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 Mylam, Cheryakomni P O, Thiruvananthapuram, Pin: 695013  
 Mobile: 8281107488 E-mail: imdr.research@gmail.com, imdrtvm@yahoo.com  
 Website: https://www.imdrtvm.com

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Chief Editor's Voice

## 20<sup>TH</sup> G 20 SUMMIT: GAIN FOR GLOBAL SOUTH

Dr. C.V. Jayamani

The twentieth G 20 Summit was held in Johannesburg, the biggest city of South Africa and the Capital of Gauteng. Its sprawling Sweto township was once home to the Nobel laureate Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tittu. Johannesburg, also known as “Jozi” or city of gold is South Africa’s largest and the wealthiest city. It is considered the world’s largest man-made urban forest with millions of natural flowering trees.

It would be the first G 20 Summit being held in Africa. African Union became a member of the G 20 during India’s presidency in 2023. Starting from twenty finance ministers meeting following the East Asian financial crisis of 1997 and their upgradation to leader’s summit meeting following the global economic slowdown from 2008, for the last quarter of a century, it had remained a grouping of the world’s largest twenty economies. Now with 55 African Nations joining the elite group with the African Union being conferred permanent membership is a ground-breaking event with far reaching implications. It has happened during the presidency time of India.

This G 20 summit marks the fourth consecutive G 20 Summit hosted in the Global South. South Africa is expected to carry forward the outcomes of previous summits held in New Delhi (2023) and Rio de Janeiro (2024). The theme for this year’s summit is “Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability”. The fundamental change during India’s presidency has been this elite group being

transformed into people’s festival. Nearly eight million Indians were directly or indirectly involved in these proceedings. India’s presidency will also be remembered for bringing Global South to the center stage of G 20. South Africa has prioritized strengthening disaster resilience, ensuring debt sustainability for low- income countries, mobilizing finance for a just energy transition and harnessing critical minerals for inclusive and sustainable growth. Summit will be an opportunity to discuss global issues, adding that to present India’s vision of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” –”One Earth, One Family and One Future”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was welcomed by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa upon his arrival in Johannesburg to attend the G 20 Summit. It has started the sessions on an ambitious agenda to make progress in solving some of the long pending problems that have afflicted the world’s poorest countries. In the discussions world leaders reiterated support for an open, fair, inclusive and rule-based multilateral trading system and called for the need for reform of WTO to make it more responsive to development concerns. South Africa framed the everything under their theme “Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability with a focus on Global South.

G 20 leaders’ declaration in Johannesburg under South Africa’s presidency centers on climate change, debt relief and development justice with a strong political message on

multilateralism, terrorism and global conflict. The document unequivocally condemns terrorism in all forms and manifestations aligning with India's long-standing demand that there are no "good and bad terrorism". Terrorism is against humanity and development. The United States boycotted the event due to diplomatic rift with the host country. But the G 20 Bloc in South Africa adopted a landmark declaration, unanimously agreed upon despite opposition and boycott by the United States

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in about fifteen sessions and met several world leaders on the sidelines of the summit. The key takeaways of PM Modi's six global development proposals at G 20 Summit. The proposals included an Open Satellite Data Partnership and a Critical Minerals Circulatory Initiative. These initiatives elaborate India's approach to growth, development and well-being for all. Bhagavad Gita also focuses on the concept of "Lokasamagraham" which means welfare and wellbeing of all. It may be recalled that the motto of 18<sup>th</sup> G 20 held in New Delhi under the Presidency of Narendra Modi was "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" which means world as one family.

Setting up a global knowledge repository, the Africa Skill Multiplier Programme, the Global Healthcare Response Team and countering the Drug-Terrorist Nexus are the other four initiatives envisaged by the Prime Minister. The Critical Circularity Initiative is aimed at enhancing clean energy transition by boosting recycling, easing supply chain pressures and advancing joint research on critical minerals. The critical minerals circulatory initiative aims to strengthen clean energy transition by boosting recycling, urban mining and second

line battery innovation. It helps to reduce the reliance on primary mining, easing supply chain pressure and pilot recycling facilities in the global south.

During the second session at the G 20 summit in Johannesburg, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's proposal of the G 20 Open Satellite Data Partnership. It aims to make satellite data more accessible and interoperable, especially to support the Global South with the space-based data. Our vision is to make space technology for all of humanity and make space-based data more accessible to global south. It seems to be an era of global south holding G 20 presidency one after another. Starting with Saudi Arabia in 2020 and then Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022 and India in 2023 were followed by Brazil and South Africa holding presidencies for 2024 and 2025.

The success of 20<sup>th</sup> G 20 held at Johannesburg is measured by key outcomes in strengthening the voice of the Global South, advancing climate and development goals, and promoting global financial stability, despite a U.S. boycott. Building on the momentum from India's and Brazil's presidencies, South Africa has continued to centre the agenda on the needs of the Global South. The summit adopted a declaration that emphasized debt sustainability for low-income countries and called for reconsidering traditional development parameters that have historically disadvantaged the African continent. The South African Presidency has focused on the theme "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability" to address global challenges, particularly those impacting developing nation.