

The New Delhi Declaration was a win for us and the world at large

The G20 leaders' consensus was a success of diplomacy but will be remembered best for how it serves the interests of people



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The recently concluded G20 Summit in New Delhi roused immense public interest in India's biggest multilateral event so far. Policy circles are abuzz with discussions on the presidency's New Delhi Leaders' Declaration which was adopted with full consensus. A leaders' declaration is a document that encapsulates the work of multiple ministries, member countries and knowledge partners, over hundreds of meetings throughout the year, discussing priorities of the presidency and forum at large. The document is a statement from leaders of G20 countries, sending out a common message to the world. It showcases the ability of the forum to rally together, despite vast differences, viewpoints and interests, to make common commitments towards issues of global concern. Each word in the declaration carries weight and stems from multiple rounds of diplomatic negotiations.

The New Delhi Declaration is a remarkable feat for India, given the unique context in which we achieved it and strength of the outcomes attained. In the aftermath of the pandemic, marked by a fragmented geopolitical order, rising food and energy insecurity and debt distress, India played the role of an honest broker, and took concerted efforts to bring member nations on common ground on issues ranging from Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), combating climate change and digital transformations to strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth. The term 'consensus' carries immense weight, considering that it had to be brought forth in a forum as diverse as the G20, and on an array of subjects that are of critical importance to all. While the declaration shows our collective strength to forge solutions for all countries, it has particularly factored in the interests and concerns of the developing world in line with the Indian presidency's emphasis on amplifying the voice of the Global South.

With a clear recognition of contemporary multi-dimensional challenges and potential crises, the Declaration underscored the presidency's action-oriented approach, as is evident from the range of outcomes in the document. Recognizing the need for growth to be strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive, the Declaration recognizes startups and MSMEs as natural engines of it. It endorses the G20 2023 Financial Inclusion Action Plan (FIAP) which aims to foster financial inclusion of individuals and MSMEs, particularly of vulnerable and underserved groups in G20 countries and beyond. The significance of trade for greater growth and prosperity is irrefutable. Given that about 70% of international trade today involves Global Value Chains (GVCs), the adoption of the G20 Generic Framework for Mapping GVCs to help member countries identify risks is an important deliverable.



The adoption of the High-Level Principles on Digitalization of Trade Documents marks a significant step towards making global trade more efficient and accessible. Additionally, a critical forward-looking element stands out in the document's emphasis on preparing for the future of work. It welcomes the comprehensive G20 Toolkit for designing and introducing digital upskilling and reskilling programmes.

India made accelerating progress towards SDGs one of its priorities. In a decade that went from being one of 'action' to one of 'recovery' in the field of attaining SDGs, the commitment of leaders to implement the G20 2023 Action Plan to Accelerate Progress on the SDGs, including its High-Level Principles, is an outstanding victory. The Declaration notes our leaders' commitment to improving food security for one and all, in line with the G20 Deccan High-Level Principles on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN). Moreover, in the aftermath of the pandemic, it is particularly important to note that the Declaration supports the development of an Interim Medical Countermeasures (MCM) Coordination Mechanism for enabling accountable and timely access to safe, effective, quality and affordable medical countermeasures, including vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. On health, the Declaration also recognizes the potential role of evidence-based traditional and complementary medicine. Considering India's long history of traditional medicine, this is a notable achievement.

In recent years, Digital Public Infrastructure has proven a powerful force that has enhanced public service delivery, and India has exemplified this. Welcoming the G20 Framework for Systems of Digital Public Infrastructure, the Global Initiative on Digital Health, and recognising the importance of harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) responsibly are some deliverables in the arena of technological transformation.

One of the Declaration's key successes is its push for reinvigorated multilateralism by recalling United Nations Resolution 75/1, a first in the G20; pushing for better, bigger and more effective multilateral development banks, and the need for enhancing the representation and voice of developing countries in decision-making at international financial institutions. By welcoming the African Union as a G20 permanent member,

India's G20 presidency has walked the talk in terms of enhancing representation in global fora.

Climate and environment is another significant area that the Declaration has taken commendable strides in. In a first, the G20 agreed to pursue efforts towards tripling the renewable energy technologies capacity globally in line with national circumstances by 2030. Leaders noted the presidency's report on 'Low-cost Financing for the Energy Transitions' and its estimated requirement of an annual investment of over \$4 trillion for the world. Additionally, the document affirms the G20 High Level Voluntary Principles on Hydrogen, thus taking the world a step closer to a sustainable and equitable global hydrogen ecosystem. While leaders have noted a peaking of global GHG emissions by 2025, they have done so keeping in mind different needs of sustainable development. Further, leaders have recognized the G20 High-Level Principles on Lifestyles for Sustainable Development (LiFE), and committed to mainstream Lifestyles for Sustainable Development. Financial resources are a prerequisite for nations to tackle climate change. The need is greater for countries in the Global South. The Declaration's recognition of the need to scale up investment and climate finance from billions to trillions of dollars globally from all sources is a resounding win for the world.

Disaster Risk Reduction, a new working group launched by the Indian presidency, has found resonance across the forum.

Yet another crucial 'first' that the New Delhi Declaration brought forth is the creation a new Working Group on Empowerment of Women, which will be convening its first meeting during the Brazilian G20 presidency next year. From 'women-led development' being our priority area at the outset of our presidency to forging a consensus on the creation of this working group, India's G20 presidency has traversed a long, fruitful and meaningful trajectory.

India's G20 Declaration is a culmination of over 200 meetings in 60 cities and discussions in 39 tracks, involving record in-person participation by over 25,000 delegates representing over 120 nationalities. Along with our prowess in diplomacy and logistics, among other skills, India relied on people's participation to pull this off, making the New Delhi Declaration a victory for its people too.