

Policy Paper

The Indian Presidency of the G20: India at the Helm of Global Governance

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PP - 14/23

S e p t e m b e r 2 0 2 3

The G20, since its emergence in 1999, has played a crucial role in maneuvering the economy, envisaging a new global financial architecture, and steering clear of the roadblocks hindering economic development. Also known as a 'multilateral economic caucus', the G20 has served as a platform for both developed and emerging economies to engage in constructive dialogue. Having as a theme Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam or 'One Earth—One Family—One Future', India has assumed the leadership of the G20 at a time when the entire world is grappling with geopolitical tensions coupled with global economic slowdown. Nevertheless, India must work to ensure that the G20 can at least provide a sense of leadership for the diminution, if not resolution, of tensions and of multilateral disputes, with a focus on the Global South.



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INTRODUCTION

On September 9-10, 2023, for the first time in its history, India will host the G20 Summit, capping the year of India's G20 presidency, which has seen a great number of ministerial meetings. The G20 Summit is the outcome of a year of negotiations to prepare the final meeting in September, which brings together the heads of state and government of the twenty leading economies and constitutes a major diplomatic event for the host country.

For the 2023 edition, India bet on inviting three African nations (Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria), as along with the African Union (AU), and the African Union New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU-NEPAD), to increase the presence of African actors alongside South Africa, which is already a member of the G20¹. India is indeed eager to the 'Voice of the Global South', in follow-up to an online summit held on January 12-13, 2023².

India's presidency is happening while the global economy is going through high inflation (notably for energy and food prices) and low growth (2.1% in 2023 compared with 3.1% in 2022^{1, 2}). Many countries in the Global South are also suffering from a lack of international investment³ and unsustainable debt levels, which could jeopardize their environmental transitions. Rising interest rates and the slowdown in world growth since 2022 could also plunge a large number of Global South countries into debt crises. The current situation then seems critical to some countries from the Global South. India, which aims to provide these countries with a global voice, it putting at stake its credibility with these nations.

For 2022-2023, India holds the 18th presidency of the G20, which is an informal institution with no legal basis, where oral culture prevails, unlike the European Union or the United Nations, which usually produce texts. Although its final declaration is not binding for member states, the G20 is seen as the forum for global issues, bringing together the world's leading economies to talk over global challenges and cooperation. As key players of multilateralism, G20 members account for 75% of world trade, 80% of world's GDP, and 60% of the planet's population⁴.

For a host country, the G20 presidency is therefore a unique opportunity to stage an event critical to multilateralism; it is as much a window of visibility as a means of cultivating its image. As a platform for global governance, the G20 offers unequalled exposure for the host country, which can turn the spotlight on certain priorities and then provide a framework for meetings. To some extent, the outcomes of negotiations are often credited to the host country and can be claimed as diplomatic achievements. Narendra Modi's government is thus fully aware of the significance of holding the G20 Summit, both for its international and national influence.

The Indian presidency follows on from the previous Indonesian presidency (2021-2022), and precedes for the next presidency, that of Brazil (2023-2024), to ensure continuity of action from one presidency to the next. While India wants to be a major player with global responsibilities in a world of disorder, it is meaningful to note that the troika (previous, current, and incoming presidencies) is made up of three Global South countries (South Africa will then hold the presidency in 2025).

1. World Bank, Global Economic Prospects, Weakening Growth, Financial Risks, June 2023, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/global-economic-prospects>

2. Banque mondiale, juillet 2023, COMMUNIQUÉS DE PRESSE, 6 JUIN 2023, Une économie mondiale fragilisée dans un contexte de taux d'intérêt élevés <https://www.banquemondiale.org/fr/news/press-release/2023/06/06/global-economy-on-precarious-footing-amid-high-interest-rates>

3. CNUCED, "La CNUCED appelle à un programme économique international audacieux afin d'éviter une nouvelle décennie perdue pour les pays en développement, confrontés à un manque à gagner estimé à 800 milliards de dollars et à des niveaux de surendettement sans précédent", April 2023

4. The Hindu, Explained | All about the G20: History of the forum and India's presidency, december 2022 <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-all-about-the-g20-history-of-the-forum-and-indias-presidency/article66208877.ece>

New Delhi is hosting the G20 Summit while India is at a crossroads in its contemporary history. India, the «world's largest democracy», recently became the world's most populous country in 2023, and advocates for a renewed form of multilateralism within international bodies.

The organization of a G20 Summit provides an opportunity to deliver a diplomatic speech that reflects a «world view and an agenda»⁵. For India, it includes criticism of the current multilateral system (particularly the United Nations, through the G4 format), which goes hand-in-hand with a call for greater consideration for the interests of the countries of the Global South.

I. FOCUS ON THE INDIAN G20 PRESIDENCY PROGRAM

India's G20 Presidency has presented an exceptional opportunity for the country to spearhead a collective approach to tackle multiple, complex, and interconnected challenges, while placing, front and center, the aspirations and needs of the developing world.

1.1 The G20 Presidency as an Illustration of India's Ambitions for Power

New Delhi is hosting the G20 Summit while India is seeking to establish itself as a key multilateral power. The following factors provide a picture of India's ambitions and assets in achieving this goal. In its quest for leadership, Narendra Modi's India meets most power criteria: economic, demographic, military, and cultural.

India, which became the world's fifth largest economy in 2018, is on a higher than expected growth path, at around 7% for 2022-2023⁶. This vigor of the Indian economy could continue thanks to its dynamic demography. In 2023, India also became the most populous country in the world (reaching 1.425 billion inhabitants), overtaking a rival, China, which had held this status since 1950. India's power is also military. India has the third largest military budget and is also one of the world's leading arms importers, with the second largest army in the world. This investment in defense has been accompanied by the recent industrial prestige acquired by the launch of the Chandrayaan-3 lunar probe by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), in August 2023.

As a new aspect of power, India is also playing a growing role fighting climate change and turning into a key player for global climate diplomacy. India, the world's third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, surprised everyone by promising to be carbon neutral by 2070, during the Glasgow COP 26 climate summit, in 2021. During climate negotiations, India regularly calls for considering «loss and damage» and «common but differentiated responsibilities» as part of the response to climate change, on behalf of «climate justice» for the developing countries.

Culturally at last, India also shines through its soft power. This encompasses Bollywood, one of the world's largest film industries, as well as university exchanges, Indian gastronomy, and fashion shows. In short, the assets of Indian power are multifaceted and feed the Indian model that the G20, as a major economic forum for international cooperation, can highlight.

5. Racine, Jean-Luc. « L'Inde dans le jeu des puissances, entre Ukraine et G20 », *Politique étrangère*, vol. , no. 2, 2023, pp. 97-110.

6. The Hindu, Despite insipid manufacturing show, India's GDP to grow 7% this fiscal: NSO, January 2023, <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/economy-expected-to-grow-at-7-in-2022-23-says-government-data/article66346276.ece>

1.2 Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, a Sanskrit Expression as the Theme of the Indian Presidency

The theme of the Indian presidency of the G20, '*One Earth—One Family—One Future*', is a clear reference to India's Hindu identity. The Sanskrit expression *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, which could be translated as 'the world is one family', comes from the ancient Sanskrit text of the Maha Upanishad, one of the sacred texts of Hinduism. Essentially, the theme consecrates the value of all life—human, animal, and plant—and their connection on planet Earth and in the wider universe⁷. From his first term in office in 2014, Narendra Modi has put forward this expression as «*India's Philosophy*»⁸, in order to promote collective and commonly accepted solutions to global issues.

India has identified a wide array of cutting-edge priorities. The most emblematic are first the financing tomorrow's cities and establishing them as the foremost engines of economic growth. Indeed, while cities generate over 80% of global gross domestic product, unplanned and rapid urbanization constrain their economic potential. Second, the energy transition by accelerating the transition from carbon-intensive energy to renewable energy. And third, the compelling need for a united global approach to fortify health systems to effectively address emerging health crises.

Eager to promote Hindu identity, Narendra Modi wants to make his presidency of the G20 as much an international event as a national one. This choice of theme appears to be a way of illustrating the «*progress and development*» of the Indian nation since 2014. One year before the 2024 general elections, Narendra Modi hopes to turn this diplomatic achievement into a national political success. The choice of the Lotus as the G20 logo is reminiscent of the logo of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Narendra Modi's party.

India's presidency of the G20 is also a tool for justifying certain aspects of Narendra Modi's narrative. The decision to hold a meeting on tourism in Indian Kashmir in last May 2023 was a good example of this. Kashmir, a Muslim-majority region that has faced a separatist insurgency for three decades, and is claimed by Pakistan, has been controlled by the Indian government since the revocation of its autonomous status in 2019. The decision to hold a prominent international meeting in Kashmir appears to be a means of approving this decision, since delegations from the world's twenty richest states visited the region last May 2023.

Given the efforts made by Narendra Modi at the head of the country for almost ten years, India's G20 presidency of such an event is an undeniable diplomatic success. Indeed, since the BJP's success of 2014, driven by promises of «*good governance*» and «*development for all*», Narendra Modi has rapidly developed a foreign policy at odds with his predecessors, focusing on the economic interests of India and its immediate environment,⁹ while promoting South-South cooperation.

Narendra Modi's many official visits, his advocacy in favor of the Global South, and his multi-alignment doctrine have all been aimed at ensuring that India is commonly regarded as one of the major powers of the twenty-first century. India is definitely an Asian superpower, but also a power that wants to invest in Africa¹⁰.

7. The Indian Express, India's G-20 Presidency will be grounded in 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' theme: PM Modi before leaving for Bali, November 2022 <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/pm-modi-india-g-20-presidency-vasudhaiva-kutumbakam-bali-8267027/>

8. The Hindu, 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' is India's philosophy: Modi. Calls for a greater role for the G-4 coalition, september 2014 <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Vasudhaiva-Kutumbakam-is-India%E2%80%99s-philosophy-Modi/article60344743.ece>

9. The Indian Express, C. Jaffrelot, "A Modi Doctrine ?", November 2014 <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/a-modi-doctrine/>

10. Abdessalam Jaldi & Hamza Mjahed PP - 04/23, "North Africa's Invisible Partner: Exploring India's Political and Economic Influence in the Region", April 2023

1.3 Meetings All Over India... With Deep and Recurring Disagreements

During the Indian G20 presidency, 32 Indian cities have been picked to host around a hundred events, which shows the determination to involve and include the whole Indian territory in this event. The Indian presidency will conclude in New Delhi with the Leaders' Summit on September 9-10, 2023, which is the climax of the G20 presidency. At the end of the meeting, heads of state and government will sign a final declaration, summarizing the progress made during the various ministerial meetings and comprising «*the essential documentation produced*»¹¹ by the G20. The final declaration is usually very awaited, since it reflects the power struggle, prospects of improvement, and the "blocs" that stand out during the G20 Summit.

In February 2023, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened the G20 Finance Summit with a speech calling for reform of the world's financial institutions. Narendra Modi then declared: "*Trust in international financial institutions has eroded. This is partly because they have been slow to reform themselves*"¹². For India, reforming these institutions, particularly the World Bank, is critical to cope with Global South challenges and world issues: climate change, but also high levels of debt. The appointment last June of Ajay Banga as head of the World Bank, an American citizen but born in India, who has stated that he wants to make the fight against global warming the top priority of his mandate, probably epitomizes this desire to put forward the demands of the countries of the South.

On the other hand, like in Bali in 2022, the G20 discussions seem to be overshadowed by disagreements and divergent views between countries, particularly over the war in Ukraine. India made repeated calls for the United Nations Charter to be respected, without strongly condemning the Russian aggression that started in February 2022 simply because India buys 45% of its weapons from Russia. India is also dependent on Russian hydrocarbons and has been obtaining Russian oil and gas at very low prices since the war. India explained that voting for the various UN resolutions would not necessarily help the peace process between both parties. Although India subsequently did not explicitly condemn the Russian aggression, Narendra Modi told Vladimir Putin, at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, in Samarkand in September 2022, that «*Now is not the time for war*».

Russia's refusal to renew the Black Sea Grain Initiative in July 2023, an agreement helping Ukrainian grain exports through the Black Sea, also weighed on the discussions of the G20 financial leaders meeting in Gandhinagar.

Finally, another example of G20 disagreements emerged in July 2023 during the meetings of G20 Energy Transitions Ministers, in Goa, and then the Environment and Climate Ministers' Meeting, in Madras. G20 Ministers failed to set out a coherent and commonly accepted timetable for the G20 countries to phase out fossil fuels¹³. Coal, one of the most polluting fossil fuels, is also one of the main sources of energy for a number of developing economies, including India and China.

11. Postel-Vinay, Karoline. « Chapitre 1. Le G20 dans la constellation des « G », , Le G20, laboratoire d'un monde émergent. sous la direction de Postel-Vinay Karoline. Presses de Sciences Po, 2011, pp. 21-57.

12. Al Jazeera, India's Modi asks G20 finance heads to focus on 'most vulnerable', February 2023 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/24/indias-modi-asks-g20-finance-heads-to-focus-on-most-vulnerable>.

13. G20 Energy Transitions Ministers' Meeting Outcome Document and Chair's Summary Goa, India 22 July, 2023

1.4 Limitations and Challenges: What has not been done?

India has become a power that weighs heavily in the global geo-economic and geopolitical balance. However, the shortcomings of its development model are undermining New Delhi's ambition to become a world power. Indeed, in truth, the Indian development model faces three challenges: first, a labor market characterized by widespread unemployment well above the official rate of 7.8%. Second, the industrial sector is unable to compensate for the rural exodus, and services are creating job opportunities in the IT, finance and banking sectors for skilled workers. Third, the development challenge, with India ranking 135th in the world in terms of the composite index of health, education and human capital indicators. The Indian government relies on the country's macroeconomic performance and the public image of the world's fifth largest economy. On the other hand, the India Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the Indian Supreme Court's decision on Rohingya refugees have damaged the image of Indian soft power. Indeed, (CAA) makes foreign undocumented migrants and religious refugees (including Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians) from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan eligible for Indian citizenship, but not if they are Muslim.¹⁴ In the same vein, the Supreme Court of India refused on 2021 to stay the deportation of Rohingya refugees back to Myanmar and directed the Indian government to follow the prescribed procedure for their deportation.¹⁵

On the other, small economies and less-developed nations may face difficulties in influencing decision-making processes, contributing to the challenge of representation shortcomings. The majority of major economies dominate the composition of the G20, raising concerns about the inclusiveness and representation of different perspectives¹⁶. Although the forum has made attempts to involve non-member countries and international organizations, further actions should be taken to achieve a more fair and inclusive decision-making system. In addition, the difficult international situation - aggravated by the war in Ukraine, which has caused major distortions in energy and food supply chains, and the Sino-American rivalry that is shaping international relations - reduces the G20's room for maneuver in balancing global governance.

Pending tasks can be summarized as follows:

- The G20 has made significant strides in tackling the issue of climate change. There remains a continued absence of consensus on the optimal approach to address this matter efficiently. It is crucial for the G20 to reach an agreement that can have a significant impact and guarantee fairness for all participating nations.
- An effective strategy is needed to tackle the worldwide food shortage triggered by the conflict in Ukraine. The G20 must intervene to resolve it. The G20 should prioritize efforts to improve food production, reduce food waste, and ensure that everyone has access to food.
- The G20 has pledged to prioritize sustainable development but there remains a lack of a comprehensive strategy to effectively attain this objective. The G20 must devise a tangible strategy aimed at decreasing poverty, safeguarding the environment, and fostering economic advancement.

14. Abdessalam Jaldi. The Indian Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Policy Brief. PCNS. April 2020. <https://www.policycenter.ma/sites/default/files/2021-01/PB%20-%2020-23%20%28A%20Jaldi%29.pdf>

15. Arunav Kaul. Indian Supreme Court's Stance on the Deportation of Rohingya Refugees Violates International Law. Just Security. 2021. <https://www.justsecurity.org/75893/indian-supreme-courts-stance-on-the-deportation-of-rohingya-refugees-violates-international-law/>

16. OECD, G20 Saudi Arabia 2020, "Enhancing equal access to opportunities for all in G20 countries," p9, 2020. <https://www.oecd.org/economy/Enhancing-equal-access-to-opportunities-OECD-background-note-for-G20-Framework-Working-Group-july-2020.pdf>

These examples illustrate a limited range of actions that remain unaccomplished by India's G20 presidency. The September G20 Leaders' Summit presents a crucial chance to evaluate the advancements achieved so far and establish a strategic direction for the future. Furthermore, the G20 must also tackle wider issues in addition to the aforementioned specific objectives. Some of these are:

- The emergence of populism and nationalism poses a significant challenge to worldwide collaboration. The G20 must discover effective strategies to tackle these challenges, and advance a global order that is fairer and more inclusive.
- The G20 also faces a challenge with the rising influence of technology. The G20 should develop strategies to ensure technology is utilized positively, without worsening inequality or inciting conflict.
- Thus, G20 serves as a significant platform for worldwide collaboration, albeit facing some obstacles. The G20 must confront these challenges directly in order to successfully tackle the issues the world currently faces.

II. AFRICAN AGENDA IN INDIA'S G20 PRESIDENCY

India is using the G20 presidency to demonstrate to the world the country's strengths as a responsible and collaborative global actor. But its target is less the industrialized and western countries, and more the Global South, particularly Africa, considered from India as the heart of the Global South¹⁷.

Although G20 interest in Africa's relations and development is plentiful, it has been seen as not very effective¹⁸. Indeed, the G20 has often treated Africa as a subject of development rather than as an active actor in global governance. So, the launch of yet another new initiative, this time in the wake of India's G20 presidency, to join the African Union (AU) into the main multilateral platform for global economic and financial cooperation, invites some reflection. This section examines the objectives of the Indian presidency of the G20 for Africa.

2.1 Africa's Tryst With the G20

To acquire a more inclusive understanding of the G20's relations with Africa, it is essential to examine carefully how the G20 has governed Africa-related issues in the past, since the first summit in London in 2009.

2.1.1 *From Toronto (2010) to Hangzhou (2016): A Relationship Focused on Development Aid*

The first G20 reference to Africa came at the Toronto Summit in 2010, which made a commitment to ensure that concessional lending facilities to the African Development Bank (AfDB) would continue despite the financial crisis of 2008¹⁹. The Annex to the summit declaration referred to a 200% increase in the capitalization of the AfDB, which would increase its funds from \$1.8 billion to \$6

17. Rajib Bathia. Focus on Africa, the heart of the Global South. The Hindu. 2022. <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/focus-on-africa-the-heart-of-the-global-south/article66310893.ece>

18. Arpinta Anant. Africa and the G20. Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. 2018. <https://www.idsa.in/africatrends/africa-and-the-g20>

19. G20 Canada 2010, G20 Toronto Summit Declaration, June 27, 2010, paragraph 26, at <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/to-communicate.html>

billion dollars, with a corresponding increase in annual lending to it. This was done since Africa was lagging behind in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals²⁰.

The summit also mentioned the particular concerns of food security and agricultural modernization as pertinent immediate concerns that the G20 must look into as priorities²¹. Furthermore, at the Seoul Summit held later in 2010, the importance of regional economic integration in Africa was recognized, and the G20 countries committed to help with that through trade facilitation and by building regional infrastructure²². It was also decided that two of Africa's countries would be among the five non-member invitees to G20 summits²³. The Multi-year Action Plan (MYAP) on Development pledged to support existing initiatives and facilities in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Water Facility (AWF), and the Investment Climate Facility for Africa, in addition to requesting the AfDB to identify barriers to regional trade integration in Africa²⁴. Among the specific policy commitments by G20 countries, Japan pledged to double its official development assistance to Africa by 2012 compared to 2007, Canada doubled its G8 Gleneagles commitment on its aid to Africa and its G8 L'Aquila commitment to double its food security aid to Africa, and France announced the formulation of a national policy for supporting sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa, among four other regions²⁵.

The Saint Petersburg Leaders' Declaration of 2013, announced the completion of the assessment of Project Preparation Facilities (PPFs) for Infrastructure in Africa²⁶. During the St. Petersburg Summit, the Development Working Group "welcomed the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA) Assessment of Project Preparation Facilities (PPFs) for Infrastructure in Africa and the ICA held a workshop to launch a project preparation network"²⁷. Once this was completed in November 2012, based on the High Level Panel on Infrastructure and ICA report, the AfDB launched the Africa 50 Fund in November 2013 to channel \$100 billion from public and private sources for infrastructure development in Africa²⁸. Meanwhile, and in line with the Seoul MYAP and the recommendations of the Development Working Group, the AfDB established the Trade Finance Plan in 2013 to enable \$1 billion dollars to be channeled for trade facilitation in Africa²⁹. Duty free and quota free trade and Aid for Trade are other policies from which Africa has benefited. The Australian presidency of the G20 in 2014 saw the IFC-funded Global Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Finance Facility focus worldwide on very small SMEs, targeting African SMEs³⁰. Three years later, the G20 Summit in China in 2016 launched an initiative for the industrialization of the LDCs and countries in Africa in

20. Ibid, Annex III: Enhancing the Legitimacy, Credibility and Effectiveness of the IFIs and Further Supporting the Needs of the Most Vulnerable, paragraphs 5, 6 and 8.

21. Ibid, paragraph 24.

22. G20 2010 South Korea, G20 Seoul Summit Document, November 12, 2010, paragraph 45, at <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/g20seoul-doc.html>

23. Ibid, paragraph 74.

24. G20 Seoul Summit 2010, Annex II, Multi-Year Action Plan on Development, November 12, 2010, <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/g20seoul-development.html>

25. G20 Seoul Summit 2010, Table: Policy Commitments by G20 members, at <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/g20seoul-commitments.pdf>

26. Ibid, paragraph 81.

27. Ibid, paragraph 12.

28. G20 2013 Russia, G20 Leaders' Declaration, September 6, 2013, St Petersburg, paragraph 17 at <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2013/2013-0906-declaration.html>

29. Arpinta Anant. Africa and the G20. Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. 2018. <https://www.idsa.in/africatrends/africa-and-the-g20>

30. Ibid.

the wake of the “new industrial revolution”³¹. The G20 action plan on Agenda 2030 was adopted after the Summit brought forth several countries’ commitments to help with the achievement of specific SDGs in Africa³².

2.1.2 *The Break-Up of Hamburg: Institutionalization of Africa’s interests*

The relations between Africa and the G20 took on a more structured form during the Hamburg Summit of 2017, with the launch of the G20 Africa Partnership. The partnership, called Compact with Africa (CwA) is aimed at promoting private investment and non-commercial infrastructure in Africa. It consists of related initiatives such as #eSkills4Girls, Rural Youth Employment, African Renewable Energy, and facilitates investment compacts. The partnership was made supplementary to the African Union’s (AU) Agenda 2063 and the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), with an implementing and monitoring role for the AU and NEPAD³³. The partnership was devised jointly by the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank for the G20 Finance Deputies for inclusion in the G20 finance track³⁴.

The Compact with Africa has represented a landmark moment in the consolidation of relations between the G20 and Africa. In the context of the G20, for the first time in the history of G20 summits since 2009, there is a dedicated policy document on Africa³⁵. This may indeed be regarded as a high-point in the relationship; in the earlier summits, priority was accorded to various issues of development the world over and particular focus on Africa came only as a corollary of that. Also, with the setting up of the Africa Advisory Group, Africa’s interests have been somewhat institutionalized within the G20. Second, the compact attempts to bring together all existing projects and actors and fill in the voids of private investment and infrastructure development in the Compact countries. Third, it seeks to channel private investment to new and critical areas such as skill developments of women and rural young people, as well as a focus on renewable energy. Furthermore, in the broader context of multilateral engagements with Africa, the Compact recognizes the agency of smaller African countries, beyond South Africa and Nigeria, a trend that has been on the ascendant for nearly a decade³⁶. Finally, the Compact is avowedly demand-driven and focuses on human resource development, thus making it conceptually akin to South-South partnerships³⁷.

2.1.3 *The Failure of the Compact with Africa*

The Compact with Africa pursued a structured approach of collaboration and development. Instead of dishing out dollars for socially uplifting projects in the traditional way, the Compact proposed that individual countries enter into compacts with individual G20 states to help improve their environments for mainly private-sector investment. The reward for African countries would be measured not in dollar terms but in increased investment, including for infrastructure, to stimulate development through normal economic activity, growth, and job creation. Thus, in their compacts,

31. G20 China 2016, G20 Leaders’ Communiqué: Hangzhou Summit, paragraph 13 and 35, Hangzhou, September 5, 2016, at <http://www.g20.toronto.ca/2016/160905-communication.html>.

32. Ibid.

33. G20 Germany 2017, G20 Leaders’ Declaration: Shaping an Interconnected World, Hamburg, July 8, 2017.

34. G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governor’s Meeting, The G20 Compact with Africa, A Joint AfDB, and WBG Report, Baden-Baden Germany, March 17-18, 2017, at <https://www.compactwithafrica.org/content/dam/Compact%20with%20Africa/2017/20170317-18-Report-Compact-with-Africa.pdf>.

35. Arpinta Anant. Africa and the G20. Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. 2018. <https://www.idsa.in/africatrends/africa-and-the-g20>

36. William Brown. A Question of Agency: Africa in International Politics. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No.10, 2012, pp. 1889-1908.

37. Arpinta Anant. Africa and the G20. Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. 2018. <https://www.idsa.in/africatrends/africa-and-the-g20>

African countries have focused on reforms such as making it easier to start a business, improving contract dispute resolution, reducing import and export times, and strengthening insolvency laws.

However, Africa's 'development partners' continue to struggle to define and manage their relationships with the continent³⁸. This was apparent at the 2019 G20 summit in Osaka, where the G20 was accused of treating Africa exclusively as a development problem, thereby excluding it from equal participation in deliberations about climate change, the future of work, the global trading system, and other mammoth issues the G20 seeks to address³⁹.

2.2 The 2023 Summit: What Can India's G20 Presidency Do for Africa ?

India's G20 presidency has the potential to give Africa's rise a further boost. While before 2000, the most common generalization about postcolonial African economic performance was that of failing economic development and governance⁴⁰, Western negative perceptions about the African continent slowly changed in the 2000s⁴¹. Terms like "*the hopeless continent*" gave way to the "*Africa Rising*" narrative, and international publications referred to fast-growing African countries as "*lion economies*". Between 2000–2010, sub-Saharan Africa grew at over 5% per year, and six of the world's fastest-growing economies of this period were African: Angola, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Chad, Mozambique, and Rwanda⁴².

With long-standing ties to Africa since the decolonization process, India's engagement with Africa has been sustained and regular in recent years. The continent's growing role in Indian foreign and economic policy is reflected in India's expanding diplomatic footprint, which currently covers 43 African countries⁴³. The numbers speak for themselves: \$12.37 billion in lines of credit (LOC)⁴⁴; trade worth \$89.5 billion⁴⁵; and \$73.9 billion in cumulative investments.⁴⁶ In many ways, India's presidency of the G20 could be an opportunity for Africa to accelerate its structural transformation. Consequently, what can India's G20 Presidency do exactly for Africa, in accordance with the Indian G20 presidency program ?

38. Peter Fabricius. Expectations must be managed but African states shouldn't lose hope because investment isn't yet pouring in. Institute for Security Studies (ISS). 2019. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/g20-compact-with-africa-is-a-long-game>

39. Ibid.

40. Shoba Suri. Addressing Africa's food insecurity during India's G20 presidency. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). 2023. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/addressing-africas-food-insecurity-during-indias-g20-presidency/>

41. Ibid.

42. Shoba Suri. Addressing Africa's food insecurity during India's G20 presidency. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). 2023. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/addressing-africas-food-insecurity-during-indias-g20-presidency/>

43. Abhishek Mishra. Why India should support greater African representation under its G20 presidency. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). August 2022. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/why-india-should-support-greater-african-representation-under-its-g20-presidency/>

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45. Government of India – Ministry of External Affairs. Address by External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar at the 17th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Growth Partnership. July 2022. https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/35499/Address_by_External_Affairs_Minister_Dr_S_Jaishankar_at_the_17th_CIIEXIM_Bank_Conclave_on_IndiaAfrica_Growth_Partnership

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2.2.1 Supporting Greater African Representation in Multilateral Institutions:

First, India G20 presidency should support greater African representation by including the African Union (AU) as the twenty-first member of the G20, and by upgrading it from a permanent invitee to a member. The AU adopted a decision at the AU Summit in February 2023 to canvas for a place in the G20. Africa realizes there is considerable time before it gets a seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on a permanent basis, and therefore aspires to be recognized by the G20⁴⁷. At present, both the African Union Commission and the African Union New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU-NEPAD) are permanent invitees, and South Africa is the lone African country in the G20. However, Pretoria often finds it difficult to balance its own domestic interests with that of other African countries, which have vastly different demographics and national priorities⁴⁸.

In this context, New Delhi considers the integration of the AU into the G20 as fundamental to its foreign policy goals and a prerequisite if the world is to truly become multipolar, as reflected in India strong support for the Common African Position, which is stated in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration⁴⁹. For New Delhi, integrating the AU into the G20 has three justifications. First, the inclusion of the AU will echo the type of representation that the European Union (EU) reflects as a member of the G20, in addition to individual members.⁵⁰

Second, excluding Africa, which represents the voice of 1.37 billion people and is the world's eighth-largest economy, from the decision-making table would be detrimental to global governance and global sustainable economic growth.⁵¹ Third, continuing to view Africa as a subject and not as an agent would impede the achievement of common developmental priorities. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar emphasized the Indian position when he stated: "*India believes that Africa's growth and progress is intrinsic to global rebalancing*"⁵². In the same vein, Indian PM Modi has strongly advocated for a "*reformed multilateralism*" that essentially calls for constructive reforms of multilateral forums like the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)⁵³, particularly by supporting more African representation in multilateral organizations.

2.2.2 Addressing Africa's Food Security Challenges:

Second, India's G20 presidency should address Africa's food insecurity. With 278 million people facing chronic hunger, expected to rise to 310.7 million by 2030⁵⁴, Africa is hard hit by the dilemma of food insecurity. This has been accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine war. Job

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52. Government of India – Ministry of External Affairs. Address by External Affairs Minister, Dr S. Jaishankar at the Launch of Book: India-Africa Relations: Changing Horizons. May 2022. <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/35322/Address+by+External+Affairs+Minister+Dr+S+Jaishankar+at+the+Launch+of+Book+IndiaAfrica+Relations+Changing+Horizons>

53. The Hindu. At UN meet, Modi calls for reformed multilateralism. July 2020. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/at-un-meet-modi-calls-for-reformed-multilateralism/article32118114.ece>

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losses during the pandemic adversely affected people's ability to access food, and disruptions in food supply chains led to food shortages and higher prices of food staples. Travel restrictions and border closures also disrupted food aid programs in Africa. The Ukraine war has been another blow to Africa, as nearly 20 African countries import 90% of their wheat from Ukraine and Russia⁵⁵. The conflict led to a 60% rise in wheat prices in 2022 and food prices remain high⁵⁶.

Furthermore, the continent's record in addressing hunger was by no means satisfactory even in the pre-pandemic era or when growth rates were high⁵⁷. Africa failed to meet the Millennium Development Goal of halving hunger, and the continent also saw undernutrition increase in all regions of Africa from 2016. In other words, while short-term shocks like the pandemic and the Ukraine conflict have dealt a heavy blow to Africa's food insecurity, there are a series of chronic problems, including conflict-induced famines, climate change, and low agricultural productivity, which are equally important in Africa's case and need massive policy responses.

Given the mounting debt burdens and the lack of fiscal space, most African countries are currently incapable of ramping up investments in the agriculture sector, although food security became a priority after the adoption of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) in 2003 and the Agenda 2063⁵⁸. For this reason, India's G20 Presidency should announce a special G20 package for Africa. Indeed, announcing a special package for African food security will have many positive aspects. First, it will further strengthen India's relations with Africa and is firmly in line with its stated objective of being the 'Voice of the Global South' during its G20 presidency⁵⁹. Second, it will help mainstream African needs and aspirations in the G20 process⁶⁰. Third, it will make a significant contribution to the achievement of SDG 2 (end hunger in all forms), as it is not possible to achieve this SDG without addressing Africa's food security concerns⁶¹.

2.2.3 Responding to Climate Change in Africa:

Thirdly, India G20 presidency must support Africa's efforts to fight climate change, particularly as the continent is likely to be most severely affected by climate change because of the low adaptive potential of the African population, to the point of creating the phenomenon of refugees and climatic migration. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that temperatures in Africa will rise faster than the world average, and countries within 15 degrees of the equator will experience frequent hot nights and heatwaves⁶². However, Africa's 1.4 billion people, around 18% of the global population, are responsible for less than 3% of the world's total greenhouse-gas emissions. Moreover, data suggest that the forests of the Congo River Basin alone

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56. James Tasamba. Wheat prices in Africa up 60% due to Russia-Ukraine war: AfDB. Anadolu Ajansi. April 2022. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/wheat-prices-in-africa-up-60-due-to-russia-ukraine-war-afdb/2573858>

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62. Dan Shepard. Global warming: severe consequences for Africa. UN Digital Magazine. March 2019. <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2018-march-2019/global-warming-severe-consequences-africa#:~:text=Temperature%20increases%20in%20the%20region,not%20impossible%2C%20says%20the%20IPCC.>

absorb 3% of global carbon-dioxide emissions every year⁶³. As elsewhere, policymakers in Africa must embrace the inevitable global transition to a low-carbon economy. In addition to pursuing economic programs to raise living standards, they urgently need to build resilience against climate shocks, especially in countries that depend on rain-fed agriculture. But the price tag for climate action is large, and it comes on top of what is required to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

The required sums are out of reach for African countries, especially now that the COVID-19 pandemic has driven up debt levels and constrained growth. In this context, India's G20 presidency can play an important role in helping African governments build their capacity to address climate challenges and in initiating the transition to the climate economy. Standardized measures, such as the Bridgetown Initiative⁶⁴, presented during the Paris Summit for a New Global Financial Pact of 2023, co-hosted by France's President Emmanuel Macron and Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Mottley, could help to improve risk profiles and catalyze private financial flows.

Indeed, the initiative aims first to establish a new financial system that prioritizes climate action; second to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals; and third offers debt relief to developing nations. Furthermore, the Bridgetown Initiative triggered a series of ground-breaking announcements and commitments. The International Monetary Fund announced the achievement of its goal to provide climate-vulnerable countries with \$100 billion in special drawing rights, a reserve currency⁶⁵. The World Bank unveiled a plan that would allow developing nations affected by climate disasters to temporarily halt debt repayments⁶⁶. Senegal and the International Partners Group (IPG) introduced a Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), which combines climate and development objectives⁶⁷. Additionally, Zambia successfully negotiated a restructuring of \$6.3 billion of its debt⁶⁸.

2.2.4 Green Hydrogen as an Opportunity for Energy Transition in Africa

Fourthly, amid the global green transition and attempts to enhance energy security, green hydrogen, increasingly recognized as an important alternative energy fuel and seen as a 'fuel of the future', could provide a new avenue for energy transition in Africa⁶⁹. Indeed, in addition to being a cleaner fuel, green hydrogen is also suitable for storage of energy and can close the gap caused by any supply shock from the switch to solar and wind energy⁷⁰. Also, its high energy density makes it an appropriate alternative to fossil fuels⁷¹. Additionally, geopolitical instabilities and volatile fuel prices have forced countries to turn to alternative avenues, including green hydrogen, to enhance their

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64. The 2022 Bridgetown Initiative. <https://www.foreign.gov.bb/the-2022-barbados-agenda/>

65. Reuters. IMF has hit \$100 billion target of special drawing rights for vulnerable countries, Georgieva says. June 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/markets/imf-has-hit-100-bln-target-sdrs-vulnerable-countries-georgieva-2023-06-22/>

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67. The African Climate Foundation. Senegal secures \$2.7bn JETP funding. https://africanclimatefoundation.org/news_and_analysis/senegal-secures-2-7bn-jetp-funding/

68. Leigh Thomas, Jorgelina Do Rosario and Chris Mfula. Zambia seals \$6.3 billion restructuring in breakthrough for indebted nations. Reuters. June 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/zambia-seals-63-billion-debt-restructuring-deal-2023-06-22/>

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71. Apoorva Lalwani. Green Hydrogen: An Opportunity for India-Africa Cooperation. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). January 2023. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/green-hydrogen-an-opportunity-for-india-africa-cooperation/>

energy security⁷². Africa's abundant solar and wind energy supply can help bolster the continent's green-hydrogen production, while the demand for energy in Africa, due to expanding urbanization, the growing middle class, and the region's developing economy, is increasing twice as fast as the global average⁷³.

However, there are three major problems with generating green hydrogen in Africa. First is the high cost. Currently, the cost of producing grey hydrogen is between \$1.50 and \$2.50 per kilogram, while the cost of producing green hydrogen is nearly triple that, between \$2.50 and \$7 dollars per kilogram⁷⁴. The second major roadblock in the expansion of P2X⁷⁵ is water⁷⁶. Water is a key resource in the process of electrolysis. One liter of water produces one cubic meter of hydrogen. Given that fresh water is in short supply, hydrogen plants must consider adopting processes to desalinate seawater⁷⁷. Notably, hydrogen is a well-established industrial gas with a complex value chain involving production, storage, transportation, and distribution networks, resulting in it facing various challenges⁷⁸.

In this context, India's G20 Presidency can engage with Africa in multiple ways on this front, such as by developing solar power plants, in partnership with the International Solar Alliance (ISA). Indeed, power supply is a key component in producing green hydrogen, making up almost 50% of the system cost⁷⁹. In particular, the deployment of green hydrogen P2X plants in Africa will make economic sense for two reasons. First, it reduces the investment cost for transmission and distribution, and the demand for hydrogen already exists in these clusters⁸⁰. Second, the adequate and cost-effective availability of green hydrogen will attract more players in enabling technologies, which will lower the costs of running fuel-cell electric vehicles, ensure transitions at grids and distribution networks, and advance the development of refueling infrastructure⁸¹.

2.2.5 Strengthen Africa's Health Sovereignty:

Finally, India's G20 Presidency can invest in African health sovereignty. Africa has limited health infrastructure and shortages of professionals trained in critical care, and of adequate tertiary care facilities (specialized hospitals) equipped with intensive care units (ICUs). In urban areas of Africa, health facilities are overcrowded with patients because of staff shortages, while in rural areas, unreliable transport and poor road infrastructure remain key bottlenecks holding up access to medical care. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the compelling need for a united

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73. International Energy Agency. Africa Energy Outlook. 2019. https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/1d996108-18cc-41d7-9da3-55496cec6310/AEO2019_MOZAMBIQUE.pdf

74. Sanjeev Ahluwalia. India's Green Hydrogen Policy: Tentative Beginnings. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). February 2022. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/indias-green-hydrogen-policy/>

75. PX2 is a collective term for conversion technologies that turn electricity into carbon-neutral synthetic fuels, such as hydrogen, synthetic natural gas, liquid fuels, or chemicals.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

79. Apoorva Lalwani. India's Leadership in Green Hydrogen will be Decided by its Leadership in the Electrolyser. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). May 2022. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/indias-leadership-in-green-hydrogen/>

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81. Ibid.

African approach to fortify health systems to effectively address emerging health crises. With this in mind, and in order to increase the resilience of African states, it is necessary to upgrade health systems and extend social-protection schemes. Dominated by the Washington Consensus over the last thirty years, social-protection issues have become the poor relation of public aid policies. Yet numerous studies show that a universal social-protection system is the cornerstone of any inclusive development project.

In this context, India's G20 Presidency is a vehicle for change to make Africa's health systems more resilient, responsive, and sustainable, and to advance previously established G20 pandemic preparedness efforts. In other words, the G20 can help shape an African health agenda focused on ensuring universal, affordable, and quality health services. Giving priority to enhancing health emergency prevention and preparedness, strengthening cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector, and leveraging digital health innovations and solutions to aid universal health coverage, is critical. India can lend its experience in framing a successful national digital health architecture through a supportive regulatory environment, private-public partnerships, and digital health interventions. Similarly, the upgrading of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) to an AU agency must be noted. India is the largest supplier of pharmaceuticals and vaccines to Africa. This can be raised to an effective partnership by engaging with the CDC and the newly emerging African Medicines Agency⁸².

2.3 G20 Membership for the AU

Since the summit in Bali of 2022, several non-African actors have expressed their wish to see the African Union (AU) represented in the G20. This is a laudable recognition of the strategic importance of Africa and the AU in particular⁸³. In this context, and at the AU's February 2023 summit, African leaders decided that body would represent the continent in the G20 alongside South Africa, which is a member in its own right. Senegalese President Macky Sall, a champion of the cause during his recent tenure chairing the AU, has rightly pointed out that the move is long overdue, given the continent's economic and demographic weight. However, are the AU and its member states ready to participate meaningfully in the G20, where collective solutions to the world's economic and development challenges, and not just Africa's problems, are discussed?

2.3.1 Why the G20 Needs the African Union as a Member

The call for full AU membership of the G20 needs to be understood in three contexts. Firstly, Africa's representation at the G20 with one permanent member and two guest seats at the table is marginal. In contrast, the EU currently holds six permanent seats and one guest representation, which is significantly more than the comparatively newly designed counterpart union, the AU. With an economic size of 10% of the global economy, 1.4 billion African people, and a demographic dividend with a median age of 19 years, there is a strong case for the AU to have permanent G20 membership.

Second, the AU is becoming more central in Africa's economic governance. With the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) forging Africa's 54 economies into a single market since January 2021, the AU now represents an economic bloc ranked as the eighth largest in the world. The AfCFTA is due to abolish 90% of customs duties on goods and services traded between all countries on the continent within the next 15 years. This development should be more favorable to trade, and will also benefit international investors, who would then be less constrained in

82. Gurjit Singh. It's time for Africa. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). May 2023. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/its-time-for-africa/>

83. Paul-Simon Handy and Felicité Djilo. Is Africa ready for meaningful participation in the G20? Institute for Security Studies. 2023. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-africa-ready-for-meaningful-participation-in-the-g20>

developing their activities in Africa. In the same vein, the AU's inclusion in the G20 is critical for the promotion of structural solutions that benefit the entire continent⁸⁴. At the Fourth African Union Coordination Meeting in 2022, AU former Chair Macky Sall outlined topics of great importance to the continent, including the reallocation of Special Drawing Rights and the implementation of the G20's Debt Service Suspension Initiative, a fair and equitable energy transition for continental access to electricity, which could be formally raised by African Union representatives in the G20 to support collective interests of African countries⁸⁵.

Third, the call for AU membership recognizes that the G20 is not primarily about 'benevolence' for Africa⁸⁶, but is a practical path that leads toward holistic solutions for sustained global development and good global governance. Politically, including the AU would enable the G20 to be more effective and influential as a global platform for collaborative governance. In the context of the Ukraine war, for example, it was the AU that first made the case for the safe release of all grain from Russian and Ukrainian ports following sanctions, the largest portion of which will flow to Asian and Middle Eastern countries⁸⁷. Economically, the G20 will benefit from the AU being a part of it, since its resources and raw materials play a major role in the global economy. Indeed, African countries are major suppliers of critical raw materials globally, which are required for all sorts of technologies. For example, 64% of the EU's bauxite imports come from Guinea, 68% of cobalt and 36% of tantalum from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and 71% of platinum from South Africa⁸⁸.

Climatically, Africa's climate actions over the next 20 to 40 years will determine the sea-level rise in locations from Amsterdam to Shanghai⁸⁹. Organizationally, with the AU potential, the region should be integrated in the decision-making process of the G20. The AU agenda strongly aligns with many taskforce missions, including the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2016, led by the G20 Development Working Group. Such inter-governmental groupings will provide the African bloc with improved economic bargaining power on the global stage once their presence at the negotiating table is permanent, and will at least convey a minimum common denominator of economic requirements for a fragmented and diverse union⁹⁰.

2.3.2 *Is Africa Ready for Meaningful Participation in the G20?*

African countries have often justified their quest for representation in global governance bodies from the perspectives of equity, inclusivity, and alleged historical injustice⁹¹. As an inter-governmental organization which aspires to become a permanent member of the G20, the AU is not a supranational organization like the EU, which has established a legal order integrated into the legal systems of its member states and binding on their jurisdictions. Furthermore, the pan-African organization faces procedural, organizational, and institutional challenges that paralyze its

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90. Sagar K. Chourasia. Assessing India's proposal to bring AU in the G20. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). August 2023. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/assessing-indias-proposal-to-bring-au-in-the-g20/>

91. Paul-Simon Handy and Felicité Djilo. Is Africa ready for meaningful participation in the G20? Institute for Security Studies. 2023. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-africa-ready-for-meaningful-participation-in-the-g20>

responses, particularly to the coup attempts sweeping across the Sahel-Sahara region. Indeed, and contrary to the vision articulated in its Constitutive Act, the AU's legislative, judicial, and technical organs remain weak, especially relative to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, which comprises the leaders of its 54 member states. The heads of state retain the power to select the AU Commission's six commissioners. With the support of the AU Commission, the AU's priorities were cut to four: political affairs, peace and security, economic integration, and amplifying Africa's voice. The Pan-African Parliament and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council designed to give civil society organizations a voice within AU institutions, remain consultative bodies with no power. The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, established to protect human rights and reduce impunity at the national level, remains hamstrung. Only 31 countries have ratified its protocol and of these, just six accept its jurisdiction to hear complaints from citizens. Furthermore, the financial autonomy of the African organization is relative, due to its strong budgetary dependence on international donors. Consequently, and based on a survey organized by *The Economist*, more than a third of Africans feel alienated from the AU or have no opinion on it⁹².

As an inter-governmental organization whose member states are sometimes suspicious of the Commission chair, the AU must reinvent itself if it would like to establish itself as a key player in global governance within the G20 framework, able to respond to global challenges⁹³. Indeed, the gap between vision and reality is compounded by many within the Assembly of Heads of State not wanting a functional supranational body⁹⁴. Instead, as currently organized, the Assembly can overrule the AU's executive, legislative, and legal bodies. This imbalance is seen in the increasingly divisive issue of term limits. For now, though, many Africans see the AU than a functional agency. A middle ground is possible. This would be an AU that responds to political direction but has the technical, managerial, and institutional competence to discharge its responsibilities. This is necessary not only to consolidate the reform of the AU, but also to influence global governance.

CONCLUSION

In India's presidency of the G20 has come at a time when the world is facing many challenges, ranging from post COVID-19 health crisis effects to the global economic slowdown and rising food and energy crisis caused by the Ukraine war. With geopolitics high on the G20 agenda in any year, it seems like a mammoth task for India to steer it through rocky waters. Significantly, the incomparable multidimensional crises that form the context for the G20 New Delhi Summit were already known, and the member nations were eager to know the Indian viewpoint on each of the issues. India acknowledged the impending consequences of economic decline, growing global poverty, and the delay in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. With the prime focus of the G20 countries being on securing long-term economic growth, efforts will have to continue towards the guarantee of food, fertilizer, and energy security for all, especially the most disadvantaged households.

In particular, the full implementation and continuation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative for the export of Ukrainian goods would be a major challenge for India. On the issue of climate change, the G20 reiterated its commitment to achieving global zero greenhouse gas emissions or carbon neutrality by the middle of this century. Some gaps could be seen in health security cooperation between the national ministries of finance and health for the Pandemic Fund to prevent, prepare

92. The Economist. The African Union is less effective at 20 than it was at two. February 2022. <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2022/02/12/the-african-union-is-less-effective-at-20-than-it-was-at-two>

93. Paul-Simon Handy and Felicité Djilo. Is Africa ready for meaningful participation in the G20? Institute for Security Studies. 2023. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-africa-ready-for-meaningful-participation-in-the-g20>

94. Ibid.

for, and respond to future pandemics. These three issues would not, by any standard, be easy tasks for the Indian presidency. The additional tasks of reaping the economic benefits of digital technology, capacity development, and inclusive industrialization, especially in the Global South and developing countries, constitute the basis of India's presidency of the G20.

India has very clearly articulated its vision by stating that, "*Without peace and security, our future generations will not be able to benefit from economic growth and technological innovation*"⁹⁵. As an established global leader now, the promise New Delhi made for an action-oriented and ambitious presidency was closely watched, not only by the members of the G20 but also by international institutions and the Global South. India has already taken the lead in some aspects, particularly in technology with digital public goods and their governance, self-reliance or Aatma Nirbhar, vaccine diplomacy, agricultural diplomacy, and asserting its firmness on various geopolitical issues. Therefore, the stage is set now for India during the G20 summit in New Delhi to take the lead and work towards global peace, rule-based governance, and growth for all on the world canvas. Africa, with its historic and strategic relations with India, can use India's presidency of the G20 as an opportunity to accelerate the continent's emergence.

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About Policy Center for the New South

The Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank aiming to contribute to the improvement of economic and social public policies that challenge Morocco and the rest of Africa as integral parts of the global South.

The PCNS pleads for an open, accountable and enterprising "new South" that defines its own narratives and mental maps around the Mediterranean and South Atlantic basins, as part of a forward-looking relationship with the rest of the world. Through its analytical endeavours, the think tank aims to support the development of public policies in Africa and to give the floor to experts from the South. This stance is focused on dialogue and partnership, and aims to cultivate African expertise and excellence needed for the accurate analysis of African and global challenges and the suggestion of appropriate solutions.

As such, the PCNS brings together researchers, publishes their work and capitalizes on a network of renowned partners, representative of different regions of the world. The PCNS hosts a series of gatherings of different formats and scales throughout the year, the most important being the annual international conferences "The Atlantic Dialogues" and "African Peace and Security Annual Conference" (APSACO).

Finally, the think tank is developing a community of young leaders through the Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders program(ADEL) a space for cooperation and networking between a new generation of decision-makers from the government, business and civil society sectors. Through this initiative, which already counts more than 300 members, the Policy Center for the New South contributes to intergenerational dialogue and the emergence of tomorrow's leaders.

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