

# What Does G20 Stand for? “Counterbalance”, “Emerging NWO”, “Global Economic Architecture”

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By [Kester Kenn Klomegah](#)

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*At the 18th G20 leaders summit in New Delhi, India (September 9-10), there would definitely be a display of palatable words and phrases such as counterbalance, emerging new world order and the world’s new superpower, et cetera. It would be so, primarily to show the deep-seated global geopolitical tensions and muscles, and to a large extent, the apparent global economic architecture.*

Within the context of the current changes, leaders have been attempting to establish the relationship between global south and global north. The G20 leaders are also taking steps to show their level of commitment to developing nations and developing nations are crawling on the path with development aspirations. These are challenges confronting the world, while the basic question still remains extremely controversial on the standard welfare of majority of the world’s population.

“The world looks upon the G20 to ease the challenges of growth, development, economic resilience, disaster resilience, financial stability, transnational crime, corruption, terrorism, and food and energy security,” Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said back in February. India, currently holding its presidency, which rotates annually among the members.

Those controversies aside, Prime Minister Modi has also indicated that India’s role as the G20 host in September 2023 would focus on highlighting the concerns of the developing world, and has further proposed the African Union (AU) secures a permanent seat in the G20. With positive motives, this will become significant for the African Union, which was created in May 1963 and unites 54 African States.

In fact the AU has an impulse to make a notable historical transition unto the group, but still remains to be seen the possible impact and degree of influence it would have on Africa. At

first, there is already a degree of euphoria stemming from one fundamental fact whether African Union's ideas and voice on global issues relating to Africa's development complaints would be heeded to, analyse and taken into consideration.

Nevertheless, arguments abound about Africa's marginalization in relation to global development processes which, sometimes are blamed on Western and European approach to the continent. African leaders are normally excused for the primary mistakes for lack of good governance and lack of systemic efforts toward their own development. Welfare of the population are relegated to backyard, due to political egoism, self-centrism and worse, persistent ethnic conflicts.

For African leaders, it is only fashionable to sit in high-level summits and conferences. The aim is to showcase personal profiles, to represent for the sake of ceremonial representation. Africa is Africa, often times described as the a rich continent but only seen making little progress towards accelerating development, approach to critical sectors fraught with deep-seated corruption and mismanagement. Economic opportunities are grossly under-utilized.

For many developing nations, there are at least three essential areas as guidelines: to prioritize development needs and design steps to overcome the challenges; to connect the transparent regulatory and governance solutions; and scale up efforts toward sustainable financing in order to achieve results and growth. Workable solutions are also necessary from external sources, turning ideas into action and forging transformative partnerships especially being members of international organizations.

Kenya's President William Ruto, who chaired the Heads of State Committee on Climate Change, early September for instance, argued that Africa faces unique, disproportionate and structural disadvantages that can help them achieve prosperity. Africa has committed to move quickly to develop the necessary instruments and institutions.

"We have been negatively profiled, the continent of disease, war and poverty, but we are stepping out to say that Africa is home to 60 percent of the world's renewable energy assets important to make the necessary development growth," he said.

Today African leaders shout the loudest of non-interference in their internal affairs, raise concerns over neo-colonialism and continue sobbing with a high level of interest for joining such organizations as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa).

Their vision of today's world is that Africa should be part of multipolar, while largely failing to put first their home in a complete order. African leaders cannot simply be persuaded to engage in internal-controlled home-cleaning. Inside Africa, for instance, regional blocs have done little with regards to sustainable development.

And yet global leaders have shown unflinching support for Africa, that the African Union plays a more effective role on the international stage. According to authentic sources, European officials plan to hold a series of sideline meetings with their African colleagues because, "the 27-European nation bloc aims to show it is serious about redefining its partnership with Africa, despite the troubled legacy of colonialism."

Sources say the EU seeks to guarantee the African Union full G20 membership, not just permanent guest invitee status. The sides will discuss the Ukrainian conflict and its consequences for global food security, as well as reforming global financial architecture,

improving conditions for private investment, carrying out infrastructure projects on the African continent, and the situation in the Sahel region.

During past several months, the United States, Russia and China and many other foreign states have expressed support for African Union ascension into G20. It was also widely reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping would skip the G20 summit in New Delhi.

In spite of the fact that Delhi feels disappointed over their absence, of course, has obvious implications and different interpretations. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and the Chinese delegation headed by State Council Premier Li Qiang are scheduled to represent both Russia and China.

It happened, in a similar way previously, and that was during Johannesburg's BRICS, Putin missed in-person-summit due to the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant issued for him. Xi skipped a key event at the BRICS where he was scheduled to make a speech. Commerce Minister Wang Wentao delivered the speech on his behalf instead.

The Foreign Ministry said China, however, hoped that the G20 meeting would focus on discussions for the recovery of the world economy.

"The downward pressure on the world economy is increasing and the difficulties of global sustainable development are increasing ... the G20 should strengthen partnerships and work together to deal with outstanding challenges in the field of international economy and development, so as to promote the recovery, growth and development of the world economy and make a positive contribution to global sustainable development," Ministry Spokeswoman Mao Ning said.

"China hopes that the New Delhi Summit will build consensus on this, convey confidence to the outside world, and jointly promote prosperity and development," she added.

Xi's absence did not mean China is not paying attention to the G20, which is intended as a platform to discuss international economic and financial issues.

In a report from South China Morning Post (SCMP), Zhu Feng, Dean of International Studies at Nanjing University, said Xi's choice to skip the G20 summit was not about regressing US-China relations, but rather evidence that India-China relations were being hampered. "It's normal that Xi chose not to attend," Zhu said, arguing India's ongoing military exercises on its border with China – which will continue during the G20 summit – will pressure China.

Xi's absence from the G20 summit could be seen as a blow to India, which has chaired the G20 this year, as China and India have continued to clash on border issues. Beijing boycotted a G20 tourism event in the Kashmir region, where India has competing territorial claims with China and Pakistan.

And then China and India are tensely fighting. Both are also claiming superpower position in the Pacific. That however, China now dominates BRICS, the move is widely interpreted as another step by China towards creating its own competing world order to the United States and its allies, in which it leads a group of developing states.

Modi's government has replaced the name India with a Sanskrit word in dinner invitations

sent to guests attending the G20 summit. India has its own internal political disputes, the new disputes is now over “India” versus “Bharat” which have gained ground since opposition parties in July announced a new alliance – called INDIA – to unseat Modi and defeat his party ahead of national elections in 2024. The acronym stands for Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance.

Stephen Collinson argues in his Cable News Network (CNN) article that “India is likely to go only so far, as its historic non-aligned status evolves into a posture of trying to have a foot in both camps.” According to Collinson, New Delhi has disappointed the West by failing to forcefully condemn Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and has profited from cheap Russian oil following a boycott by US-allied nations. As a rising power that is still regarded as a developing nation, India is a leading member of both the BRICS and the G20.

That aside, the Western world is also against Russia. There are many other differences among the members of G20. The biggest risk of the forthcoming summit is persistent heightened geopolitical and economic antagonism. Developing nations are deeply frustrated with often opaque nature of their relationship with the global north.

The final document, if any, that may be adopted must necessarily reflect a new practical approach towards the Global South, despite having diametrically opposed positions among G20 members.

Bridging the development disparity, and promoting collaboration in addressing the existing shortfalls in the developing nations should be prioritized.

G20 has to continue shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance as its members represent around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world’s population.

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*Kester Kenn Klomegah, who worked previously with Inter Press Service (IPS), Weekly Blitz and InDepthNews, is now a regular contributor to Global Research. He researches Eurasia, Russia, Africa and BRICS. His focused interest areas include geopolitical changes, foreign relations and economic development questions relating to Africa. As a versatile researcher, he believes that everyone deserves equal access to quality and trustworthy media reports.*

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