

The logo for the Bay of Bengal Conversation 2023. It features a blue geometric shape on the left, resembling a stylized 'C' or a network of nodes connected by lines. To the right of this shape, the text 'Bay of Bengal' is in a dark grey serif font. Below it, 'Conversation' is in a blue sans-serif font, and '2023' is in a dark grey sans-serif font. At the bottom, the phrase 'Rising Tides' is written in a brown, cursive script font.

Bay of Bengal Conversation 2023 *Rising Tides*

Plenary Session: "Dollar Dominance Vs. BRICS Expansion"

Speakers:

Andre de Mello e Souza, Tenured Researcher and Policy Analyst, Institute for Applied Economic Research, Brazil.

Ashok Sajjanhar, Former Ambassador, Institute of Global Studies (President), India.

David Morris, Senior Fellow, Center for China and Globalization, Australia.

Dominique Rakotozafy, Former Minister of Defense, Madagascar.

Faris Hadrovic, Business Development and Government Relations Expert, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mamun Rashid, Managing Director, PwC, Bangladesh (Moderator).

About: BRICS leaders have said they want to use their national currencies more instead of the dollar, which strengthened sharply last year as the Federal Reserve raised interest rates and Russia invaded Ukraine, making dollar debt and many imports more expensive. However, the dollar still dominates global trade. It is on one side of almost 90% of global forex transactions. What does the dollar dependency mean for a new and volatile Indo-Pacific? Will the growth of BRICS represent a net positive or detriment to regional peace and prosperity?

Mamun Rashid, “very good afternoon Asalam Walaikum to everyone. and today for rest of the few minutes before we are standing between discussion on a very important topic though and the lunch. so we are very mindful of it not to bore anyone but in thick or have an very in thick discussion with regard to Dollar dominance and the BRICS . the ask while getting or known to be or deemed to be getting stronger with the inclusion of the few new members the Brazil Russia China India and of sorry South Africa and now few others in the in the team. so ladies and gentlemen you would be seeing every now and then especially even in Bangladesh newspaper also some news translated into Bengali that yes how BRICS is trying to elbow out the dollar dominance or how China is contemplating to make a more stronger pre-eminent. and also India promoting and championing trade in Indian rupee and of course China has been always there trying to elbow out the dollar dominance and seeing or ensuring more trade in renminbi and other BRICS member country currencies. over the last few years the BRICS as I have already mentioned group of Nations has become an increasingly importance important Block in the global economic and political landscape. as the countries in BRICS Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa have continued to dominate global trade flows the question of their influence versus the influence of the G-7 known to be the developed country block is a natural point of contention. the recent move by BRICS to announce an expansion in its membership to include Saudi-Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Argentina, Iran and Ethiopia were unveiling the dollarization plan over the next 3 years. at least there has been lot of discussion as we have seen happening in South Africa and

ask while in China and other places also is expected to have profound economic and political implications. and I aim to discuss many of these implications now more importantly with the esteemed panel lined up here who represents each of their competence and Excellence to discuss and delve into the matters of dollarization as well as BRICS emerging BRICS power. over the USD 17 billion of sold by China, Brazil, Saudi Arabia and India in the last month which is part of a general trend of BRICS Nations reducing their treasury. Holdings China over the last decade has unloaded over us do 500 billion this is a key part of the move to increase the number of transactions in local currencies within member countries which despite the long-term goal of the dollarization has grown very slowly. the BRICS bank which holds 70% of its funds in US dollar is also focusing on reducing its USD Holdings which is an important move to reduce the dependence on dollars. what could be the implications be for global trade flows for those countries which currently struggle to build up their USD Holdings? it represents an opportunity to trade in a group of currencies which may be more accessible to them the member countries or the BRICS countries. this can potentially help developing nations who can also take loans in non US dollar currencies. enhancing their relationship with the larger Brics Nations or brics Nations. this is also direct challenge to the G-7 countries who have propped up the dollar. and due to their past dominance of global trade flows made the US dollar The Only Resort for countries. if the BRICS is united in its approach the US Dollar's ubiquity may be in trouble. but therein lies The crucial weakness of the BRICS block I guess much of the geopolitics also I've seen from the agenda before discussed here in this August Gathering their diversity of objectives. the BRICS block has never been a United group of countries which work closely towards common economic goals. currently Russia and China C12I in their focus on supplementing the US dollar. however dollarization is not necessarily a priority for India. their relationship with the USA is important for

their growth as they serve as crucial IT support for us or large US Farms. they also have significant border tensions with China and dedollarization. which will inevitably magnify Chinese influence globally means India is unlikely to support China and ultimately also Russia's policies. this division was also clear in the recent decision to expand the BRICS block as certain countries backed by China were vetoed by India ultimately. with Argentina expected to decline the offer of membership the soft power of the blocks may also be in question for brics to truly replace the G-7 as the leader in global trade and politics it must ensure that it is United as inconsistent objectives will undermine any efforts they make. with this small kind of intro or setting the tone I will of course go now to the esteem panelist who have been invited by Center for governance studies. and thank you very much for accepting rather while I'm moderating on behalf of Center for governance studies on behalf of myself also for agreeing to discuss on this very important topic as I have mentioned that just before this this kind of to set the tone. so may and I have got in the esteem panel Mr Andre de Melou e Souza, tenure researcher for policy analyst Institute for Applied economic research, Brazil, Ashok Sajjanhar, former Ambassador Institute of Global Studies president India, Then followed by Mr David Morris senior fellow Center for China and globalization Australia, who would be focusing more on China and the possible power of renminbi as a well traded currency in the global marketplaces Dominique Rakotozafy former Minister of Defense, Madagascar, Faris Hadrovic, Business Development and government relations expert Bosnia and Herzegovina. so all of their present here once again thank you so much. so of course everyone can come up with their own opinion but to set the tone and make ourself quarantine or softly quarantine within the planned time limit. so I will be posing each one of them one question and to set the tone and then we will again expect that if the time permits come up with the second question for them. and also try to accommodate one or two question from the audience also. so where we go starting with Mr Andre

de Mello e Souza, the question would be why are China and India's economic objectives different will they ever unite in the future to ensure there is a possible BRICS dominance or BRICS currency dominance? thank you.”

Andre de Mello e Souza, “many thanks chair and many thanks to the Center for governance studies for the invitation to participate in this event. let me just see if I got the question right so the question is- will China and India join forces to try to mitigate Reliance on the dollar? was that the question chair, yes? well I obviously I can't speak for these countries but from what we've seen in BRICS negotiation there certainly has been a willingness to try to reduce Reliance on the US dollar, right. and this the global dominance of the dollar as a currency of Reserve clearly gives the United States some very important advantages both economically and geopolitically. well economically not just the US government but also households and firms from the US are able to borrow more than they would be able to do so otherwise. and so they can sustain large deficits and expenditures including mind you on their own military. because in practice they are being financed by the rest of the world right so the US deficit is financed by other countries which keep us-based Assets. Now this is also a geopolitical Advantage because as we have seen in the at least in the last 10 years the US has used the global dominance of the dollar to impose sanctions on countries, such as Afghanistan, Iran, Venezuela and more recently Russia. actually given the size of the Russian economy and given the multilateral nature of the sanctions that have been imposed I would argue that Russia is an unprecedented case and actually it it's on a distinct level if you will of geopolitical sanctions. and so many countries are not happy with the dominance of the dollar precisely for these reasons, and these include the BRICS which mind you originally was not an anti-American block. you can say it was anti- hegemonic if you will but not particularly anti-American. but now with Rising tensions between the United States and China with increasing securitization of

economic flows including not just Finance but trade and others and other political agendas as well the BRICS may be adopting an increased anti-American stance or at least that is the fear that comes from latest development. as you should know during the last Summit that took place earlier this year in Johannesburg South Africa; there was a decision to expand the BRICS with six new members three of which are oil producing and oil exporting countries, namely Saudi Arabia Iran and the United Arab Emirates. now there has already been a process of dollarization in oil markets but the proposal that was put forth by the BRICS is to have trade in oil and in other Goods as well but oil is a very important commodity as you know in currencies other than the dollar. and actually the Brazilian president has even spoken about a BRICS currency which I think is something still very farfetched fetched we can't see it coming in the short term but it is possible to have a greater deollarization and again particularly in the oil Market given that the new BRICS blocks with the new members will concentrate most of the countries that produce and Export oil, right. so this might take place and so if we're thinking about dedollarization we have to think which currency will take place of the dollar or at least expand its role as foreign Reserve globally and the most important candidate clearly is the renminbi of China, right. and China has been seeking to increase the status of its own currency for some time now but that's not very easily done. first because the Chinese system of payments is undeveloped and secondly because there's still very strong restriction in China for inbound and outbound Capital flows as well. so if the renminbi is eventually to play a greater role as a reserve currency which nowadays by the way accounts to about 2.5% so it's still very low let alone replace the dollar as the main currency of Reserve. then it would need to relax these restrictions and it would need to develop its own system of payments. and we don't see that coming at least not in the short term so it might happen actually the new and expanded BRICS might present a blow to the dollar if you will. but the dollar will not lose its

status at least in the short term and if it does So eventually this will take place gradually over time. now I would also argue that the expansion of the BRICS. on the other hand if it does strengthen its role in oil markets and oil trade and poses a challenge to US influence particularly in the Middle East and if you think about it all the new members are in the Middle East or in neighboring regions of the Middle East with the sole exception of Argentina which we don't even know if it's actually going to join it depends on the elections that will take place soon very shortly later this month; but anyway it will be a lot harder for the BRICS to make common decisions and to have joint actions in the international political and economic agenda. I would argue it was already very difficult to begin with because these are countries that are very different and that have very distinct interests and Views and objectives. but on one particular issue area which was the main reason for being of the BRICS which was precisely International financial institutions they did manage to achieve to create the new development Bank the contingent Reserve Arrangement which by the way is something that goes far beyond anything that the G-7 has ever done but it was specific to this issue area and again at the time there were four and later four countries joined by South Africa in 2010. but now there are 11 countries and that poses considerable Collective action problems to make any joint position in international governance negotiations and to achieve things like a new currency if you will or a common position for dedollarization. I think it will become much difficult and I fear that the BRICS might end up becoming weaker and perhaps even irrelevant as a result of this Choice, which was clearly driven by China again to try to reduce the influence of the US in the middle East. my government the Brazilian government was opposed India was also opposed but in the end the Chinese position prevailed and I'll stop here. thank you.”

Mamun Rashid, “Brazil and Brazil is a member of the of course BRIC original BRIC as BRICS and then now the expanded BRICS. thank you very much and as we all have heard him that the

biggest challenge for the BRICS and the reorganized BRICS countries would be driving towards a common agenda and a common Vision. so may I now go to Mr Ashok Sajjanhar, former Ambassador, Institute of Global Studies president India and my humble question not necessarily he must be quarantined to totally, can you elaborate on the impacts of dollarization for business and people? are there any harms for neutral countries or small countries? and especially now the new member countries that Mr Andre de Mello e Souza has focused on like UAE, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Ethiopia. thank you so much.”

Ashok Sajjanhar, “thank you very much Mr. chairman for giving me the floor since this is the first time that I take the floor on this particular platform. let me also add my words of gratitude and appreciation to the Center for governance studies for organizing this Bay of Bengal conversations and getting us all together here in this beautiful city on this beautiful venue. my particular appreciation to the chairman Mr Dr Manzur Chowdhury and also to the executive director Zillur Rahman for the hard work that they have done and the initiative they’ve taken. now the question Mr. chairman that you have asked is in terms of dollarization and its impact on Private Business, you know let me put it this way I think we need to differentiate between what we mean by dollarization and we are mentioning also a new common BRICS currency in the same breath. I think these are two very different concepts and right at the beginning we should be quite mindful of that. I think we also need to be mindful of the fact that BRIC not BRICS, BRIC the four countries when they started in fact when this idea was given by Jim O’Neal in 2001. it was basically that these countries large countries large population large economies would play a very significant role in Seeking a better deal and a greater influence in the western dominated financial and economic architecture. it was never in an anti-western stance or anti-western position that BRICS were to take. BRICS were getting together so that they could have a much better

negotiating position when they are talking to the finance to whether it's to the World Bank or to the IMF getting a better deal for themselves. and I think that has not changed in my view. although you know recent developments have shown that there is a very deep polarization between China and the United States because of trade and Technology matters. and there is a huge divide between the United States and the west and Russia on geopolitical issues. so that definitely is a reality that we have to take cognizance off. but that having been said I think BRICS was never intended to be an anti-western construct, it might be a nonwestern construct but it was never intended to be an anti-western construct. and if I think there is some thinking in certain quarters that the expansion would drive the BRICS to take a more pronounced anti Western stand; I think I would have difficulty I would doubt that very much. because as the previous panelist said even in the BRICS five as they exist I don't think there is definitely not a consensus but not also an agreement that we should take this body this organization into an anti-western position. because in that case what whatever its potential is to voice the concerns and the aspirations of the Emerging Markets of the global South I think that will be seriously compromised. because if you look at the new additions to the BRICS the six countries that have come together, I think barring Iran I don't think any of the other countries whether it is Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, it is Argentina Etc I don't think any one of them would want to take a pronouncedly anti-western stand. I think basically the idea there is when you want to expand you want to hedge your bets. particularly when you see that there has been so much of turmoil there have been so many sanctions so I think countries are wanting to hedge their bets. and this is quite visible in you know if we talk about, let us say Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. I think we need to take also cognizance of the fact that very recently we have had this i2u2 Arrangement between India, UAE, Israel and the United States. very recently on the sidelines of the G-20 we had the very ambitious India middle east Europe

economic Corridor that has been put into place. and that is with the very active cooperation and collaboration of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates of course Israel, Jordan, India Etc and Europe we get together. the point I'm making is that we would be making a very serious mistake if we think that it is an anti-western institution that we are trying to create. second point on this whole issue of dedollarization you know this is not a new idea. we have been I have been following the BRICS summits for many years now, in fact there are other organizations also for instance the shanghai cooperation organization we have been talking in the SEO also to have more trade in our national currencies. and that is a move that has been expanding that has been growing I think the new membership of these six countries as far as BRICS is concerned it will provide more heft and more traction to this organization. but I don't think that it will give a very strong push in terms of dedollarization or coming up with a new BRICS currency. you know let me just give one or two figures one is the BRICS 5 as it existed it accounted for of course about 42% of the global population. but it accounted for about 26% of the global GDP. with the additionality of six more members the GDP increases from about 26% to 29% as against that if you look at G-7 it still commands about 43% of the global GDP. I'm talking about nominal terms I'm not talking about the purchasing par parity term because there are the situation is quite different. so I think this movement toward trading in non-dollar currencies that is going to go forward that is going to increase. but I think if the BRICS stays on its chartered path that is to provide a greater say and a better deal for the developing countries it has a good future. if it projects itself and paints itself which I do not think it is going to do in an anti-western position then I think it will be doing a great disservice to itself and also to the countries of the global South who have come together. so I would say it has great potential and if there is dedollarization Mr chair as you asked I think it is in terms of Greater trading in National currencies. I think this has the potential to provide an impetus and a

boost to the domestic economies of these countries. and that is why individually these countries are going on that path I could mention the large number of countries with which India has signed these agreements to have trading in National currencies and that is proceeding. well I think it gives a greater Comfort level there is greater uncertainty, because there's when you look at the foreign exchange volatility that of course has an impact on trade and on private businesses also. and when you are talk when you are trading in your National currencies then that uncertainty is considerably reduced. so I would say that you know even today dollar accounts for 90% of the global trade irrespective of what you mentioned Mr chairman that about \$500 billion of the assets in China have being dedollarized or whatever I think 90% of trade is still in dollars and more than 60% of the global assets are still held in dollars. so I think we need to be realistic on this account that these are small steps but these are important steps. I don't think we will no one is working towards having a new BRICS currency so to say although I know that the Brazilian president had proposed this last year. because I think there are too many power asymmetries and also the dynamism between the members of the BRICS is very complex. so I think there are obstacles and there are challenges but BRICS will be able to fulfill its objective if we are able to get greater cohesiveness and greater Coherence as far as the working of the processes of the BRICS countries. thank you.”

Mamun Rashid, “Thank you so much Ashok Sajjanhar. he has brought in ladies and gentlemen something new and positive vibe that BRICS is not a anti- western block kind of platform and number two what is really intrigued me at least that, yes more cohesiveness within the BRICS Nations and number three he also has brought up the spirit of global South. so these are three issues to take forward I would guess. but again for the interest of time especially not to stand fast or steadfastly stand up between the lunch and the this dialogue so I would request each of our esteem

panelists to be very judicious to the time management. so ladies and gentlemen now I would like to come to Mr David Morris from Australia senior fellow Center for China and globalization. and my humble question or observation to elaborate for Mr David Morris would be- how do you think inclusion of the new member countries would help BRICS? Mr David Morris please.

David Morris, “well good afternoon everyone thank you for that question. I'm going to make a few General comments first if I might and firstly I must express my gratitude to the Center for governance studies. and you know everything we're talking about is about governance because governance is about leadership and institutions and leaders change as we know institutions tend to endure institutions sometimes need to be reformed but they tend to endure. so we can predict some things about the future and we can predict that institutions will tend to endure and be reformed but we cannot predict leadership. it's not easy to do So. leadership can change as events can change I know from my experience as someone who's worked in government and in diplomacy When leaders change everything changes. leaders play such an important role in setting the tone in determining the priorities and in framing the issues and the challenges of the day. and so these questions around World Order around the financial architecture around new Regional groupings these are questions about the leaders of the day. they're also questions about the long-term institutions that either already exist or new ones that are being formed. and so when it comes to this question of the dollar and the question of BRICS I would make some observations. and the first observation about the enduring leadership for many decades of the United States. I think it's actually unhelpful for us to think about a unipolar moment. I think that phrase has distracted us from understanding that actually amongst the market economies of the world that's been an awfully long unipolar moment. it's actually been since the end of the second world war that the United States has essentially determined the institutions and the practices of the international not just the

International Financial system but the International System as a whole. the United States was the prevailing power after the destruction and disaster of the second world war the United States dominated the global economy. and it was in a position to draw on its better angels and its optimism about the world to work with other Victorious Powers after the second world war to create the International System to create the United Nations and all of the institutions of the multilateral system. and For Better or Worst we all know they don't work as well as they were designed to and we all know that's partly because of the Great Powers the US included. but I think it's important for us to understand that we are talking about a long-term process here of Institutions that were determined in the post-war era not least the international financial institutions, those Breton Woods institutions the dominance of the of the dollar that has been supported by those International institutions the IMF the World Bank Etc this goes back a long way. so it's not about it's not a recent thing and it's not something that's going to change quickly we've heard that the US dollar Remains the predominant currency of use in the world it Remains the currency for trade and for foreign reserves all around the world. and I think it's highly unlikely that's going to change quickly having said that there are underlying these long-term trends of how institutions tend to endure there are changes in leadership. and one of the changes that we're undergoing this great uncertainty that we're all trying to Grapple with is that actually that position that the United States has been in of the really the preeminent power in the world. that is changing that is now in question because even if it's only a relative shift in power there is no doubt that China is now a peer competitor in a way that the Soviet Union never was. the Soviet Union ran its own closed shop its own Comicon system of planned economies that completely failed and it's why the whole world has adopted to some extent elements of the market approach to running economies because of the failure of the Soviet block. and the best example of that is China in 1979 abandoned the

Soviet Led model of central planning and adopted a marketized approach a more Market Led approach and the success of China followed by you'd have to say most of the countries of east and south Asia and developing countries around the world that have followed this model pioneered. but before China by Hong Kong and Singapore and Taiwan and others this this model of a market-led approach has been enormously successful. but it's been based in its in the global trade. and the value chains that have been developed the global value Chains It's been based still on the US dollar. so Chinese trade is still predominant by US dollar. but the leadership's shifting so if the leadership is Shifting what is the leadership doing. so if there's a new rival leader to the United States and if that is China and I say if because I want to pose a second suggestion here and that is that it may not be a binary it may not be a quest of one or the other. it's it's in fact as I think we've heard from many speakers throughout the last couple of days probably much more likely and we don't know for sure but it's probably much more likely that we're entering into a period of multiple players not a multi-polar world. because polls tend to imply that these poles are attracting followers I don't think that's necessarily the way it's going to work and I think BRICS is a good example of this. that it's perhaps more likely that we're going to see a multiplex of many players. many of them with significant amounts of power India being one and Brazil being another but but there are many other examples of significant economies and significant powers that may well in this transition phase and perhaps in whatever New World Order emerges may find that they have coalitions of Interest around specific issues they may Ally on security grounds in some directions they may work on economic grounds in others. and they'll be pulled and they'll be pushed by big Powers but just how it will all settle down. and how it will sort out may not be a binary it may not be between two sides. and I think the question of the financial system is a good example of this, because if China is a rival to replace the United States as some Global hegemon then it would be

madly trying to undermine the US dollar. and it would be trying to use the renminbi as a new Global Currency and I don't think there's much evidence for that actually. I think what I think what we've seen instead is that actually China as it's been engaging in new institution building is certainly looking to do more bilateral trade with its own currency. but at the same time it's building institutions that are that are still embedding the US dollar dominance. so for example the Asian infrastructure Investment Bank which China created as a new Institution for multilateral infrastructure lending. now why did China do this? well there was a gap in the market because the Breton Woods institutions, the IMF, the World Bank had taken a position for a couple of decades that they were not lending for infrastructure and the developing world as we know countries like Bangladesh were desperately in need of infrastructure and the growth of Asia in particular was leading to this massive infrastructure deficit. the Japanese led Asian development Bank was addressing this issue but the big International financial institutions dominated by the US and by Europe the IMF and World Bank were not addressing this need. so China came in and established quite a large new international institution the Asian infrastructure Investment Bank but what currency did it use. it uses the US dollar and this institution a hundred billion US institution is not about setting up one block of countries against the West it's actually look at its membership look at the membership of the Asian infrastructure Investment Bank, it includes my home country it includes Australia, it includes France, it includes Germany, it includes India, it includes Indonesia this is a an inclusive multilateral institution that has been created. and I suggest will endure because it's been created to address a need in the International System and in the International Financial system based on the prevailing US dollar and based on a on addressing some existing problems with the with the previous institutions. now is it a challenge in the way that the brics has depicted as a challenge to the West? well I'll say one more thing about the Asian infrastructure Investment

Bank it's an important point because the design of the Asian infrastructure Investment Bank as one of these new institutions deliberately gives a majority role to the developing world. so in that sense it's a huge challenge to the World Bank and the IMF. it is led by a developing country it is led by China it's the first multilateral financial institution to be led by a developing country and it does not impose standards based on political views in the way that the IMF and World Bank impose conditions political conditions such as democracy and human rights which are strongly held views in Western countries. but this is a huge Challenge from the AIIB to that prevailing Western View. so yes BRICS in that context is perceived like the rise of China is perceived as some threat to Dollar dominance to the US. I wanted to throw out some interesting different observations there that perhaps it's a bit more complicated than that. perhaps actually what we're seeing is countries that are developing but are developing seeking to reform rather than to overthrow the International System.”

Mamun Rashid, “thank you so much David Morris. he has brought in ladies and gentlemen again some New Dimensions that role being played by the international big or large financial institutions including the Breton wood institutions like World Bank, IMF and Asian development Bank. yes and also the Rivalry age old rivalry between China and US and now with Taiwan on one corner and India on the other Corner how does it evolve in the coming days also with an eye being kept on constant eye being kept on the Ukraine Russia war and how the developed countries in Europe they are also linking with and becoming closer to US in driving also indirectly propping up the support for US dollar dominance maybe. thank you so much Mr Morris. so may I now come to Mr Dominique Rakotozafy, former minister of defense for Madagascar. and my question to him- would be what why is the G-7 more united than the BRICS nations? are they more effective in your opinion? again reiterating why is the G-7 countries or block more united than the BRICS

countries or nations are they more effective in your opinion? if you could be very brief Mr Dominic.”

Dominique Rakotozafy, “okay, thank you Mr chairman, first of all I'd like to extend my gratitude to the Center for governance studies for inviting me to exchange views on this important topic today to start with I'm not a finance Specialist or an economist but I'll try to give my point of view on this. let me put it the other way around back in post World War I the UN and IMF and World Bank was were set up to guarantee peace and security. IMF and World Bank were just set up to finance the Reconstruction because it was the bank for International Bank for construction and development of a devastated Europe. at that time African states did not exist because there were independent most of them only after the 1960s. so the world order at that time does not much anymore the current world order what I see is that dollar is just a tool it's an instrument of payment but the most important thing is the mindset behind that. if the structure and the processes in the world order do not change it is I think it's just a waste of time. maybe step by step but it will take very long time to change it. from my point of view because I'm from Africa Madagascar is a big island of the eastern coast of Africa we have quite some difficulties especially for example during the vote at the general assembly whether we should be with Ukraine or Russia there was pressure on the countries who are dependent on the IMF and World bank financing system to put cast vote for the West the western side. so it's a good idea in this multipolar system now to have another grouping but for our point of view from Africa it's rather difficult to have direct benefits from it. because we are not really part of the system up till now. it's just South Africa which is a member of the BRICS even after the expansion of the BRICS. I think that this would be more what would they say fruitful if there is a large consensus on how the World System would be set up but effectiveness of the expanded BRICS. yeah I would say that but we still focus on the Petro

dollar the fossil energy whereas we are talking about climate change global warming green energy then that makes me up sometimes what do we really need. at the end so this is only my point of view since I'm not expert in that I prefer to stay at that stage. first thank you.”

Mamun Rashid, “so he has brought in again new kind of issues like energy, security, fossil fuel how green energy green manufacturing green environment. all these issues and how are these two groups of Nations or blocks of nations are going to address these are also becoming very important issues going forward. now I'm coming with the possibly the simplest question for Mr Faris Hadrovic from Bosnia and Herzegovina as you would be knowing Mr Faris Hadrovic that has technology is becoming very important either aggregator or divider in this world? so while we are talking of two interesting blocks like G-7 and BRIC against BRICS or expanded BRICS that yes how do you see the recent rise in Ai and generative Technologies? what with this kind of and rise in Ai and generative Technologies? what do you think the impact on BRICS Nations will be given the technological development is based in USA and Europe? and the BRICS nations are more focused on manufacturing will this help G-7 Nations more in the ultimate competition or elbowing out each other or in the words of the Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar that he has more upholding the interest of the global South. thank you so much again. role of technological development and the BRICS and G7 blocking out with each other.”

Faris Hadrovic, “thank you Mr chairman the simplest question seems to be the most complex one for the end. I would just like to just give a few thoughts before moving on to the technological aspect which I think is very interesting and fascinating. it is a I think a separate section on its own. but just to touch upon some of the points that some of my colleagues have already discussed. I think that there is talking about dedollarization and BRICS I think is premature at this particular stage in my humble opinion. there's no Universal agreement on within the BRICS and setting

that as part of the agenda. I think we've seen signals clear signals from Russia for obvious reasons China as well but there isn't agreement within the block or grouping itself. and it'll be more complex as the group expands. it was rightly stated that the dollar still is about 90% of world trade and it would take many more World economic actors to Dethrone the dollar in the future. and that's a complex debate by itself The Rise the rise of alternative currencies does not seem to threaten the dollar but seems to be giving competition more amongst the regional currencies that are part of it. now from the technological perspective I think you've mentioned generative AI, I think there's a an important and I think that's something we haven't developed touched upon here. and development which has been going on for the past decade and that's the rise in blockchain technology and cryptocurrencies. now you might know that several countries around the world have already started discussing the creation of digital Central Bank/ digital currencies as they're called as a response to the rise in cryptocurrencies led by Bitcoin and similar currencies. and some of the countries the United States has been somewhat lagging in terms of its regulatory development, some other countries have jumped on onto the bandwagon and are developing their regulatory environments much quicker and are moving into the development of their own digital currencies. You've you might have noticed that recently the European Central Bank has signaled that even though it was opposed to digital currencies has now firmly stated that it's developing its own Central currency digital currency and is already starting to limit the use of cash for payments. now adopting blockchain you're adopting transparent mechanisms as well. and the BRICS Nations have the opportunity to dramatically increase their trust in their financial systems. the implementation of blockchain's so-called smart contracts in international trade agreements and amongst BRICS Nations potent potentially May diminish the Reliance on the dollar based system. while the US is not left behind in harnessing blockchain the race is to see which nation or Alliance

of Nations can fully integrate this technology to modernize and secure trade first. I believe that we've seen many countries including BRICS Nations harnessing generative AI, in particular for analytical purposes and to sift through vast economic data resulting in more informed strategic decisions. that'll hopefully create a ripple effect and more countries will start adopting Technologies and increase also Financial stability with particularly embracing blockchain Technologies. now the strength of the US dollar is intrinsically tied the perceived security of the US dollar and the BRICS Nations perhaps can fortify their financial infrastructure with blockchain as I've said and I would I think we're running out of time because it's a complex topic I have many more points I can make but I think for the start this will be it.”

Mamun Rashid, “thank you so much yes it was not as simple as one would have deemed. ladies and gentlemen we have got around 5 plus minutes left before we head on for lunch so at this point in time I would like to open the floor. but please do justice to the time for all 5 minutes so anybody asking only question no opinion no passing of remarks only question to the any of the esteem panelist present here. question must be contained within 1 minute and answer I'm afraid also must be contained within 1 minute. thank you so much, if you could raise your hand I can take five three questions only three questions in fact. please yes.”

Question, “about dollarization-Dedollarization and BRICS itself sounds rather I should say anti peaceful coexistence and it relates to economic Warfare we already suffering and suffer more. I want opinions about this and what is the alternative to all this we had ad we have World Bank we have now another AIIB, aren't they going to complicate the issues and more so?

Ashok Sajjanhar, “thank you very much very quickly let me respond one. sir you mentioned there are so many other Banks Etc I think basically they are to create infrastructure in the world there is a huge deficit of infrastructure so the more banks that we are able to have whether it is the

new development Bank AIIB, ADB we have found that the already existing banks have really not been able to complete the task to fulfill the objective that they have met. so I think these new banks that are coming up of course there should be due diligence Financial you know Integrity should be maintained. but I think that is the purpose otherwise if the banks don't lend for infrastructure then private individuals and countries might come and they might have very adverse terms and conditions that are imposed. the second question that you mentioned is that this is all War? I would not tend to agree with you I think this is a way to cooperate to collaborate and that is why I mentioned sir that there should be cohesiveness and coherence in these organizations. they will be able to identify the interest of the developing countries of the global South and be able to negotiate with the partners in G-7. there groupings like BRICS, G-7, G-20 they all have a very important role to play they should not be pitted against each other but they should try to work along with each other.”

Mamun Rashid, “thank you so much Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar. I can only ladies and gentlemen take another question only one question specific to do justice to time more to do justice to the hungry tummies. thank you so much one question only.”

Question 2, “ I have a question. I'm Rezayeb from ISAC in Bangladesh. so I'm excited to know will BRICS reduce dominance of the dollar in the future in the near future? if yes, then what should we do as a developing country as a small developing country like Bangladesh, so what's your observation?”

Mamun Rashid, “thank you so much Mr Morris can I request you to take that question please and very brief of course.”

David Morris, “I think the my brief answer to you is that the dollar is not losing its dominance in the near future. it is it is gradually losing its almost total dominance of the past there's no doubt and there are other currencies available for reserves and for trade. but I think in terms of Bangladesh I would suggest the US dollar is still likely to be the currency for some time for international purposes.”

Mamun Rashid, “thank you so much to all question questioning people and individuals and more importantly our esteem panelist. I'm very sorry I know this is a very important topic with this special with the recent expansion of BRICS and China-India, China-US further polarization and more so say NATO becoming again reorganized because of this Ukraine Russia War the all this de-dollarization, G-7 dominance, BRICS expansion have become very important topic to discuss, topic to understand, topic to appreciate. for the interest of time we could not elaborate much but again I think most of the panelist in fact all the panelist did tried to do their best kind of Justice to the topic that has been put up for us today. I would like to once again thank all the esteem panelist and more importantly the organizer not only for inviting us here more so for picking up a very important topic to discuss and putting up on the table for us to discuss. thank once again I guess lunch is waiting for all of us if not each one of us thank you so much.”