



Iran Boosts Ties With China and Russia

On August 24, Chinese President Xi Jinping declared that China is prepared to increase cooperation with Iran on BRICS (the economic bloc currently made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) as well as on other multilateral platforms.

Xi made the remarks when meeting with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on the fringes of the 15th BRICS Summit last week that culminated in six new countries joining the economic bloc.

The Chinese leader also congratulated Iran on becoming a member of BRICS and pointed out that such an expansion was a landmark one, given that the last such enlargement was when South Africa joined the group in 2011.

All the new BRICS members are countries with vital international clout, Xi said, voicing his optimism that these countries would command huge influence on the global arena.

Moreover, Xi posited that with the help of China, Iran and Saudi Arabia, both long-standing regional rivals in the Middle East, have reached out to each other to mend ties, thus boosting security and stability in the Middle East.

Also, China is open to reinforcing its friendship with Iran, boosting mutual trust as well as sustaining its support for Iran on issues of key interest, Xi stated.

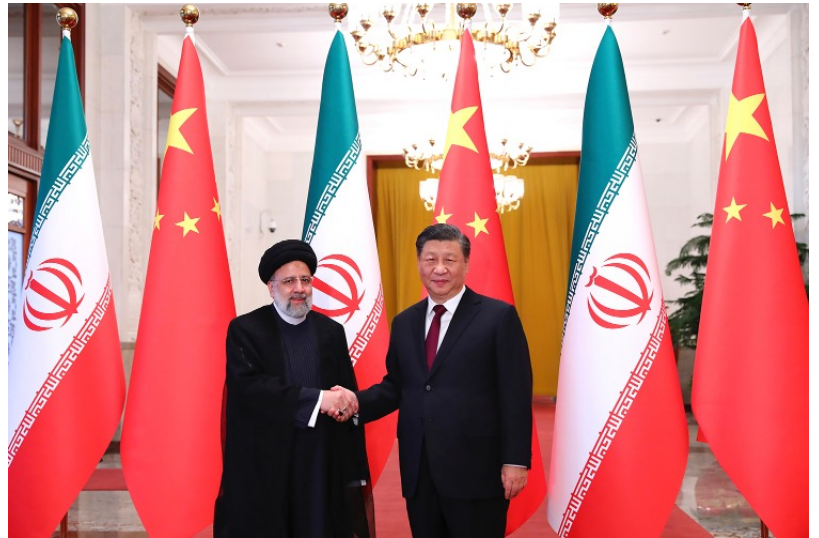
On his end, Raisi expressed his gratitude to China for backing Iran in becoming a full member of BRICS and said that Iran's membership would offer fresh momentum for the enhancement of Iran-China ties.

The Iranian leader elaborated that Iran's BRICS membership would help increase bilateral coordination on multilateral platforms, as well as better advance the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative introduced by Xi.

Raisi also pointed out that the expansion of BRICS showed that unilateralism was on the decline.

Iran's plan to strengthen the Iran-China comprehensive strategic partnership is unflinching, Raisi stated, elaborating that Iran is also open to further enhancing comprehensive strategic collaboration with China in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Additionally, China's top diplomat, Wang Yi, said in a telephone conversation with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amirabdollahian that China was ready to cooperate with Iran "to continue to firmly support each other on issues related to the core interests of each side, jointly resist external interference and counter unilateral harassment, protect the sovereignty, security and development interests of China and Iran, uphold the common interests of developing countries and international impartiality and justice."



AP Images
Ebrahim Raisi and Xi Jinping



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on August 28, 2023

Apart from China, Iran is also boosting its cooperation with Russia, as Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov declared that bilateral military cooperation would not bow to international pressure, in response to a question about the notion of halting bilateral military and technical collaboration, Reuters reported.

“We are independent countries and we are not subject to the dictates of the United States and its allies,” Ryabkov said, based on a report by Arabic Sputnik.

Besides, Ryabkov reaffirmed that there were no amendments to bilateral military-technical cooperation. The Russian diplomat stressed that “the military-technical cooperation with Iran is completely legal and fully consistent with the international obligations of Russia and Iran.”

“The joint work with Tehran continues, does not stop and there are no changes in it,” the diplomat added.

Likewise, Yahya Rahim Safavi, a senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps commander and advisor to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, asserted that increased maritime cooperation among Iran, Russia, and China will aid Tehran in overcoming the West’s “cruel sanctions.”

“In order to counter the cruel sanctions imposed by the US and its allies, Iran must promote the strategy of sea-oriented economy and boost its maritime power with the presence of its trade and military fleet in the oceans and seas and by using the network of South-North and East to West corridors in cooperation with the Russian Federation and China,” Safavi declared at a national conference on maritime affairs.

“We need to connect the maritime and ground geostrategic domains. This is a new strategy as Iran’s geographical location gives us such a capacity,” the official continued.

Securing Iran’s role in the “geometry of the new world order” without an increased presence in the world’s seas and oceans would be impossible, Safavi argued.

In recent years, Iran has significantly escalated economic, trade, and security cooperation with its Eurasian neighbors, and has emerged as a key economic, [scientific](#), and military power, testing out its “sea legs” in 2021 and in 2023 with high-profile deployments of mini-armadas on international voyages.

Boosting trade ties with China via the ambitious BRI, and with Russia through the so-called [North-South Corridor](#), Iran, which typically protects its military independence, has nonetheless stepped up collaboration with Beijing and Moscow in large-scale naval exercises, which Iranian officials have admitted [help](#) contest the U.S.-led world order.

Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has been under American sanctions in one form or another. The restrictions, however, have been unsuccessful in halting Iranian economic growth. Rather, they have catalyzed the development and production of advanced weapons such as drones; ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles; as well as advanced radar and defense electronics. In the realm of civilian technologies and industries, Iran is presently the largest industrial power in the Middle East, and is arguably the country with the most developed civilian space program in the Islamic world.

In South Asia, Iran has been flexing its diplomatic muscles to woo India as well. According to Indian media reports, India and Iran have decided not to pursue commercial foreign arbitration for disputes between users and operators at the deep sea Chabahar Port in southeast Iran, facilitating the path to a long-term plan to develop the strategic hub.



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At the BRICS Summit last week, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Raisi explored ways to boost bilateral cooperation in various fields including trade and investment, energy, connectivity, and counter-terrorism.

“Both sides agreed to fast track infrastructure cooperation, including the Chabahar project. The leaders also exchanged views on regional developments, including Afghanistan,” Modi’s office declared.



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