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INDIA & The WORLD

India's G20 Journey Scaling A New Summit



वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

“

The world looks upon the G20 to ease the challenges of growth; development; economic resilience; disaster resilience; financial stability; trans-national crime; corruption; terrorism; and food and energy security. In all these areas, the G20 has capacity to build consensus and deliver concrete results.

We should not allow issues that we cannot resolve together to come in the way of those we can. As you meet in the land of Gandhi and the Buddha, I pray that you will draw inspiration from India's civilizational ethos - to focus not on what divides us, but on what unites us.

”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting on March 2, 2023.





G20 SUMMIT NEW DELHI

G 2 0 M E M B E R S



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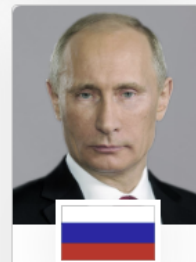
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The 18th G20 Summit in New Delhi will be a culmination of all the G20 processes and meetings held throughout the year among ministers, senior officials, and civil society. A G20 Leaders' Declaration will be adopted at the conclusion of the G20 Summit, stating Leaders' commitment towards the priorities discussed and agreed upon during the respective ministerial and working group meetings.

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**FROM THE
EDITOR'S DESK****India's G20 Journey: Forging
A Human-Centric World Order**

It's India's moment under the sun as New Delhi hosts the summit of the leaders of the world's top economies in September. The G20 summit signals a new peak India has scaled in terms of its global standing and prestige, with its presidency widely seen as pathbreaking and transformational, holding the key to a clutch of burning global issues. The summit has been preceded by another stellar moment in the nation's onward ascent. The launch of the historic lunar mission to the south side of the moon, making India the first country to perform this feat, has sparked national jubilation, putting the global spotlight on what this emerging Asian powerhouse can do and achieve.

Building Bridges

With the world riven by conflicts, chaos and crises, India's G20 presidency has emerged as an emblem of "Hope, Healing and Harmony." In a deeply polarised world marked by poly-crisis and paranoia, India has emerged as a bridge-builder and great reconciler, bridging divides and geopolitical fault-lines. Just when some powerful countries are showing a tendency to withdraw into their shells, India is keeping the torch burning for globalism and international solidarity, which has been epitomised in its G20 credo "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam." In a seminal sense, the ancient Indian ethos could turn out to be a lasting legacy of India's G20 presidency and, if practised in its true spirit, could ignite inclusive multilateralism which can help alleviate multiple crises that beset the world.

Inclusion: Global South & Africa

Taking a big-picture view, inclusiveness, equity, and justice are key drivers of the ambitious and action-packed agenda that frames India's G20 presidency. In his remarks at various G20 meetings, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has underlined the centrality of inclusion, with his exhortation of "leaving no one behind." It is in this spirit that India has placed the interests and aspirations of the Global South at the heart of its G20 agenda. In this respect, India's G20 presidency marks a turning point for the ascendance of the Global South in the multilateral agenda. Four successive G20 presidencies of emerging powers, including Indonesia, India, Brazil and South Africa, are poised

to be a game-changer and shape the future evolution of the world's most representative global grouping. India's drive to seek inclusion of the African Union as a full member of the G20 is an extension of New Delhi's focus on the Global South and forging an inclusive world order. Complementing the Voice of Global South Summit, this year India has ensured the highest African participation in the G20 till date, by including Mauritius, Egypt, Nigeria, AU Chair - Comoros, and AUDA-NEPAD as invitees to the forum. Above all, India's G20 presidency has emerged as an exemplar and "has sowed seeds of confidence in countries of the so-called Third World," in the words of Prime Minister Modi.

India's G20 Legacy

Moving beyond the spectacle and pageantry that will mark the biggest diplomatic event India has hosted in decades, what will be New Delhi's enduring legacy? Opinions may differ on it, but if one were to take the long view, mass participation in G20 meetings across India can be considered a signature achievement. Bringing an elite forum whose debates revolve around complex issues closer to ordinary people requires imagination and a leap of faith. The transformation of the G20 into a people's festival underlines the need to make multilateral diplomacy people-centric. By the time India's G20 Presidency term ends, over 220 meetings would have been organised across 60 cities, in all 28 states and 8 Union territories. Over 100,000 participants from around 125 nationalities would have visited a new "Incredible India" of enterprise, innovation and imagination.

In terms of transformative outcomes, India is set to leave a lasting legacy, with trailblazing outcomes expected in crucial areas, ranging from the reform of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and the inclusion of the African Union in G20 to Green Development Compact and harnessing technology for promoting digital inclusion. Under India's G20 leadership, many new initiatives have concretised, including the setting up of a new Disaster Risk Reduction

Working Group within the Sherpa track and the formalisation of a Women's Working Group. These endeavours, coupled with the elevation of the G20 Research and Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) into a comprehensive Working Group during the ministerial meeting in Mumbai, reflect India's commitment to innovation-driven progress, says India's G20 sherpa Amitabh Kant in his article written for *India and the World*. In an important achievement, the 'G20 2023 Action Plan on Accelerating Progress on the SDGs,' was unanimously adopted by all G20 member countries in the Development Ministers' Meeting in Varanasi in June.

Human-Centric World Order

Looking ahead, India's G20 presidency will be remembered for making the G20 a catalytic agent for people's empowerment and paving the way for a human-centric world order. Being human-centric means going beyond ideological binaries and the North-South divide to create tangible improvement in people's lives. The pandemic has pushed millions of people deeper into poverty and placed several countries under debilitating debt distress. While millions don't have food on the table, many nations, deluded by false glory and machismo, are stoking conflicts for geopolitical ends. In this gloom-and-doom world, a forum like the G20 can only stay relevant by reinventing and moulding it closer to all-too-human needs and yearnings. What coheres diverse strands of India's G20 presidency is precisely this human-centric focus: seeking unity amid divisions and harmony amid polarisations. The only way to address global challenges effectively is to "focus on what unites us, not what divides us", said PM Modi. The ancient Sanskrit saying "Sarvajana Hitaya, Sarvajana Sukhaya" (For the welfare of all, for the happiness of all) shows the way forward, and crystallises the essence of India's G20 presidency.



Manish Chand
Editor-in-Chief



NARENDRA MODI



A SHARED FUTURE: Blending Innovation and Inclusiveness

The G20 summit in India has coincided with festive celebrations in the country. The annual festival season in India, in a way, has been advanced. This festive season is the time when our society as well as our businesses celebrate. This time around it has started from August 23. And this celebration marks the arrival of Chandrayaan on the moon. Our space agency ISRO has played a significant role in the success of India's lunar mission. But at the same time, Indian industry has also provided immense support. Many components used in Chandrayaan have been developed by our industry, private companies, and MSMEs, and were made available within the necessary timeframe. In a way, this success belongs to both science and industry.

What's also important is that this time the whole world is celebrating it along with India. This celebration is about running a Responsible Space Programme. This celebration is about accelerating the country's development. This celebration is about innovation. This celebration is about bringing sustainability and equality through space technology.

Crisis as Opportunity

It is often said that any crisis or adversity brings with it some lessons, teaching us something valuable. Just two or three years ago, the world faced the biggest pandemic, the greatest crisis in a century. This crisis has taught every country, every society, every business house, and every corporate entity a lesson. And the lesson is that what we need to invest the most now is in mutual trust. The Corona pandemic has shattered this mutual trust around the world. And in this atmosphere of mistrust, the country that stands before you, with utmost sensitivity, humility, and the banner of trust, is India. Amidst the greatest crisis of 100 years, India has given the world something invaluable and that is trust, mutual trust.

Solidarity in Times of Covid

When the world needed it during the period of Corona, India, being the "Pharmacy of the World," provided medicines to more than 150 countries. When the world needed vaccines for Corona, India increased vaccine production and saved

the lives of millions of people. India's democratic values are evident in its actions and responses. India's democratic values are visible in the G20 meetings held in over 50 cities across the country. That's why your partnership with India is of great importance. Today, India is home to the world's youngest talent. Today, India stands as the face of the digital revolution in the era of 'Industry 4.0'. The stronger your friendship with India, the greater the prosperity both will achieve. You all know that businesses can transform potential into prosperity, obstacles into opportunities and aspirations into achievements. Whether they are small or big, global or local, businesses can ensure progress for everyone. Therefore, the future of global growth is dependent on the future of business.

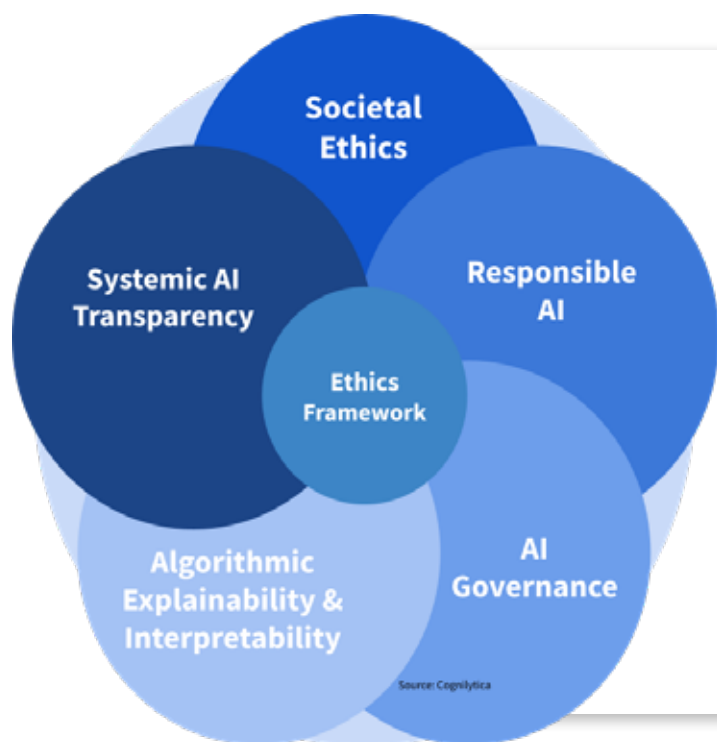
The world has undergone significant changes both before and after COVID-19. We are witnessing irreversible changes in many aspects. Now, global supply chains cannot be seen the same way as before. It used to be said that as long as the global supply chain is efficient, there is no need to worry. However, such a supply chain can break precisely when

the world needs it the most. Therefore, today when the world is grappling with this question, I assure you that India is the solution to this problem. India holds a crucial position in building an efficient and trusted global supply chain. Therefore, global businesses need to step up their responsibility to make this happen, and together, we must.

As we discuss solutions to global challenges, sustainability is a highly critical topic. We all need to remember that sustainability shouldn't be confined to mere rules and regulations; it should become an integral part of our daily lives. My appeal is for global businesses to take an additional step forward in this direction. Sustainability is both an opportunity and a business model in itself. To illustrate this, let me give you a small example and that is millets. This year is being observed by the UN as the International Year of Millets. Millets are not only

Sustainability is both an opportunity and a business model in itself. To illustrate this, let me give you a small example and that is millets. This year is being observed by the UN as the International Year of Millets. Millets are not only superfood but also environment-friendly and supportive of small farmers.





The world is currently brimming with excitement about AI, but within this excitement, there are ethical considerations as well. Concerns are being raised about skilling and re-skilling, algorithmic bias, and the societal impact of AI.

superfood but also environment-friendly and supportive of small farmers. Additionally, there is tremendous potential in the food processing business. In other words, it is a win-win model for both lifestyle and the economy. Similarly, we see this concept in the circular economy, which presents enormous opportunities for businesses. In India, we are focusing significantly on green energy. Our aim is to replicate the success we've achieved in solar energy capacity in the field of Green Hydrogen. India's effort is to take the world along with it and this effort is also visible in the form of the International Solar Alliance.

In the post-Corona world, we can observe that people have become very conscious about their health. Health consciousness is visible not only at the dining table but also when we make purchases, choose our meals, and engage in various activities. We carefully consider how each choice will impact our health. Everyone worries about avoiding discomfort and potential difficulties in the long term. It's not just about the present; we also consider its future implications. My belief is that both businesses and society should have the same mindset regarding our approach towards the planet. Just as I am

concerned about my health and how it influences my everyday life, it is also our responsibility to consider how our actions impact the health of the planet. Before making any decision, we must think about its impact on our Earth. The Mission LiFE, which stands for Lifestyle for Environment, is driven by this philosophy. Its purpose is to create a community of pro-planet individuals worldwide, to initiate a movement. Every lifestyle decision has some impact on the business world. When both lifestyles and businesses become pro-planet, many problems will naturally diminish. We must focus on aligning our lives and businesses with environmental considerations. India has developed a framework for Green Credit in the business sector. While we've been tangled in the concept of Carbon Credits for a long time, there are others who are also enjoying the benefits of the Carbon Credit. I have brought the issue of Green Credit in front of the world. Green Credit emphasizes 'planet positive' actions.

Ethical AI

An approach similar to this is also needed for Artificial Intelligence (AI). The world is currently brimming with excitement about AI, but within



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this excitement, there are ethical considerations as well. Concerns are being raised about skilling and re-skilling, algorithmic bias, and the societal impact of AI. We all need to come together to address these issues. Global business communities and governments must collaborate to ensure the expansion of Ethical AI.

We must analyze potential disruptions in different sectors. Disruption is becoming more profound, pervasive, and significant with every instance. This challenge requires a solution under a global framework. And friends, it is not that these challenges have come before us for the first time.

When the aviation sector was growing, when the financial sector was advancing, the

world established frameworks to address such challenges.

Beyond Bottomline

Businesses have successfully gone beyond borders and boundaries. Now is the time to take businesses beyond just the bottomline. This can only be done by focusing on supply chain resilience and sustainability. I am sure that the B20 Summit has paved the way for a collective transformation. Let us remember that a connected world is not just about connection through technology. It is not only about shared social platforms but also about a shared purpose, shared planet, shared prosperity, and a shared future. ■

Narendra Modi is the Prime Minister of India since May 2014. This article is an abridged version of the remarks made by PM Modi at the Business20 summit on August 27, 2023.

G20 and Role of Global South in Emerging World 2.0



In the Emerging World 2.0 with multiple engines of growth, India has tirelessly projected the welfare of the Global South in its G20 presidency by prioritising inclusive growth, innovation and resilient supply chains, says India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

Since 1945, we have seen a steady evolution in the global order that was established after the Second World War. It was initially more political, with decolonization and the independence of many nations. It gradually acquired stronger economic connotations that were accelerated by globalization. As these fused increasingly with factors like technology, energy, resources, connectivity and human

ingenuity, a different world started to emerge. That is obviously a continuous and unending process. It has also acquired greater cultural and social characteristics. Indeed, that the G20 was established is itself an acknowledgement of that direction.

However, it is an undeniable reality that the international system remains dominated by the Global North. This is naturally reflected in the composition of the G20 as well. Perhaps, this mattered less when the globalization process appeared to offer more opportunities. But as its iniquities became more apparent and the Covid pandemic took a horrific toll across the world, the need to focus on developing countries became more compelling. If that was not enough, the consequences of the Ukraine conflict for global energy, food and fertilizer security added to complexities. And obviously, trade disruptions, high interest rates and climate events have contributed additional factors of stress. The current focus on the Global South emanates from the conviction that these are countries deserving of special care. But equally, these are today societies under exceptional stress which, if left unaddressed, would become a serious drag on the world economy. Remember, globalization cuts both ways. Till now, the discourse has largely focused on its optimistic facets. But do consider what the implications are for all of us – North or South – of slowdowns in nutrition, health, education, employment or even security. And indeed, when the promise of digitization, connectivity or technology falls short.

Prioritising Global South

When India assumed the G20 Presidency last December, we were acutely conscious that most of the Global South will not be at the table when we meet. This mattered very much because the really urgent problems are those faced by them. To discuss their concerns without providing a fair hearing appeared extremely unfair. And India, itself a part of the Global South, would not stand by and let that happen. Therefore, Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to convene the Voice of the Global South Summit in January 2023. We heard from 125 nations directly about their challenges and priorities. And on their behalf, these have been made central to the G20 agenda.

Different aspects of these fundamental challenges have been discussed in the finance track and the sherpa track, or for that matter, the ministerial streams, and the engagement groups. As a result, we have deliberated on the issues of debt and finance, sustainable development, climate action, food security, and women-led development. The core mandate of the G20 is to promote economic growth and development and that cannot advance if the crucial concerns of the Global South are not addressed.

It's important to highlight some structural issues that today are at the heart of the predicament of the Global South. Key among them are the concentrations of various kinds created by the last three to four decades of globalization. For a variety of reasons that range from scale, subsidies, technology, human

The current focus on the Global South emanates from the conviction that these are countries deserving of special care. But equally, these are today societies under exceptional stress which, if left unaddressed, would become a serious drag on the world economy.

resources and strategic choices, the Global South was largely reduced to being a consumer rather than a producer. Their contribution very often was to provide resources for manufacturing elsewhere. They not only did not reap the benefits of economic change, but often, ended up saddled with unviable debts emanating from opaque initiatives. This was a gradually unfolding crisis in the making, that was rapidly accelerated by the multiple shocks of debt, Covid and conflict.

As a result, the endeavour now is to seek a re-globalization that is more diversified and democratic. Where there would be multiple centres of production, not just of consumption. And that is where business can make a crucial difference. We cannot be at the mercy any longer of a few suppliers, whose viability can come into question by unanticipated shocks. This was starkly apparent when it came to health during the Covid pandemic. But it pretty much applies to everything else as well. The compulsion to create more resilient and reliable supply chains is a really pressing one. Its counterpart in the digital domain is driven more by anxieties about trust and transparency. The volatility of the last few years has brought home to us the importance of strategic autonomy. We may talk about seeking a more just, equitable, and participative global order. At the end of the day, that will only happen when we see the commensurate investment, trade and technology decisions.

Atmanirbhar Bharat

Where India is concerned, our response to this situation is articulated in the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat – self-reliant India. At its core is the ‘Make in India’ initiative, one that would not only focus on our own needs but those of others as well. It is paralleled by a strong commitment to make it easier to do business in India. At the same time, our infrastructure is being rapidly developed through the ‘Gati Shakti’ initiative. Since human resources are an increasingly vital



Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to convene the Voice of the Global South Summit in January 2023. We heard from 125 nations directly about their challenges and priorities. And on their behalf, these have been made central to the G20 agenda.

ingredient in a knowledge economy, that too is being addressed through programs of literacy, education, skills and digitization. And indeed, the mindset itself is undergoing a transformation through emphasis on innovation and startups. Overall, it is the Modi Government's commitment to enhance 'Ease of Living' that can bind these positive developments closely together. It is the working of these multiple axes in tandem that is now forging the New India. An India that creates its own 5G stack, which invents its Covid vaccine or that lands near the South Pole of the moon.



Focus on Inclusion

When you reflect on it, the discourse about the Global South is essentially about leaving no one behind. But to preach it convincingly, one has to practice it effectively. And that is what India has sought to do over the last decade. During the Covid pandemic and thereafter, we have provided food support to 800 million of our most vulnerable citizens. And financial support to 450 million.

The Government's housing programme has benefitted about 150 million. Affordable and accessible healthcare is today within the reach of 220 million, and growing by the day. Pension schemes cover 450 million. And the basic necessities of sanitation, electricity and water will become universal in the very near future. All of this is made possible through the creation of a digital public infrastructure. Now, I can share a similar story when it comes to the deployment of renewables, to energy efficiency practices, or the creation of green infrastructure.

Today's India is where the world simultaneously witnesses experimentation, scaling up, deployment, innovation, and breakthroughs. These developments not only solve 1/6th of the world's challenges, but they also provide replicable models for the rest of the Global South.

Walking the Talk

So, how has India walked the talk when it comes to the Global South? Stress situations normally provide the best indicators of intent and behaviour. During the Covid, 'Made in India' vaccines were sent to about 100 countries. 150 nations imported medicines during this period from the 'pharmacy of the world.' Our own development partnerships have grown significantly over the last decade, extending now to 78 nations across multiple geographies. The 600 projects delivered or under execution are a testimony to our goodwill, as much as to

The Modi Government's commitment to enhance 'Ease of Living' can bind these positive developments closely together. It is the working of these multiple axes in tandem that is now forging the New India. An India that creates its own 5G stack, which invents its Covid vaccine or that lands near the South Pole of the moon.

Emerging World 2.0 is one with more engines of growth, a fairer distribution of the benefits of globalization and greater resources to attain sustainable development goals and promote climate action and justice.

our capability. Believing that capacity building is central to development, we have provided training to 200,000 nationals of more than 160 countries. Our approach is guided by the Kampala principles enunciated by PM Modi in 2018, where the priority of the partner is the determining criteria. In all this, India has also been a source of ideas and initiatives focused on the welfare of the Global South. It could be the International Solar Alliance or the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. Or for that matter, the One Sun, One World, One Grid or the One Earth One Health. Or indeed, the International Year of Millets or the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS). We have also stepped forward as a First Responder in disaster, emergency and conflict situations, from Fiji and Myanmar to Mozambique, Yemen and Turkiye.

Multiple Engines of Growth

Emerging World 2.0 is one with more engines of growth, a fairer distribution of the benefits of globalization and greater resources to attain sustainable development goals and promote climate action and justice. This is not merely a challenge for the policy-making world, but even more so, for those who shape the real economy everyday through their decisions and choices. It is heartening to see that the B20 has risen to the occasion. By prioritizing inclusive growth,

resilient supply chains, services trade, digital technologies, innovation and sustainability, it has established itself as a credible partner of Governments who are working for the same ends. The theme R.A.I.S.E. – Responsible, Accelerated, Innovative, Sustainable, and Equitable – business says it all. Its task forces and action councils are a practical articulation of what the world must do. The emphasis on ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) in business and African economic integration is particularly laudable. Our expectation is that the G20 Summit in September will provide the inspiration and directions for all stakeholders to move in unison to build a better world. Progress and prosperity can only be lasting when they are shared both within societies and between them.



This article is based on remarks by India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar at the B20 summit in New Delhi on August 27, 2023.



DR G.N.M. PANDOR

Prioritising Africa and Global South at G20

Lauding India's G20 Presidency for advancing interests of the Global South, South Africa's Foreign Minister Dr G.N.M. Pandor makes a strong case for the African Union's induction as a member in the G20. The minister underlines that India, an emerging power, is well-placed to ensure that the core interests of the developing world, including Africa, are promoted in the global arena.

The G20 has become one of the pre-eminent global agenda-setting bodies in international relations outside of formal UN structures. Not only does the G20 serve as the premier economic forum for international cooperation but it also is an important vehicle to advance Africa's development priorities. The themes India has chosen for its G20 Presidency this year place the Global South at the centre of development



India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with South Africa's Foreign Minister Naledi Pendor.

planning. Accelerating progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals is a key priority of India's presidency, and reflects South Africa's policy goals which are in harmony with this year's G20 Action Plan.

India's proposals of a Green Development Pact for a sustainable future and its proposed reforms of multilateral institutions for the 21st century reflect our own foreign policy priorities.



Digital Power

India is committed to bridging the digital divide through technology transfer and digital transformation. South Africa believes that If digital architecture is made widely accessible, it can bring about socioeconomic transformation, and the use of digital technologies can become a force multiplier in the fight against poverty.

Harnessing data for development is critical for providing greater access to the internet and

Accelerating progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals is a key priority of India's presidency, and reflects South Africa's policy goals which are in harmony with this year's G20 Action Plan.

improving digital skills. As India's G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant has said, "There are 400 million people who do not have a digital identity, 200 million people do not have a bank account, and 133 countries do not even have fast payments. This is a massive opportunity to use technology to transform the world."

Green Finance

Fast-tracking the delivery of climate finance is a high priority for India's G20 presidency. It is the perspective of both India and South Africa that developing countries require substantive climate finance to meet their ambitious goals, and developed countries need to lead the mobilisation of resources.

The G20 summit in Bali last year agreed to expedite the delivery of climate finance to developing countries and work on an ambitious New Collective Quantified Goal of climate finance from US\$100 billion per year to support developing countries. The Bali Declaration urged developed

The G20 remains the best forum to pursue the reform of financial and economic multilateral institutions. Making global financial governance institutions more democratic and representative given the ongoing shifts in the world order is a major priority for this year's G20.

countries to at least double their collective provision of climate finance for adaptation to developing countries, from 2019 levels, by 2025, in the context of achieving a balance between mitigation and adaptation. There needs to be concrete action from developed countries in terms of climate finance and strengthening the capacity

of developing countries to combat climate change. We must also work with G20 countries to scale up the deployment of zero and low-emission power generation, including renewable energy.

Under the Indian Presidency, there is also a focus on enhancing food security, and the need to mobilise the international community to maintain the supply of both fertilisers and grains. Given the non-renewal of the grain deal, whereby Russia was asked to extend the agreement that enabled Ukraine to export grain from its Black Sea ports, this issue is all the more urgent.

India has emphasized the fact that developed countries need to honour their financial commitments to developing countries most in need. Through its laudable support for the Debt Service Suspension Initiative, the G20 attempted to provide relief to developing countries, but the results were below expectations. Not only have developed countries not met their commitments to the developing world, they are trying consistently to shift responsibility to the Global South. We hope that this year's G20 will bring about more tangible commitments in this regard.



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then President Ram Nath Kovind with South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa, the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day Celebrations in 2019.

We commend India for its numerous active ministerial meetings that have interrogated all of these issues, and for the consistent contact among the G20 Sherpas.

It's Time for Africa

South Africa also welcomes the Indian Presidency's call for the G20 to accept the African Union as a permanent member of the G20. We believe there is a need for Africa to be fully involved in the decision-making processes on global political, economic, financial, security, environmental and health governance. India, as an emerging global power, is well placed to ensure that the core interests of the developing world, including Africa, are a priority during its presidency. Africa will look to India to ensure that its socio-economic regeneration, as articulated in Agenda 2063, receives the attention it deserves within the G20 this year.

The G20 remains the best forum to pursue the reform of financial and economic multilateral institutions. Making global financial governance institutions more democratic and representative given the ongoing shifts in the world order is a major priority for this year's G20. The World Bank and IMF need to be more representative to be relevant, and developing countries need greater decision-making power.

Multilateral institutions and international financing institutions, including development banks, need to reform urgently given the rise of emerging economies. A country like Ethiopia – home to more than 100 million people – controls only 0.09% of the votes in the IMF, while the US has a vote share of 16%. This needs to change.

In recent times, the agenda of the G20 has expanded beyond economic and financial issues, and now encompasses issues of peace and security. The G20 is not a substitute for the UN system and should remain an economic development forum and refrain from centering peace and security issues in the forum.

Bridging Divides

The war in Ukraine must not be allowed to divert from the core objectives of the G20. The Global South is concerned at the possibility

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of the G20 agenda being derailed by the ongoing tensions between Russia and the West. This was the primary challenge that Indonesia faced throughout its presidency and at the Summit itself. There is a need to bridge divides between countries which are polarized over the Ukraine war, so that the G20 can focus on the challenges for which it was created - accelerating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reviving economic growth, and generating the much-needed climate finance.

The model of rotation in the presidency of the G20 allows countries of the South to exercise leadership, and India's Presidency this year, the Brazilian Presidency in 2024, and South Africa's Presidency in 2025 will prioritise the global South's development priorities. The Johannesburg II Declaration adopted at the recent XV BRICS Summit underscored the importance of the G20 in continuing to play the role of the premier multilateral forum in international economic and financial cooperation to jointly seek solutions to global challenges. ■

Dr G.N.M. Pandor is the Minister for International Relations and Cooperation in South Africa.

Forging a Path to Inclusive and Transformative Global Growth

As the countdown to the final G20 Leaders' Summit in September begins, India's presidency stands as a testament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of inclusivity, ambition, and decisive action. Guided by these principles, India has embarked on a journey to negotiate and establish transformative, action-oriented initiatives that potentially reshape the global landscape. These priorities have been selected to reflect India's commitment to fostering a more equitable and sustainable world – now more pertinent than ever in the context of multiple health, climate, and geopolitical crises.

Strong, Sustainable, Balanced and Inclusive Growth

India's G20 Presidency is committed to fostering growth that goes beyond economic

prosperity to encompass inclusivity and resilience. In a country where the middle-class segment is projected to expand to a billion people by 2046-47, the emphasis on manufacturing and strategic urbanisation is pivotal to achieve a growth rate of 9%-10% per annum. This ambitious drive aligns with India's vision to become a leader in shaping the global agenda.

However, our approach to growth must be multifaceted. The creation of smart cities must go hand in hand with advocating for policies that are environmentally sustainable and that also ensure decent work opportunities in the era of technological transformation – promoting upskilling and reskilling initiatives to adapt to evolving job landscapes. Furthermore, as we commit to enhancing the ease of doing business, both domestically and abroad, streamlining regulations must combine with



India's G20 Presidency focuses on inclusivity, innovation, and sustainability. With transformative initiatives spanning growth, SDGs, green development, gender equality, and more, India solidifies its global role, emphasising collective action for positive change. The New Delhi Summit marks a central moment, reflecting India's commitment to shaping a brighter, equitable future, says India's G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant.

investments in improving infrastructure to create an enabling environment for businesses to flourish.

Accelerating Progress on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The theme of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* or One Earth-One Family-One Future under India's G20 Presidency highlights the crucial midpoint in the implementation of the 2030 agenda. This presidency offers a unique platform to reflect on the progress, impact, and future direction of the G20 to expedite the 2030 Agenda. While the pandemic, climate change, and other crises have impeded progress on SDGs, setting back decades of advancement, India's emphasis on collective action, blended financing, and leveraging private



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capital underscores the need for innovative and cross-cutting solutions to revitalise global efforts on this front.

The 'G20 2023 Action Plan on Accelerating Progress on the SDGs' was unanimously adopted by all G20 member countries during the Development Ministers' Meeting in Varanasi in June. This plan strategically focuses on transformative areas such as digital transformation, gender equality, and sustainable transitions to accelerate the realisation of SDGs worldwide. As a dynamic multi-year document, it enhances collaboration among G20 workstreams and fosters international partnerships to advance SDGs globally. The Development Working Group (DWG) will oversee its implementation, reinforcing the G20's commitment to inclusive and impactful progress.

Green Development Pact for a Sustainable Future

India's dedication to a sustainable future takes shape through the G20 Green Development Pact – a Leaders' deliverable that propels collaborative efforts for sustainable development, climate action, and environmental initiatives on a global scale, interconnected and mutually reinforcing. This transformative initiative seeks to strike a balance between economic advancement and environmental conservation. By leveraging green technologies, reducing carbon emissions, and promoting sustainable practices, India's commitment paves the way for a blueprint that can guide nations in achieving ecological harmony.

Multilateral institutions for 21st Century

Central to India's agenda is the transformation of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) such as the World Bank and IMF. These institutions, shaped after World War II, must now reflect the 21st-century realities. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden have emphasised the urgency of modernisation, including the incorporation of transboundary issues and climate action. With MDB reforms gaining momentum, the G20 Troika held by developing nations promises a pivotal opportunity for progress.



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Moreover, acknowledging the limitations of government finances, innovative financing strategies are being explored to bolster smaller nations. These strategies involve attracting private capital through incentives, reducing investment risks, and leveraging avenues like blended financing and sovereign green bonds. By tripling sustainable lending by 2030, optimising capital usage, and enhancing collaboration with the private sector, India's leadership envisions a robust multilateral framework that catalyses global economic resurgence and accelerates SDG achievement.

Technological Transformation and Digital Infrastructure

Acknowledging the transformative power of technology, India's presidency places immense importance on harnessing its potential for the greater good. Through the development of a robust digital public infrastructure (DPI), India has successfully democratised access to essential services, fostering digital inclusion for underserved sections, plugging leaks in Direct Benefit Transfer (DBTs), and creating pathways for the ethical use of public data and IP for advanced innovation.

This presents an opportunity for the G20 to establish channels for sharing knowledge, best practices, financing, and capacity-building



aimed at assisting low and middle-income nations in crafting and advancing their own inclusive, interoperable, and secure DPI.

Gender Equality and Empowering Women and Girls

India's draft New Delhi Declaration is particularly ambitious for its emphasis on women's empowerment. Notably, the endorsement and widespread support of the dedicated Women's Working Group, set to convene under Brazil's G20 Presidency next year, demonstrates a significant stride toward fostering concrete actions for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

This visionary step not only empowers women and girls but also aligns with the G20's broader mission of achieving inclusive and sustainable development.

By boosting women's financial access, skills, leadership roles, health, and gathering gender-specific data, we pave the way for a brighter future. India is dedicated to constructing strong digital systems and enacting projects that bridge gender disparities, empowering women and nurturing their leadership. Through these

united actions, we forge a path to a thriving future where women's economic empowerment and gender parity take centre stage in our shared pursuits across sectors and borders.

Championing the Voice of Global South

Inclusivity takes center stage in India's G20 Presidency. The landmark proposal to include the African Union in the G20 fold reflects India's dedication to amplifying the voices of emerging countries and those from the Global South. This year, India has ensured the highest African participation in the G20 to date by including South Africa, Mauritius, Egypt, Nigeria, AU Chair - Comoros, and AUDA-NEPAD as invitees to the forum. In January, India hosted a special virtual summit called the Voice of the Global South Summit under the theme – 'Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose,' which witnessed the participation of 125 countries and 18 heads of state. This commitment to diverse perspectives exemplifies India's role as a bridge-builder throughout history, enhancing the forum's equitable representation.

Cultural Programmes: A Tapestry of India's Diversity

India's vibrant cultural heritage has taken center stage during its G20 Presidency, with 150 cultural programmes held so far, showcasing diverse local and national art forms. By featuring 7,000 artists across these programmes, we have not only managed to provide a post-COVID impetus to the tourism sector but have also offered a global platform for indigenous artists to showcase their work, fostering cross-cultural understanding between countries.

Initiatives and Achievements: Shaping the Future

Under India's visionary leadership, an array of new initiatives has been introduced, exemplifying the nation's commitment to shaping a dynamic global landscape. Notably,

a new Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group has been established within the Sherpa track, signifying India's proactive approach to confronting critical challenges head-on.

Furthermore, the formalisation of the Women's Working Group during India's Presidency speaks volumes about the country's dedication to gender equality and empowerment. With its inaugural meeting scheduled for the Brazilian Presidency, this initiative holds the promise of fostering meaningful change and amplifying the voices of women across the G20 forum. These endeavours, coupled with the elevation of the G20 Research and Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) into a comprehensive Working Group during the Ministerial meeting in Mumbai, reflect India's commitment to innovation-driven progress. This forward-thinking move underscores our aspiration to harness collective creativity for sustainable solutions, setting the stage for future collaboration under the Brazilian Presidency in 2024.

Reaching Across Borders

India's G20 Presidency has transcended geographical boundaries by welcoming over 20,000 delegates from 115+ nationalities across multiple venues to date. This widespread outreach has nurtured international collaboration, enriching the G20's discourse with an array of diverse perspectives that reflect the intricacies of our interconnected world.

Inclusivity takes center stage in India's G20 Presidency. The landmark proposal to include the African Union in the G20 fold reflects India's dedication to amplifying the voices of emerging countries and those from the Global South.



The New Delhi Summit: A Confluence of Leaders

India's hosting of a record-breaking 43 heads of state at the New Delhi summit solidifies its role as a central player on the global stage. This unparalleled participation reaffirms the significance of India's presidency and its far-reaching impact on the G20's agenda.

As India's G20 Presidency approaches its culmination, the nation's steadfast commitment to inclusivity, ambition, and decisive action stands undiminished. Guided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership, India's transformative initiatives are poised to shape a more sustainable and equitable future for all. By amplifying the voices of the Global South and embracing diverse perspectives, India has

India's vibrant cultural heritage has taken center stage during its G20 Presidency, with 150 cultural programmes held so far, showcasing diverse local and national art forms.

reaffirmed the G20's pivotal role as a catalyst for collective action and positive change. As the world eagerly awaits the New Delhi summit, it anticipates the crowning moment of a presidency that will leave an enduring mark on the global stage. ■

Amitabh Kant is India's G20 Sherpa. He was CEO, NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India), India's premier policy think tank. Prior to that, Kant, an Indian Administrative Service officer, served as Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion. He is the author of *Branding India – An Incredible Story, Incredible India 2.0* and has edited *The Path Ahead: Transformative Ideas for India*. He has been a key driver of the "Make in India", "Startup India," "Incredible India" and "God's Own Country" initiatives which positioned and branded India and Kerala as the leading manufacturing and tourism destinations.



HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA

India's G20 Presidency and Power of Yoga

From early mornings along the beautiful white sands of Rann of Kutch to rejuvenating sessions in the lush alpine greenery of Srinagar, Yoga, with its focus on unifying body and soul, has become an integral part of the G20 meetings across India, writes Harsh Vardhan Shringla, India's G20 Chief Coordinator.



G20 delegates performing yoga.

The world paused to take a deep breath on June 21 as we celebrated the 9th International Day of Yoga. Nine years after his clarion call for Yoga at the United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi returned to New York and led the session commemorating the International Day of Yoga at the UN Headquarters.

With over 2,000 enthusiasts participating in the session led by Prime Minister Modi, a new Guinness World Record was also created on June 21 for the participation from most nationalities. At this momentous occasion, Prime Minister Modi called upon the world to “use the power of Yoga to build bridges of friendship, a peaceful world, and a cleaner, greener and sustainable future”.

In 2014, when he addressed the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Modi had urged the international community to adopt an International Yoga Day - the invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition.

Within 75 days, the proposal was accepted with a resounding consensus.

Since then, millions have adopted Yoga – the symphony of body and mind as a part of their daily lives. As we wade through a cacophony of challenges in today's fast-paced world, Yoga allows us to reclaim a space for ourselves within us free from the stress and pressures of the world.

When the mind and body are unified through this poetry of movements, we rediscover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and nature. This year, the theme for the International Day of Yoga was ‘Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam or ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’ is the core of India's G20 Presidency as well. But this is not all. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is the essence of India's story.

The reality of the present and promise of the future cannot be viewed without reflection of the past. So, allow me to take you back to





the day Prime Minister Modi extended the gift of Yoga to the world and show you how it is intrinsically linked to India's G20 Presidency today.

In 2014, Prime Minister Modi asked the world, "While we speak of an interdependent world, have we become more united as nations?" He reminded the international community that our destinies are interlinked and if we were to continue with a "zero sum game" mindset, our collective future would be in danger. This mission of uniting the world on issues of global importance with a human-centric approach has been the overarching aim of India's G20 Presidency, and the same spirit of unity is advanced through Yoga as well. As encapsulated in the words of Prime Minister Modi in New York this year, "Yoga is unifying - it is for everyone, for all ethnicities, for all faiths and for all cultures. Yoga is truly universal."

As part of the G20 meetings, delegates have had the opportunity to attend beneficial Yoga sessions, including sessions in Rishikesh, the 'Yoga capital of the world'. Yoga sessions were incorporated between meetings as well to demonstrate how it can be a viable solution

The World Health Organization last year said that the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a 25% increase in the prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide. Yogic meditation is known to significantly help reduce stress, the bane of the modern world.

to sedentary lifestyles. From early mornings along the beautiful white sands of Rann of Kutch, to rejuvenating sessions in the lush alpine greenery of Srinagar, Yoga has been an integral part of G20 meetings across the country. Yoga teaches us to live in peace and harmony with ourselves, others, and with nature. Thus, Prime Minister Modi's insistence

on working towards “genuine peace, inclusive global development, and a sustainable world” was only fitting when he proposed International Yoga Day to the UN.

Each of these words are echoed in the key priorities of India’s G20 Presidency, and this is not a coincidence. India’s priorities, irrespective of time and international order, remain steadfast. We aspire for a world that is built on a beautiful balance of collective action and works towards global good; we aspire for a paradigm of human-centric globalization.

When the mind and body are unified through this poetry of movements, we rediscover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and nature. This year, the theme for the International Day of Yoga was ‘Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.’

Yoga is one such path through which a profound connection with yourself and the world can be attained. But it is not merely asanas that can get you there. Yoga is a way of life that washes away the boundaries between the individual, nature and the world.

This holistic way of ‘LiFE’ is another key priority of India’s G20 Presidency: Lifestyle for Environment. In India, respect for nature is an integral part of our spiritualism and we treat nature’s bounties as sacred. By changing our lifestyles and creating a collective consciousness, we are better equipped to deal with global challenges like climate change.

Another global challenge that Yoga can help with is mental health. The World Health Organization last year said that the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a 25% increase in the prevalence of anxiety and depression

worldwide. Yogic meditation is known to significantly help reduce stress, the bane of the modern world.

In his address to the joint session of the US Congress, Prime Minister Modi said India lives by the motto of ‘The World is One Family’, and a key aspect of this is ‘One Earth, One Health’ which is a vision for global action to bring quality healthcare to everyone. Today, as the world looks for solutions to stress and lifestyle diseases, India offers its ancient wisdom in the form of Yoga to fill the vacuum for a healthier ‘One Future’. Yoga caters to the physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing of a person, which makes it a holistic solution to the multifaceted aspects of health.



In conclusion, I would like to quote US astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, “We are part of this universe, we are in this universe, but perhaps more important than both of those facts, is that the universe is in us”. We are more than cities, countries and continents. We are ‘One Family’ with ‘One Future’ and we must protect it together. ■

Harsh Vardhan Shringla is India’s G20 Chief Coordinator.



MUKTESH PARDESHI

A Celebration of Inclusive Diplomacy and India

India's G20 Presidency emphasises inclusivity, amplifies global voices and showcases its diverse culture and development. It's a year-long national endeavour with broad participation, marking a pivotal moment in India's path towards global recognition and prosperity, writes Muktesh Pardeshi.



From an organisational perspective, India's G20 Presidency has been widely recognised as a great success. The presidency, which began on December 1, 2022, has completed nine months of its substantive work by hosting an impressive tally of over 200 meetings across nearly 60 different locations.

There has been a great deal of popular support for the country's diplomatic efforts. Like the Chandrayaan-3 landing moment in the last week of August, this presidency has been a high point for India's global leadership, public policy making, and showcasing India to the world; it is now a part of the Indian lexicon.

To shed light on the multifaceted approach that underpins India's G20 Presidency, we can identify seven 'petals' that have shaped both its substantive and organisational aspects:

G20 for All

The making of India's Presidency is inspired by the vision of 'G20 for All'. Speaking at the Bali Summit 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi articulated that India assumed leadership of this intergovernmental forum during a period marked by concurrent challenges of geopolitical tensions, economic deceleration, surging food and energy costs, and the enduring repercussions of the pandemic. He pledged that India's stewardship would be "inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented".



Robust Secretariat

The absence of a permanent secretariat or dedicated staff within the G20 framework places the onus on the presidency to establish a robust support system. On February 15, 2022, the Union Cabinet approved the establishment of a G20 Secretariat and its reporting structures for implementing overall policy decisions and the necessary arrangements to guide India's Presidency.

Subsequently, the G20 Secretariat swiftly assumed operational status, taking on responsibilities related to substantive matters, technical intricacies, media management, security protocols, and the overall organisation of India's G20 Presidency. It is guided by an Apex Committee headed by the Prime Minister and comprises the Finance Minister, Home Minister, External Affairs Minister, and G20 Sherpa, who provided overall guidance for India's G20 Presidency.

The New Delhi Summit marks Prime Minister Modi's 10th participation in a G20 Summit. As the host leader, he has tasked the Secretariat with developing an organisational plan to provide visiting guests with a "full experience of India's amazing diversity,

inclusive traditions, and cultural richness". This can only be achieved by adopting a 'whole-of-country approach' in which central government ministries, states, Union Territories and local bodies all become stakeholders. Over the past nine months, this approach has emerged as our guiding mantra.

Logo and Theme

The G20 logo draws inspiration from the vivid hues of India's national flag – saffron, white, green and blue. Within this logo, a harmonious juxtaposition emerges as it interweaves the image of planet Earth with the lotus, India's national flower, symbolising growth amid challenges. The Earth symbolises India's deeply-rooted pro-planet ethos, reflecting a life in perfect alignment with the natural world.

Below the G20 logo is Bharat, written in the Devanagari script. The theme of India's G20 Presidency – Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam or 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' - is drawn from the ancient Sanskrit text of the Maha Upanishad. Essentially, the theme affirms the value of all life – human, animal and plant – and its interconnectedness in the wider universe. During the conceptualisation of this theme, it

There is a profound sense of national pride among the people regarding India's G20 Presidency and its pivotal role in projecting India onto the global stage. For India, the G20 Presidency also marks the beginning of Amritkaal.

became evident that India was championing a pro-planet philosophy, emphasising the value of all living beings, the bonds that unite us, and our collective destiny.

The logo and the theme together convey a powerful message of India's G20 Presidency, which strives for just and equitable growth for all in the world as we navigate through these turbulent times in a sustainable, holistic, responsible and inclusive manner. India is committed to taking everyone along. India's pledge is to ensure that no one is left behind, encapsulating the essence of 'G20 for all.'

Advancing G20 Agenda

India has been an active participant in the G20 ever since its founding in 1999 as an informal forum for the finance ministers and central bank governors of the most important industrialised and developing economies. It even hosted a meeting of G20 finance ministers and central bank governors in 2002.

The G20 Presidency is responsible for bringing together the G20 agenda in consultation with other members, especially the 'troika,' in response to developments in the global economy. During India's Presidency, the members of the G20 troika are Indonesia, India and Brazil, all dynamic emerging economies.

In addition to the core member countries, which encompass 19 nations and the European Union, each G20 Presidency invites other guest countries and international organisations (IOs)

to participate in the G20 meetings and summit. India has invited Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain and the UAE as guest countries. For Guest IOs, India has invited ISA, CDRI, and ADB in addition to the regular IOs (UN, IMF, WB, WHO, WTO, ILO, FSB, and OECD) and Chairs of Regional Organizations (AU, AUDA-NEPAD, and ASEAN). Therefore, New Delhi will see the participation of nine invitee countries and 14 IOs, apart from G20 members.

Under our presidency, several noteworthy additions have been made to the agenda. This includes the establishment of a new Working Group focused on Disaster Risk Reduction, the introduction of a new Startup20 Engagement Group, and the implementation of two distinct initiatives: a roundtable of Chief Scientific Advisors and a conference on cyber security. This ambitious agenda comprises a comprehensive array of 37 workstreams and subject areas, encompassing vital domains such as trade, climate change, sustainable development, health, agriculture, energy, environment and anti-corruption, among others.

Giving Voice to Global South

When India assumed the presidency last December, it was acutely conscious that most of the Global South would not have a direct seat at the G20 table. Therefore, a strategic decision was made to convene the Voice of the Global South Summit in January 2023. India heard from 125 nations directly about their challenges and priorities, and amplifying these voices has elevated its presidency to a higher level.

We are also witnessing the highest participation from Africa at the New Delhi Summit, including South Africa (the sole African member country), Mauritius, Egypt, Nigeria, the African Union Chair (Comoros), and the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD). Under India's leadership, support for permanent membership for the African Union has gained momentum, and it is likely to become a reality if all leaders endorse this long-pending proposal.

Narrating India Story

G20 meetings held across India have provided unique opportunities to present and share the Indian story with the global community, including its diversity, culture, democracy, development and technological transformation.

At the newly-built summit venue, Bharat Mandapam, several thematic exhibits will be installed. These exhibits include Bharat: Mother of Democracy, which aims to highlight that “taking the consent of the people in governance has been a part of life since the earliest recorded history”. There will also be a Digital India experience zone and crafts bazaar, showcasing and selling handicraft products from different parts of India, with a special focus on One District One Product (ODOP), Geographical Indication (GI) tagged items, and products crafted by women and tribal artisans. Delegates can also look forward to special live demonstrations by master craftsmen, enhancing the immersive experience.

People's G20

The 2023 Presidency, which has come to India for the first time, is more than just a multilateral diplomatic endeavour; it has evolved into a year-long national undertaking and celebration involving the entire central government, all 36 states and Union Territories, the Parliament, businesses, the hospitality industry, academia, professionals, scientists, cultural groups, media, and most notably, the youth.

In the annals of independent India's history, there has never been an event of such magnitude and scope carried out over an entire year, touching every corner of the nation. We have embraced a distinctive approach, pioneered by Prime Minister Modi himself in his Mann Ki Baat address, emphasising the infusion of Jan Bhagidari (People's Participation) into our endeavours. Aligning with this vision, we have



achieved an unparalleled geographical reach for G20 meetings, with 230 meetings scheduled across 60 different locations - a remarkable feat under any G20 presidency. Our success in engaging our citizenry as active participants in the process stands as a testament to our commitment to inclusive governance.

There is a profound sense of national pride among the people regarding India's G20 Presidency and its pivotal role in projecting India onto the global stage. For India, the G20 Presidency also marks the beginning of Amritkaal, the 25-year period leading up to the centenary of its independence in 2047, towards a prosperous, inclusive and developed country. In this context, our G20 leadership is poised to leave an enduring legacy by bolstering our infrastructure and capacity in physical, intellectual and organisational domains, showcasing India's potential to the world and shaping a positive global narrative that echoes our achievements and aspirations.

Ambassador Muktesh Pardeshi currently serves as the Special Secretary in India's G20 Presidency Secretariat. With a distinguished diplomatic career spanning over three decades, he has served as India's Ambassador to Mexico, High Commissioner to New Zealand, and Chief Passport Officer of India.

Bringing Development Agenda to Centrestage: Accelerating Achievement of SDGs

India's G20 Presidency aims to accelerate Sustainable Development Goals through collective actions, focusing on developing countries, gender equality, digital transformation, and climate resilience. Strong cooperation and increased financing are essential for a sustainable future, says Eenam Gambhir.



The year 2023 is crucial as it marks the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is the only roadmap for collective actions to achieve the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. However, multiple crises have derailed progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and have underscored the persistent vulnerabilities and imbalances faced by developing countries.

The countries of the Global South were severely impacted by the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which were further exacerbated by the food, fuel and fertiliser crises. According to UN estimates, developing countries require at least \$4.3 trillion per year to reach their SDG goals. The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023 by the United Nations highlights that only about 12% of the SDG targets are on track, and 30% have either shown no progress or have regressed below the 2015 baseline.

At the same time, extreme weather events are becoming increasingly common, glaciers are shrinking and the intensity of biodiversity loss is rising. Between 2015 and 2020, the world lost approximately 10 million hectares of forests per year. Today, more than two-thirds of the world's ocean ecosystems are damaged, degraded, or modified. UNFCCC's recent analysis of climate financing needs indicates that developing countries require at least \$6 trillion by 2030 to meet less than half of their existing Nationally Determined Contributions. With the world already at 1.1°C of warming, without extraordinary action, the 1.5°C temperature increase is likely to be surpassed in the coming decades, possibly by the middle of this century. The recent crises have exposed the shortcomings of international institutions, which have been unable to deliver for those who need them the most.

In this backdrop, India assumed its G20 Presidency, along with the responsibility of

shaping the global agenda. India engaged extensively with multiple stakeholders at all levels throughout the G20 process. In January 2023, over 125 countries were consulted during the first-ever 'Voice of Global South' Summit, aimed at addressing the specific concerns and challenges of the Global South within India's G20 priorities.

The theme of the Indian Presidency, "One Earth, One Family, One Future," was chosen by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a vision for a world where no one is truly left behind. India's G20 Presidency introduced priorities with a particular focus on developing countries. These priorities included accelerating progress towards the SDGs, facilitating inclusive and resilient growth, promoting green development and lifestyles for sustainable development, reforming multilateral institutions for the 21st century, advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, and promoting technological transformation and increased access to digital public infrastructure. The presidency collaborated with all G20 partners to find pragmatic solutions to the multidimensional crises and championed ambitious, concrete and collective G20 actions to create opportunities for all while addressing structural vulnerabilities and imbalances, particularly those faced by developing countries.

One of the notable achievements of the presidency has been redirecting the G20's focus to its original mandate of fostering global growth and development, shifting the discussions away from East-West divides and North-South tensions.

Today, developing countries face increasing resource and capacity constraints in fulfilling the aspirations of their people due to shrinking fiscal and policy space needed to simultaneously meet development, environmental and climate goals. Implementing the 2030 Agenda in the next seven years is indeed possible, but the transformational transitions required are on a scale and timeframe faster than ever

before in our history. Achieving the SDGs can only happen through unprecedented global cooperation and the promotion of bold collective actions that align with changing realities.

The theme of the Indian Presidency: 'One Earth, One Family, One Future', was chosen by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi as a vision for a world where truly no one is left behind.

In his address to the G20 development ministers, Prime Minister Modi urged them to collectively assume responsibility to prevent any further setbacks to the SDGs. Recognising that developing countries are crucial stakeholders in implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving its SDGs, the G20, under the Indian Presidency, unanimously adopted the ambitious multi-year 'G20 Action Plan to Accelerate Progress on the SDGs' on June 12, 2023, during the Development Ministerial in Varanasi. This plan represents a coordinated, integrated and inclusive roadmap for G20 actions, taking into account the specific needs of countries, especially those in the Global South.

Through this action plan, India has addressed one of the key requests that emerged from the Voice of Global South Summit: progress toward a world where developing countries can access the support they need, including adequate and affordable finance, capacity building, and technology transfer to implement the 2030 Agenda. The action plan not only strengthens G20 commitments to the development agenda but also presents decisive transformative actions to create an international enabling environment and policy support system that aligns with developmental needs and priorities. Furthermore, it aims to tackle the challenges

that developing countries face in accessing affordable financing and enhancing the representation of developing countries in global decision-making.

Action Plan

Under India's leadership, G20 countries have pledged to take robust and collective actions in the following areas: digital transformation, the implementation of sustainable, inclusive, and just global transitions that leave no one behind, and sustainable development through gender equality and women's empowerment.

The action plan recognises that digital technologies have the potential to empower people by promoting social justice. The integration of digital technologies in governance is generating extensive datasets that can advance the development agenda. The G20 has also unanimously adopted the G20 Principles on Harnessing Data for Development to bridge the digital and data divide, promote digital technologies and data usage for development, and enhance capacity building in data.

In line with India's aspiration to minimise trade-offs between development, growth, and climate agendas, the action plan promotes the right to development by collectively facilitating climate-resilient growth pathways through an international enabling environment that is adaptive, proactive, and responsive to the needs of developing countries in the 21st century. It encourages international partnerships to strengthen institutional frameworks and enable clean, sustainable, just, affordable, and inclusive energy transitions through improved access to finance, technology, and capacity building.

Women's empowerment and women-led development are key priorities of the Indian Presidency. Achieving holistic global development is not possible without the active participation of women. The G20 has called for a paradigm shift in the role of women, recognising them as agents of change and decision-makers in addressing global challenges effectively, decisively, and inclusively, as well as leaders in development planning and implementation.

The 2023 action plan has also garnered

strong consensus on financing for the SDGs, emphasising the need to scale up adequate, accessible, affordable, and long-term financing for developing countries. This includes addressing financing bottlenecks and continuing to improve the mobilization of finance. Additionally, the call has been made for reforming the international financial architecture and evolving multilateral development banks to make them more responsive to the development needs of the Global South. Developed countries are also urged to fully fulfill their development and climate finance commitments.

New Development Model

Through the unanimous adoption of the action plan by development ministers, the G20 has sent a powerful message to the world: achieving the 2030 Agenda is not a choice but a necessity. Only through unprecedented global cooperation and solidarity can we recover sustainably from the current disruptions, reverse the setbacks in developmental progress, and get back on track to achieve the SDGs.

In light of emerging needs, lessons, and challenges, there is a compelling case for a new development model – one that accelerates decarbonisation and a just energy transition while simultaneously promoting economic growth and job creation. The Indian presidency has advanced climate action by addressing critical gaps and creating pathways for green, low-carbon economies. It envisions an ambitious Green Development Pact to be adopted by the Leaders – a blueprint of actions for the next decade that facilitates green development, driven by investments in implementing just energy transitions, Lifestyles for Sustainable Development, climate finance, and the conservation and protection of ecosystems.

Development ministers have recognised that social and economic development relies on the sustainable management of our planet's limited natural resources. They are committed to strengthening the G20's efforts in developing an integrated approach to achieving sustainable development in a balanced and

comprehensive manner. The adoption of the G20 High-level Principles for Lifestyles for Sustainable Development was a significant milestone, strengthening the connections between development, environment, and climate goals. It builds on sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption and production patterns, as recognised in the 2030 Agenda, especially SDG 12, the UNFCCC, and the Paris Agreement, as well as the achievements of past G20 Presidencies.

Women empowerment and women-led development is one of the key priorities of the Indian Presidency. Holistic global development is not possible without women's participation.

The COVID-19 pandemic served as a stark reminder that we are interconnected, and so are our problems and their solutions. Our future depends on the prosperity of all. Implementing the development, climate, and growth agendas necessitates trust and robust accountability. The political momentum generated by the G20's actions for sustainable development needs to be advanced in upcoming international forums. There is a need for greater ambition, stronger international policy actions, and increased financing to achieve a sustainable future. We have witnessed renewed forms of cooperation and collaboration within the G20 grouping and beyond. It is time to implement the new vision outlined by the G20 Development Ministers to achieve a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future for all.

The writer is the Co-Chair of the Development Working Group of G20, Government of India. Views are personal.

G20 Presidencies of Emerging Countries Bodes Well for Global South

The global rise of India holds significant implications for the African continent. As India looks to broaden its horizons, Africa is emerging as an increasingly vital partner in this narrative. With its abundant natural resources, burgeoning markets, and youthful population, Africa presents a natural synergy with India's economic and strategic objectives. In an interview with Manish Chand, CEO, Centre for Global India Insights, Mehdi Jomaa, Tunisia's former prime minister, says India has leveraged its G20 Presidency to advocate the concerns of the Global South and Africa. **Excerpts from the interview:**

Q) India has placed the priorities and interests of the Global South on its G20 presidency agenda. In what ways can India advance the interests of the Global South?

A) It's common for developed and developing countries to hold opposing perspectives on critical issues such as the role of international institutions, global trade, economic sanctions, climate finance and regional conflicts.

There is a noticeable divide between the Global North and the Global South that is impacting global cooperation. The positioning regarding the war in Ukraine is a very good example, but the disconnect between these regions extends beyond this debate. This divide can also be observed in climate negotiations,

discussions about a pandemic treaty, and efforts to reform International Financial Institutions, among other topics.

The G20 Presidencies of India, Brazil, and South Africa, all of which are part of the Global South, offers a valuable opportunity to bridge gaps and share ideas with the United Nations. India has already indicated its intention to utilise its G20 Presidency to advocate for the concerns of the Global South, and Brazil has expressed similar intentions.

This presents a unique opportunity to address critical issues hindering progress in the Global South, but it is imperative that this be done in a manner that avoids exacerbating existing divisions. It is crucial to reach agreement on fundamental issues that impact all



individuals throughout the world.

Q) India has also projected interests of Africa in its G20 agenda and has been advocating permanent membership of the African Union in G20. How do you look at this initiative? Do you think there is sufficient support in the global community to achieve it?

A) For global governance to be effective, it is imperative that it becomes more inclusive. It is high time that we explore ways to establish a framework for global cooperation that takes into account the perspectives of Africa and the Global South in every discourse on global challenges.

India's G20 Presidency serves as a model for what can be achieved. Prime Minister Modi was resolute in his commitment to use his presidency to effectively represent the interests of the Global South, and supported the notion of granting the African Union permanent membership in the G20.

This is a positive development that warrants careful consideration and has the potential to inspire other forums to follow suit. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), for example, should consider broadening its Executive Board by adding seats for emerging and developing countries, specifically African nations. The

Security Council should also follow this lead, given the clear rationale for doing so.

Q) Reform of the global governance architecture is a key goal of India and Africa in their diplomatic outreach. In what ways do India and Africa cooperate to advance the reform and expansion of the UNSC?

A) If the multilateral system is to position itself to effectively deliver peace as a global public good, it is imperative that it be based on a definition of collective security that takes into account the current political, economic, social, environmental, and technological threats that we face.

Regrettably, the Security Council, which is the most prominent component of the multilateral system, has yet to live up to expectations. Controlled by a limited number of states and hindered by geopolitical polarisation, it is unable to respond to significant risks to international peace and security. Unless it undergoes meaningful reform, the Security Council is at risk of becoming irrelevant.

The time has come for a renewed effort to reform the Security Council. The upcoming Summit of the Future presents an opportunity to showcase our mutual commitment to the United Nations Charter and propose a conference aimed at reviewing the Charter, with a focus on reforming the Security Council. To ensure that the decision-making process of the Security Council is more representative, it is crucial that the Council be expanded in a fair manner. This would grant a greater voice to regions that are traditionally underrepresented, including those with young populations on the rise and areas affected by conflict.

It is important that the decisions of the Security Council are not solely influenced by one state with veto power. There needs to be an effort to democratise its actions. Building unity through effective and unified action is crucial for legitimacy. Therefore, reform should focus on achieving this unity.



The Security Council must be able to adapt to the contemporary geopolitical landscape by developing innovative approaches to address evolving risks. To achieve fairness and legitimacy, the Council must expand its membership and reform its decision-making processes. This expansion must prioritise representation from historically underrepresented regions, with the exploration of seat allocation options by region, rather than by individual country, being a viable consideration. Furthermore, extending non-permanent seat tenure can enhance diversity and ensure equitable representation. By enabling a more diverse range of voices to be heard during deliberations, the Council can fulfill its role as a just and legitimate body.

As a permanent member of the Security Council, there is a significant responsibility to uphold the interests of all nations and peoples. However, this responsibility is often disregarded when permanent members obstruct the essential work of the Council. In order to address this issue, a future-oriented reform process should prioritise reducing the use of veto power and investigating alternative methods to prevent individual states from blocking the actions favoured by the majority of members.

It is important for Security Council members to take responsibility for their use of the veto and explain their actions to the General

Assembly. It is also necessary to establish a clear plan for action in case the Security Council fails to act in the face of international security threats. If this happens, the General Assembly should take immediate action. We need to increase the power of the General Assembly to respond more effectively to security threats. Additionally, while Article 53 of the United Nations Charter limits the ability of regional organisations to enforce peace without the Security Council's authorisation, we should work towards empowering regional organisations to play a more active role in conflict prevention based on the principle of subsidiarity. Our aim is to improve the prevention mandates of regional bodies and provide them with the resources they need to strengthen the implementation of subsidiarity within the global/regional framework.

Q) How do you look at Africa's role in the international arena? How can Africa partner with India in shaping a constructive human-centric global agenda?

A) By 2050, Africa will be home to a quarter of the world's population, two-fifths of its newborn children and half of its labour force. This presents a unique opportunity to foster innovation, entrepreneurship and economic growth. The entrepreneurial spirit and ingenuity of the African Union and the Global South have

sparked groundbreaking initiatives in areas ranging from renewable energy and agriculture to technology and infrastructure development.

The African region is already showing increasing leadership on global issues such as climate and the war in Ukraine. Africa is the future because of its potential for growth, development, and global influence. Of course, it has to overcome challenges but with some strategic support, it can become a key international player.

Africa's role in the international arena is evolving, and its partnership with India can play a crucial role in shaping a more human-centric global agenda. By leveraging their respective strengths and collaborating in various areas, both regions can contribute to economic growth, sustainable development, and the well-being of their populations while promoting global harmony.

To shape a constructive human-centric global agenda, India and Africa should focus on inclusivity, sustainable development, and respect for human rights. We can work together to advocate for policies that prioritise the well-being of people, address inequalities, and contribute to a more just and equitable world order.

Q) How can G20 address global crises such as rising food and energy prices and climate change more effectively?

A) As we gather to engage in fruitful discussions on shaping the global future, it is important to acknowledge the challenges that Africa and the Global South face in the context of the G20, despite their strategic and economic potential and demographic dividend.

It is clear that developing countries are currently experiencing deep frustration due to the uneven recovery from the pandemic. While wealthy countries were able to recover from the economic impact through expansionary monetary and fiscal policies, many developing countries, which are heavily indebted and have less fiscal space, were not able to do the same. The number of countries that are in

technical default, at high risk of default, or facing extremely expensive market financing is worrying.

Developing nations, particularly those in Africa, are experiencing financial strains that are not sustainable. This is attributed to the failure of the current debt management framework as well as inflation and increasing interest rates. It is shocking to note that Africa now allocates more resources to servicing debts than it does to healthcare. This necessitates urgent action to ease the burden on these countries, with a structural response being a vital step. To accomplish this goal, the international financial system must be reformed to make it more resilient, equitable, and inclusive. An overhaul of our financial systems is essential to envisioning a future of growth and development in Africa.

The G20 Presidencies of India, Brazil, and South Africa, all of which are part of the Global South, offers a valuable opportunity to bridge gaps and share ideas with the United Nations. India has already indicated its intention to utilise its G20 Presidency to advocate for the concerns of the Global South, and Brazil has expressed similar intentions.

On climate, Africa and the Global South should be supported financially and technically to help our economies accelerate decarbonisation. The Loss and Damage Fund agreed in Sharm el-Sheikh must be made operational. The work of the G20 is essential, but how can we expect to tackle these crises without African voices at the table? Joining the

G20 will of course pose political, cultural and technical challenges for the African Union, but it is time to rise to these challenges.

Q) How do you look at India's emergence as a global power and the ramifications of the rise of India for the world order and the rise of Africa?

A) The ascent of India as a global power has brought significant changes to the international landscape, with far-reaching implications for the world order and Africa's development. The emergence of India has provided a compelling narrative for the global community, driven by its robust economy, advanced technology, and skilled diplomacy, which have all contributed to the evolution of a more diverse and balanced world. This shift away from a unipolar system has led to a redistribution of power and a rebalancing of geopolitical forces, resulting in a recalibration of international relations to accommodate the diverse perspectives and interests that a multipolar system entails.

The expansion of India's global presence holds significant implications for the African continent. As India looks to broaden its horizons,

Africa is the future because of its potential for growth, development, and global influence. Of course, it has to overcome challenges but with some strategic support, it can become a key international player.

Africa is emerging as an increasingly vital partner in this narrative. With its abundant natural resources, burgeoning markets, and youthful population, Africa presents a natural synergy with India's economic and strategic objectives. Through collaboration, the two can foster a mutually beneficial relationship that promotes sustainable growth and development for both India and Africa. ■

Mehdi Jomaa served as the Prime Minister of Tunisia from January 29, 2014 to February 6, 2015. Mr. Jomaa was also the Minister of Industry in the Ali Laarayedh government in 2013.





India's G20 Presidency is a Revolution: Former UNGA President

As India hosts the G20 summit in New Delhi in September, the international diplomatic community is upbeat about New Delhi's skills in shaping the global agenda. In this interview with Manish Chand, Founder, India Writes Network and Centre for Global India Insights, Dr Maria Fernanda Espinosa, a former president of the United Nations General Assembly, the first from Latin America and the Caribbean to preside over this body, says that India has raised the bar by placing women-led development and interests of the Global South at the heart of its G20 presidency. **Excerpts from the interview:**

Q) Women-led development is one of the core priorities of India's G20 presidency. How can India promote women-led development under its presidency, especially the empowerment of women in countries of the Global South?

A) India's G20 presidency is a revolution because it has not only looked at the world's priorities but also been open and sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the Global South countries by undertaking a crusade for inclusion. This inclusion is not only of different countries in different sectors and actors, think tanks and civil society, but also inclusion within India.

The other very important issue is the issue of women-led development. Because what you often hear is development for women, or development that is friendly to women's needs, with better access to financial services, education, and health for women - this is all very good and necessary. But here when you say women-led development, the verb "to lead" is critical, because it is not women as recipients or as beneficiaries, it is women as actors, decision-makers, and owners of their own destiny which is a paradigm shift in thinking. We should use that momentum to bring it to Brazil as well. Any effort on sustainable development, on stabilizing our macroeconomic landscape, on "solving" global problems will not succeed if you leave half of the world's population

Any effort on sustainable development, on stabilizing our macroeconomic landscape, on "solving" global problems will not succeed if you leave half of the world's population behind. India has understood this very clearly. Women-led development is, therefore, about putting women to lead and take decisions.

behind. India has understood this very clearly. Women-led development is, therefore, about putting women to lead and take decisions.

Q) India's G20 presidency is aspiring to mainstream issues of the Global South in the G20 agenda. What do you think has been the progress so far and what is the way ahead?

A) When it was established, the G20 was seen as the club of the wealthy and powerful. Because of the successive presidencies of Indonesia, India, Brazil, and South Africa, it's a golden opportunity for the Global South to shape the agenda and priorities. We live in a world of paradox, where we are divided between the countries of the Global North that have all the wealth, be it water, biodiversity, cultural diversity, oil and gas and critical minerals, and a well-educated population that is growing younger, and those of the Global South which is perceived as the poorest in the poorest parts of the world. It's the Global South where the wealth, the labour force, the intellect, and the talent are there, and yet other countries are wealthier. Why? Because there is a divide in technology access, and capacity building. It's also because of very uneven partnerships in the way we use the wealth and resources of the Global South, including atmospheric space. The climate crisis is because of an uneven distribution of atmospheric space. If you look at per capita emissions in India, or in my country, Ecuador, then you see that something is wrong. We need to rebalance cooperation through technology transfer, low carbon technology transfer to proper investment, because the money and the resources are up here, and the actual wealth and resources and human power and human talent is mostly in the South. So, this act of rebalancing and working in partnership and forging alliances is perhaps the greatest challenge of our time.

Q) How can India advance the reform of the UNSC and global governance architecture, under its G20 presidency? Is there a critical mass in favour of UN reforms and UN Security Council reforms?

A) First of all, wherever you go, there is wide agreement about the UN reforms. The G20 has

the traction and the power to really make the reform happen not only of the UN system, but also of international financial institutions. Global governance institutions need to be efficient, inclusive, and relevant to people. We are living in a multipolar and a polycentric world. Knowing the UN quite well, I would say we need to be also committed to improving the way the General Assembly operates in terms of accountability, implementation, the way we make decisions, and the legitimacy of those decisions. We also need to be concerned about the paralysis of the Security Council and think seriously about expanding the membership of UNSC to make it more representative of a changing world order.

The debate on reform of the Security Council has been going on for more than 20 years, but it's not making the headway. You go one step forward, but then there is some regression on certain things. There are different "rival" groupings, like the G4 and the L69, what is called United for Consensus. I don't think that the process is going to go far, if there is no political decision to really go forward with some formula that can be acceptable for the P5. We have heard some positive signs from some permanent members of the Security Council like the US, France, and the UK, but more needs to be done.

Q) India's G20 presidency is also India's moment under the global sun. How do you look at India's emergence as a global power with its own narrative on global affairs?

A) India is taking its leadership role very seriously. We saw that in the way that India took over the G20 presidency with great responsibility and creativity; and also, in a very intentional dialogue with the Global South. We need to close the gaps on gender inequality and the role of women. And we are really looking to India to have not only this critical leadership role in



the G20 context but also to be a strong voice in the concert of nations in the United Nations, for UN reform, and when we are redesigning the international financial institutions. A strong voice is also needed for the more than 60 countries in distress. It's really not acceptable that most countries, my own country, are paying more in debt and interest to service their debt than what they're investing in health or education. So, there is a rebalancing act that needs to happen. I agree that we need to mobilize more resources and that the private sector has to come in. But, under India's G20 presidency, we hope for a very strong decision on debt relief and debt cancellation in some critical cases. This is something that could be perhaps one of the greatest legacies of India's G20 presidency. ■



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VIBHA DHAWAN

In recent years, the global discourse on environmental sustainability and sustainable development has gained unprecedented momentum. As nations grapple with the pressing challenges posed by climate change, resource depletion, and ecological degradation, India has emerged as a prominent advocate for a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing these issues. The Sixth Assessment Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released in 2023 has unequivocal evidence that we are way off track of maintaining global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. This is also the year that India assumed the presidency of the G20, offering a unique opportunity to provide global leadership and shape the climate and social

equity agenda from the perspective of the Global South. The theme for India's G20 Presidency, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (One Earth, One Family, One Future), reflects India's outlook on fostering global cooperation and solidarity for a sustainable and inclusive future.

The theme underscores the need for global unity, collaboration, and collective efforts to build a resilient and equitable world that respects the principles of sustainable development as articulated in the Brundtland Commission Report as Our Common Future, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." India's G20 Presidency places emphasis on human-centric development, green initiatives, cooperation in the fields of

India's Leadership in Promoting Environmentally Responsible and Sustainable Development

India's approach to environment and sustainable development during its G20 Presidency reflects a forward-looking and comprehensive strategy that addresses the complex challenges of the 21st century, writes Dr. Vibha Dhawan.

technology, inclusivity and holistic growth. Apart from emphasising collective action, our Hon'ble Prime Minister has eloquently articulated, "... a divided world cannot fight a common challenge. That is why our approach during our G20 Presidency and otherwise has been to unify the world on this issue for what can be done. The poor and the planet, both need to be helped. India is moving ahead on this with not only a positive attitude but also a mindset of driving solutions" and in a way, this sets the agenda and indicates the next course of collective action.

India: Voice for the Global South

By championing equitable and fast-tracked actions, India has not only emerged as an

architect of the global agenda but also a driver of change, sustainability and growth in the Global South.

As the impact of climate change is particularly pronounced in the Global South, India is amplifying the key challenges, opportunities and aspirations of developing and developed economies and calls for unified action. India's leadership in climate action has been to emphasise bringing together global opportunities and capacities in an equitable manner. India pioneered and shown leadership in setting up the International Solar Alliance (ISA), and has also collaborated with fellow G20 members to establish large-scale green hydrogen production capacity. India has pushed for transformative ideas.

By championing equitable and fast-tracked actions, India has not only emerged as an architect of the global agenda but also a driver of change, sustainability and growth in the Global South.

India, positioned as an energy hub, could offer sustainable energy solutions at affordable rates, potentially resolving the overarching energy challenge. India has shown through the recent success of Chandrayaan that we can develop successful technologies just at a fraction of the cost of many technologically advanced countries. Underscoring the urgent need to scaling up finance for executing the collective vision of fostering global cooperation and solidarity for a sustainable and inclusive future, the Indian G20 Presidency has set forth a blueprint to achieve the spirit of “One Earth, One Family, One Future”, which can fructify only through the inclusion of the Global South in the pursuit of a low-carbon climate-resilient world.

India’s role as a voice for the Global South is integral to international discourse and decision-making. India’s active engagement and leadership reflect the nation’s commitment to promoting fairness, equity, and sustainable development on a global scale, while also advocating for the specific needs and priorities of developing countries.

Leading Energy Transition for a Just and Resilient Future

As the world’s required capacity of energy increases with each passing day, the need for clean energy sources has never been higher. However, a balance between energy sustainability, affordability and reliability is imperative.

At the heart of India’s sustainable development strategy is its commitment to

climate action and the promotion of renewable energy sources. As part of its G20 Presidency, India has championed the development and implementation of ambitious climate goals, aligned with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. India’s ambitious target of net zero emissions by 2070 and to have 50 percent of its power generation capacity come from renewable energy sources by 2030, showcases its determination to transition towards a low-carbon energy future.

Demonstrating remarkable progress, India has surpassed its commitment made during the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) - Paris Summit by deriving 40 percent of its power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources—achieving this milestone nearly a decade ahead of time. Notably, the proportion of solar and wind energy in India’s energy portfolio has experienced a remarkable surge. Among major economies, India stands out for the unparalleled growth of its renewable energy sector, with projections indicating the doubling of new capacity additions by 2026. India also boasts a prominent standing as a significant producer of modern bioenergy and aims to significantly upscale its application across various sectors.

In this transformative journey, green hydrogen emerges as a pivotal player in

At the heart of India’s sustainable development strategy is its commitment to climate action and the promotion of renewable energy sources. As part of its G20 Presidency, India has championed the development and implementation of ambitious climate goals, aligned with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.



achieving the net-zero aspiration. India's ambition to emerge as a global epicentre for green hydrogen production and exports is notable, with the potential to generate a considerable demand of five million tonnes—replacing conventional grey hydrogen in industries like refineries and fertilizers. This transformative shift could translate to the mitigation of 28 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions for this initial volume, with the potential for a monumental 400 million tonnes of CO₂ abatement by 2050 as the green hydrogen economy evolves and flourishes. With regard to this, the Government of India proposed initiatives such as the proposed solar cities and parks, the National Green Hydrogen Mission, and the Green Energy Corridor. It is also rolling out policy measures and incentives that enable the uptake of green energy and technology, including the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for entities that set up manufacturing facilities for clean technology. As a large developing economy with over 1.3 billion people, India's climate adaptation and mitigation ambitions are not just transformational for India but for the entire planet.

In this transformative journey, green hydrogen emerges as a pivotal player in achieving the net-zero aspiration. India's ambition to emerge as a global epicentre for green hydrogen production and exports is notable, with the potential to generate a considerable demand of five million tonnes, replacing conventional grey hydrogen in industries like refineries and fertilizers.

A more concrete announcement under India's G20 presidency is the Global Biofuel Alliance led by Brazil, India and the United States. The alliance seeks to accelerate sustainable biofuels deployment in support of the global energy transition and aims to foster cooperation and enhance the adoption of sustainable biofuels, particularly within the transportation sector including aviation and shipping. The shift



Once again, appealing to the concept of “One Earth, One Planet, One Family” and also recognising the diversity of cultures, India’s Mission Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE) rallies the global community, both individuals and institutions, to embrace LiFE as a worldwide grassroots mass movement.

becomes all the more important in light of international regulations such as cross-border carbon tax.

Positive Agenda: Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE)

The energy crisis looms large over the G20 countries especially as their development depends on ensuring energy security and with developmental progress energy usage is bound to increase. Once again, appealing to the concept of “One Earth, One Planet, One Family” and also recognising the diversity of cultures, India’s Mission Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE)

rallies the global community, both individuals and institutions, to embrace LiFE as a worldwide grassroots mass movement. We must realise that every individual is responsible for and is impacted by climate change, though to varying degrees.

The essence of LiFE revolves around a shift from wasteful consumption to purposeful and conscious utilization, safeguarding and conservation of our environment and simultaneously achieving the SDGs. LiFE places the onus on each individual and the collective to lead a lifestyle harmonious with the Earth, devoid of harm. India in its G20 Presidency advances the concept of LiFE, and encourages individuals to live a sustainable lifestyle and safeguard the resources for future generations. It emphasises individual accountability and reflection as to how each of us can conduct our daily life in a more sustainable way.

The Road Ahead

To sum up, India’s approach to the environment and sustainable development during its G20 Presidency reflects a forward-looking and comprehensive strategy that addresses the complex challenges of the 21st century. By prioritising climate action and renewable energy India is setting a positive example for global cooperation and leadership in the pursuit of a more sustainable future. India



Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais, accompanied by State Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav, participated in a mega G-20 Beach Clean Up Drive at Juhu Chowpatty in Mumbai.

has done this through its effective advocacy for the Global South, setting an example for sustainable energy transitions and pioneering the LiFE mission that promotes responsible climate behaviour. As India continues to lead discussions and initiatives within the G20 framework, its commitment to environmental preservation and sustainable development serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for nations around the world. By showcasing the interconnectedness of economic growth, social well-being, and environmental protection, India's G20 Presidency offers valuable insights into how a balanced and holistic approach can pave the way for a more resilient, inclusive and prosperous future for all. ■

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DR MOHAN KUMAR

Harnessing Trade and Investment for Inclusive Prosperity



The G20 Trade and Investment Minister's Meeting and the 4th Working Group Meeting (TIWG) were held in Jaipur, Rajasthan from August 21-25, 2023.

Under its presidency, India has been advancing trade and investment as a means to achieve inclusive prosperity and link it up with sustainable development and promotion of MSMEs, says Dr Mohan Kumar.



India took over the G20 presidency from Indonesia in what has turned out to be a seamless transition. The Bali G20 meeting of Trade and Investment Ministers emphasized the importance of policy coherence between trade, investment, and industry to support the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This will provide a basis for a strong foundation for a resilient, strong, sustainable, and inclusive global economic recovery.

Taking off from the above, the Trade and Investment Ministers of the G20 countries met in Jaipur on August 24-25. The ministers reached a groundbreaking consensus on concrete and action-oriented deliverables which have been adopted in the Outcome Document. Each of these outcomes are briefly considered below:

Accelerating WTO Reform

Reform of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) was the centre of discussions among the ministers. The ministers reaffirmed that a rules-based, non-discriminatory, fair, open, inclusive, sustainable, and transparent multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core, is indispensable to achieving inclusive growth and prosperity. They also committed to reinforcing cooperation on international trade and investment to achieve SDGs. On the WTO, the Ministerial Conference

India has done a great job by emphasizing the “development dimension” in the WTO deliberations which should help all countries of the Global South. Indeed, the WTO should align its work more and more towards enabling its members to achieve the SDGs.

(MC) 12 Outcome Document reaffirmed the need to pursue WTO reform through a member-driven, open, inclusive, and transparent process that must address the interests of all its members, including on development issues.

It was stressed that the development dimension should be an integral part of such deliberations. Interestingly, the importance of the ongoing negotiations in the WTO was underscored by the G20 Ministers.

The WTO can remain at the “core” of the multilateral trading system only if it is reformed and made functional in all three aspects of negotiating, dispute settlement, and trade monitoring. As far as negotiations are concerned, a call has to be taken (including by countries like India) whether plurilateral negotiations can be housed in the WTO and how it can be taken forward.

On dispute settlement, if it is possible to revert to the two-tier dispute settlement mechanism which was the jewel in the crown of the WTO, can this be done latest by 2024? Last but not least, on the trade monitoring function of the



WTO, members like China have to be more forthcoming in terms of sharing information on their trade policy regime. India has done a great job by emphasizing the “development dimension” in the WTO deliberations which should help all countries of the Global South. Indeed, the WTO should align its work more and more towards enabling its members to achieve the SDGs. This is important because the latest Global Sustainable Development Report, which will be released by the UN Secretary General in September, in New York makes for sombre reading. It is said that half the world has been left behind in terms of achievement of SDGs by 2030.



Global Value Chains

Resilient Global Value Chains (GVCs) were discussed at length and the ministers vowed to continue their efforts to promote and uphold not just resilient but inclusive GVCs. They highlighted the importance of identifying digital solutions that can help high level of GVC participation and revive GVC growth. Enhanced regulatory cooperation, capacity-building efforts, and transparency in rules and regulations were emphasized.

India also spoke for the Global South when it talked of increasing participation in GVCs and reviving GVC growth. An impressive “Generic Framework for mapping GVCs” was outlined

as a concrete step in this regard including some guiding principles for collaboration. This should be of enormous help for countries of the Global South.

Role of MSMEs

Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) were given great importance so much so that there was a “Jaipur Call for Action for enhancing MSMEs access to information”. The ministers recognized the critical role which MSMEs, including women-owned or women-led MSMEs, play in world economies. It was recognised that limited or inadequate access to information, finance, and markets are three key challenges faced by MSMEs. The main recommendation of the ministers was to scale up existing portals that provide business and trade-related information to MSMEs. The International Trade Centre (ITC) was tasked to come up with a detailed implementation plan in consultation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and WTO regarding their Global Trade Helpdesk.

This is an excellent and practical step which will help MSMEs, especially those belonging to the Global South.

Logistics and Infrastructure

Logistics for trade figured prominently in discussion. The ministers rightly believed that widespread adoption of paperless trade will drive productivity gains and economic growth by reducing trade costs and lowering barriers to entry for MSMEs. The ministers endorsed non-binding “High-Level Principles on Digitisation of Trade Documents” and urged all countries to make efforts to implement them. Some of these principles are neutrality, security, trust, interoperability, data privacy, reliability, and voluntary sharing of data. The digital divide is real and came into sharp focus during the

COVID pandemic. Countries of the Global South need to invest more not just in electronic infrastructure but also in their people to ensure digital literacy. Without this, they run the risk of being left behind.

G20 Standards Dialogue

The Indian presidency has proposed a G20 Standards Dialogue in 2023 which will bring together members, policymakers, regulators, standard-setting bodies, and other stakeholders to discuss topics of common interest such as good regulatory practices and standards. This will be held in partnership with the World Standards Cooperation and will seek to promote capacity building and exchange of best practices.

One of the biggest impediments to trade and investment that countries of the Global South face is the standards and regulations imposed by the developed countries on goods and services from the Global South. It is important that these are discussed between all stakeholders with a

view to removing unnecessary barriers to trade and harmonising minimum standards even while ensuring that the principles of necessity, non-discrimination, and proportionality are scrupulously adhered to.

Promoting Services

The importance of Services for the economies of the Global South cannot be overemphasized. In this regard, the initiative of India to come up with a “Presidency Compendium of best practices for Professional Services” must be commended.

As exporters of professional services, countries like India face barriers in advanced countries. It is worthwhile to highlight best practices in this crucial area. At the end of the day, Mutual Recognition Agreements are critical for professional services exports.

The Ukraine Roadblock

It is hard to have a meeting these days without





India's Commerce and Industry Minister Minister Piyush Goyal, along with G20 delegates, celebrated the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 in August 2023.

the war in Ukraine being discussed. The G20 Trade and Investment Ministers meeting in Jaipur was no different. In the event, this was the only paragraph that eluded consensus.

What the G20 Trade and Investment Ministers did was to repeat verbatim the language from the G20 Bali Leaders Declaration. This paragraph on Ukraine found a consensus in Bali including from Russia and China present there. But as has now become common, Russia has changed position since Bali and has been objecting to the Bali language. The Jaipur meeting was no exception. Russia stated that the one paragraph on Ukraine be considered as the "Chair's Summary" and not the outcome document produced based on consensus. China gave diplomatic support to Russia in this.

With positions hardening since Bali, this is not a surprise. Indeed, barring a breakthrough, this may also provide a template for India when it comes up with a Leaders' Declaration following the New Delhi Summit on September 9-10.

Looking Ahead

India has had an intensive, dynamic and people-centric G20 presidency which will culminate with the New Delhi G20 Summit. Barring the Ukraine issue which has proved intractable, the Indian presidency has ticked pretty much all the boxes. India has done well to focus on trade and investment as a way of leading to inclusive prosperity. This is essential because most economies of the Global South have been hit by a double whammy: first the COVID pandemic and then the war in Ukraine. With the half-way mark reached for the UN Agenda 2030, the lower-income countries are still far from achieving the crucial SDG targets such as "no poverty", "no hunger", "gender equity" and "decent work for all". These challenges are monumental and the richer among the G20 membership must look at ways and means to help the poorer countries meet the challenge. India has provided useful leads in this regard. It is now up to the advanced countries to deliver. ■

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MANJEET KRIPALANI



HARSHIT KACHOLIYA



MADHUMITHA



Private Innovation in Digital Public Infrastructure

Developing a Digital Public Infrastructure repository for best practices and regulations should be the job of India as G20 president today and part of the G20 troika till 2025, write Manjeet Kripalani, Harshit Kacholiya and Madhumitha Prema Ramanathan.



India's Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw addressed the G20 Digital Economy Ministers' Meeting in August 2023.

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) encourages and accelerates private and public innovation and provides digital access and equity to the very poorest - a G20 goal. India has made this a central offering of its G20 presidency, showcasing how developing and developed countries may benefit from the technology and the business model.

India's DPI, based on the India Stack open source framework, has grown over ten years. It is a unique entrepreneurial and volunteer effort by citizens enabled by the government, to bring seamless,

reliable, replicable and low-cost digital inclusion, tested at a sub-continental scale. This independent and robust ecosystem has lowered the cost of transactions for individuals, businesses and governments and permits the safe sharing of personal data without compromising privacy.

DPI and Public and Private Innovation

It has spawned both private and public innovation. Fintech and e-commerce have led the private sector innovation in India, putting the country on the list of the top three unicorn-producing nations in 2023 - over 100 so far. The public sector's use of DPI has led to government services, delivering them efficiently and transparently. An example is the transfer of direct benefits to citizens, which has saved India \$33 billion by preventing leakages in the transfer of subsidies, and which funds which have been reinvested to improve health, sanitation, education, etc.

DPI does all this while keeping nations digitally sovereign. This article explores how DPI creates public and private innovation and

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The impact on the GDP of a largely cash-based economy being formalised, is evident. Since 2020, adaptation of DPI by Indian ministries for subsidies alone has saved over 1% of GDP or \$33 billion – monies that were used to expand and better use government schemes for poverty alleviation.

compares it with private digital offerings, which also work at scale but for commercial profit and are not always in the national interest.

The private sector in India used DPI well especially in Fintech and e-commerce. Innovating on the DPI tracks has created new businesses and cost-effective service delivery, which in turn has provided access to and also provided opportunities for young talents, and eventually, powered economic growth.

Examples abound. Google Pay created a smartphone payments app, the first of its products based on the Indian DPI, and the first-ever product Google created specifically for India. Other such

Google products are now being developed for and tested in India – for global use.

NBFCs and DPI

Banks and Non-Banking Financial Corporations (NBFCs) have been significant beneficiaries of DPI. With 1 billion digital IDs generated along with the e-KYC and e-Sign framework, India has reduced a bank's cost for on-boarding a customer from \$23 to \$0.15. It has allowed for 3 billion identity authentications for private transactions, including completing 150 million distinct digital KYC reviews. In 2022, 89.5 million real-time online transactions took place in India – 46% of all worldwide real-time payments. Brazil processed 29.2 million, China 17.2 million, Thailand 16.5 million and South Korea 8 million.

This has improved the scope of lending. In India, a consumer or even personal loan can take as little as a few seconds to four hours to be approved. It includes the process of the consumer giving the lender access to personal financial documentation, through a DigiLocker – a digital locker where all documents from school certificates to health reports to income certificates can be stored for use whenever needed and in any geography. It enables commerce and saves the citizen time, money and logistical difficulty.

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Since 2020, adaptation of DPI by Indian ministries for subsidies alone has saved over 1% of GDP or \$33 billion – monies that were used to expand and better use government schemes for poverty alleviation. Additional money in the hands of citizens expands the economy. In the summer of 2021, India saw a blossoming of e-commerce start-ups, all of which have used DPI for their benefit. That year, India had 37 unicorns, which have grown to 107 in 2023, and attracted venture capital of \$25 billion during the year.

The cost and time of bringing customers on-board has reduced across sectors. For example, large banks can now onboard customers in 1 hour instead of 6 days; large telecom players can provide a SIM card in 4 minutes instead of 24 hours, and large asset firms can onboard customers in 2 minutes instead of 4 hours. All of this frees up capacity and enhances customer experience.

Collaborations

The collaboration between public and private sectors in digital public infrastructure is powerful and has had a multiplier effect. This is visible in countries such as India, Estonia, Ukraine, where a variety of models exist. Two are the most effective: one, the creation

Based on the success seen in FinTech driving financial inclusion using DPIs, India is now taking a giant step forward: implementing DPIs in the health, education and agriculture sectors. Agri-techs were already ready in February 2023 when Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced DPI for agriculture.

of Account Aggregators and use by foreign private tech players. Account aggregators are private players, licensed by India's central bank, which provide full control to the consumer who wants to share her personal data for various needs. This effort is coordinated by an NGO called Sahamati – a triangular collaboration model.

This is not limited to Indian entrepreneurs; foreign private entities like Stripe, a payments platform, can also be an account aggregator – without payment, unlike its business model in advanced Western economies.

Here too, there are global examples – like M-Pesa in Kenya, Pix in Brazil, and DIIA in Ukraine. M-Pesa in Kenya is a small-value electronic payment system





accessible from ordinary mobile phones. It is a 2010 collaboration of multinational private telecom players Vodafone, local internet provider Safaricom, the aid agency of the UK governments and the Kenyan government. Today, half of all transactions in Kenya take place through mobile money, and M-Pesa dominates all of it.

Brazil's Pix is a fast-payment system introduced by Brasil's Banco Central in 2020. It is similar to India's UPI and is also growing exponentially. In 2021, Pix saw 1.2 million transactions per month, a fourth of India's UPI, but the value of the transactions of both was an estimated \$100 million each. Pix now provides 85% of its population access to financial services and is being used for social programmes like CadUnico and Bolsa Familia.

Ukraine's DIIA is a DPI established in 2020, to enable the private tech sector to collaborate in innovation in a Digital Free Economic Zone. During the war, DIIA has helped citizens of Ukraine to digitally retain key identity documents which may have been lost or destroyed in the upheavals. This has particularly helped in their mobility and search for safety in other countries.

Based on the success seen in FinTech driving financial inclusion using DPIs, India is now taking a giant step forward: implementing DPIs in the health, education and agriculture sectors. Agri-techs were already ready in February 2023 when Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced DPI for agriculture. The collaboration of the private sector has

already been sought, through accelerator funds for startups in rural areas. The next green revolution is expected to be a digital green revolution.

Challenges

Of course, there are challenges for both the public and private sectors. The most significant is the inherent conflict between private sector interests and the pursuit of public welfare. Private sector investment brings undeniable benefits, but the predominant focus is on profit maximisation and can inadvertently create exclusionary barriers for certain groups, perpetuating unequal access to essential services for individuals and communities. The omnipresence of some private sector platforms such as Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Alibaba, Facebook, and Tencent, results in their projecting an extensively-used private product with the public good. Hence, the need for building a 'Good DPI' like India Stack, and knowing the difference between a digital private product/digital public infrastructure becomes essential. Issues of excessive control over DPI also exist, which can limit public oversight and accountability, and potentially result in monopolistic practices, particularly in the era of artificial intelligence.

Strong legal protections enhance innovation. India has already set this in motion with procedures to protect data-sharing for consumers, businesses and service providers. It includes the key principles of Permission (free consent for sharing data), Protection (of sensitive personal information) and Privacy (secure and encrypted). This year India will introduce another DPI called the Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture (DEPA), a framework that provides granular control to data owners over sharing personal data through unique technology-enabled legal rules. DEPA will then move into its second phase, which is the foundational model for AI applications, whilst preserving privacy and ensuring regulatory compliance. This will drive ethics-based AI offerings that benefit individuals, enterprises and society.

DPI's success depends on its standardisation and interoperability. There are already several suggestions within the G20's trade and investment working group to develop standards for digital trade – an area where innovators will be present.

The challenge for G20 countries, therefore, is to understand the value of DPI to their societies, overcome their monopolistic digital capture, and provide a secure ecosystem for public and private innovators to build open source DPIs. The institutional role of the G20 in fostering innovation and growth through DPI is four-fold:

- Encourage governments to finance DPIs and thereby:
- Create a robust global ecosystem.
- Develop global standards for DPI.
- Build a DPI repository for best practices, including regulation.

The Way Ahead

To achieve the above, and protect the vast amounts of data generated by DPIs, individual

governments must establish strong data protection laws and regulations to ensure that data is collected and used transparently and securely. India's DigiLocker and Ukraine's DIIA is a step in that direction, and the EU has pathbreaking consumer data protections in place. To facilitate innovation and safety, a clear line of communication must be established between the public and private sector, encouraging the sharing of information and expertise, and embedding a culture of collaboration.

DPI's success depends on its standardisation and interoperability. There are already several suggestions within the G20's trade and investment working group to develop standards for digital trade – an area where innovators will be present. The G20 Digital Working Group can align with the Trade and Investment Working Group to develop standards. Global standards for DPIs on identity, payments and data will help countries to develop an ecosystem, where one country's DPI and its innovators will be able to seamlessly speak with and be interoperable with another country's DPI.

Developing a DPI repository for best practices and regulations should be the job of India as G20 president today and part of the G20 troika till 2025. India is best positioned as a pioneer of DPI and software heavyweight. Close collaboration with national regulators on the same will result in flexible regulatory frameworks that adapt to rapid changes in technologies and emerging risks. ■

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| IN CONVERSATION |

India's Chance to Prove Its Global Influence



India's G20 presidency has ignited hopes for a new period of leadership by the emerging economies in the G20. In this interview, well-known academician and the founder of G20 Research Group, John Kirton, speaks to Manish Chand, Editor-in-Chief, India and The World and Director, Centre for Global India Insights (CGII), about India's G20 presidency and how it could be a turning point for the leadership of emerging economies in the group. Kirton, a leading expert on the G7, G8, and G20 summits, says that India, as one of the world's major ecological powers, could make a significant contribution to climate change by reducing its reliance on coal. **Excerpts from the interview:**

Q) What, in your view, would be the key contribution of India during its G20 presidency? Can you identify some areas where India will leave its imprint on the G20 process?

A) India's domestic and global leadership was recently focused on two critical issues. The first is the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, which has now resumed its rise. This highlighted India's role

as a key player in the global healthcare system. India has been instrumental in providing free vaccines to hundreds of millions of people both domestically and abroad, earning its reputation as the "pharmacy of the world" and a leading vaccine manufacturer. This accomplishment serves as an excellent platform, especially as other countries in the G20 and beyond are striving to develop their own vaccine

manufacturing capabilities. The recent supply chain problems or hoarding will thus be reduced during future pandemics, thanks to India's efforts in vaccine manufacturing. This is a significant accomplishment.

The second contribution is India's leadership in digitalisation, specifically in the development of its digital public infrastructure and a digital payment system. This system is vital for ensuring the inclusion of the poor, promoting gender equality, and advancing the equalisation of other items on the G20 agenda. Gender equality has been a major theme for the Indian presidency and the G20 for many years. India's mobile payment system has solved in India the plight of the billions of people worldwide without bank accounts. It allows them to enter the formal economy, which provides consumer protection and offers entrepreneurs opportunities to access global markets.

Another issue I'd like to highlight is climate change. India is one of the world's major ecological powers due to its size and rich biodiversity, which includes distinctive animals like tigers that thrive here. However, India is a big coal-fired power producer, with a heavy reliance on coal in its energy mix. Shifting India away from coal towards renewable energy sources would make a significant contribution to controlling climate change. There is good reason to believe that Prime Minister Modi is genuinely committed to doing this. If India can achieve this goal, many other coal-reliant countries around the world, such as G20 members Indonesia, South Africa, and even Germany, which is currently reopening old coal facilities and developing new ones to address short-term energy needs, could follow suit.

Q) Fast-tracking climate finance is a major priority for India's presidency. The developed world has been delaying action and failing to meet the \$100 billion target to send finance to developing countries, as set in the Paris Accord in 2015. India aims to set a higher figure, but the question remains: how realistic are these targets?

A) I think we'll finally get the overdue \$100 billion a year done at the G20's New Delhi Summit in September. Whether it's nearly enough is the question that remains. But you're right, it's simply shameful that a promise made so long ago to have developed countries mobilize \$100 billion a year for developing countries has not been fulfilled yet. To be sure, that commitment, made at the UN, included funding from both public and private sources, and rich G7 governments often blame the private sector for the delay. But I believe that it's now time for G7 governments to step up to fill the gap themselves. This could easily be achieved at the Delhi Summit, allowing us to tick this box and focus on the next steps, including raising the \$100 billion by a substantial amount every year. There are also several other relatively easy ways to scale up the needed climate finance.

Q) India is using its presidency to project the interests of the Global South. On January 12-13, 2023, Prime Minister Modi hosted the Voice of Global South Summit. Additionally, other South countries are set to hold the G20 presidency in 2024 and 2025. What does this mean for the shifting power dynamic in the G20, where some countries are splitting into camps?

A) The first thing I'll say is that in some sense, the concept of a 'Global South' no longer accurately reflects the state of the world. With population decline occurring not only in Japan, Korea, and Europe, but also in China – which is often considered a part of the Global South – the boundaries between North and South are becoming less clear. India, in particular, is home to many extremely wealthy individuals who have access to substantial capital that can be used to support infrastructure and economic growth. Additionally, there are large numbers of Indians earning significant incomes abroad and sending money back to their families in India, bolstering financial flows. Looking ahead, India has the potential to become one of the world's most rapidly growing economies. And many countries in the Caribbean – which are sometimes considered part of the geographic

North – are facing financial strains that are all too familiar, and Haiti remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Overall, the world is interconnected and the boundaries between North and South are becoming blurred.

Therefore, we're all in this together, and the North-South language that made sense in the 1970s no longer accurately describes the current global economy, society, or ecology.

The concept of the 'South' is being redefined, as emphasised by the fact that the G20 presidency is being held by four democratic developing countries in a row – Indonesia, India, Brazil, and South Africa. These democracies are

not only important as leaders of the developing countries, but they can also write the history of the decade by defending and deepening their democracy. In fact, democracy and development go hand in hand. India, now growing economically and demographically more rapidly than a slowing China, is a shining example of this reality. India is in an important way the global mother of democracy, and its democracy has endured unbroken since it became a free country in 1947. We should acknowledge the importance of democracy in achieving progress in India and now elsewhere in today's world. ■

'Values Play an Important Role in G20'

Q) What is the role of ethics and values in multilateral diplomacy?

A) The role of ethics and values in the G20 has been significant since its start as a finance ministers' club in 1999. It has grown since the G20 became a leaders' summit in response to the American-turned-global financial crisis in 2008.

Every multilateral organization, and plurilateral institution such as the G20, is created and continued to pursue a distinctive foundational mission that no other international institution at the time does. For the G20, this mission is two-fold – promoting financial stability and making globalization work for the benefit of all. The first is a global public good that benefits all, but especially the poor who suffer the most when global financial crises erupt. The second focuses on distributional values, notably inclusiveness and equality.

The G20 summits affirmed both values since their start in 2008. At the St Petersburg Summit in 2013, leaders added to their longstanding focus on "strong, sustainable, balanced" economic growth the value of "inclusive," to embed the second mission in their economic core. At every summit since, the affirmations of the inclusive value of globalization for all exceed those to financial stability. This mission emphasized by the G20's



developing country members has during the past decade had a permanent first place.

G20 leaders also increasingly affirmed the value of human rights, and extended its application from economic and social rights, to civil and political and ecological ones. In their treatment of gender equality, leaders first applied the value of globalization for all at Seoul in November 2010, did so at a peak of 18 affirmations at Hamburg in 2017 and have done so continuously since. Prime Minister Modi's innovative priority on women-led development at New Delhi in 2023 could well bring a new peak then.

On climate change, at Rome in 2021, leaders made six affirmations of globalization for all, five on financial stability, two on human rights, and five on democracy. The New Delhi Summit could well produce more. ■



ARVIND GUPTA

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: A Framework for Global Cooperation



India's G20 presidency's theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future" is a lesson for the world to be more mindful of sharing resources, lending a helping hand in times of need, and assisting the Global South, while following the principle of unity in diversity, writes Arvind Gupta.

India has set "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" as the theme for its G20 presidency. The Sanskrit phrase "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" occurs in a verse from the Maha Upanishad:

अयं नजिःपरो वेतगिणना लघुचेतसाम् ।
उदारचरतिनां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥ (महोपनिषद्, अध्याय ४, श्लोक ७१)
(Maha Upanishad, Chapter 4, verse 71)

Its translation reads:

"Only people with a petty outlook differentiate, saying, this is my friend, and this is not my friend. But for those with a magnanimous mind, the entire world is one family."

“Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” does not deny the existence of national interests. It only signifies that national interests across the globe need to be aligned. There are higher goals to be pursued. It points out that a selfish pursuit of goals at the expense of others will not take one very far.

The idea of oneness, or “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,” is also reflected in the Vedic saying “yatra vishwambhavatiek needam,” i.e., the “world is a nest.” A similar verse is found in the Hitopadesha. The civilizational idea of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” is ingrained deeply in the Indian psyche.

This year’s G20 theme of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” has a tag-line which resonates with most people: “One Earth, One Family, One Future.” This theme is highly relevant today. If the planet is to be saved from the ravages of war, climate change, alienation, and social disintegration, the people of the world must appreciate that we are in the same boat. We share the same future. There can be no winners or losers if the entire planet is destroyed due to any of the reasons I mentioned, from ecological destruction to nuclear warfare.

Regrettably, international relations are run on the principles of narrow national interests. Universal values and ethics have little traction in the cut-throat world of strategic rivalries and destructive competition. The results are there for everyone to see—the heightened risk of the destruction of humanity and the planet. Climate change, for instance, is an existential threat, and so far, efforts to curb emissions have failed. Relentless exploitation of limited planetary resources for selfish interests has led to environmental destruction and biodiversity loss, deepening the climate crisis. In view of such realities, “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” underscores the value of common good.

“Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” does not deny the existence of national interests. It only signifies that national interests across the globe need to be aligned. There are higher goals to be

pursued. It points out that a selfish pursuit of goals at the expense of others will not take one very far.

Unity in Diversity

The world is diverse, and this diversity needs to be respected. Uniformity is not natural. Approaches to solving global problems have to be inclusive. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam underlies the respect for diversity and inclusiveness.

The timeless wisdom of Indic philosophy is that there is one truth but many paths to it. “Ekamsat, viprabahudhavadanti (Rig Veda 1.164.46), i.e., “The wise says the same truth in different ways.” In fact, there is an underlying thread of unity running across this diverse world. The philosophy of Yoga, for example, underscores the unity of mind, body, and spirit. The International Day of Yoga, celebrated by every UN member country on June 21, reinforces the idea. Diversity cannot be suppressed.

But there has to be harmony in diversity. Diversity should not degenerate into chaos. This kind of thinking is radically different from the exclusionary thinking that we have got used to: my way or the highway. Respect for the others’ viewpoint is critical if we have to save ourselves and the planet.

The world is experiencing the painful consequences of the Russia-Ukraine war. How can this conflict be resolved? Prime Minister Modi has often said that this should not be an era of wars. We should not be so short-sighted as to destroy ourselves knowingly. The differences should be resolved by dialogue and diplomacy. This is exactly the kind of thinking that is rooted in the philosophy of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.” Let us realise that we are a family. War is not the solution to our problems.

In the context of climate change and environmental degradation, Prime Minister Modi has proposed Mission “LiFe,” which stands for Lifestyle for Environment. This will require a mindset change — from extravagant living to sustainable living. However, no number of agreements and protocols will save Earth if human beings continue to follow the model of reckless consumption. The environment is being

destroyed. We need an ethical and spiritual approach to save the planet. There has to be some self-restraint on consumption, some regard for those who do not have enough to eat and live and yet are the victims of the excesses of those who over-consume. The rich and the elite must change their lifestyles. This requires wisdom. The philosophy of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” is the philosophy of sustainable development.

New technologies are emerging at breakneck speed. Artificial Intelligence and quantum technology are the latest to arrive. They have fantastic use cases which can change our lives for the better. But, in this world of mutual suspicion and deep distrust, such technologies can also be manipulated for dark purposes. An unethical approach to these new technologies, driven only by strategic, economic, and financial motives, can lead to the destruction of humanity itself. In the last century, several conventions and agreements were signed to restrict the use of nuclear, chemical, and biological technologies. Today, there is talk of regulating AI and quantum technology. “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” provides the framework for new thinking on dealing with these technologies. “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” shows us that power and force must be used responsibly, in accordance with dharma and ethics.

The Case for Global South

In the spirit of the overarching theme of G20, Prime Minister Modi has strongly advocated the cause of the Global South. The Global South is not a political or economic grouping on the international chessboard. It represents a section of humanity which is struggling to have its legitimate share of the planetary resources. A few powerful countries with access to capital and technology have cornered most resources of the earth. Leaving behind a vast section of humanity is a recipe for disaster. “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” provides the framework for thinking about all humanity as one. It is another name for common but differentiated responsibility and climate justice—the principles that inform the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) but are sadly ignored. There are a lot of things that COVID-19 has taught us, provided

we are willing to learn from it. The virtues of humility, caring, and sharing are among them. The pandemic ravaged the entire planet. Millions of lives were lost across the world. The vaccines, when invented, were cornered by a few, leading to glaring vaccine asymmetry.

The rich countries refused to share intellectual property rights even when millions were dying. The pandemic underlined the need for health care for all. G20 summits have devoted a lot of attention to providing health care for all. That is a reflection of the value of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.”

When faced with nature’s fury, no one is safe. This point is brought home regularly when earthquakes, forest fires, cyclones, and floods strike some part of the world or the other almost on a daily basis. Tackling disasters requires cooperation and empathy. Global problems require global cooperation. “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” is another name for global cooperation.

One should not be naïve to think that “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” is the panacea for all global problems. Wars and conflicts are all too common in global history. Billions of people have died in man-made conflicts and situations. There are still many who scoff at the values that require one to take a non-selfish approach to the world’s problems. Nothing can be done about such people.

However, one can take solace in the thought that most people will not be able to deny the self-evident truth that “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” is not an esoteric philosophy. It is a very practical and pragmatic way of living. To make it work requires a change of mindset from egocentric thinking to an inclusive form of thinking, informed by the spirit of selfless service. “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” signifies such an approach.

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MUKESH AGNI

Leveraging G20 Presidency to Promote India's Global Rise

G20 presidency offers India a unique opportunity to spur its economic growth and shape the global agenda to advance the interests of the Global South. The burgeoning India-US partnership will play a critical role in actualising these goals, says Mukesh Agni.

Euphoria grips India in the wake of the historic moon landing of Chandrayaan-3, a milestone moment for India's space program and a triumph for the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). With the successful moon landing, India not only joins the exclusive club of just three other nations, the United States, Russia, and China, to have accomplished this extraordinary feat, but also writes its name into history as being the first to land on the South Pole of the moon.

Against this spectacular backdrop, the focus shifts back to the ground in India, as the nation prepares for the G20 Summit 2023.

G20 Vision

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has articulated India's vision, in that this G20 Summit will espouse the importance of equitable growth and a shared future for all. This is best captured by this year's theme, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", or "One Earth, One Family, One Future". Prime Minister Modi has emphasized that India's

presidency comes at a time of global economic and geopolitical headwinds and that the summit will in particular voice the concerns of the Global South.

The Prime Minister has recently returned from Johannesburg, South Africa from the BRICS Summit and has proposed the African Union to become a permanent member of the G20.

Advantage and Challenge

India's place on the global stage is now established. As the world's most populous country with one of the fastest-growing economies, we serve as a key bridge between the emerging economies and the Group of 7 (G7) bloc. India, apart from advocating a more egalitarian representation for the Global South, is also looked upon as a key arbiter in the tensions between Russia and the West with the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, a conflict which will preclude President Vladimir Putin from sharing the dais with President Joe Biden.

With the G20 presidency, India has the herculean task of bridging the trust deficit that

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi with US President Joe Biden at the White House in Washington DC in June 2023



lies between Moscow and the West, as tensions in Europe exacerbate the economic crisis of food and energy price volatility. Previous G20 meetings since December 2022, when India took over the presidency from Indonesia, failed to realise a joint communique between the member nations as the deadlock ensued. Unfortunately, consensus and a solution continue to elude.

The G20 meetings so far have deliberated on rising debt, sustainable development, climate action, and food security, among other issues that affect low- to middle-income countries.

While President Putin will skip the summit and deputize his Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to be Moscow's voice and articulate their concerns, President Biden will visit New Delhi for the first time as the President. The White House has stated that President Biden will address a broad range of economic issues, including the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Bilateral Ties in Multilateral Fora

President Biden and Prime Minister Modi will meet once again after a historic state visit by Prime Minister Modi to the United States in

June, which reaffirmed the strength of the strategic partnership and elevated it to new heights. Washington and New Delhi inked crucial deals in critical and emerging technology, with the jet engines deal and quantum computing to semiconductor investments, and from drone technology and artificial intelligence to underwater cables. With ISRO's recent success, there will be many more opportunities for collaboration in space between NASA and ISRO.

As summer fades to fall, a reminder of the hottest months in both the subcontinent and the United States, the threat of climate change means a conscientious shift from fossil fuels to a clean energy economy as both New Delhi and Washington reaffirm their commitment in this sector. The people-to-people ties remain the bedrock of this relationship as education and cultural links are further cemented.

Economic Vision

The G20 Summit 2023, to be held in New Delhi on September 9-10, is where President Biden, Prime Minister Modi, and other heads of government will come together to tackle the pressing problems of the decade. The core mandate



of the G20 remains to promote economic growth and development. Prime Minister Modi has made it clear that these goals cannot be achieved without addressing the concerns and achieving a consensus in the Global South.

A slew of problems from tackling climate change to reforming multilateral development banks and multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, will require a consensus-building approach. The focus on development banks is critical as infrastructure investments and development remain a key priority, especially as the security situation worsens in the Sub-Saharan region.

The geopolitics of the South China Sea and the territorial disputes have brought Tokyo, Canberra, Washington, and New Delhi together in the Indo-Pacific Quad, but the G20 will bring to the fore the priority for maritime security and economic fishing lanes. The priority in the Indo-Pacific is twofold: economic growth and investments in emerging economies and adhering to and upholding a rules-based international order.

Key priorities from the Business20 (B20) summit that will overlap with the G20 discussions will be along the lines of rebuilding resilient supply chains, a focus on the digital economy as Prime Minister Modi has made India's digital transformation a key priority for the G20 Summit, addressing the debt stress plaguing emerging economies, and collectively finding solutions to climate goals, which shows that no part of the world is insulated from this threat.

Elevating Manufacturing

As India sets its sights on becoming a 5 trillion dollar economy and is expected to grow from the fifth largest to the third largest economy, the imperative remains to generate 12-15 million jobs annually in order to accommodate the influx of new entrants into the workforce.

While India's information technology prowess is well established, the burden cannot be shouldered solely by the services sector. There is a concerted effort to grow India's

The core mandate of the G20 remains to promote economic growth and development. Prime Minister Modi has made it clear that these goals cannot be achieved without addressing the concerns and achieving a consensus in the Global South.

manufacturing economy, especially in high-tech manufacturing. This sector is scalable and will provide mass employment for semi-skilled laborers, fostering essential economic mobility, and contributing to individual states' GDP, thereby underscoring the economic competitiveness among different states within the federal structure.

Semiconductors: The New Oil

The focus is on semiconductors in the critical and emerging technology domain as AI dominance enters the geopolitical fray. Companies need to look at a "China-plus-one" model in a dual effort to rebuild supply chains and avoid bottlenecks and supply chain vulnerability after the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020. This has accentuated the necessity to diversify manufacturing locations and explore alternative markets for advanced products.

India stands out in this regard. To bridge the deficit with Beijing, the government in New Delhi is focused on initiatives like "Make in India" and "Production Lined Incentives". The recent policy outcomes from the state visit in June show that manufacturing is vital to both American and Indian economies, and both



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New Delhi and Washington continue to share geopolitical and economic alignment in an era of cooperative manufacturing.

Apple CEO Tim Cook’s visit to inaugurate Apple’s maiden retail store in India holds profound significance and reinforces the tech giant’s confidence in India’s ecosystem and extends an invitation to fellow Fortune 250 enterprises to participate in the “Make In India” initiative. It’s also a belief in India’s supply chain capabilities, and adds confidence as a prime destination for

American manufacturers, particularly within the expansive consumer electronics domain that aligns with India’s huge consumer market.

A newly privatized Air India meant augmented purchasing power to procure additional aircraft from both Boeing and Airbus.

The agreement with Boeing not only bolstered commercial ties between the United States and India but was also hailed as a “historic agreement” by President Biden and Prime Minister Modi. This accord resonated as a pivotal catalyst for the American manufacturing sector, a critical point of discussion as America heads to the polls in 2024.

From the sea to the stars, in securing a free and open Indo-Pacific to the success of its space mission, to energizing a clean energy economy with the electrification of vehicles and the ubiquity of digital payments and the growth of the digital economy, the G20 Summit and India’s presidency is a harbinger for the Indian economy and growth ahead. ■

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Inclusive Development & G20: Progress & Prospects



India, with its rich tapestry of cultures, languages, and religions, offers an intricate mosaic of development challenges and opportunities. As the world's largest democracy and most populous country, achieving inclusive development is pivotal to ensuring sustained socio-economic growth. This article delves into India's pursuit of inclusive development with a focus on the crucial sectors of education and healthcare.

The aspiration towards inclusive development is grounded in South Asian tradition and thought. Mahatma Gandhi's emphasis on uplifting the village economy as a strategy for development as well as the dangers of unchecked growth and environmental degradation have formed the bedrock of the sustainability movement in much of South Asia.

Inclusive development refers to economic growth that extends benefits to the widest range of people, including the marginalized and vulnerable sections of society. It emphasizes equal opportunities in terms of access to markets, resources, and an unbiased regulatory environment. It seeks to reduce inequalities, foster social harmony, and ensure that no one is left behind in the process of development. This is consistent with Prime Minister Modi's credo of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas" (Participation of All, Development for All, Trust for All).

Synergies between Health and Education

For inclusive development, education and healthcare must be viewed synergistically. Better education leads to improved health outcomes, as educated individuals are more likely to understand and access healthcare services. Conversely, a healthy population is better able to participate in and benefit from educational opportunities. Programs that address health and nutrition of school-going children, such as the Midday Meal Scheme, which is a multi-faceted programme of the Government of India that seeks to tackle issues of food security, lack of nutrition, and access to education on a nationwide scale, exemplifies this synergy.

Role of Education

India has made significant progress in improving access to quality education, increasing school enrollment, and reducing the number of out-of-school children. These achievements have been strengthened by key legislations, policies, and

schemes such as the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act (2009) which mandates eight years of quality education for all children aged 6-14; the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which complements the RTE by aiming to universalize elementary education, bridging social, regional, and gender gaps; the National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy (2013); the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) which seeks to boost the quality of state institutions; and the National Education Policy (2020), a transformative policy designed to overhaul India's education system. Recognizing that formal education might not be the only path to employment, India has also emphasized vocational training through schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY).

However, while policies abound, the implementation often witnesses disparities. Fragmented service delivery, bureaucratic delays, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of awareness among beneficiaries can impede progress.

In education, while enrollment numbers have surged, learning outcomes remain a concern. Teacher absenteeism, outdated curricula, and

India can harness mechanisms to cultivate a digitally skilled and future-ready workforce, facilitating the implementation of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and beyond. Consequently, digital public infrastructure, cybersecurity within the digital economy, and digital upskilling stand as imperative priorities.



India's Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya with Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, World Health Organization (WHO), at the G20 Health Ministers Meeting in August 2023.

inadequate infrastructure are critical challenges. Quality of education is also a major issue. Continuous teacher training and a shift towards learning outcomes rather than rote memorization are necessary. Lessons from the pandemic have also shown that making education more accessible through online platforms and digital tools can help advance learning outcomes and bridge the rural-urban divide.

Healthcare: Sustained Inclusive Development

India's healthcare system is characterized by a vast network of health facilities. Recent policy interventions have been focused on trying to improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of healthcare services, particularly in rural areas. These include the National Health Mission (NHM) which aims to improve healthcare services by focusing on 18 states that have poor public health indicators and/or weak infrastructure; the Ayushman Bharat Scheme (2018), an ambitious initiative that aims to provide free healthcare coverage to over 500 million people, making it the world's largest government-sponsored healthcare scheme; the

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) which provides insurance cover for over 100 million vulnerable families; the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) which incentivizes institutional deliveries; and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program that focuses on holistic child development. These policies have contributed a great deal towards improving the inclusivity of healthcare delivery in India.

There are several challenges remaining with the delivery of healthcare. For instance, while insurance schemes have expanded access, quality of care can vary. Overburdened public health systems, lack of specialists in rural areas, and out-of-pocket expenditures remain pressing issues. The shortage of trained healthcare professionals is a major challenge. Incentivizing medical education and facilitating the deployment of healthcare workers in underserved areas is essential.

Lessons for the World

India assumed the year-long presidency of G20 in December 2022. Under India's G20 presidency, there has been a significant emphasis to push for inclusive development as a cornerstone of the global agenda. Given the complex and

interconnected challenges facing the world today—from economic inequality to climate change—leading such an influential group of countries has offered India a platform to drive meaningful change. India has vast experience in addressing challenges of poverty, innovation, and sustainability, and as G20 Member States position themselves to tackle these urgent issues at the G20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023, India can leverage its own experience to promote inclusive development in various ways.

In the field of health, with respect to global health security, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, India has been leading discussions and actions to strengthen global preparedness for future pandemics, emphasizing the importance of healthcare infrastructure and rapid response systems. It has used the platform to improve international cooperation for future pandemic preparedness, including vaccine development, manufacturing and

India's healthcare system is characterized by a vast network of health facilities. Recent policy interventions have been focused on trying to improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of healthcare services, particularly in rural areas.

a major global player, providing affordable medications and vaccines. India's emphasis on cost-effective healthcare solutions can provide a blueprint for nations looking to optimize healthcare expenditure without compromising on quality. Finally, leveraging its advancements in digital infrastructure, India is spearheading digital health initiatives that enable telemedicine, healthcare data analytics, and online health services to reach underserved populations.

India has also underscored the importance of inclusive and quality education as a means to foster sustainable development and economic growth. Education is central to the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). India could use its presidency to reiterate the importance of education in meeting these global goals, sharing strategies for effective implementation and monitoring. With the advent of digital technology in education, India could stress the importance of digital literacy as a fundamental skill and discuss initiatives to provide accessible and affordable digital tools for education. India's focus on education, epitomized by campaigns like "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" (Save the Daughter, Educate the Daughter), and innovations like the National Digital Library, offer lessons in using limited resources to achieve expansive goals. Finally, given the changing nature of the global job market, India could promote skill-based education and



distribution. India has also made strides in providing affordable healthcare solutions and can bring this experience to the G20 table. The country's pharmaceutical sector has also been



vocational training as a key agenda item, sharing its own experiences and programs like the Skill India initiative.

Development Journey

India's socio-economic landscape is diverse and complex, but the country's commitment to inclusive development, especially in education and healthcare, is unwavering. The recent policy initiatives in India show a strong commitment towards achieving inclusive development. However, effective and efficient implementation of these policies is key. This requires relentless political will, increased financial allocations, robust data systems for monitoring progress, and active participation of the civil society in holding the system accountable.

In an increasingly interconnected world, India's development journey holds lessons for many other nations striving to grow

in an inclusive and sustainable manner. Today, as India successfully straddles the intersection of modernity and tradition, poised to become a USD 5 trillion economy, public-private partnerships, technology integration, community involvement, and robust monitoring mechanisms can fast-track the journey towards an inclusive and prosperous India. While challenges persist, the drive for inclusive development in India—by ensuring equitable access to quality education and healthcare—is a testament to the nation's vision for a sustainable, equitable and inclusive future.

India's experience and perspectives offer a rich source of insights for global challenges. As a key player in the G20, India not only stands to benefit from international cooperation but also has much to offer in shaping a more equitable and sustainable world order. ■

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D.B. VENKATESH VARMA



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

Global Geopolitics: India's Role As a Consensus Builder

The Ukraine conflict also had a negative impact on the developmental agenda of the Global South due to the disruption of fuel, fertilizer, and food supplies. The G20 can either get bogged down with conflicts amongst a few or move forward towards more productive outcomes that would benefit humanity. India has made a clear choice in favour of the latter, says D. B. Venkatesh Varma

As host of the G20 Leaders Summit to be held in New Delhi on September 8-9, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be welcoming world leaders as they gather for one of the most significant diplomatic events of the year. India's presidency has already broken numerous records in terms of the preparatory process for the G20 in general or for that matter other comparable multilateral events in particular along the three tracks of the Sherpas, Finance, and the Engagement groups which have covered areas ranging from Civil Society, Labour, Parliamentary Contacts, Science, Startups, and Global Think Tanks. With the theme of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", or "One Earth, One Family, One Future", which affirms the interconnectedness of Planet Earth in the wider universe, India has elevated the vision of the G20 as never before. As directed by Prime Minister Modi the preparatory process for the Summit has taken the extraordinary step of organizing meetings in all states of the country with a specific people-connect focus so much so that India's presidency is not just an event in international diplomacy but has become a household name in far-flung corners of the country. This new revolution in diplomacy, with an active international dimension and vibrant internal dimension, has not been seen before.

Ukraine Dilemma

The G20 Summit will be taking place against the background of unprecedented global changes. The G20 as a grouping was conceived at a time of the financial crisis in 2008 as a dialogue forum for promoting understanding and taking common or coordinated action on specific financial and trade issues. It was not intended to be a forum for addressing bilateral or international security issues. Besides, some of the key members of the G20 had pre-existing forums for addressing these issues such as the G7. The G20 has had a good track record of productive outcomes on the issues of its original mandate - in addressing the global fallout of the

2008 financial crisis. India was keen to preserve the original mandate of the G20.

The outbreak of the Ukraine conflict in February 2022 deepened the divisions in the international community, between Russia on the one hand and the G7 on the other. The commencement of military hostilities and the imposition of unilateral sanctions by the US and its allies had the further effect of paralyzing the United Nations Security Council and other UN bodies which have the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Ukraine conflict also had a negative impact on the developmental agenda of the Global South due to disruption of fuel, fertilizer, and food supplies which further exacerbated the precarious economic, social, and debt servicing conditions of many developing countries. However, at the insistence of the G7 an unfortunate precedent was created in the Bali Declaration of the G20 Summit in 2022 of including paragraphs of a political nature in the summit document. This enabled consensus in the Bali Summit but it was an outcome that only sharpened divisions amongst the G20 countries as to the real purpose and meaning of the grouping.

Bali Summit and Legacy

It was against this background that India took over the presidency in 2023 and was immediately faced with the headwinds of the international situation and the legacy of the Bali Summit. India has a well-articulated position on the Ukraine conflict, notably through Prime Minister Modi's call that "this is not an era of war" as communicated during his meeting with President Putin in Samarkand in 2022. However, as the host country India had an added responsibility to build consensus considering the various and sometimes sharply differing views of members, fulfilling one of the key tasks of its presidency, which is to promote dialogue and find common ground. While the G7 wanted reiteration of the condemnation

of Russia as in the Bali Declaration, Russia argued that the conflict situation had changed considerably since the last summit and hence that formulation was not acceptable. Various formulations have been under consideration, though in the final analysis the issue is not so much of language as the political will for mutual accommodation which, unfortunately, has been lacking. While there have been several peace proposals, none of them has elicited a positive response from all the stakeholders. The two countries directly involved are Russia and Ukraine, where the former is a member of the G20, and the latter is not. Neither has expressed readiness to engage in direct dialogue in recent months. In fact, Ukraine has a legislation that prohibits dialogue with President Putin. With prospects for peace in the Ukraine conflict still in the future, given the still-evolving military situation, it would be counterproductive for the concerned countries, particularly those of the G7, to bring matters to a head in the G20 Summit, especially when there has not been a single peace proposal offered from any of the G7 countries which are in the G20.

Against this background of such deep geopolitical splits, India's G20 team headed by its Sherpa Amitabh Kant as well as those representing India at the ministerial level exerted vigorous effort to promote dialogue and consensus. Even though consensus was elusive on a few points, agreement was reached on a vast majority of substantive issues in the six priority areas – Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Green Development, Multilateral Development Banks, Digital Public Infrastructure, and Gender Equality. The common ground attained in the G20 will reinforce at the global level efforts to address challenges that concern all humanity with focus on development and growth, climate change and Prime Minister Modi's unique formulation of Lifestyles for Sustainable Development (LiFE). In so doing, the developmental imperative of the G20 has been further reinforced during the Indian presidency of the G20.

The Virtual Summit

The substantive content of the G20 outcome document has been enriched by the unprecedented move by Prime Minister Modi to host in January 2023 a virtual summit of developing countries to impart a distinct Global South imprint on the G20 proceedings. This has not only changed the center of gravity within the G20, which tended to favour the G7, towards non-G7 members but also brings the G20 in line with the general trend of multipolarity now evident in the international system.

A momentous development in promoting inclusivity is India's proposal to include the African Union (AU) in the G20. With its 55 members, the AU's inclusion after a formal decision at the Delhi Summit would help not only in consolidating India's traditionally friendly relations with countries of the African Continent but also amplify voices of the Global South at global forums.

At a time of great power conflict and numerous global challenges, the success of India in preserving the G20 as a platform for dialogue on key issues, with the participation of key countries of the G7, Russia and China are noteworthy. India's Sherpa's call that the G20 is a development forum and not a forum for political conflict has resonated well among the G20 members.

The value of the G20 as a forum for bringing together developed and emerging economies is now widely recognized. The latter have interests and priorities that are distinct from the G7 or Russia and China and cannot allow the G20 to be taken hostage by conflicts they are not involved with. They don't wish to continue to suffer the negative consequences of a European conflict with global ramifications. The only way the G20 can get involved is on the side of peace, dialogue, and diplomacy. That has been India's national position from the commencement of the Ukraine conflict and has been maintained during the Sherpa dialogue process.



India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Need For Consensus

While the Leaders Declaration is yet to be finalized, its final shape will be responsibility of the G20 as a whole and not just the Chair. It is widely recognized that India as the Chair left no stone unturned to find the consensus and had performed an outstanding job of drafting an inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented Leaders Declaration to be issued at the September Summit. The overall momentum is for a positive outcome and if any member or group of members wish to break consensus, the onus of responsibility for the future viability of the G20 as a group will rest squarely on their shoulders.

The G20 can either get bogged down with conflicts amongst a few or move forward towards more productive outcomes that would benefit humanity. India has made a clear choice in favour of the latter and in doing so has shown vision and leadership not only of the Global South but at the global level. Therefore, while we have every reason to expect a successful G20 Summit, India's global standing has been assured by its hosting of the G20 Summit. This

would be remembered as a major milestone in India's diplomatic history and a turning point in our international engagement. At a time when geopolitics threatened to disrupt the international agenda, India's leadership of the G20 at a crucial time has resulted in not only the development agenda being preserved but also strengthened in the face of grave geopolitical disturbances. Crucially, the character of the G20 has changed from a grouping dominated by G7 concerns to one that is now better prepared to address a more equitable international cooperative agenda that is sensitive to the interests of the Global South. At a time when many multilateral institutions have fallen victim to geopolitical conflicts, preserving the original agenda of the G20 as an effective, inclusive, and action-oriented international forum would be a lasting contribution and legacy of India's Presidency of the G20 in 2023.

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ANNA-KATHARINA HORNIDGE



ALMA WISSKIRCHEN



A Multipolar World: Forging G20 Unity to Accelerate UN Reforms and SDGs

Can a multipolar world effectively confront the challenges posed by global conflict, the pervasive debt trap, and the natural disasters caused by global warming? Anna-Katharina Hornidge and Alma Wisskirchen describe the challenges ahead and explore how India can accelerate SDGs and promote green growth in the context of its G20 presidency.

July 2023 was the hottest month recorded to date. More than 830,000 hectares were burned within the territory of the European Union alone (not counting the devastating effects of wild fires in Canada, Russia, or the US), while China experienced in August the heaviest rainfall in the last 140 years. The extreme weather events of the past months are just some examples of the destructive effects of climate change and provide a glimpse of what to expect if global temperatures continue to rise. Meanwhile, approaching its midpoint, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is alarmingly off-track: at the current rate of progress, only 18% of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be implemented by 2030, and while 575 million people might still live in extreme poverty, more than 600 million could face hunger by 2030. These developments cannot be blamed on the failure of individual governments, but are the result of increasingly dangerous risks unfolding out of the interplay between global warming, loss of biodiversity, and geopolitical tensions. At the same time, they underline the need for concerted efforts of the international community to develop and implement measures that limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Moribund UN?

While the ramifications of today's global challenges become increasingly evident, we observe a concomitant polarization of the established global order. The United Nations, which was called into life to maintain international peace and security while promoting social progress, is blocked. Its composition and structures no longer represent today's realities. As a result of the UN's failure to adequately respond to and address the aforementioned challenges, the systems of global governance are moving from universal structures that are open to all nation-states to exclusive forums that are based on specific country groups and focus on a selected range of topics. While

some of these group-based formats have opened the yearly summits in most recent years by inviting additional countries as observers (i.e., the Group of 7), others extend full memberships. The most recent example is the expansion of the BRICS group. Formed in 2009 by Brazil, Russia, India, and China (with South Africa joining in 2010), it seeks to provide an alternative voice to the West. On the other hand, following Russia's attack on Ukraine, western democracies in general and the G7 in particular have demonstrated great unity. As the unipolar moment that has emerged and shaped global governance since the end of the cold war is coming to an end, the emergence of a multipolar structure raises the fundamental question whether this will be a multipolar world or a world of multiple orders. Can a multipolar world stand in constructive cooperation in the future, or are we increasingly on the path to destructive competition and a further fragmentation into multiple orders no longer brought together by a universal system of multilateralism as we find it in the United Nations?

Acknowledging the global and interdependent nature of the aforementioned global challenges, the international community must, by all means, try to prevent the realization of the latter scenario. Instead, global leaders should step up their efforts, taking the 2030 Agenda and its principles of universality and indivisibility as common ground to advance and deepen multilateral cooperation. Against the background of a blocked UN system, the G20 presents an increasingly important forum to assume responsibility and leadership in advancing coordination and cooperation on the issues of sustainable development and growth. Bringing together the world's most important industrialized and emerging economies, the G20 represents 80% of global GDP while also being responsible for 80% of global emissions. As a forum that has both G7 and (the founding) BRICS states as its members, it provides an important platform to enable and promote discussion and engagement, thus working against a further polarization between

the different groupings. A joint concentration on uniting convergences rather than divisive differences becomes possible.

One Earth And LiFE

The theme of India's G20 presidency "One Earth, One Family, One Future" illustrates the presidency's focus on the interconnected nature of human life, animals and plants, indicating the potential implications of human activity on our planet and common future. In line with this theme, the Indian presidency has prioritized the topics 'sustainable development' and 'just and equitable growth', advancing, among others, the concept of 'women-led development' and the 'LiFE approach'. This prioritization constitutes an important and welcome initiative, as it could and should accelerate the G20 members' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. More concretely, at the G20 summit and for the remainder of its presidency, India should build on the ongoing discussions, using its position as the world's most populous country, the second largest emerging economy and (self-proclaimed) voice of the Global South to forge common ground and pave the way for the UN SDG Summit in New York. To make its presidency a success and to enable real progress on SDG implementation, the Indian presidency needs to advance the G20's work in three important areas: reform of the multilateral system, debt relief and the reform of the international financial architecture, and national SDG implementation.

Reform, Finance And SDGs

The first point, reform of the multilateral system stems, as elaborated above, from the UN's failure to adequately respond to global challenges and to be responsive to all its member states. The permanent members of the UN Security Council neither represent today's global distributions of power nor are they representative in terms of population size. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the UN system remains the most inclusive forum to provide global governance and can and must not be replaced by any exclusive group of states. Acknowledging the importance of the UN system, the G20 should accompany and foster discussions and concrete steps to make the reform of the

UN system (including the UN Security Council) possible. In the meantime, however, the G20 becomes even more important to address key global issues and should thus seek to be more inclusive and effective. The Indian presidency's proposal to integrate the African Union (AU) as a permanent member into the group would strengthen the G20's representation and outreach. Bringing the AU to the G20 table would allow the G20 to directly engage with the representation of 55 African states. Hence, seeking to advance reforms on both the multilateral level and within the G20, India must use the remainder of its presidency to foster discussions on UN reforms and the integration of the AU into the G20.

A second major obstacle to SDG implementation is the lack of sufficient finance. In February 2023, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres called for an SDG stimulus, underlining the need for new public and private finance for the 2030 Agenda. A large majority of low- and middle-income countries are in severe debt distress, paying higher amounts on debt service than on investing in their own countries and citizens. This weakens both their capacity to respond to extreme weather events and to advance national SDG implementation. As the G20 comprises the largest creditor nations, it is of fundamental importance to advance discussions on the issue of debt restructuring. In doing so, the G20 should consider innovative measures such as debt-for-climate swaps, which can be particularly effective when efforts are closely coordinated and directed towards a jointly identified set of countries. Finally, responding to Guterres' call for an SDG stimulus, G20 countries should mobilize new private and public finance to provide the required 500 billion USD per year.

As a third and last point, the G20 under India's presidency should prioritize national SDG implementation. The UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs' 2023 SDG report shows that countries of all income levels are not on track in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Additionally, policy incoherence and spillover effects hamper effective implementation. According to the International Energy Agency, renewable power capacity has to be tripled by 2030 to keep the global temperature increase



The Bretton Woods Conference, officially known as the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, took place in July 1944 in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to agree upon a series of new rules for the post-WWII international monetary system. The conference paved the way for the creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Yet, while investments in renewable energies have increased, the G20 has recently drastically augmented consumer subsidies on fossil fuels. The fact that the outcome document of the third meeting of G20 energy ministers mentions neither phasing out of fossil fuels nor reducing fossil fuel subsidies demonstrates that much remains to be done on these issues. Similarly, spillover effects, which refer to the negative implications of progress in one sector or country on another sector or country, remain unaddressed in the outcome document of the G20 development ministers. If the G20 in general and the Indian presidency in particular want to advance sustainable development and SDG implementation, they have to show serious efforts in advancing these topics within their own countries. Looking at the G20 process so far, the

Indian presidency has put great emphasis on advancing sustainable development and just and equitable growth. Against the backdrop of the recent BRICS expansion, mounting geopolitical tensions and the alarming mid-term review of the 2030 Agenda, India should use the remainder of its presidency to forge unity among the G20 and find common ground with regard to reforming the UN system and the international financial architecture as well as implementing the 2030 Agenda. By striving for unity, coordinated and concerted efforts to implement the SDGs, the G20 summit can pave the way for the UN SDG Summit in September. Just as important, the G20 can strengthen its role as a forum for sustainable development, counteracting current tendencies towards greater polarization and destructive competition. ■

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India's G20 Legacy: The World is One Big Family

As India hosts the G20 summit in New Delhi, the world is confronted with challenges of unparalleled magnitude. But India's G20 presidency promises to be a game-changer in forging unique solutions to these challenges, says Prof. Dennis J. Snower, President of the Global Solutions Initiative, Berlin. In a wide-ranging conversation with India and The World, Prof. Snower says that if India can help the G20 understand that "we have no choice but to consider ourselves one family only with regard to the global problems where we need to cooperate globally, we would be making great progress." (Excerpts from the interview)



Q) What are the major challenges before India as it hosts the G20 Summit in September?

A) The major challenges will be to address the issues of climate indebtedness, biodiversity, food, and energy in which all interact and are dependent on one another. These are handled in separate silos, and India's particular challenge is to make sure that these different silos are acting in coordination with one another. Unfortunately, this is an unprecedentedly large challenge because time is running out with regard to climate change. We have made very little progress. In fact, we have regressed during the COVID pandemic in addressing the issue of giving everyone on earth a satisfying livelihood. Therefore, India's challenge is of proportions that have not been seen before, and the need to solve the problem is greater than it ever has been.

Q) One of the important themes of India's G20 presidency is the Global South and along with that the idea of inclusion and the forging of an inclusive world order. How do you see India advancing the formation of an inclusive world order?

A) Inclusion is an important topic for the G20 even though the issues related to inclusion have been traditionally assigned primarily at the national level. Therefore, the issues of inclusion have generally been considered national problems rather than global problems except in issues where there is a grand bargain to be made. For example, with regard to climate indebtedness, there is a grand bargain to be made, and the West would like movement on climate which it is not going to get unless it has cooperation from the Global South, who want the support of the West to make this happen on the livelihood front.

Q) Geopolitics is obstructing consensus in the G20. What is the way forward?

A) The big danger is to let these particular issues become infected by geo-political conflicts that are not directly associated with these issues. Because one is in a political conflict, a potential military conflict in one regard may prove to be unhelpful in resolving issues that have nothing to do with that conflict. It would be very important for the G20 to articulate the nature of this problem and to agree in principle that those issues before the G20 which are the global issues that countries need to cooperate on must be addressed without ideological or political preconditions. That is what is not happening currently. In principle, the G20 could help enormously by addressing these global issues.

Q) Ukraine continues to be a divisive issue. How will geo-political contestation play out on this issue? What could be a possible resolution of this contentious issue?

A) In the end, military conflicts end either through negotiations or in rare cases through the unconditional defeat of one side. Since the parties relevant to this conflict are nuclear powers on both sides, unconditional defeat is not something that can be contemplated. Therefore, if this conflict is to end in a way that both sides consider

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satisfactory, it will need to be negotiated, and the quicker both sides reach that conclusion, the fewer lives that will be lost. Speedy negotiations could then replace long periods of wars of attrition. My hope is that this point will be reached soon on both sides.

Q) Looking forward, there are many unique and singular features of India's G20 presidency. In your view, what would be the enduring legacy of India's G20 presidency?

A) One thing that would make a major difference to the way we handle multiple crises is if India could infuse the remainder of its G20 presidency with its "One Earth, One Life, One Future" motto through its distinctive approach to lifestyles, frugality, and material sufficiency, and help pave the way for a systemic change that will prepare future politicians to adjust governance in order to make economies in societies operate in a way that doesn't destroy the planet and undermine communities.

Q) How do you see India's unfolding rise as a global power?

A) India is a huge country, which will remain the most populous country on earth for the rest of the century. We live in a world that is neither unipolar nor multipolar, which is in a state of

geopolitical transition where what particular leaders do will make a very big difference to the time-path that the entire world follows. And this happens at a time when the earth is on fire, the threat of nuclear war and the dangers of biochemical conflict are on the rise again, identities have become more fragmented, and people have become more inward-looking than ever. On this account if India can help the G20 understand that we have no choice but to consider ourselves one family only with regard to the global problems where we need to cooperate globally, we would be making great progress. ■

Dennis J. Snower is President of the Global Solutions Initiative, Berlin; Professorial Fellow at the Institute for New Economic Thinking, Oxford University; and Non-resident Fellow at Brookings. He is an expert on labor economics, socio-economics, public policy and inflation-unemployment trade-offs. He is currently working on a new paradigm for economics with David Sloan Wilson. He is the author of a major report on digital governance with reform with Paul Twomey. He has been a visiting professor at many universities around the world, including Columbia, Princeton, Dartmouth, Harvard, the European University Institute, Stockholm University, and the Vienna Institute of Advanced Studies.



Africa's Priorities at Heart of India's G20 Presidency



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Tanzania's President Dr. John Magufuli playing drum at a ceremonial welcome at the State House, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in July 2016.

India's G20 Presidency, under the theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, seeks global unity and shared future, with a crucial emphasis on involving the Global South, especially Africa. Through partnerships, initiatives, and representation, India aims to prioritise African concerns in areas like debt relief, climate finance, sustainable development, and disaster risk reduction, fostering a more equitable international order, highlights Gurjit Singh.

India's G20 Presidency, characterised by its theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, holds the potential to pave the way for a united Earth – one that embraces the principles of a singular global family and a shared future. The celebration of this theme is distinguished by its diversity and departure from conventional norms.

India's presidency comes at a time when the world is plagued by significant power rivalries. It is characterised by a rise in protectionism stemming from the economic downturn that followed the pandemic. The promise of globalisation, which held benefits for all, particularly espoused by developed nations, was put to the test. The responsibility to advocate for globalisation fell upon emerging countries, as a result of the Ukraine crisis and the sluggish post-pandemic recovery. The disruption of supply chains for energy, food, and fertiliser were a consequence of the Ukraine crisis, derailing the post-COVID recovery upon which developing countries had pinned their hopes. Instead, these nations faced an unprecedented economic onslaught, having redirected substantial resources to combat the pandemic.

Thus, issues such as debt relief, public health, the establishment of new supply chains that would remain unaffected by strategic differences, and a heightened reliance on resilient value chains among reliable countries came to the forefront.

Addressing the Neglect of the Global South

For several decades, developing countries and the Global South have harboured feelings of neglect within the international order. Alongside the dominance of the Bretton Woods institutions, the establishment of new institutions led by China, such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), failed to alleviate their concerns. The China-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which utilised the NDB and the AIIB, resulted in issues of debt and a deficiency of foresight in the planning of



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Mozambique's President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi at the margins of the 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg.

expansive projects. As a result, the lending from both the multilateral development banks (MDBs) and China constricted the Global South, and the pandemic only magnified this realisation.

In these institutions, the Global South had the opportunity to speak but was rarely heard, and was often kept out of important decisions, whether they pertained to climate finance, terrorism, migration, debt relief, or the maintenance of international peace and security. The international order was intended to empower countries and peoples; however, the way it operated only further disempowered them.

The G20 provides India with the opportunity to speak confidently about its agenda and involve the Global South to the fullest extent. Firstly, its list of guest countries invited to the G20 Summit includes Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain, and the UAE. This preference for countries from the Global South, who can play pivotal roles in their respective regions and contribute to the enhancement of human destiny, is truly evocative.

Secondly, in January 2023, through the virtual summit for the Voice of the Global South, India engaged with 125 countries to consult them on a series of subjects. This engagement occurred not only at the level of leaders and foreign ministers, but also through functional ministries. This consultative process marked the first time that almost every country in the Global South participated in the G20 process, which had otherwise been becoming more restrictive. India's commitment to its partners in the Global South has always been to collaborate towards securing a better position in the international order.

India has refined this process through its extensive 75 years of engagement with countries in the Global South. Long before the Bandung Conference in 1955, India had been involved with the newly emerging nations. Subsequently, India played a leading role in the Non-aligned Movement, the Group of 77, and in the current century, has fostered successful partnerships with Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific, ASEAN and Central Asia.

The African Dimension

India addressed the Global South's quest for reprioritisation through various means. India understood that it couldn't unilaterally dictate the G20 agenda. Given the principle of equality among G20 members, some with greater economic influence can influence the G20's direction. India aimed to shape these priorities by incorporating those relevant to the Global South. This approach has been evident in India's G20 Working Groups and meetings covering diverse subjects throughout the year. This helped calibrate the G20's priorities towards realistic and desired objectives.

Numerous nations in the Global South regard India as a positive model of pluralistic democracy and development. They also value India's strategic autonomy. They believe they can emulate India's trajectory. India's recent achievements during and after the pandemic have only deepened that admiration. India

introduces these accomplishments into the G20 process, presenting them as examples of impactful development.

Capitalising on these factors, India initiated the move to elevate the African Union from a frequent guest to a permanent member of the G20. This bold decision represents a significant stride towards granting Africa a permanent seat at the prestigious table, enabling it to voice its concerns and priorities more effectively.

Among the numerous thrust areas, India is pursuing five vital sectors to realise a more extensive and improved vision for the G20. These sectors are all directly relevant to African priorities.

India can harness mechanisms to cultivate a digitally skilled and future-ready workforce, facilitating the implementation of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and beyond. Consequently, digital public infrastructure, cybersecurity within the digital economy, and digital upskilling stand as imperative priorities.

The first involves addressing debt stress. Strengthening multilateral development banks to be responsive to the current global challenges, facilitating financing for resilient, inclusive, and sustainable development, and leveraging Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) to enhance financial inclusion and productivity gains are among India's priorities. Secondly, the issue of climate finance stands as a significant

concern due to repeated assurances to aid developing countries that remain unfulfilled. The strategy of persistent negotiation for increased contributions by OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries has proven ineffective. The challenge of climate adaptability and mitigation demands

substantial funding. In this regard, India could explore hybrid solutions that involve the aggregation of smaller funds and their leveraging through international markets to generate a more substantial fund for implementing sustainable projects. Hybrid finance, supported by appropriate guarantees



and with greater involvement from the host country, could offer a potential way forward. Though still in its early stages, discussions are underway to explore these possibilities.

A third area involves the establishment of a just energy transition, coinciding with LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) to infuse sustainability into lifestyles. This initiative aims to enhance human life and its quality while safeguarding communities and nations from the escalating challenges they confront.

As the SDGs gather greater momentum in attracting direct investment at the grassroots level, impact investment also takes center stage in India's trilateral cooperation efforts, particularly in Africa. This extends both to the private sector and through the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Funds are being established, with G7 countries like the UK, France, Germany, and Japan, alongside the EU, gradually stepping up their contributions. The India-German Sustainability Development Cooperation is currently engaged in such projects in Peru, Cameroon, Ghana, and Malawi. Likewise, the UK and MEA have set up an impact fund for analogous objectives.

A fourth crucial area pertains to the digital economy. This encompasses managing digital public infrastructure, providing cybersecurity solutions for MSMEs, addressing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and utilising geospatial technologies, which are currently under discussion. India can harness mechanisms to cultivate a digitally skilled and future-ready workforce, facilitating the implementation of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and beyond. Consequently, digital public infrastructure, cybersecurity within the digital economy, and digital upskilling stand as imperative priorities.

A new working group on Disaster Risk Reduction has been established under India's Presidency to adjust priorities within the G20 towards more realistic goals and to foster collaborative efforts among G20 members. This group aims to conduct multi-disciplinary

research, exchange best practices, and encourage collective action in the field of disaster risk reduction. The establishment of a "loss and damage" fund at COP 27 (Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC) in November 2022 for countries vulnerable to climate disasters is a well-intentioned move lacking substance. The Indian initiative to promptly assist Turkey and Syria through its National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) demonstrated that setting an example holds greater significance than merely stating principles.

Self-Help Efforts

Shouldn't the Global South strive to assist itself rather than vociferously lament unmet expectations from others? The Global South ought to establish its own self-help fund. The impact investment movement, exemplified by the Indian impact investing model, could be expanded. It appeals to investors not only from the G7 but also beyond. Its project implementation is effectively executed within developing countries.

The primary focus lies in having priorities guided by India and major Global South nations such as Indonesia, South Africa and Brazil. These countries would contribute to, manage, and oversee the fund's activities. While other G20 members and entities beyond are encouraged to contribute to their self-help group for the SDGs, the setting of priorities and project approvals will be undertaken by the Global South countries themselves.

India has demonstrated significant empathy towards Africa and the Global South, highlighting years of cooperation with Africa in the spirit of the Harambee Factor (Harambee is a Swahili word for cooperation). This commitment has received substantial impetus through the substantial efforts put forth during India's G20 Presidency. ■

Gurjit Singh has served as India's ambassador to Germany, Indonesia, Ethiopia, ASEAN and the African Union. He is the Chair of CII Task Force on Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC).



ELIZABETH SIDIROPOULOS

G20 Connect: Africa, India, South Africa and Global South

The AU's full participation in the G20 would increase the legitimacy of the grouping, while also providing a platform for a continent that is under-represented in the G20, says Elizabeth Sidiropoulos.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's request to his G20 counterparts in June 2023 to invite the African Union to become a permanent member of the grouping was a bold step that vocalised the views of many in Africa and beyond about the importance of having a collective African voice at the G20 table. The G20 is not the UN; it's an exclusive, select group. The value of such a small grouping is that it can build consensus among systemically important countries on key global challenges. The downside is that it may ignore, knowingly or unknowingly, the potential

consequences of its decisions on the most vulnerable economies.

Africa is home to 33 of the world's least developed countries. About a third of its population lived below the extreme poverty line in 2022 (431 million people). Achieving sustainable development is an existential necessity for all these people. Many African countries are unlikely to meet all the SDGs by 2030. In many cases there is insufficient credible or timely data for effective monitoring and policymaking. Coupled with the imperative of an energy transition, the scale of resources needed to achieve the SDGs runs into trillions of dollars.

These challenges cannot be dealt with only through domestic policymaking. They also require a global architecture geared towards effective financing for development. And this is where the G20's mandate as the world's premier global economic governance forum becomes crucial for the continent and indeed all of the Global South.

Hence, the invitation to the AU serves as more than a symbolic gesture. The AU's full participation in the G20 would increase the output legitimacy of the club, while also providing a platform for a continent that is under-represented in the G20.

Why AU Matters

The African Union and the NEPAD heads of state implementation committee had been granted and observer status at the G20 soon after the grouping was elevated to a summit level in 2008. During the global financial crisis South Africa as the only African member of the G20, working together with the African Development Bank, created a platform for consultation with other African states to coordinate positions on the crisis response. More recently, as the COVID pandemic was breaking out across the world and countries were locking down in early 2020, the G20



India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen co-chaired the Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable in April 2023.

A view of the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa.



under the Saudi presidency was meeting to discuss this unprecedented health crisis and take remedial action. One of the most critical issues was how to deal with the many indebted developing countries, for which the pandemic was accelerating their fiscal trauma. SA, who at the time was both AU chair and a G20 member, convened a meeting of the AU Bureau, and included a number of African institutions such as the AfDB and the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, to discuss and take to the G20 meeting in March 2020 the African concerns and proposals.

South Africa has often been considered by many external actors as representing the continent in such forums, an expectation which is not placed on the other G20 members. Whenever possible it has advocated for African issues but it is there in the first instance to defend its own interests. Including more African voices is a positive step, but the path will not be smooth.

Capacity Building

For the AU's G20 membership to be effective, the AU and its member states will have to ensure there is the requisite technical expertise and capacity, as well as a sufficiently wide mandate for the AU (through the rotating chair and the Commission chair) to meaningfully

advocate for certain outcomes and for agenda-setting. This is important because the AU is an intergovernmental organization. The AU Commission does not have the same legal competencies as the European Commission. Nevertheless, over the last decade the AU has been able to develop common positions on certain critical global issues such as climate change. This approach creates a foundation upon which to build to ensure the AU's meaningful engagement in the G20.

Since independence India has considered itself a leader of the South, both through the Non-Aligned Movement but also through its bilateral South-South cooperation initiatives. South Africa since the end of apartheid has also positioned itself very strongly as a leader on advocating for Global South issues, South-South cooperation and African priorities. There have been numerous examples of cooperation between them on Global South issues over the years. In the late 1990s both countries advocated for the removal of intellectual property rules that restricted access to ARVs for low and middle-income countries, under WTO's TRIPS, a fight which they won. During the COVID pandemic India and South Africa made a submission to the WTO in October 2020 for a temporary waiver on all patents, trade secrets, industrial designs, and copyrights on coronavirus-related

drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other medical technologies during the pandemic. This would enable all countries to have affordable access to critical medical supplies. The proposal has met with only partial success at the WTO, but it is nevertheless an important step in rethinking existing rules related to public health versus private gain.

Earlier this year at the start of its G20 presidency, India held a virtual summit – Voices of the Global South – to which all Global South countries that were not G20 members were invited. Its objective was to ‘provide a common platform to deliberate on the concerns, interests and priorities that affect the developing countries’ (as set out by the Ministry of External Affairs) and to channel them into the G20 deliberations.

Debt Distress

Together with the IMF and the World Bank, India co-chaired the Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable in April 2023 to discuss debt sustainability and debt restructuring challenges and ways to address them, given the slow progress in the G20’s Common Framework. The objective is to identify actions that can be taken quickly to accelerate debt restructuring processes, making them more efficient. This is a critical undertaking although progress continues to be slow because of the difficulty of bringing the variety of debtors on board – both public and private.

Both countries and other BRICS members have pushed for the reform of the Bretton Woods institutions so that they can better serve the needs of the developing world. Sovereign debt and climate finance have been high on South Africa’s list of areas requiring significant changes in the global financial architecture. Reform of the UN Security Council and the UN as a whole to better reflect the rise of Global South countries has also been a common priority. The challenge that needs to be overcome there is that of restoring the UN’s credibility and overcoming the paralysis that is a feature of the growing geopolitical contestation.

G20, a Bridge-BUILDER

In that vein, both South Africa and India want to ensure that a forum such as the G20 remains a place where consensus can be forged on critical global economic governance issues. This means trying to safeguard it from the geopolitical rivalries that have become more pronounced over the last two years. Major global challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality should not be forgotten. In the area of climate change, it is clear that time is running out for the planet. Preserving the G20 as a bridge between North and South, between geopolitical rivals

For the AU’s G20 membership to be effective, the AU and its member states will have to ensure there is the requisite technical expertise and capacity, as well as a sufficiently wide mandate for the AU.

and rich and poor is an essential ingredient for tackling the transnational crises facing the world. From 2022 to 2025 four leading Global South countries are presiding over the G20 (Indonesia, India, Brazil and South Africa). It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to ensure that development is at the heart of the agenda and that the voices of those who are most vulnerable find their way into the discussions and the outcomes. ■

Elizabeth Sidiropoulos is the chief executive of the South African Institute of International Affairs, which she has led since 2005. She has over two decades of experience in the field of politics and international relations, and her expertise lies in South Africa’s foreign policy, South-South Cooperation and the role of emerging powers in Africa.

The African Continent: A Voice, an Opportunity, and a Greater Role

Long overlooked and neglected despite its civilizational contribution and growing economic prowess, Africa clamours today for a greater say and stake at the high table of nations. A permanent seat in the G20 would be a significant first step in the required direction, say Pamla Gopaul, Kennedy Mbeva and Reuben Makomere .

An emergent Africa necessitates a greater role in global governance. From the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic to the debt crisis and climate change, African countries are facing significant development challenges due to global problems for which they are least responsible. But Africa is also a frontier in innovative governance, especially as epitomised by the conclusion and ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), whereby 46 of the 54 signatories (85.2%) have deposited their instruments of AfCFTA ratification which illustrates Africa's divergent globalisation against the tide of deglobalisation. Africa, therefore, has a prominent role to play in governing the emerging poly-crisis world order. Having a seat at the G20 is not only the right thing to do, but also a wise move in reshaping global governance and reinvigorating cooperation between Africa and the rest of the world in a fast-changing geopolitical and economic landscape.

Three fundamental shifts justify the case for Africa's membership in the G20. First, the unfolding poly-crisis in the economic, ecological, and security realms are posing significant challenges to global governance. Hegemonic leadership, where a few powerful

countries provide critical public goods, is no longer sufficient. Recent reports from the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), for instance, have highlighted the global socio-ecological risks posed by climate change. Additionally, the rapid yet uneven recovery from the pandemic has also highlighted significant economic vulnerabilities across Africa and the world. In a global economic system already weakened by shocks associated with the pandemic, Africa and other developing countries are already exposed to significant financial pressure due to the high cost of commodities including fuel, food, and borrowing (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) 2022). As further illustration of these risks, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank identified up to 16 low-income African countries as states at high risk of debt distress, while 7 were already in debt distress.

Age of Poly-Crisis

Global security and geopolitical challenges are illustrative of the increasingly complex suite of challenges facing multilateral governance institutions. High commodity prices arising out of the war in Ukraine and associated disruptions in the supply chains of critical products such as grain, fertilizers, and energy provides an apt



example of the multiple crises that face and influence global cooperation. In a region that plays a central role in the global supply of various products, both Russia and Ukraine provide approximately 30 per cent of world exports of wheat, as well as 20 per cent of maize and over 50 per cent of sunflower oil. Additionally, Russia and neighbouring Belarus provide about 20 per cent of global fertilizer exports. The war, associated disruptions, and attendant economic sanctions have resulted in severe restrictions on the supply of these commodities to Africa and other parts of the world thus resulting in an increase in trade costs. The shortfall in wheat supplies coming from Russia and Ukraine has affected Africa particularly hard due to the heavy dependence for an outsized share of their wheat imports. In contrast with other more developed parts of the world such as the European Union which could make up the shortfall by tapping into regional producers and/or other alternative sources, African states have often struggled to cope given the lack of alternative partners and global presence that can ensure the provision of additional imports.

Second, the ongoing rapid global power shifts are reconfiguring the global economy in significant ways, leading some commentators to talk of an emerging geoeconomic order. With the shift from unipolarity to a multipolar world, cooperation especially amongst the great

powers is becoming more challenging. Moreover, emerging powers are establishing alternative institutions and forums for cooperation. These changes are not only occurring at a global scale but also present particularly unique challenges for the African continent and its engagement in global affairs. An expansion in the involvement of great powers including China, Russia, and the US, in addition to intermediate powers such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia, for instance, epitomizes the changing global geopolitical landscape and its impact on Africa (Gustavo De Carvalho and Laura Rubidge 2022). While this expansion of the geopolitical space has presented significant opportunities such as additional avenues for development financing, it has also brought about new complexities including navigating debt restructuring and achieving effecting and equitable cooperation on contemporary problems such as climate change. The recent wave of high-profile visits to Africa by western and non-western delegations such as US Vice President Kamala Harris, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, French President Emmanuel Macron, China's Foreign Minister Qin Gang, and Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, for instance, highlights the complicated strategic choices that the continent needs to make to navigate the increasing complexities associated with the changing geopolitical dynamics (Nuzulack

Dausen 2023; Mohammed Yusuf 2023; Elizabeth Pineau 2023; Reuters 2023; U.S. Department of State 2023). Progressively, intense competition between China, the US and powers such as the European Union (EU), United Kingdom (UK), India, Turkey, and Russia for greater influence across Africa are already having important reverberations across the continent's political and developmental landscape. While global powers have their goals and interests in Africa, there is an increasing demand for more complex approaches to regional and global governance that ensure this rising interest does not diminish the continent's agency. It is gradually being recognized, for instance, that Africa's abundant natural resources could supplement Europe's need for alternatives to Russian gas, oil, and coal. Despite the increasingly vocal push for a just transition from fossil fuels, African states have the opportunity to maximize emerging opportunities to negotiate more favourable and equitable trade agreements as noted by Senegalese President Macky Sall. The geopolitical interest in Africa dovetails its importance as the largest regional voting bloc at the United Nations (UN) making Africa an important player in international geopolitics.

Demographic Shift

Third, rapid demographic shifts are reshaping the global image. Given that one out of five people in the world in 2050 will be African, and two out of five babies will be born in Africa, how Africans envision the world is indispensable to redesigning global governance. Asymmetries in terms of governance, approaches and tools reduce the potential of the cooperation system to enable Africa's development and to address common challenges facing all countries. Africa's population, for instance, is projected to increase to about 2.8 billion by 2060, up from the current estimate of 1.4 billion (statisticetimes n.d.). Population in the Eastern and Southern African region alone is projected to increase to be about 1.1 billion people by 2050 from approximately 633 million in 2021 (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) 2023). While this uptick presents significant opportunities to harness

demographic dividend and turbocharge rapid economic development necessary to transform the continent, it also poses significant challenges especially for African policy makers particularly around pathways to address the specific and pressing developmental aspirations for current and future generations in the continent. Taken together, these three fundamental shifts provide important heuristics for the increasingly significant role that Africa can play in shaping global governance and reinvigorating multilateral cooperation in the age of poly-crisis. Crucially, these challenges have highlighted the widening gap between rising complex global problems, a rapidly changing geo-political landscape around which these problems are to be addressed, and the current capacity of conventional global governance institutions to cope with these problems. Enhanced engagement with the G20, beginning with a seat at the forum would be an important step in realizing a more meaningful and nimble form of multilateral cooperation to solve current and emerging global problems in a manner that not only offers important opportunities for both parties but is also more responsive and representative of the current global geopolitical landscape.

G20's Role in Africa

The G20 presents an important opportunity to explore and implement nimbler, fit-for-purpose cooperation frameworks to tackle current and emerging ecological, economic, and geopolitical challenges in a more equitable and responsive manner. Indeed, there have been several important initiatives within the G20 that are highly relevant to the African continent, especially in the context of realizing the African Union Agenda 2063. The G20 Compact with Africa, for example, was meant to enhance the continent's attractiveness to private investment through technical and institutional improvements on existing macro, business, and financing frameworks (G20 Compact With Africa n.d.). Since its launch in 2017 under the German G20 presidency, the initiative has attracted the interest of several African states including Benin, Côte d'Ivoire,

Egypt, and Ethiopia. The G20 Debt Treatment beyond Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) was another mechanism that was initiated at the height of the pandemic to help alleviate the financial pressure on low-income developing countries occasioned by servicing debt repayments in the middle of the pandemic (IMF 2021). In this sense, low-income countries were temporarily allowed to suspend their debt payments through the end of 2021. In April 2021 the G20 developed the DSSI to facilitate debt restructuring negotiations as they pertain to low-income countries (William N Kring 2021). While considered largely ineffective, the initiatives were representative of the institutional agility that can be harnessed and leveraged to develop more meaningful forms of cooperation and address current and emerging challenges including the Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JTEPs), debt restructuring and pandemic response.

The case for strengthening Africa's engagement within the G20 should not be seen as a mere case of charitable benevolence but a long overdue partnership that is necessary if current and emerging global challenges are to be addressed. Significant economic and political relationships already exist between African countries and current G20 members. These relationships are likely to continue expanding in scope and importance in a multi-polar world characterised by poly-crisis. The increasingly active presence of global powers in the continent combined with the need to address complex current and emerging universal problems including climate change, debt restricting, and post-Covid recovery present additional justification for why a more representative, responsive G20 is needed. Excluding Africa from such platforms runs the risk of alienating a critical constituency at a time of great transformation in global governance and international politics.

Additionally, enhancing such cooperation arrangements is a significant step towards reforming and adapting to the changing global realities. The G20 can support and enhance

Africa's contribution to global (economic) governance in several ways including agenda-setting, legitimacy, policy coordination, and capacity building. By incorporating Africa's policy priorities into its core agenda, the G20 can ensure that the views of a significant global populace are incorporated into its governance activities. Born of a crisis, the G20's nimble structure allows it to respond to global crises quickly and effectively. It is also best suited to addressing complex challenges that may not neatly fit into a particular governance regime, such as the JTEPs and debt restructuring efforts. Strengthening engagement with Africa thus takes a normative component especially in relation to increased legitimacy and representation in addressing current and emerging problems. The African experience in relation to Covid vaccines further highlighted the need to enhance equity, representation, and fairness especially given the disparities in access to vaccines between the G20 countries and sub-Saharan African countries. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), for example, acknowledged in 2021 that G20 member countries received up to 15 times more Covid-19 vaccine doses per capita compared to those in sub-Saharan Africa. Strengthening legitimacy amid such disparities is therefore not only necessary but an imperative to the creation of meaningful cooperative arrangements especially for the G20. Crucial to generating legitimacy and equity is enhancing meaningful engagement with Africa through avenues such as more concrete membership in the G20. By design, the G20 is based on exclusive membership. While this limited membership can enable faster decision-making, many of the global challenges that fall within the mandate of the G20 require broader engagement, especially with countries and regions that bear a disproportionate impact of the challenges. Climate change, for instance, presents a particularly prescient example of this dynamic given that Africa is responsible for only around 3% of global carbon emissions yet loses about 5% to 15% of GDP due to climate change (African Development Bank 2022).

Recommendations to G20

To institutionalise and strengthen the emerging cooperative arrangements, the G20 can implement the following policy recommendations: **Acceptance of Africa's candidacy:** The G20 should accept Africa's candidacy as a first step. Such formal acceptance would reshape a crucial global governance institution to make it more appropriate for a world with multiple crises. It's a step in the right way that the important great and major powers have expressed support for Africa's candidacy. **Boost institutional connections:** There are already a number of formal and informal institutional frameworks for the G20. African nations have created substantial institutional frameworks for coordinating concurrently through the AU. The first steps might involve coordinating the G20's and Africa's top priorities on a technical and policy level. Building blocks for these choices might be the ongoing partnership between the Think20 (T20) and the Policy Bridge Tank of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD). Such momentum could also be created through political and policy coordination.

Reforms and changes to policy: Aligning the G20 with Africa's major policy concerns would be a difficult political step, but one that is crucial. This would encourage synergy and make the areas of cooperation clearer. Importantly, while Africa and the G20 do not have to collaborate in every area, they can reach an understanding on political topics of shared concern. More particularly, this might entail harmonizing some

of the G20 and African Union Agenda 2063's fundamental principles. To create the necessary synergies to reach consensus on policy problems of shared interest, it will be important to develop trust-building institutions, such as policy clearing houses and platforms for dialogue.

Rethinking cooperative models will lead to more equal engagement; Africa's engagement with the G20 must be meaningful and equitable. Participation alone won't be sufficient to achieve the expressive cooperation needed to address the ongoing and upcoming challenges facing Africa and the rest of the globe. For instance, how G20 collaboration with the African Union would affect higher education and research in Africa, how debt in African countries stifles public funding for education, how Africa has 25% of the world's disease burden but only 4% of clinical trials globally due to research capacity, funding, and regional data, and many other examples.

Given that Africa is underrepresented in important global decision-making institutions and processes that go beyond post-war laws and principles, rethinking multilateral system governance to make it more representative is essential. Africa should have a place in the primary bodies where economic and financial decisions are made due to its population weight and cumulative GDP. Therefore, Africa should have a permanent seat in the G20 through the African Union, as requested by President Sall and backed in November and December 2022 by the Presidents of France, Japan, and the US. ■

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Dr. Reuben Makomere is a legal adviser at ARIN and a doctoral researcher at the University of Tasmania, Faculty of Law. His current research is focused on governance for addressing ocean acidification through regulation of its response strategies.)

Read the full article at www.indiawrites.org

IN CONVERSATION

India has put Sustainable Infrastructure on G20 Agenda



In this conversation with Manish Chand, President, Centre for Global India Insights, Nicolas J.A. Buchoud highlights the need for promoting sustainable infrastructure in the Global South, and underlines that India will have a pivotal role to play in this process.
(Excerpts from the interview)

Q) How has India's G20 presidency promoted investment in sustainable infrastructure in the Global South?

A) The issue of infrastructure investments in the Global South has been on the table of the G20 in the past years, along with that of de-risking investments. Yet not much progress has been made as emerging and lower-income countries where new infrastructure investments would be needed, such as in the energy and mobility sectors, are also the ones with more limited capabilities to borrow money in global capital markets. Furthermore, many countries of the Global South have suffered more than their counterparts from the G7 from the macro-economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some tools have been set up to try and overcome the risk gridlock such as the Global Infrastructure Facility by the World Bank. A Global Infrastructure Hub was initiated by G20 Australia in 2014 to promote the role of infrastructure investments in supporting growth. However, such initiatives have fallen short of

helping countries and cities most in need of capital.

During G20 Indonesia last year, we addressed the issue of de-risking in a different way, combining the expertise of the Think20 (T20) infrastructure investment and financing taskforce with that of the group of businesses (B20) and the group of cities (U20) in close coordination with the G20 Finance Track chaired by the Indonesian Finance Ministry. This followed the innovative process initiated during G20 Italy in 2021 and the joint declaration of the T20, B20, and G20 group of long term investors (D20).

Emphasis On Infrastructure

This year, the G20 presidency of India has brought up the issue of infrastructure investment in the Global South to yet another level, echoed in the T20 by the large taskforce devoted to Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE), resilience, ethics, and values. In the first days of the G20 presidency, in January 2023, the Prime Minister

of India convened the Voice of Global South gathering and the T20 organized a large meeting in Bhopal on LiFE. Ahead of the G20 Leaders' Summit in September, the BRICS Summit in South Africa focused global attention on finance and investment, and Brazil and South Africa will be chairing the G20 in 2024-25. The Global South is now affirming its leadership role, including in setting up future financial norms and rules to a much greater extent. This may be the most significant transformation of the global financial architecture since the end of the 1980s and perhaps the 1940s, with expected manifold impact, including in the delivery of sustainable physical, social, and digital infrastructure investments.

Q) How can G20 India contribute to reducing significantly the infrastructure finance gap while promoting eco-friendly development?

A) I believe that the infrastructure investment legacy of G20 India will have an impact on sustainable urbanization pathways in the world, especially in emerging and lower-income countries. About a decade ago, India launched a 100 Smart Cities Mission. I remember one roadshow taking place in Berlin for several days, where Western engineering companies and advisory firms would largely communicate about their know-how and skills. Things are quite different in the context of 2023 India where national standards tend to prevail over the copy-paste of international or Western processes.

The summit of Urban20 (U20), the engagement group of cities of the G20 hosted in Ahmedabad in July 2023, was another illustration of the current transformation of the making of urban India, reflected in the final communiqué endorsed not only by major cities across the G20 countries but also by over 50 Indian cities.

On a personal note, I regret that the dialogue about urban issues such as in the T20, in the U20 and in the ministerial Infrastructure Working Group (IWG) have remained somewhat limited. The regret is all the higher as

urbanization was the major theme of the G20 IWG. I hope that G20 Brazil will be the occasion to bring together the many achievements and breakthroughs of G20 India with a deeper dialogue between governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, and think tanks about the future of urbanisation with a renewed Global South focus.

Green Finance

Q) The issue of green finance has been exhaustively discussed during the past months of G20 India, including in the T20. How should the delivery of green finance be fast-tracked? What are your recommendations?

A) The issue of green finance goes hand in hand with improving the quality and quantity of infrastructure stock. The greening of infrastructure investments without any improvement of quality public services available to everyone is a societal dead-end. When we created the Grand Paris Alliance for Metropolitan Investments in 2011, we wanted to explore and understand how to maximize the socio-economic and environment spill-overs of large-scale infrastructure projects such as the €40 billion Grand Paris Express new metro in the Greater Paris area.

In the past decade, we have organized over a dozen international fora and dozens of working meetings with a very wide range of public, private, academic, and social stakeholders, from multilateral public and global private banking institutions to local and international philanthropies and charities, research groups, multinational companies, and highly specialized micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and so on.

There is much inequity in current ways of promoting environment, society and governance (ESG), starting with the varying capabilities of cities or metropolitan governments across the globe to raise capital and borrow money in global markets. ESG standards are very market-oriented but we can see that markets have largely failed

at delivering the resources, especially for large-scale infrastructure investments, where they are needed the most. The way T20 India has included the issues of green finance in a larger scope including ethics and values is very interesting and innovative, as was reflected by the Bhopal Declaration of January 2023 calling for the G20 to focus on inclusive development.

To summarize, we have entered into necessary but also highly volatile times of deep political and financial transformations, well reflected by the G20. The G20 can be the place to build new forms of synthesis between various ways to look into growth and sustainability, be it from the Global South, the G7, or BRICS, keeping in mind that for many, the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic meant high levels of inequalities within and among nations, and within nations, among cities and neighbourhoods.

Social Justice and Empowerment

Q) India has coined the motto, “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”, or “One Family, One Earth, One Future” as a driver for its G20 presidency and with a view to empowering the Global South. How do you view the long-term impact of G20 India on issues such as social justice?

A) The ‘one family, one earth, one future’ approach is both a very obvious and subtle way to assess that other sets of values are possible at the global level, beyond individualistic, CO2-emitting

lifestyles. The issue of lifestyles, including sustainable consumption and production, has nurtured G20 India even before it started, when Prime Minister Modi officially initiated the Mission LiFE campaign in 2022 with the Secretary General of the United Nations to take the economy from ‘mindless consumption’ to ‘mindful utilization.’ We have extensively discussed the issue in the context of the T20’s ‘LiFE, resilience, ethics and values’ taskforce, which is perhaps the largest and maybe the most ambitious taskforce ever in the history of the T20. I am very happy that the Director General of Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) Professor Sachin Chaturvedi has managed to convince a global publishing house to edit a full volume on our LiFE discussions in the G20 and I hope that the LiFE summit, initially planned ahead of the G20 Leaders Meeting, will take place before the end of 2023.

For the LiFE concept to become a new global standard and the G20 India motto to live beyond the current presidency, gently breaking the forum’s routine will not be enough. The LiFE summit will be a critical moment to assess the outcomes of the LiFE Mission so far, to understand how much of it has progressed during the G20, in which specific fields, and to project it beyond 2023. We have engaged in discussions with Brazilian think-tank counterparts since last spring as they are preparing for T20 and G20 Brazil. At this moment, the ‘One Family, One Earth, One Future’ motto alongside the LiFE economy belong very much to India. It will take more time for them to become more universal. ■

“There is much inequity in current ways of promoting environment, society and governance (ESG), starting with the varying capabilities of cities or metropolitan governments across the globe to raise capital and borrow money in global markets.”

Nicolas J.A. Buchoud is the co-chair of the T20 India TF3 and special advisor to the Indian National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA) for the U20, advisor to the Dean and CEO of ADBI for T7 Japan (Tokyo), Fellow of the Global Solutions Initiative, Berlin and President of the Grand Paris Alliance for Metropolitan Development. He is a founding co-editor of the INTERSECTING global editorial project.



ABHAY K

CULTURE CONNECT

G20 Presidency Showcases India's Rich Cultural Heritage and Soft Power



During its G20 presidency, India successfully highlighted its diverse cultural heritage, including performing arts, visual arts, heritage sites, and culinary traditions, serving as a testament to the country's cultural richness and promoting cross-cultural understanding among member nations. India's G20 presidency has not only projected its cultural soft power, but also its economic potential in the cultural and tourism sectors, making it a source of national pride, highlights Abhay K.



In a world that thrives on divisiveness, India has embodied the spirit of oneness during its G20 presidency by upholding the ancient Indian philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and its extension, One Earth, One Family, One Future.

India's G20 presidency has provided a one-of-a-kind opportunity to showcase the diversity

and richness of Indian culture, heritage, art, and hospitality to the world's 20 largest economies and other invited guest countries.

Culture acts as a cohesive agent for growth and development in international relations. Two Indian philosophies, namely Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and Atithi Devo Bhava, have always been part of Indian traditions, and these were evident during multiple G20 meetings throughout the year across various Indian states and Union Territories.

India is home to a diverse range of songs, music, dance, theatre, tribal and folk traditions, performing and visual arts, rites and rituals, literature and writings known as the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Each Indian state boasts rich traditions and art forms.

From December 2022 to the present day, over 50 Indian cities have hosted various G20 meetings. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), in collaboration with the respective state governments, has been entrusted with the responsibility of organising cultural events for the invited G20 delegates. So far, more than 300 cultural programmes have been organised in 139 G-20 meetings, featuring over 17,000 artistes from various parts of India.

During India's G20 presidency, cultural diplomacy fostered better understanding and collaboration among the member countries. Cultural events, exhibitions, and performances organised during G20 meetings created informal and convivial spaces for discussions and relationship-building.

India is known for its cultural diversity, encompassing languages, traditions, arts and cuisines. The G20 presidency provided an opportunity for India to showcase this diversity and promote cross-cultural understanding among member countries.

India's G20 presidency has also fostered collaborations between artistes, musicians, writers and filmmakers from different countries,



promoting cross-cultural understanding and creative synergy.

India's cultural, creative, and tourism industries make significant contributions to its economy. During its G20 presidency, India has emphasised the economic potential of its cultural and tourism sectors and discussed how these sectors can serve as major drivers for economic growth and job creation. By showcasing cultural landmarks, historical sites, and vibrant cities, India aims to attract more tourists, thereby promoting its tourism sector.

During its G20 presidency, India has proudly demonstrated its rich and diverse cultural treasures, a source of pride for every citizen of the country.

Performing Arts

A series of classical, folk, and tribal dances and music reflects India's multicultural and pluralistic society. India's rich cultural tapestry is interwoven with an array of classical and folk dance forms, each bearing witness to the nation's artistic and traditional heritage. Among the distinguished classical dances are

Kathak, Odissi, Manipuri, Sattriya, Kuchipudi, Bharatanatyam, Mohiniattam and Kathakali. Recently, during the G20 meetings, these eight classical dance forms took center stage, presenting India's cultural diversity.

The captivating performances underscored the nation's vibrant artistic legacy, with each dance form exuding its own unique flavour and narrative. Beyond the classical forms, Indian states came alive with a plethora of folk dances, providing a glimpse into the heart of each state's customs and ethos. For instance, Maharashtra showcased Lavani, while Punjab presented the spirited Bhangra and graceful Gidda. Gujarat displayed the energetic Garba and Maniyaro, Karnataka featured Dollu Kunitha and Veeragase, and Telangana highlighted Perini Natyam. Kerala added its vivacious Thiruvattam and Pulikali to the mix.

The Bihu dance of Assam, encompassing Mising, Bodo, Dimas, Karbi, Rabha and Hajong, along with the myriad indigenous tribal dances of Nagaland, Jharkhand, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, further enriched this colourful tapestry.

Every dance form is a living embodiment of the artistic finesse and cultural depth of each region. These artistic expressions collectively weave the fabric of India's cultural identity, offering a glimpse into the intricate tapestry of traditions and narratives that grace each state.

Amidst the grandeur of the G20 meetings, a symphony of captivating cultural performances tickled the senses of the delegates. The stage came alive with a harmonious blend of traditions as the attendees were enthralled by a medley of traditional and contemporary melodies, folkloric tunes, indigenous rhythms, and innovative fusions, meticulously orchestrated by well-known musicians.

The musical panorama presented a kaleidoscope of acoustic wonders, a testament to the vastness of India's musical heritage. These performances were not just harmonies; they were stories told through melodies, a cultural bridge connecting the past and present. Among these renditions, the audience was

treated to ethereal and rare instrumental music, transporting them to realms of sonic novelty. In this aural celebration, the delegates were given a taste of India's musical legacy, each note resonating with the essence of a thousand tales. The performances stood as a vibrant mosaic of cultural narratives, uniting tradition with innovation and leaving an indelible imprint on the collective memory of the G20 guests.

Visual Arts

Visual arts and artistic interpretation, including paintings, sculptures, art installations, and literature, are considered valuable treasures of India and constitute a salient part of Indian culture. During the meetings of the G20 presidency, India presented art exhibitions featuring great masters as well as folk traditions. The exhibits were not limited solely to visual arts but also included other artistic forms such as handloom, rangoli, and handicrafts from various states. Jal Sanjhi, presented in Rajasthan and

Hyderabad, was an epic example of water-based art forms. Sand art and mandala art, exhibited in Karnataka, Gujarat and Ladakh, received high praise from the delegates of the G20 member countries.

Contemporary and great artworks, comprising paintings, sculptures, and multimedia installations, were displayed at some of the meeting venues. Works by prominent Indian artists such as Jamini Roy, Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Subodh Gupta, MF Hussain, SH Raza, and Jayashree Burman were presented and exhibited.

Folk and tribal art, including Madhubani, Warli, Phad, Kalamkari, etc, were also showcased, featuring a diverse range of Indian traditional artworks that explore the



India's G20 presidency has provided a one-of-a-kind opportunity to showcase the diversity and richness of Indian culture, heritage, art, and hospitality to the world's 20 largest economies and other invited guest countries.



vibrant array of colours, textures and cultural symbolism unique to the country.

Heritage Sites

India is home to numerous UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The G20 presidency organised visits to some of these iconic sites, offering delegates the opportunity to experience India's rich architectural

wonders firsthand. Cultural diplomacy is a unique way to further economic benefits for the state and boost tourism. In the excursions curated for the delegates, India was able to showcase both its architectural heritage and its diversity in landscapes.

The sites included the shikara ride on the iconic Dal Lake in Kashmir, Loktak Lake in Manipur, the backwaters in Kerala, the Ajanta and Ellora Caves in Maharashtra, Kumbhalgarh Fort in Rajasthan, the Sandbar Brahmaputra Islands in Assam, and a river cruise at Babughat in Kolkata, to name a few. Delegates even witnessed the Ganga aarti in Varanasi and Chapchar Kut (the Harvest festival) in Mizoram.

The broad spectrum of heritage experiences included staying in Kutch's Tent City in Gujarat and visits to the temples in Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu, Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh, and Konark in Odisha. The attendees witnessed a wide range of native flora and fauna from various parts of India, from the red panda and orchids in Sikkim to the coconut trees in the south. Even the majestic Himalayas, Bay of Bengal, and the Arabian Sea served as backdrops to numerous cultural events that highlighted the magnificence of our nation.



The G20 presidency organised visits to some of these iconic sites, offering delegates the opportunity to experience India's rich architectural wonders firsthand.



Gastronomy and Culture

Culinary experience is unquestionably an excellent way to navigate and understand one's culture. The G20 events offered a culinary treat to the delegates with a wide range of mouthwatering regional dishes, taking them on a tour of India's diverse food culture. G20 delegates had the opportunity to savour Indian cuisine from various regions, such as daal baati and churma from Rajasthan, makki di roti and sarson da saag from Punjab, fish-based curries from the coastal regions of the country, and fermented bamboo dishes from Arunachal Pradesh. The Year of the Millet was showcased in the regional dishes, highlighting its importance in Indian culinary traditions. Various cooking

demonstrations and cultural evenings featuring traditional dishes from various seasons gave the delegates a taste of the Indian culinary delights.

Soft Power

India's presidency of the G20 provided it with a platform to showcase a whole spectrum of Indian culture and India as a premium destination for tourism. It was the first time G20 events were hosted in each and every state and union territory of India, providing each of them with the opportunity to showcase the best of their culture. India's G20 presidency has emerged as a source of national pride, with India demonstrating the richness and diversity of its culture to an international audience, thereby projecting its soft power globally. ■

Abhay K is the author of a dozen collections of poetry and the editor of The Book of Bihari Literature. His poem-song Earth Anthem has been translated into over 150 languages. He received the SAARC Literature Award 2013.



PARIDHI PARDESHI

B20 India: R.A.I.S.E. the Bar

B20 India has raised the bar for the businesses to play a transformative role in navigating three important transitions encompassing digital technology, energy and global supply chains. Now, it is time for the G20 leadership to R.A.I.S.E. the bar, says Paridhi Pardeshi.

The third week of August 2023 has proven auspicious for India. From the nation coming off a widely celebrated lunar landing and reaffirming its status as an emerging global powerhouse to the seamless execution of one of the biggest Business 20 (B20) Summits held until now, both society and businesses are celebrating. To quote Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who delivered a welcome address at the Summit, “this celebration is about accelerating the country’s development...about innovation...about bringing sustainability and equality through technology. And [these are enshrined in the] theme of the B20 Summit” – R.A.I.S.E.: Responsibility, Acceleration, Innovation, Sustainability and Equality.

Road to the Summit

The involvement of businesses in shaping global economic decisions has never been so critical,



making the B20 recommendations extremely pertinent in today’s context.

Commencing in January 2023 with the B20 Inception Meeting held in Gandhinagar, the B20 process has achieved significant milestones and established rigorous regulatory mechanisms to ensure its effectiveness. Under the leadership of Mr. N Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons and B20 India Chair, the B20 agenda and priorities were carefully crafted through extensive dialogues with the Indian government, past B20 chairs, and international industry members.

This collaborative effort resulted in the formation of nine working groups, in alignment with the overarching G20 theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – “one earth, one family, one



The launch of the B20 India Communique by B20 Chair, Mr. Chandrasekaran, chairs of the nine Task Forces and Action Councils, and Director General of the B20 Secretariat, Mr. Chandrajit Banerjee, in the presence of India's G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant.

future.” These were divided into Task Forces on: global economic recovery; inclusive global value chains for resilient trade and investment; financial inclusion for economic empowerment; digital transformation; collaborative work in technology, innovation, and research; future of work, skilling and mobility; and energy, climate change, and resource efficiency. Two Action Councils were also established on embedding ESG in every business and on integrating Africa’s economic development with the global economy.

Over the past nine months, each of these groups has engaged in multiple rounds of deliberations to formulate a comprehensive

set of policy recommendations, which have been consolidated into the final B20 India Communique which was unveiled during the Summit’s inauguration.

Tangible Outcomes

From the outset, Mr. Chandrasekaran has been resolute that this year’s efforts result in enduring initiatives. In his opening remarks at the Summit, he quantified the B20 achievements: since January, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), which is this year’s B20 Secretariat, has spearheaded 110 policy advocacy initiatives across 29 national and international locations. 1400+ members have deliberated on

the strong set of 54 recommendations and 172 policy actions across the nine themes, which will now be endorsed to the G20 Leadership.

Prominent recurring themes unify the core recommendations put forth by the Task Forces and Action Councils:

Inclusiveness: the first, and most important, was championed by PM Modi in his own speech, pointing out that the “in...RAISE, ‘I’ represents Innovation. But along with innovation, I also see another ‘I’ in it – Inclusiveness”. B20 members want to see notable progress on this agenda through the inclusion of least developed countries, MSMEs, women, and youth into global value chains, digitalization, financial literacy, and skill development. Here, progress in digital public infrastructure would greatly boost financial inclusion.

Global Recovery and Net-Zero Transition: The B20 group calls for an accelerated global recovery and a coordinated approach to achieving net-zero emissions. This necessitates a unified global response on financing and the harmonization of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards, especially in the context of climate change measurements.

Harnessing New Technologies: The group emphasizes the utilization of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation to drive skill development, enhance capacity building, and promote workforce mobility.

Research and Development Promotion: Members advocate for fostering research and development on an international scale through the establishment of a virtual laboratory and the transfer of best practices in technology.

Integration of African Economies: Achieving deeper integration of African economies with the global economy has been a longstanding objective. Progress is underway in this direction, with the G20 Presidency extending an invitation to the African Union to become a permanent member.

Based in India, the B20 Global Institute will be led and driven by business and have the key responsibility of providing continuity through every G20 presidency year. It will measure the progress of all recommendations, with special focus on tailor-made solutions for developing countries in the context of pressing global issues for businesses.

Legacy Initiatives

Mr. Chandrasekaran went on to share that four legacy initiatives will bring these recommendations to life and ensure that the impact of India’s B20 lasts long after its presidency:

B20 Global Institute: Based in India, the B20 Global Institute will be led and driven by business and have the key responsibility of providing continuity through every G20 presidency year. It will measure the progress of all recommendations, with special focus on tailor-made solutions for developing countries in the context of pressing global issues for businesses. Finally, it will work alongside previous G20 legacy institutions and think tanks to provide thought leadership and research on focus areas such as global value chains, digital technologies, sustainability and inclusion.

Decarbonization of G20 countries: Drawing on the groundwork established by Indonesia, is committed to expediting financial assistance for decarbonization efforts in the Global South. This initiative would harmonize

Over 1500 global CEOs and thought leaders from 55 countries, as well as Indian Ministers of External Affairs, Commerce and Industry, Finance, and Education convened at the Taj Palace Hotel from 25-27 August. Their collective focus was to assess the impact of the previous year's B20 work aimed at enhancing policy formulation, promoting robust and sustainable economic growth, and establishing effective economic governance. The B20 group has been one of the G20's most prominent and dynamic ones ever since 2010 and has played a pivotal role in the intergovernmental forum, acting as an intermediary between policymakers and businesses.

sector specific decarbonization strategies with funding technology support on knowledge exchange.

Global Sustainable Development Goals Acceleration Fund: B20 India is introducing the concept of the Global Sustainable Development Goals Acceleration Fund (GSAF). This fund's primary objective is to amplify the scale of projects aimed at achieving the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals by leveraging private capital from the G20 and next ten largest nations.

Compendium of Best Practices on Innovation Projects from G20 countries: the Task Force on Technology, Innovation, and R&D has developed a valuable knowledge resource – a compendium of technology deployment use cases. This will serve as a guide to businesses for converging technologies with development. It is a compilation of 125+ technology projects from across the G20 nations and will serve as a guide for businesses for bringing together technology and development.

The Road Ahead

B20 India has played a crucial role in fostering extensive discussions that enshrine the values of Responsibility, Acceleration, Innovation, Sustainability and Equality, while searching for global solutions to ongoing crises. This year's collaborative endeavours have significantly influenced the direction of the B20 India agenda, successfully echoing the viewpoints of the business community in pursuit of bringing about substantial global change.



Mr. N Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons and B20 India Chair.

India's leadership of the B20 believes that businesses can play a transformative role "as the world is navigating through three important transitions: digital transition, energy transition, and global value and supply chains transition. India [has been] well-positioned to lead in all three." This is the India Inc. message which will inform discussions at the G20 Summit being held in New Delhi from 9-10 September 2023.

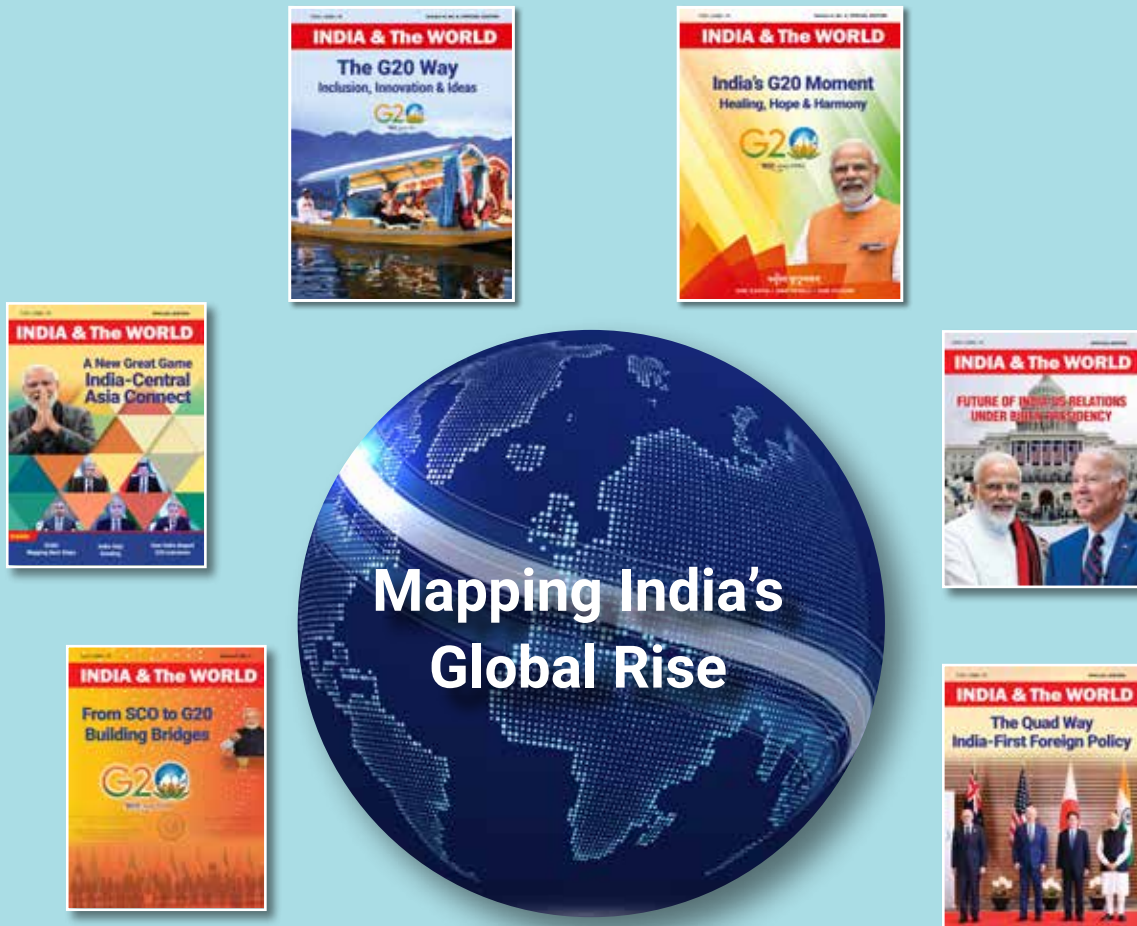
Now, it is time for the G20 leadership to R.A.I.S.E. the bar. ■

Paridhi Pardeshi, an EY project Consultant, was until recently associated with the B20 Secretariat, the Confederation of Indian Industry. Views are personal.



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