

# Taiwan Fastener Industry's Future Markets: The “BRICS+10”

## Part 2: New Landscape of BRICS+4

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At the BRICS Summit held in South Africa on August 24, 2023, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE were formally accepted as new members of the BRICS group, with their membership taking effect on January 1, 2024. The BRICS group expanded from its original 5 members (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) to a new 9-member framework. This expansion represents not only a numerical increase, but also signifies enhanced representation for emerging markets within the global governance architecture and challenges to the U.S.-dominated international financial order.



In recent years, significant shifts have occurred in the global geopolitical and economic landscape. Although the U.S. and Europe continue to dominate the international financial system and the U.S. dollar remains the primary reserve currency and settlement tool, the rise of cryptocurrencies, intensifying U.S.-China trade competition, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, and escalating energy & food security issues have significantly heightened global financial uncertainty, with many emerging economies now seeking alternative platforms to reduce their reliance on the US dollar and the Western financial system. Against this backdrop, the BRICS countries have chosen to expand by welcoming key countries from the Middle East, Africa, and North Africa. This move represents not only an increase in membership, but also an extension of their strategic footprint. **Table 1** below provides basic information on the 4 members joining BRICS in 2024.

▼ Table 1. Profiles of the 4 Countries Joining BRICS in 2024

Country	Area (sq. km)	Nominal GDP (USD)	Population (USD)	GDP Per Capita (USD)	Total National Exports (USD)	Primary Business/Product
Egypt	1,010,449	~389 billion	~0.116 billion	~3,338	~34.6 billion	Oil, natural gas, chemicals, agricultural products (cotton, citrus)
Ethiopia	1,127,571	~139.6 billion	~0.132 billion	~1,300	~4.5 billion	Coffee, sesame, flowers, livestock products
Iran	1,622,500	~452 billion	~91.6 million	~4,930	~112.5 billion	Oil, natural gas, petrochemicals, steel, agricultural products
UAE	71,020	~537.7 billion	~11.03 million	~48,700	~1.4 trillion	Oil, natural gas, aluminum, finance, tourism, real estate

**Egypt**, a major African country with a population exceeding 100 million, holds immense strategic significance due to its geographical position, controlling one of the world's most vital shipping routes—the Suez Canal. This waterway linking the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea serves not only as a lifeline for energy & goods transportation but also positions Egypt as an indispensable player in the international trade. However, **Egypt's industrial base remains relatively limited, with its demand for metal fasteners being primarily concentrated on construction projects, infrastructure development, and automotive maintenance sectors.** For Taiwanese fastener industry, leveraging the BRICS platform to strengthen trade cooperation with Egypt could unlock new export opportunities in infrastructure and automotive parts markets. Yet significant challenges persist: Egypt's market is price-sensitive, and Chinese fastener suppliers have established deep roots over many years, creating intense competition. To successfully penetrate this market, Taiwanese companies must leverage quality advantages and technological differentiation as their breakthrough points to establish a solid foothold in this emerging market.



**Fastener demand:**  
construction projects,  
infrastructure  
development, automotive  
maintenance





**Fastener demand:**  
infrastructure,  
machinery &  
equipment

**Ethiopia** is Africa's 2nd most populous country with over 120 million people and hosts the African Union headquarters, symbolizing its central role in African politics and regional cooperation. Although its industrialization remains in the early stages, its massive infrastructure needs continue to drive market growth. In recent years, Ethiopia has actively invested in road, railway, and industrial park construction, gradually revealing its potential in manufacturing and infrastructure. For Taiwanese fastener industry, while current industrial demand remains limited, the future demand for metal fasteners will inevitably increase alongside infrastructure and manufacturing development. Through cooperation via the BRICS platform, Taiwanese fasteners have the opportunity to find new export opportunities in the engineering construction and machinery equipment markets. However, Ethiopia remains a low-income country with a limited market scale, meaning its short-term impact on Taiwanese fastener exports is minimal. For companies seeking to enter this market, a long-term strategic approach and collaborative partnerships are essential to seize opportunities when the market matures.



**Fastener demand:**  
automotive manufacturing,  
petrochemical equipment,  
heavy industry

As one of the world's major oil & natural gas exporters, **Iran** wields significant influence in the Middle East energy market. Despite enduring long-term Western sanctions, its vast energy reserves and export potential position it as a pivotal player for BRICS countries in energy security and de-dollarization settlement. Iran possesses a relatively complete industrial base in the Middle East, particularly with its automotive sector ranking among the region's largest. This creates substantial demand for fasteners across automotive manufacturing, petrochemical equipment, and heavy industry applications. Should BRICS countries further advance “de-dollarization” and local currency settlement mechanisms, Taiwanese enterprises may indirectly access the Iranian market through third-party platforms like China or Russia, thereby tapping into opportunities driven by its industrial demands. This underscores that while Iran holds immense potential, Taiwanese fastener industry must approach market entry with strategic planning and flexible trade strategies to navigate complex international dynamics.



**Fastener demand:**  
regional re-export center

The **UAE** is renowned as a financial and logistics hub, with Dubai and Abu Dhabi in particular having long established themselves as one of the Middle East's most vital trade centers. They serve as critical nodes for global capital flows and trade transshipment, possessing robust import-export and redistribution capabilities. Although the UAE's own industrial scale is limited and its direct demand for fasteners is not substantial, its status as a regional re-export center makes it a crucial springboard for Taiwanese fasteners entering Middle Eastern and African markets. If Taiwanese fastener manufacturers can establish a solid trade foothold in the UAE, they can not only leverage its sophisticated logistics and financial systems, but also expand into broader regional markets through Dubai's re-export network. However, competition in the UAE market is fierce, with Chinese fastener suppliers having established a strong presence over many years and holding a price advantage. To break through this barrier, Taiwan must emphasize high-quality and specialized products, positioning technological differentiation as its core competitive edge to carve out a unique niche in this highly internationalized market.

This article summarizes Taiwan's 2024 exports of iron and steel fasteners (HS code 7318) to the newly added 4 BRICS countries as shown in **Table 2**. Taiwan's total fastener exports to these markets exhibit characteristics of “low volume and low prices.” In 2024, the exports to the UAE and Iran accounted for 0.28% and 0.17% of Taiwan's total exports, respectively, with unit prices significantly below the national average, reflecting high price sensitivity in these markets and requiring Taiwanese manufacturers to maintain competitiveness through scale and supply stability. Although exports to Egypt were smaller than those to the UAE, its unit price was close to the national average, indicating that the market still had certain quality requirements and the main demand came from the

infrastructure and building materials industries. As for Ethiopia, no export data has been formed yet, indicating that Taiwanese fasteners are still absent in this market. It can be considered a potential development target in the future.

Overall, Taiwan's fastener export strategy for these 4 BRICS countries should focus on price competition in larger markets (Iran, UAE) and quality-driven regions (Egypt), while simultaneously exploring emerging markets (Ethiopia). This market distribution poses significant challenges to the flexibility of Taiwanese fastener industry within the global supply chain.

▼ **Table 2. Summary of Taiwan's Iron & Steel Fasteners (7318) Exports to the Countries Joining BRICS in 2024**

Country	Total Value (1,000 USD)	Total Volume (Kg)	Unit Price/Kg (USD)	Difference from the Avg. National Export Unit Price
Egypt	2,717	837,319	3.24	-0.26
Ethiopia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Iran	4,992	2,160,333	2.31	-1.19
UAE	10,652	3,577,520	2.98	-0.52
Total National Export Value	4,373,848	1,250,321,770	3.50	



The addition of the 4 emerging countries in 2024 expands BRICS' geographic reach across South America, Eurasia, the Middle East, and Africa, forming a broader strategic network. In terms of energy resources, Russia's and Iran's oil & natural gas, Brazil's and South Africa's minerals, and Egypt's transportation hub collectively build a diverse and complementary resource foundation. In terms of population scale, the inclusion of Egypt and Ethiopia further expands the BRICS total population, enhancing its consumer and labor force advantages in the global market. Regarding financial influence, the UAE's status as a financial hub complements China's manufacturing exports, providing the BRICS with a more complete "resources-market-finance" triangular framework. Therefore, this expansion is not merely a symbolic addition of members but a strategically significant move with far-reaching implications. It enhances the BRICS countries' representativeness in global governance and strengthens their influence in energy security, financial settlements, demographic markets, and geopolitics. In the future, such a diverse grouping may emerge as a significant force challenging the dominance of the U.S. dollar and driving a multipolar world order. The concept of a "BRICS common currency" has garnered considerable attention in recent years, as the BRICS countries seek to reduce their reliance on the dollar by establishing a shared currency or payment system. In 2024, Russia proposed the BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative (BCBPI), emphasizing trade settlements in national currencies rather than immediately introducing a single currency. The 2025 BRICS Summit confirmed that a euro-style common currency would not be introduced in the near term. The current focus remains on expanding trade in local currencies and advancing payment platforms. BRICS countries must continue political coordination, fiscal stability, and central bank cooperation to potentially achieve a true common currency.

Although the expansion of the BRICS organization to 9 member states in 2024 has enhanced its representativeness and influence on the global stage, it still faces numerous challenges. First, significant internal disparities exist, with vast gaps in political systems, economic structures, and development levels among member states, making it difficult to establish a unified policy direction. Second, geopolitical tensions cannot be ignored. Ongoing border disputes between India and China, coupled with regional rivalries like those between Iran and the UAE, may erode the cohesion of cooperation. Moreover, inconsistencies in financial systems make advancing a common currency extremely difficult. The absence of unified financial regulation and monetary policy hinders BRICS' progress toward financial integration. Finally, external pressures cannot be ignored. The U.S. and the EU may seek to weaken BRICS' influence through intensified financial and trade sanctions, further increasing the cost of cooperation for member states.

In summary, while the 9 BRICS countries have expanded in scale and representativeness by 2024, they must still overcome multiple internal and external challenges to establish deeper institutional coordination and political mutual trust before truly assuming a leading role in the global economic order. The expansion of the 9 BRICS countries signifies a gradual shift toward multipolarity in global governance. While it is unlikely to replace the dollar or the Western-dominated financial order in the short term, its advantages in energy, food, population, and markets will enable it to play an increasingly significant role in the global economy. ■

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