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## In Defiance of Trump-Era Pressures, Brazil Reaffirms Commitment to BRICS

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In a move that underscores its pivot away from U.S.-centric foreign policy and reflects lingering defiance of the hardline approach pushed by President Donald Trump, Brazil is doubling down on its commitment to BRICS, the geopolitical bloc that includes Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

While the Trump administration sought to pressure Latin American allies into distancing themselves from China and Russia, Brazil's renewed embrace of BRICS signals a clear rejection of those expectations. Under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Brazil is reasserting its sovereignty on the world stage by strengthening alliances with major non-Western powers and advocating for a multipolar global order.

At the heart of Brazil's strategy is a belief that BRICS can serve as a counterbalance to Western-led institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, long seen as vehicles for U.S. influence. Brazilian officials argue that deeper cooperation within BRICS will allow emerging economies to chart their course on global trade, development, and finance, free from Washington's oversight.

In recent remarks, President Lula expressed his support for a more assertive BRICS presence in global economic governance, adding that they continue to seek alternatives to dollar dominance in trade. He also called for greater representation of emerging economies in multilateral institutions. "We are not aligning against the United States," Lula said at a BRICS forum. "We are asserting our right to align with our interests."

This posture stands in sharp contrast to the Trump administration's foreign policy doctrine, which viewed international blocs like BRICS with suspicion and discouraged U.S. allies in the Western Hemisphere from engaging with China and Russia. During Trump's tenure, Brazil's previous leadership maintained closer ties to Washington, even mirroring Trump's tough rhetoric on China.

Lula's foreign policy, however, is defined by nonalignment and economic pragmatism. His administration sees BRICS not as a geopolitical challenge to the U.S., but as a means to secure development financing, diversify trade partnerships, and assert greater influence on issues ranging from climate change to global health.

Brazil has also backed efforts to expand BRICS membership, supporting the inclusion of countries such as Iran, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, nations often at odds with U.S. foreign policy priorities. Critics in Washington view this expansion as potentially destabilizing, while Lula's government frames it as a step toward democratizing global governance.

For U.S. policymakers, Brazil's BRICS strategy presents both a diplomatic challenge and a wake-up call: Latin America's largest economy is no longer willing to play a junior role in a

U.S.-dominated global system. Instead, it is asserting its independence through multilateralism, even when that means aligning with rivals of the United States.