

# G20 Summit: Russia-Ukraine conflict to African Union's entry, key takeaways from New Delhi Declaration

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## HomeAnalysis

### Analysis

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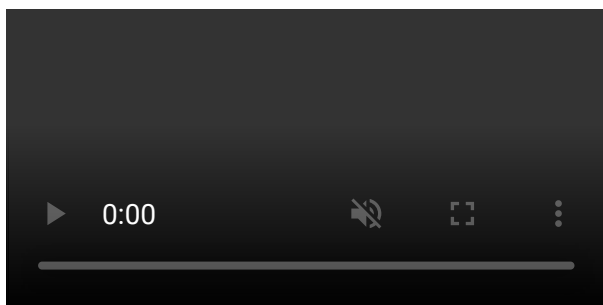
Several commentators highlighted the absence of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin at the G20 Summit held in New Delhi on September 9-10, 2023. They also expressed scepticism with regard to any significant outcomes given the fact that there will be differences over the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Despite the scepticism, members of the G20 were able to come up with a consensus and the New Delhi Declaration was adopted. There was a clear imprint of India on the declaration, with emphasis on 'inclusive growth' and the need for the Global South to have a greater voice. The consensus over the declaration and emphasis on important issues, including clean energy, food security and digital economy which India had been pushing, was clearly an achievement for New Delhi.

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**Here are the significant takeaways from the Delhi G20 Summit:**

### **Russia-Ukraine and supply chains**

On the Russia-Ukraine issue, the joint declaration did not mention Russia, unlike the Bali Declaration (2022) issued during Indonesia's chairmanship of G20. Without referring directly to the conflict, the New Delhi declaration did point to the need for adhering to UN charter, and also said that 'use or threat of nuclear weapons is admissible'. The declaration said, "We call on all states to uphold the principles of international law including territorial integrity and sovereignty, international humanitarian law, and the multilateral system that safeguards peace and stability. The peaceful resolution of conflicts, and efforts to address crises as well as diplomacy and dialogue are critical."

At the same time, it clearly stated that G20 is not just focused on economic issues and it highlighted the impact of the conflict on global supply chains, and how developing countries had been impacted by the disruption. The statement welcomed steps being taken to ensure that food grains and fertilisers from Russia and Ukraine are delivered to developing and least developed countries.

There were two other developments which drew attention. First an India-Europe-Middle East corridor, which includes India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, the European Union, France, Italy, Germany and the US. This corridor will be part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII), a G7 initiative. This project will enhance India's connectivity and could also emerge as an alternative to the BRI.

Advancing Infrastructure Growth, Enhancing Connectivity!

On the sidelines of the G20 Summit, PM [@narendramodi](#) and other leaders joined a special event on Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment & India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.

It will facilitate... [pic.twitter.com/jb1wnDQlor](https://pic.twitter.com/jb1wnDQlor)

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### **African Union's entry into G20**

Apart from the success in building consensus and coming up with a declaration, one of the noteworthy achievements of the Summit was the entry of the African Union (AU), a block of 55 African nations, into the G20. Before banging the gavel and inviting the current Chair of the AU, Azali Assoumani (President of Comoros), Prime Minister Narendra Modi underscored the point that India had supported entry of AU into G20. In June 2023, India had written a letter in support of AU's entry into G20 and this proposal was firmly backed by other members.

Le G20 vient d'entériner, par la voix du Premier Ministre de l'Inde, [@narendramodi](#), l'admission de l'[@\\_AfricanUnion](#) en son sein. Au nom du continent africain, je remercie très sincèrement tous les pays membres du [@g20org](#) pour cette admission historique. [pic.twitter.com/h0XKKUxsRw](https://pic.twitter.com/h0XKKUxsRw)

— AZALI Assoumani (@PR\_AZALI) [September 9, 2023](#)

The New Delhi declaration regarding African Union entry into G20 said, "We welcome the African Union as a permanent member of the G20 and strongly believe that inclusion of the African Union into the G20 will significantly contribute to addressing the global challenges of our time...Africa plays an important role in the global economy. We also reiterate strong support to Africa, including through the G20 Compact with Africa and G20 Initiative on supporting industrialization in Africa and LDCs.."

AU becomes the second regional bloc, after the EU, to have joined G20. The US had supported the entry of AU into G20 apart from India's letter in support. Africa has often been viewed from the lens of natural resources and the continent has accused the West of being patronising.

In recent years, China has been able to increase its economic influence in the region significantly. The entry of AU is important for several reasons. First, it is rich in natural resources and has significant economic potential. Second, India has also extended its outreach vis-à-vis Africa, and while it may not be a competitor, Africa is seeking to reduce its dependence upon China and strengthening ties with many other countries including India. The fact that AU was admitted into the G20 during India's chairmanship is a shot in the arm – though China had also supported the African Union's entry. More importantly, India has reiterated that it would like to be the voice of the Global South and AU's entry into G20 under India's presidency is important in this context.

In conclusion, the entry of AU into the G20 is important for other reasons. The stereotypes regarding Africa, which still persist, are totally skewed. Like other parts of the developing world it is increasingly important in the context of the Global economy. It is also an important achievement for India which hosted the G20 Summit.

The New Delhi declaration and some of the other outcomes clearly show that a zero-sum approach on geopolitical issues is not possible. Not just India, but several other countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE will give precedence to their interests and not want to get trapped into a zero-sum mindset.

Finally, while the G20 Summit has been noteworthy for several reasons for India, it is important to be realistic with regard to the outcomes in the imminent future given the changing geopolitical dynamics as well as the fact that the developing world/Global South is far more diverse and complex than we often perceive it to be.

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