

2. 2025 G 20 Summit – I R

The 2025 G20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa is the first-ever G20 summit held on African soil under the theme “Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability.”

Key Highlights of the Summit

Adoption of the G20 Leaders’ Declaration – Reaffirmed commitment to the Paris Agreement goals, particularly focusing on adaptation finance, which remains severely underfunded for developing countries. Called for accelerating global renewable energy deployment, highlighting the need to triple renewable capacity by 2030. Renewed pledges on debt sustainability, pushing multilateral development banks (MDBs) to enhance concessional lending and climate-aligned financing. Prioritized support for vulnerable developing countries, such as SIDS, LDCs, and African economies, in climate resilience and sustainable development.

Institutional Reform and Multilateral Cooperation – Strong articulation for UN Security Council reforms, echoing demands from India, Africa, and Latin American countries for greater representation and legitimacy. Emphasized the African philosophy of Ubuntu to promote shared humanity, collective responsibility, and solidarity-based global governance. Stressed strengthening the WTO, WHO, IMF, and World Bank to better respond to global shocks.

Women’s Empowerment and Security – Affirmed commitment to empowerment of women and girls in all sectors including STEM, entrepreneurship, finance, and digital access. Condemned all forms of terrorism, calling for intensified cooperation against terror financing, cyber-threats, and cross-border radical networks.

Africa’s Centrality – Recognized Africa’s development priorities such as infrastructure financing, digital transformation, food security, and health systems. Highlighted the significance of the African Union’s permanent membership in G20, elevating Africa’s representation from observer to decision-making status.

India’s Stand and Initiatives at Johannesburg 2025

Global Traditional Knowledge Repository – Proposed a digital, open-access repository of traditional knowledge from all cultures. Aims to promote biodiversity-based solutions, indigenous medicine, sustainable agriculture, and climate-resilient practices.

G20–Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative – Launched a programme to train one million certified trainers to enhance youth skilling in Africa. Focus areas include manufacturing, digital technologies, green jobs, and vocational education, aligning with Africa’s demographic dividend.

Global Healthcare Response Team – Advocated for a rapid-response multi-country health force to act during pandemics, outbreaks, and disaster-linked health crises. Builds on India’s experience in vaccine delivery, telemedicine, and emergency health logistics.

Open Satellite Data Partnership – Introduced an initiative to share satellite-based data for agriculture planning, sustainable fisheries, early disaster-warning, and water management. Supports climate-resilient development in low-income countries lacking space-based data infrastructure.

Critical Minerals Circularity Initiative – Proposed global norms and frameworks for recycling lithium, cobalt, nickel, rare earths, and other strategic minerals. Aims to reduce environmental damage and address vulnerabilities in high-concentration supply chains dominated by few countries.

Countering the Drug–Terror Nexus – Raised the issue of narcotics being used as a major source of terror financing. Proposed coordinated global enforcement, real-time data sharing, and combating dark-web routes of narcotics trade.

ACITI Trilateral Framework (Australia–Canada–India)

Announced a trilateral platform for cooperation on AI safety, clean energy transition, critical technologies, and resilient supply chains. Strengthens democratic technology ecosystems against strategic dependencies.

Challenges at the Summit

Geopolitical Tensions and US Boycott – The US boycott led to reduced collective bargaining power and weakened perceptions of unity among major economies. Reflected deeper geopolitical contestations affecting global fora.

Disagreement on Fossil Fuel Phase-out – Sharp divisions over timelines and language for fossil fuel reduction mirrored failures witnessed at COP30. Hydrocarbon-dependent economies resisted stronger commitments.

Fragmentation Over the Ukraine Conflict – Western countries sought stronger language condemning Russia, while others demanded neutrality. Resulted in diluted language and exposed deep fault lines within G20.

Financial System Inequities Highlighted by Developing Countries – Developing economies pointed to unsustainable debt burdens, high cost of capital, and minimal access to climate finance. Called for systemic reform of the Bretton Woods institutions.

Diplomatic Protocol Disputes – Disagreements on G20 presidency handover arrangements between South Africa and the US reflected sensitivity of global diplomatic hierarchies. Demonstrated challenges in ensuring smooth leadership transitions under political pressure.

Way Forward

Strengthening Multilateral Consensus – G20 must build systems that insulate global economic governance from great-power rivalries. Requires more inclusive decision-making, proactive diplomacy, and transparent negotiation processes.

Focus on Climate Finance and Debt Relief – Priority must be on operationalizing –

1. Adaptation finance commitments
2. Loss & Damage Fund
3. Concessional climate lending for the Global South

Requires coordination with IMF, World Bank, Green Climate Fund, and private finance.

Reforming Global Financial Architecture

Calls for –

1. Enhanced voting rights and representation for developing countries
2. Predictable, transparent debt restructuring mechanisms
3. Scaling up MDB financing through hybrid capital, SDR rechanneling, and risk guarantees
4. Aligning global finance with SDGs and Paris climate objectives

Conclusion

The 2025 Johannesburg G20 Summit represents a major shift in the global economic narrative by placing Africa and the Global South at the decision-making table. Despite geopolitical tensions, the Summit showcased new pathways for solidarity, sustainability, and inclusive development. India emerged as a proactive leader bridging North-South divides, promoting climate resilience, digital cooperation, and capacity-building initiatives that reflect its growing global influence.

Basics of G20 Grouping

Composition

The G20 includes 19 countries, the European Union, and since 2023 the African Union. This brings the total number of members to 21. It represents major advanced and emerging economies spanning all continents.

Global Economic Weight

Accounts for approximately –

1. 85% of global GDP
2. 75% of international trade
3. Two-thirds of world population

Makes the G20 the most influential economic governance forum.

Origin and Evolution

Established in 1999 following the Asian Financial Crisis to stabilize global financial systems. Initially a Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' forum, elevated to Leaders' Summit level in 2008 during the Global Financial Crisis.

Working Structure

Operates through Sherpa Track, Finance Track, and various engagement groups (B20, T20, C20, Y20, W20, etc.). Annual summit is hosted by a rotating presidency, supported by a Troika comprising preceding, current, and succeeding presidencies to ensure continuity.

Source - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/g20-summit-south-africa-us-boycott-pm-modi-visit-live-updates-november-23-2025/article70313568.ece>

