

# FROM BRAZIL TO SOUTH AFRICA: KEY OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE G20

Martina de Pablo

Andalus Committee, February 2025



ANDALUS  
COMMITTEE

# **FROM BRAZIL TO SOUTH AFRICA: KEY OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE G20**

**Martina de Pablo**

Published by the Andalus Columbia Office

February 14th, 2025

75014 Paris, France

[info@andaluscommittee.com](mailto:info@andaluscommittee.com)

Copyright © Andalus Committee 2025

All rights reserved

*andaluscommittee.com*



***Author:***

Martina de Pablo

***Acknowledgments for their research contributions:***

Jacqueline Grace Vera, Yasmine Afifi, Clara Barschdorff, Delaney Kim

***Design:***

Zoe Silverman, Ali Sebti

---

**OUR COMMITTEE IN NUMBERS****7****Universities****100****Researchers****40****Nationalities****About the Andalus Committee:**

The Andalus Committee is the first cross-university academic think tank bringing together more than 100 international students and spanning over 40 nationalities across Sciences Po Paris, Georgetown University, London School of Economics, Columbia University, FU Berlin, IE Madrid and King's College London.

Our mission is to explore the emerging opportunities of the Global South by fostering an engaged community of young leaders contributing to global decision-making. We believe that our shifting world order requires reassessed approaches, and our goal is to fully seize its economic, cultural and diplomatic potential. As new actors emerge across the globe, we are inspired by Al-Andalus' ideal of *Convivencia*, convinced that civilizational exchanges and diversified cooperation are key to prosperity. We provide policy recommendations to world leaders, striving to unlock the full potential of emerging countries and harness the opportunities presented by the rising multipolar order.

# Table of Contents

**Introduction.....3**

**I. Focusing on the G20’s Previous Agreements.....4**

**II. Structure of the upcoming Brazil G20.....4**

**III. Recommendations for Future Partnerships G20 Countries.....6**

**IV. The future of the G20 : South Africa’s future presidency.....7**

**V. Recommended Policy Reforms for South Africa’s Presidency.....8**

**Conclusion.....8**

**Bibliography.....9**

## Abstract

*The G20 provides a multilateral framework that is vital to the incorporation of the Global South in current contemporary challenges. Given the recent G20 Brazilian-led conference, between November 18-19, 2024, this report seeks to analyze the agreements and opportunities discussed. It will seek to then provide recommendations for members and non-members of the G20 in order to continue to foster emerging opportunities within the Global South.*

## Introduction to the G20

The G20 is a multilateral forum promoting global equality among international actors outside of traditional political power spheres. It operates quite differently from other multilateral organizations as it lacks permanent rules of procedures, but allows for states to have a stronger sense of agency during their presidency of the G20 (CEBRI Revista, 2023). Despite the explicit heightening of state actors' voices, we must recognize the inefficiencies that this presents. As Kanica Rakhra outlines:

A case in point would be the Energy Sustainability Working Group, established during the Russian Presidency (2013). The Working Group continued with its agenda until the German Presidency (2017), when it became a part of the Climate and Energy Sustainability Working Group. This was because Germany saw the two concepts as interlinked. However, during the Argentine Presidency (2018), the two concepts were delinked and discussed under separate working groups—the Environment and Climate Sustainability WG and the Energy Transition WG (CEBRI Revista, 2023).



Current members of the G20 are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. There are also two regional bodies: the European Union and the African Union.

Before Brazil, the presidency had been held by Indonesia and India. Indonesia focused on the Russo-Ukrainian conflict and the large impact of this on the G20 (CEBRI Revista, 2023). This term saw many Global South countries remain neutral on the topic of the war, despite many walkouts during Russian interventions. Furthermore, while the G7 removed Russia (previously the G8), the G20 was unsuccessful in achieving enough member countries' votes to do so.

India's Presidency, on the other hand, held the virtual meeting of the "Voice of Global South Summit" with the theme of "Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose" in January 2023 (CEBRI Revista, 2023). It took suggestions from other nations on what they should focus on during their Presidency, a novel step, and delivered on documents such as Lifestyle for Sustainable Development (LiFE) and Action on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (CEBRI Revista, 2023). In this case, LiFE wanted to modify



people's behavior to ensure energy conservation and a decrease in environmental stress. Throughout India's Chairship of the Development Working Group (DWG), this country released the High-Level Principles (HLP on Lifestyle for Sustainable Development to further this project (CEBRI Revista, 2023). Finally, India also created a Working Group for Women's Empowerment, which has continued since.

## I. Focusing on the G20's Previous Agreements

Previous G20 summits have primarily focused on financial crises, exchange rates, and development. The first subtopic has focused on driving reforms to increase the representation of emerging countries within the IMF and the World Bank, specifically called for by Brazil, India and South Africa (Shaw & Vassallo, 2012). This has led to the development of increased voting power for these countries in a gradual manner. In previous G20 documents, concluding documents dedicated 30% of their text to financial crises. This varied from the previous 50% dedication in 2008 and 13.7% in 2011 (Shaw & Vassallo, 2012). Additionally, financial regulation has taken the most wording out of all previous G20 agreements, with 254 total signed commitments since 2008 (this has been added to the 115 commitments on international financial institutions) (Shaw & Vassallo, 2012).

Regarding exchange rates, countries focused an average of only 4.5% of the words in concluding documents on this topic. Finally, G20 summits have dedicated a considerable word space for development, with around 30% of conclusions centered on this (Shaw & Vassallo, 2011). Except for in 2011, the trend has been ever increasing and it is the second most

committed issue, with 179 commitments since 2008 (Shaw & Vassallo, 2011).

## II. Structure of the upcoming Brazil G20

### • Agenda items

Agenda items within the G20 have recently been expanded, coinciding with the Brazilian presidency. Current leadership seeks to include growing challenges within macroeconomic collaboration. These challenges include, but are not limited to: agriculture, development, disaster risk reduction, climate sustainability, women's empowerment, sustainable finance, international taxation, financial inclusion, and infrastructure.

### • Forums for the reduction of inequalities

The focus on reducing inequalities has been seen in three different subsections of the organization of the G20. The **first** is the Task Force for a Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, mobilizing public policy resources and knowledge (Sherpa Track). The Brazilian Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Social Development, and Assistance have also worked closely with the G20 and this branch, which has made it much more exhaustive and functional (Sherpa Track). This can be seen by the fact that the G20 now works a lot closer with state entities in order to push its agenda into national and local spheres. This branch has also provided a new avenue for cooperation that is beneficial as it is open to member countries, non-member countries, international organizations, multilateral development banks, knowledge centers, and philanthropies that agree with the Global Alliance Charter (Sherpa Track).

**Secondly**, the Task Force for the Global Mobilization Against Climate Change has enhanced

the global macroeconomic and financial alignment centered on-ment (Sherpa Track). Its success remains to be seen. The implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Peace Agreement.

**Thirdly**, the financial tracks within the G20 have managed new and upcoming strategies on macroeconomic trends within member countries (Finance Track). They have focused on their finance ministers, as well as heads of their central banks. This is made up of 7 technical groups and 3 task forces within.

- **Avenues for cooperation of countries attending: Sherpa track**

The Sherpa Track is now the primary track of G20 and non-G20 entities' cooperation, in charge of coordinating most activities within the forum (*Sherpa Track*). It is made of 15 smaller working groups, one task force and one initiative and constitutes the backbone of the Brazilian-led G20.

- **Main Outcomes of the G20**

#### 1. *Climate Action and Sustainability*

This section produced the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA), promoting sustainable biofuels as an alternative energy source. This initiative aims to set international standards and certifications for biofuel production and consumption, supporting the transition to clean energy. This was further enhanced by an agreement on the phasing down of fossil fuels. While a complete phase-out of fossil fuels was not discussed, there was consensus on reducing reliance on them through gradual, equitable energy transitions. Finally, an unexpected number of countries committed to renewable energy infrastructure investment, viewing it as essential to climate goals

under the Green Development Pack. Specifically, India's presidency emphasized "Lifestyle for Environment" (LiFE), advocating for sustainable living practices and resource use, which resonated with other nations' climate action plans.

#### 2. *Digital Transformation and Inclusive Technology*

On this topic, member countries underscored the importance of ensuring that digital transformation benefits everyone, especially underserved populations. There was also an agreement on principles for the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to promote trust and accountability. This was paired with the launch of the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) frameworks, which were modeled on India's success with Aadhaar and Unified Payments Interface, encouraging other nations to implement similar systems for governance and financial inclusion.

#### 3. *Economic Resilience and Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) Reform*

There was strong support for restructuring MDBs like the World Bank and IMF to better address 21st-century challenges, including climate change and infrastructure funding, which was one of the central themes of the multilateral forum. This was based on the commitment to expand MDB financing capacity to address the debt crisis in low-income and developing countries. Specifically, the US and India led discussions on debt relief for vulnerable nations, with China and other creditors agreeing on more transparent debt restructuring frameworks.

#### 4. *Global Health Security*

The G20 issues a unified declaration to strengthen global health systems. It emphasized equitable vaccine distribution to prevent future pandemics. This agreement then led to creating a new pandemic fund under the World Bank to ensure immediate financial



resources for pandemic preparedness and response.

### *5. Trade and Supply Chain Resilience*

On this topic, member countries agreed to ensure resilient supply chains by diversifying sources and reducing over-reliance on a single country for critical goods like semiconductors and rare earth materials. This will seek to enhance trade facilitation for critical goods to address disruptions caused by geopolitical conflicts. There was an overarching understanding that trade and supply chain resilience should be at the forefront of future sustainable development dialogues.

### *6. Gender Equality and Women Empowerment*

The G20 focused on enhancing women's participation in the global workforce by addressing structural barriers and ensuring access to education, digital tools, and financial inclusion. This commitment vowed to further bridge the gender pay gap and foster leadership roles for women in technology and innovation. Specifically, India and the EU played a leading role in drafting gender-focused programs, particularly around STEM education and entrepreneurship.

### *7. Food Security and Agricultural Innovation*

Agreements were achieved on improving agricultural productivity and resilience through innovation, including the use of AI in farming. Addressing global food shortages caused by climate change and conflicts are central, with initiatives to stabilize global grain markets. This was the case with G20 nations that have begun partnering with African countries to address food insecurity and invest in sustainable agricultural practices.

## **III. Recommendations for Future**

### **Partnerships among G20 Member Countries**

#### *1. Climate Action and Sustainability*

- The Andalus Committee recommends the further collaboration between developed and developing nations in calling for financial and technical assistance to vulnerable countries to meet climate adaptation and mitigation goals. A starting point are Brazil's specific agreements made during the forum which called for shifting climate change talk into tangible public policies. These could take the form of sustainable investment and loans to developing nations.

#### *2. Digital Transformation and Inclusive Technology*

- The Andalus Committee further proposes cross-border payments in order to benefit intermediary nations to improve interoperability between payment systems, reducing costs and inefficiencies for global trade and remittances.

#### *3. Economic Resilience and Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) Reform*

- We propose an enhanced focus on financing for sustainable infrastructure in Global South countries as well as their further inclusion within MDB forums that are representative of the ever-changing world order and structures. This should be done by the expansion of forums to include Global South nations as well as their leading of debates. The South African G20 presidency is an avenue for this as it represents the first African G20 presidency. Forums which grant agency to the Global South could see an expansion in economic resilience policies and reforms.



#### 4. *Global Health Security*

- We believe that global health security could be strengthened by sturdy partnerships with the WHO to improve disease surveillance and early warning systems, particularly in regions lacking robust healthcare infrastructure.

#### 5. *Trade and Supply Chain Resilience*

- The Andalus Committee proposes that partnerships are the untapped avenue to create alternative trade corridors, including the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor. This example could be a counterbalance to China's Belt and Road Initiative, and further agreements should be made as well.

#### 6. *Gender Equality and Women Empowerment*

- Due to India and the EU's unparalleled agreements on gender-equal reforms, we propose the exploration of these two entities' partnership in the future, especially regarding recent agreement on this subtopic.

#### 7. *Food Security and Agricultural Innovation*

- We propose the enhanced study and work with African nations from the G20 in assisting their access to food security and innovation developed by African representatives at the G20 and their alliances.

### IV. **The future of the G20 : South Africa's future presidency**

South Africa is the next G20 country to take the Presidency, and this will occur December 1, 2024 until November 30, 2025 (G20 Presidency). It will be the first African country to host the G20 and the first time a state from the Global South will hold the Presidency

for such an extended period of time.

This demonstrates the historic and significant presence of the Global South in global forums and will guarantee that their issues and priorities are heard (*G20 Presidency*). Their proposed theme is "Fostering Solidarity, Cooperation and Sustainable Development," with a focus on the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality (United Nations, *South Africa's G20 Presidency in 2025*).

The main agenda items are likely to be the Just Energy Transition, Financing for Development, Transforming Global Financial Structures, Infrastructure Development, Artificial Intelligence, Food Security, and Debt Trap, with a specific emphasis on its National Development Plan, Agenda 2063, prior issues within the G20 (SAnews, 2024). Furthermore, South Africa hopes to place Africa's development at the forefront, aligning it with the aforementioned Agenda 2063 "The Africa We Want."

The incorporating of this agenda as the centerpiece of the forum is one of the ways they hope to center debates on the African continent. They also aim to increase the distribution of resources for Just Energy Transition as, currently, Africa receives less than 3% of the global climate financing, despite being severely affected. Finally, they vow to solve the Illegal Financial Flows (IFFS) which annually eradicate approximately \$88.6 billion from Africa and link their policies to their domestic priorities in line with the South African Development Community (SADC) region (SAnews, 2024).

This can be seen as International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) Minister Ronald Lamola has agreed that giving support to emerging economies is necessary for international stability (allAfrica.com, 24).

Furthermore, South Africa will support Brazil's key priority – to reform the Global Governance Institutions – alongside India.

## **V. Recommended Policy Reforms for South Africa's Presidency**

It would therefore allow for the exploration of inter-African partnerships as well as with other countries to spread awareness on the challenges the continent faces. Another avenue for exploration could be the Advance the Hunger and Poverty Alliance as well as discussions on global taxation, especially regarding the wealth tax of billionaires. In order to tackle the rapid advance of technology, South Africa would also create panels and debates within the G20 in order to discuss global technological literacy, internet infrastructure, and access in global regions and countries that might lack it. This could all be paired with, similarly to the Brazilian G20 presidency, the active and deep rooted collaboration with South African Ministries and national institutions. Finally, direct participation would also be an avenue that would greatly strengthen the presidency, setting the scene for civil society to partake in G20 conversations as well.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The recent G20 forum held in Brazil between November 18-19, 2024 was a successful multilateral platform that enhanced cooperation between nations. Targeting a wide selection of subtopics and avenues for exploration, debate centered around the centering of Global South economies, societies, and politics. This achieved astounding results and has introduced

frameworks and Sherpa Track systems that have allowed the continuation of this model for future generations of these forums. The Andalus Committee is hopeful of what this forum will mean for the future of the G20 as well as both its Member Countries and non-Member entities.

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**



Martina serves as the Executive Director of the Andalus Committee. Born and raised in Barcelona, Spain, Martina is currently pursuing a Dual BA program at Sciences Po and Columbia University, majoring in Political Science and Human Rights. Her professional experience includes an internship with the Andorran Government and participation in leadership courses at the Oxford Royale Academy. She aspires to build a career in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Martina is fluent in Spanish, Catalan, English and has a basic knowledge of French, Arabic and Italian.



## Bibliography

- **CEBRI Revista.** (2023). The G20 as a multilateral force. Retrieved from <https://cebri.org/revista/br/artigo/133/the-g20-as-a-multilateral-force>
- **Finance Track.** (n.d.-b). G20 presidency. G20 South Africa. Retrieved from <https://g20.org/g20-south-africa/g20-presidency/>
- **SAnews.** (2024, October 11). SA's G20 presidency, a significant moment for the country's young democracy, says Lamola. Retrieved from <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/sas-g20-presidency-significant-moment-countrys-young-democracy-says-lamola>
- **Shaw, Z., & Vassallo, S. J.** (2011, November 14). G20 leaders' conclusions on development, 2008-11. G20 Research Group. Retrieved from <https://g20.utoronto.ca/analysis/conclusions/development-1.html>
- **Shaw, Z., & Vassallo, S. J.** (2012, January 3). G20 summit conclusions on financial crises. G20 Research Group. Retrieved from <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/analysis/conclusions/fincrisis-1.pdf>
- **Sherpa Track.** (n.d.). G20 Sherpa track. G20 South Africa. Retrieved from <https://g20.org/tracks/sherpa-track/>
- **allAfrica.com.** (2024, November 20). South Africa: SA to play key role at upcoming G20 Summit. Retrieved from <https://allafrica.com/stories/202411140037.html>
- **United Nations.** (2024). South Africa's G20 presidency in 2025: A pivotal moment for the country and Africa. Africa Renewal. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/november-2024/south-africas-g20-presidency-2025-pivotal-moment-country-and-africa>

**Cover Image:** *Mauro Pimentel/AFP via Getty Images | Eraldo Peres/AP/picture alliance.*

**Back Image:** *Isabela Castilho/Climate Group*

# G20



# BRASIL

2024 BUILDING A JUST WORLD AND A SUSTAINABLE PLANET



ANDALUS  
COMMITTEE

