



The late Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi (front row - 2nd L) and his fellow BRICS leaders pose for a family photo during the closing day of the BRICS summit at the Sandton Convention Center in Johannesburg, South Africa, on August 24, 2023.

try to hang the flag at half-mast after the helicopter incident that killed President Raisi and its companions, Ankara and Tehran were also seeking closer ties. It is reasonable to believe that the 'Palestinian issue' has led several Sunni-majority countries to enhance their cooperation with the Islamic Republic.

As a result of the 'Look to the East' policy, Iran has cultivated closer relations with Russia and China. The message of condolence from the Russian President following Raisi's death clearly showed the high level of cooperation between Moscow and Tehran, encompassing initiatives such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) or joint naval drills. Meanwhile, China brokered the normalisation of relations with Saudi Arabia and invested significantly in key Iranian infrastructure projects, such as the Persian Gulf Bridge.

As I mentioned the military field, undoubtedly, under Raisi, Iran has increased its indigenous production, particularly of drones. This development has raised concerns in Western circles, but it has also enhanced Iran's capability to export arms and bolstered its resilience in the face of heavy sanctions in this sector.

In recent years, Iran's policies have brought Tehran closer to Central Asia, the Caucasus, and India, all of which are attracted by Iran's strategic location and its ports.

Other notable successes are Iranian membership into

BRICS, Tehran signing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which represents a significant milestone in Iran's regional economic integration, and the Islamic Republic's admittance to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) as a full member.

Defining Raisi's actions regarding relations with the West is more challenging. Despite continuing nuclear negotiations under the current Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri, no agreement has been reached yet.

The Israeli military intervention in Gaza has further strained relations, with Iran supporting the resistance axis and the West steadfastly backing Israel. However, while the 'Palestinian dossier' has distanced Western actors from Iran, it has also brought some regional powers closer to Tehran.

The conflict in Ukraine and Iran's close ties with Russia have further cooled relations with Brussels.

Still, according to many analysts, under Raisi's administration, Tehran, while not avoiding negotiation tables, has essentially turned away from the West and generally sought to redirect the country's future relations towards the East and the so-called global South. In general, Iran has been one of the countries advocating for a multipolar organisation of world powers, focusing more on forging new alliances during this historical shift rather than meeting Western demands regarding its policies.



Martyr President