Alignment Movement (NAM). Brazil under President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva has run with a number of high profile diplomatic initiatives, ranging from leadership on the G20 via the World Trade Organization, the proposal for a global fund against hunger, and the recent push on biofuel diplomacy. South Africa shares an innovative partnership with India and Brazil and plays a strong role in the G77, the African Union, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Mexico has combined its membership in NAFTA with an ascendant role in the OECD.

Of more instrumental purpose for this paper, this cluster of countries coincides with the so-called G5 'outreach' or 'dialogue' countries that have been gradually albeit unevenly incorporated into the G8 summit process. The value of using the term B(R)ICSAM therefore, is that it recognizes the individuality of each member of this group of countries, while minimizing the sensitivities of hanging onto terms such as 'outreach' or 'dialogue' - which are problematic from the perspective of the global South.

The selection of this core group is certainly not without its own diplomatic limitations. By the standards of some far more ambitious conceptualizations of G8 reform, this model is a step down. The best known of these initiatives is the one pushed by the (now former) Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin for a Leaders' 20, or L 20 summit. This builds on the success of the G20 or F20 of Finance Ministers developed as a consequence of the Asian/IMF crisis of 1997/98.<sup>5</sup> As in the case of the F20, the L20 was intended to act as a bridge between the G8 members positioned in the North and selective representatives from the global South. Another model of similar scope has been the proposal by Klaus Schwab, the executive chair of the World Economic Forum, for a P21 (or Partnership 21 along the lines of the UNSC P5).

B(R)ICSAM is also complicated by the presence of Russia in its midst as an official but not full member of the club. As opposed to the other members of B(R)ICSAM Russia is already an established member of the G8 at the political level, as witnessed

<sup>4</sup> See Andrew F. Cooper, Agata Antkiewicz, and Timothy M. Shaw, "Economic Size Trumps All Else? Lessons from BRICSAM." CIGI Working Paper #12 2006.

<sup>5</sup> The F 20 concept is taken from Colin I. Bradford and Johannes Linn, "Summit Reform: Toward an L-20," in Colin I. Bradford and Johannes Linn, eds., *Global Governance Reform: Breaking the Stalemate*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007), 77-86.

by its role as host of the 2006 St. Petersburg summit. Yet, this insider position should not be exaggerated. Russia still is excluded from the key economic discussions within the G8 process, including those on currency matters. It is still more accurate to talk of a hybrid G7/8.<sup>6</sup>

Normatively, the addition of Russia complicates the element of 'we-ness' contained in the traditional club model of the G7. On the one hand, it puts the onus on socializing from within, nudging and cajoling Russia to become a sustained champion of democracy. This was the original rationale for the G7 to extend membership to Boris Yeltsin's Russia in the late 1990s. On the other hand, an argument can be made that with the turn of President Vladimir Putin's Russia towards 'managed democracy' this criterion for membership is lessened.<sup>7</sup> At St. Petersburg Russia was courted not on the basis of its democratic credentials but because of its role as an energy superpower.

Consequently the question is opened up about whether or not Russia is (and should be) exceptional or not. If democracy is no longer the criterion for 'we-ness' is/should this criterion be replaced by other measures. One of these measures is economic bigness, that is to say, simply adjusting the G8 to a G13 or even an L20 simply by economic ranking (based on GDP/PPP or some other metric). *The Economist*, for example, has long championed reform of the G8 along these lines (with the replacement of some existing members by countries with bigger economies).<sup>8</sup> The other measure would be on a more subjective one of diplomatic weight, focusing less on structure and more on behaviour or agency.

The attraction of a limited, stable, and status equivalent group via the B(R)ICSAM model is reinforced by its simplicity. Procedurally, this model cuts out much of the debate about membership for the L20 beyond a core grouping. Calls for rotational membership, or some form of delegation, are made moot. There are also design benefits of sticking to small numbers, in that consensus on complex issues (hard enough with a G13) will increase with an L20. The ability to solve crises - as the UN has often found out - is not enhanced by simply building a more inclusive decision-making process.

Operationally, the case for the inclusion of these core countries can be made on both efficiency and legitimacy. As noted at the outset all of the core B(R)ICSAM members of the L20 configuration fit the profile of classic big emerging markets and/or regional powerhouses, that are becoming increasingly integrated into the world economy (Wilson and Purushothaman, 2003).

This structural strength goes hand in hand with diplomatic prowess. As suggested by John Humphrey and Dirk Messner in their innovative work on what they term "anchor countries", the size of the economies of these hub countries must be blended with their capacity to "actively participate in global dialogue" that is crucial for this analysis.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> It is for this reason that China has been reluctant to move by itself in becoming a member of the G9. See Yu Yongding, "China's evolving global view," in John English, Ramesh Thakur, and Andrew F. Cooper, eds, *Reforming from the top: A Leaders' 20 Summit* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2005) 187-200.

<sup>7</sup> Anders Åslund, "Russia's Challenges as Chair of the G-8," *Policy Briefs in International Economics*, no. PB06-3, Washington, DC, Institute for International Economics, 7, March 2006.

<sup>8</sup> *The Economist*, "There were seven in the bed," February 27, 1993.

<sup>9</sup> John Humphrey and Dirk Messner, "The Impact of the Asian and other Drivers on Global Governance," available at: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/global/pdfs/AsianDriversGovernancepaper05.pdf>.

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The G8's  
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### Responding to the Crisis of Legitimacy and Efficiency: A diffuse pattern of outreach

The legitimacy of the G8 has long been questioned. The greatest source of its weakness - and paradoxically, its strength in terms of club cohesion - has been its self-selected (and un-elected) status. To outsiders, especially in the global South, it was precisely this feature that demarked the G8 as an illegitimate body in contrast to the universal form of multilateralism via the UN system (with all its formalism).

What has transformed these tensions about a 'democratic deficit' into a crisis has been the increased inability of the G8 to be effective on an issue-specific basis. On many of its traditional economic concerns the G8 has shown itself to be stronger on words than on deeds, e.g. exhorting action from China on currency revaluation with little or no impact. The same is true on foreign policy and security issues, with declarations on the Middle East but no tangible results. At the same time, however, the G7/8 has continued to expand its agenda. And it must be acknowledged that many of its perceived successes have come not in the area of economics or security affairs but on social/development issues, such as debt relief and the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Still, rather than ameliorating the need for reform these successes actually increase the normative need (and procedural momentum) for reform. A strong argument can be made that the global economy can no longer be managed - or globalization re-shaped - without the presence of the B(R)ICSAM countries embedded in the G8 process. But this governance gap is magnified in the developmental/social arena. As India, China, Brazil and South Africa extend their own functional reach in these domains is it ethical or practical to leave B(R)ICSAM out?

The response by the G8 has been an opening up by the summit through a diffuse pattern of outreach. France chose to showcase members of B(R)ICSAM - with the leaders from China, India and Brazil (along with those from other potential L20 members, including Mexico and Saudi Arabia) at Evian in 2003. The UK, with a similar model in mind, invited the same core countries (albeit without Middle Eastern representation) to discuss climate change at Gleneagles in 2005.

A similar framework was used in key ancillary bodies. Most noticeably, the G7/8 forum of finance ministers was opened up to the upper echelon of the B(R)ICSAM group. For the first time in 2004, China was invited to attend one of the four G7 finance ministers' meetings held that year; Russia was not even invited to any of the four. Excluding Mexico, the finance ministers of all of the B(R)ICSAM countries were present at various meetings throughout 2005 and 2006 and the entire B(R)ICSAM group was invited to the meeting of finance ministers at Essen, Germany in February 2007.

So entrenched did this hub approach become that it operated with little critical comment. At the societal level, protestors targeted many aspects for the G 7/8 for criticism but the outreach component slid under the radar. At the societal level, the main focus for reproach was not because of their inclusion but when this core group appeared to be excluded. Outgoing French President Jacques Chirac publicly rebuked the United States, most obviously, for not being more inclusive to these regional hubs

at the 2004 Sea Island summit: "We cannot discuss major economic issues nowadays without discussing these issues with China, with India, Brazil, South Africa".<sup>10</sup>

If habit-forming at a generalized level the approach to the B(R)ICSAM group was applied quite unevenly on a specific basis. Italy and Canada took what might be termed an African-centric approach. The meetings they hosted - in Genoa and Kananaskis - picked a form of representation that put the primary emphasis on the attendance of leaders from the African continent and the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development agenda. Japan at the earlier 2000 Okinawa summit took a similar line, inviting Algeria, South Africa and Nigeria into the mix (with Thailand added in as well). And Prime Minister Tony Blair played the African card as well at Gleneagles, combining B(R)ICSAM participation on climate change with African participation on debt relief and development assistance.

Other countries took a divergent track. As mentioned, the US did things its own way at Sea Island, moving from an approach that downplayed outreach altogether to one that placed the emphasis on the Middle East. The response rate, however, proved low for this invitation: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Tunisia, Turkey and Yemen said yes. But Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Pakistan, Egypt and Morocco said no. So the Bush administration scrambled at the last moment to bring together a blend of African states to Sea Island.<sup>11</sup>



The official photo session of the G8 leaders, invited leaders and heads of international organizations during the 2006 G8 summit. (Photo: [www.g8russia.ru](http://www.g8russia.ru)).

## The Diplomatic Logic of B(R)ICSAM

The B(R)ICSAM has a good number of advantages over the other models not only on the logic of economics but diplomacy. The behavioural/functional range of each of the B(R)ICSAM countries on the diplomatic axis is far greater than the other potential members of an L20. To give just the most obvious illustration, the G20 or F20 of Finance ministers established by the G7 in the aftermath of the Asian/IFI crisis in 1997/8 included the bulk of the potential members of the L20, yet the diplomatic status among the G20 countries was not equitable. Some countries (most notably Argentina and Turkey) were included less because they were seen as problem solvers but because they were themselves problem cases. And still other countries, although not without impressive economic assets (Saudi Arabia and South Korea), are commonly judged not to possess the geographical/functional range of diplomatic credentials held by the B(R)ICSAM countries.

Confirmation of the elevated status accorded to the B(R)ICSAM countries came out in the rotation of the presidency of the G20. India was tasked with this role in 2002, Mexico in 2003, China in 2005 and South Africa in 2007, with Brazil taking over in 2008. A top tier of countries with the G20 constellation has thus been credentialized.

<sup>10</sup> G8 Information Centre, "Press briefing by French President Jacques Chirac", Sea Island documents, University of Toronto, June 9, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> On this initiative see Princeton N. Lyman, *Freedom, Prosperity, and Security: The G8 Partnership with Africa: Sea Island 2004 and Beyond*, Special Report (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, May 2004).

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If attractive by design there are also benefits by default, as the B(R)ICSAM model provides the most appropriate form of compensation for failure on what for many observers is the best option: universalistic reform via the UN. Almost all the leading candidates for a permanent seat on the SC would be accommodated in this model (most notably, India and Brazil). Likewise there is room for a number of alternative UNSC possibilities (Indonesia, for example) and for some strong blockers (above all, Mexico which opposed Brazil's bid to join the UNSC).

### Targeting the B(R)ICSAM as the G7/8 plus group

The refinement of the diffuse pattern of outreach has been pushed by both the UK government of Tony Blair, in the aftermath of its presidency of the G8, and by members of the coalition German government, in the lead up to Heiligendamm in June 2007. Blair made his call for G8 reform at the 2007 World Economic Summit at Davos with a specific targeting on what he termed the 'Outreach 5' or 'O5'.<sup>12</sup> The number of negatives associated with this initiative cannot be ignored. In terms of language, Blair's call signalled the limits as much as the boundary-spanning dynamics of the initiative. For offering 'outreach' status was still very different than equitable partnership. In terms of operation, it still left the modalities of this outreach up in the air. Would this core group be invited simply for breakfast or lunch on an ongoing basis? If so, the asymmetrical nature of the G8 plus would be emphasized, not reduced.<sup>13</sup>

In other ways, it is the positives that stand out. If not completely novel, the Blair initiative advanced the reformist drive both in respect to process and selection. In terms of previous outreach models, it is the differentiation between the G8 and the G8 plus group that is notable. UK G8 watchers, such as the former sherpa Sir Nicholas Bayne, had long recommended that leaders should maintain the practice, begun at Okinawa in 2000, of inviting a group of leaders from developing countries to meet them before the summit proper. He argued that the admission of new members to the G8 itself, however, should be approached with caution. He characterizes the G8's greatest merit as the fact that "it is small and compact enough for the leaders to have a direct exchange around the table. This quality would be lost if extra members were added in the interest of making the G8 more widely representative."<sup>14</sup>

In terms of membership, Blair's initiative makes a clear choice on a permanent outreach group that is very different from the ad hoc approach adopted since 2000. Blair's rationale for picking what is effectively the B(R)ICSAM is not made explicit. But one close observer suggests that the pick was made on as much diplomatic as economic criteria: "There is a general consensus concerning the regional and global role of China, India, and Brazil. South Africa gets the nod because of its active global-governance policy...although there are major reservations on the continent of Africa concerning

<sup>12</sup> *Speech by the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair MP. to the World Economic Forum, Davos. January 27, 2007, available at: [www.weforum.org/pdf/AM\\_2007/blair.pdf](http://www.weforum.org/pdf/AM_2007/blair.pdf).*

<sup>13</sup> See Paul Martin's criticism in his keynote address at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the Development and Peace Foundation: "Speaking notes for the Right Honourable Paul Martin P.C., M.P.," Annual Meeting of the Development and Peace Foundation, Dresden, Germany, June 8, 2006, available at: [www.paulmartin.ca/speech-20060608-1.html](http://www.paulmartin.ca/speech-20060608-1.html).

<sup>14</sup> Sir Nicholas Bayne, "Concentrating the Mind: Decision-Making in the G7/G8 System", presentation to the *Promoting Conflict Prevention and Human Security: What Can the G8 Do?*, conference of the G8 Research Group, University of Toronto, July 16, 2001, available at: <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/conferences/2001/rome/bayne-conflict.pdf>; See also Sir Nicholas Bayne, "Prospects for the 2005 G8 Gleneagles Summit," presentation to the G8 Research Group, University of Toronto, November 22, 2004.

South Africa's claim to a leading role. Mexico's claims are less obvious. Presumably US interests come into play here: the USA wishes to provide its neighbor with a leading position in the global hierarchy. Having said that, by virtue of its OECD and NAFTA membership Mexico is suitable for a bridging role between North and South and in addition has strategic significance as a major oil exporter."<sup>15</sup>

The German approach has been more diversified across the spectrum of political actors and shifting priorities. Chancellor Angela Merkel's own view at the outset of the German presidency was that Heiligendamm should be a 'back to basics' summit in terms of site, agenda, and participation.<sup>16</sup> This perspective has been twisted out of shape by both international and domestic circumstances. At the international level several of the original agenda items pushed by the Germans have proved an awkward fit with the G8 process, most notably initiatives on hedge fund reform. Alternatively, developmental/social issues reminiscent of Gleneagles have proved to be attractive. This widening out approach has in turn reinforced the need for outreach, especially with the B(R)ICSAM countries. The most noticeable characteristic of the G8 process in 2007 has been the embedded nature - and high level of participation - of the relationship between the traditional members and the B(R)ICSAM countries. As noted above, all of these countries were invited to the meeting of finance ministers at Essen, Germany in February. And the sherpas for the G8 summit have closely engaged their counterparts from the B(R)ICSAM countries, including on developing issues. To reinforce this point, Bernd Pfaffenbach, State Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, and Chancellor Merkel's Personal Representative (sherpa) for the summit, put into the public domain the planned permanent integration of the big 5 ('the Heiligendamm process').

Domestically, the coalition nature of the German government has been an important source of this change in approach. The Social Democratic Party Finance Minister Peer Steinbrück has been a vocal champion of G8 reform, with the summit being extended to include select members from the North and South. After making his views known at the November 2006 G20 meeting in Melbourne Australia, Steinbrück repeated them to a home (and increasingly attentive) audience at the Essen meeting of Finance ministers.<sup>17</sup>

As in the case of the Blair initiative Steinbrück's shift was not entirely unanticipated. With the push by the Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin for an L20, German Finance Minister Hans Eichel (a key actor with Martin in the establishment of the Finance G20), expressed some sympathy: "There is a need to reinforce the growing sense of responsibility of all members for their respective regions and for the world economy as a whole. On this basis policy co-operation could be broadened as well. This applies both to the number and frequency of meetings and to the division of labour by subject matter. If the G20 continues to develop along these lines and becomes



German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin following a meeting during the 2006 G8 summit. (Photo: www.g8russia.ru).

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Fues, "Global Governance Beyond the G8: Reform Prospects for the Summit Architecture," *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft*, 2/2007, 11-24.

<sup>16</sup> Simon Morgan, "Germany wants G8 to 'go back to roots,' to tackle world's economic problems," *Agence France Presse*, December 28, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> "G 20 warnt vor steigender Inflation; Industrie- und Schwellenländer aber nicht einig über Rezepte," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (20 November 2006).

even more effective, I think we could in theory expect to see a G20 comprising the Heads of State and Government set up at some time in the future."<sup>18</sup>

The fundamental distinction between the two German Finance ministers was on timing. Whereas Eichel was still looking well into the future, Steinbrück urged that the G8 be reformed "Not next year, but in two or three years."

### Constraints on the B(R)ICSAM Model for G7/8 Reform

If there is an opening for the B(R)ICSAM countries to be the model for G8 reform, there continue to be severe obstacles to progress along these lines. Inside the G8 there remains some considerable opposition to any major reform. One of the major functional initiatives of the UK government during its presidency was the creation of a 'G8+5' process connecting the ministers of energy and the environmental ministers of the G8 and the G5 outreach group. The potential of this initiative is still ready to be captured. However, Russia during its time as president of the G8 did not nurture this process, marginalizing it at the St. Petersburg summit. What space this initiative still has will be played out in an autonomous manner.



Chinese President Hu Jintao, summit host Vladimir Putin, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh pose during a tripartite meeting at the 2006 G8 summit. (Photo: www.g8russia.ru).

In all likelihood Japan will also downplay the role of the G5 outreach group in 2008. Japan highly values its participation in the G8, and is unlikely to place pressures for greater legitimacy over its club mentality. This bias is reinforced - in a similar manner to the US - by the sense that democracy is essential to 'we-ness'. On this premise, the candidacy of China (by the economic as well as diplomatic criteria at the top of the list for entry into the G7/8) is nixed.

Outside the G8, one main form of resistance is on the principle that any move towards reinforcing the legitimacy and efficiency of this self-selective group is detrimental to universalism as embodied by the UN. Another is on selectivity. One point of controversy remains the presence of South Africa as the sole African member of B(R)ICSAM. Although in South Africa the notion has begun to grab some positive attention,<sup>19</sup> as the UNSC contest revealed (in

that three African countries - South Africa, Nigeria, and Egypt vied openly for two potential spots) this ownership will not be uncontested.

The other point of controversy is the absence of an Islamic country. This mode of participation was at the core of the American approach to outreach at the Sea Island summit. Even with the dual approach of the Blair government - with both core B(R)ICSAM and African representation - the UK found itself in a position where it had no major Islamic representation at Gleneagles (a missing element that was made even more glaring by the July 2005 London bombings).

<sup>18</sup> Andrew F. Cooper and John English, "Introduction," in *Reforming from the Top: A Leaders' 20 Summit*, ed. John English, Ramesh Thakur, and Andrew F. Cooper, (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2005) 13. See also the G20 Official Website for the Berlin meeting of G20 Finance Ministers, November 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Brendan Vickers, "Heading towards the G-8 St. Petersburg Summit: What's in it for Africa?," *Global Insight*, Institute for Global Dialogue, no. 63 (July 9, 2006): 4.

Notwithstanding these deficiencies there are solid counter-arguments as to why the model of G7/8 reform should not be stretched too far in the pursuit of "representativeness". Paul Martin contemplated adding either Egypt and/or Nigeria to the L20 model. But the concept he was convinced was right built on the G20 model, with Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey "in" and Nigeria and Egypt "out." On the basis of diplomatic logic Indonesia would appear to be the best country to add to B(R)ICSAM group. In part this is because of an international standing built up over the years as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement (not only hosting the path-breaking Bandung conference but the 50th anniversary) as well as the G77. But these credentials have been reinforced by its status as a country with a large Islamic majority and an emergent democratic culture (with its democratic values extended into the international arena through its support for the new ASEAN charter).

The remaining flaws of the B(R)ICSAM model appear to pale as well with those offered in alternative designs. The International Task Force on Global Public Goods, if commendable in other ways, suggests an expanded version of the L20 that is over-crowded with a Global 25. Such proposals have the deficiency of tilting the balance towards legitimacy at the expense of efficiency.<sup>20</sup>

### Big Bang to Incrementalism

Paul Martin laid out his model of the L20 for all to see. This was highly commendable as a model of global governance. The intellectual endorsement of this approach is impressive. Yet, in terms of an immediate diplomatic impact, this initiative has fallen short of its ambitious aims.

Incrementalism - if far less attractive as a normative device for reform - appears under current circumstances to be a far more productive vehicle. It allows different champions, whether Tony Blair or Angela Merkel, to hand off some elements of ownership as they move out and in of the presidency of the G8. It also avoids direct confrontation with the resisters. The focus is a neo-functional one with an emphasis on making tangible connections between reform and problem-solving on specific issues (a practical approach that has puts energy, climate change, and health, in the forefront)

If incrementalism does continue to progress it seems predictable that the B(R)ICSAM countries will be the big winners. The L20 has many advantages over this more parsimonious option, not the least that it encompasses the G20 or F20 model. But parsimony has its virtues from a diplomatic perspective. It is very difficult to argue that any of the B(R)ICSAM countries do not belong in a reformed G8 on diplomatic grounds, notwithstanding their political and economic differences. All of these countries are necessary ingredients for unblocking issues both as constructive demanders and as countries that have been blockers themselves.

The top-down orientation of this dynamic of multilateral reform will linger as a basic feature of this type of reform process. Nonetheless, the means of bringing about changes in the G8 will at least in governmental terms bubble up from below. The sherpa process will be an important component of this dynamic. For example, will

Under current  
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<sup>20</sup> International Task Force on Global Public Goods, "Meeting Global Challenges: International Cooperation in the National Interest," 2006, available at: [http://www.gpgtaskforce.org/bazment.aspx?page\\_id=268#bazAnchor](http://www.gpgtaskforce.org/bazment.aspx?page_id=268#bazAnchor).

sherpas of the B(R)ICSAM countries be invited in coming years to attend by the G8 as a club as opposed by individual countries which hold the presidency?

Other possibilities of both reform scenarios and rejection are available for sure. Still, the B(R)ICSAM model for G8 reform seems to have become the best bet for movement. It allows a sizeable degree of reform without either tipping the balance away from the G8 or raising the bar of expectations too far for other countries. An adjustment will in all likelihood be added sometime in the future, in the way of another African country and/or an Islamic country but the core group has been established. The increasingly strong impulse towards enhancing legitimacy and efficiency at the heart of the global governance architecture brings with it a recognition that the B(R)ICSAM are an integral - if not complete - means to this end.

## Who We Are

CIGI identifies and develops ideas for global change by supporting research, fostering exchange among experts and leaders in the private and public sectors, and providing informed advice to decision-makers on multilateral governance issues. To achieve its ambitious mandate, CIGI supports research initiatives by recognized experts and promising academics; forms networks that link world class minds across disciplines; informs and shapes the dialogue among scholars, opinion leaders, key policy-makers, and the concerned public; and builds capacity by supporting excellence in policy-related scholarship.

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