



# G20 SOCIAL SUMMIT 2025 DECLARATION

## PREAMBLE

We, the delegates of the G20 Social Summit, gathered for the first time on African soil, under the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa. United in advancing the theme “Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability”, the G20 Social Summit convened at a time when the global architecture is confronted by deepening inequality, rising conflict and instability, climate fragility, debt vulnerability, financial distress, contestation for critical minerals, and rapid green, blue, circular and digital transitions.

Drawing from Africa’s tradition of inclusive dialogue, consensus-building, and community-driven development, and following a year-long national outreach programme under the South African Presidency including more than 230 community dialogues under the banner of a “People’s G20”, this historic Social Summit represented the collective voice and agency of international organisations, engagement groups, civil society networks, communities, and social partners in shaping a people-centred contribution to the G20 Leaders’ Track.

The Social Summit amplified diverse voices, strengthened social cohesion, and forged collective, consensus-based solutions where every voice matters, including those of workers, youth, children, women, persons with disabilities, immigrants, indigenous communities, traditional and faith leaders, academia, queer communities supporting economic prosperity for all.

Guided by the philosophy of Ubuntu, “I am because we are”, We, the delegates, reflect our collective commitment to inclusive development, ethical

governance, sustainable transitions, and global solidarity herein.

## DIGITAL INCLUSION & EQUITABLE TRANSFORMATION

Digital inclusion and equitable transformation demands a foundation where every individual can connect affordably, access digital resources confidently, and participate safely in the opportunities of a modern economy. Achieving this requires expanding environmentally conscious infrastructure, bridging geographic and linguistic divides, and embedding digital literacy throughout education systems so that no community is left behind. At the same time, a human-centred digital ecosystem that is grounded in dignity, autonomy, cultural identity, and ethical governance is essential to prevent technology from entrenching historic inequities. Rights-based frameworks, community stewardship of data, and participatory structures that elevate youth and indigenous voices strengthen both trust and relevance. Wholistic legislation, accountable governance, and responsible platform design must work together to safeguard all people online, ensuring that digital environments empower rather than expose them. When individuals are connected, skilled, and protected, societies can innovate, transact, learn, and engage fully, we urge the G20 member states to advance a digital future where every community shares in the benefits of transformation.

We call for affordable, equitable access to digital ecosystems, that is alongside universal and relevant digital literacy ensuring that everyone can participate safely and confidently in the digital world. This requires expanding access to People-First infrastructure,



especially in vulnerable groups and embedding digital skills across all levels of education, including teacher training. Together, these actions create resilient, inclusive systems that empower meaningful engagement and opportunity for all.

We urge for the implementation of human-centred, rights-based AI and data governance frameworks that safeguard cultural integrity, protect diverse knowledge systems, and ensure equitable representation of Global South perspectives. Ethical and culturally grounded governance models must prioritise human rights, dignity, and autonomy, creating digital systems that reflect and respect the people they serve.

We call for robust digital safety and cybersecurity measures that protect those disproportionately targeted by online harassment and gender-based digital violence, while eliminating systemic bias in AI to create fair, inclusive, and secure digital environments for all. This requires multistakeholder governance mechanisms with active youth participation, including a Digital Observatory on Children, aligned with international standards to safeguard the rights and needs of children and vulnerable groups.

### **TRADE, RESILIENCE, AND INCLUSIVE VALUE CHAINS**

The rise of protectionism and increased volatility in global markets threaten the stability of multilateral trade, placing additional pressure on economies that are least equipped to absorb such disruptions. We affirm that diversification of products, markets, and supply sources strengthens resilience; however, resilience alone is insufficient to ensure that trade works for all. We underscore the importance of transparent, predictable, and responsive trade governance systems that enable swift adaptation to shocks and structural changes.

The G20 has a critical role in restoring confidence in global trade and ensuring that the benefits of production networks and supply chains are shared equitably. We reaffirm that trade is most transformative when it is inclusive, anchored in a rules-based global trading system that allows indigenous communities, women, persons with disabilities, youth, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and informal cross-border traders to participate meaningfully and

benefit fully. Strengthened collaboration with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on anti-dumping enforcement and fair-trade practices.

We call for strengthened support to the WTO to safeguard the integrity of the rules-based multilateral and regional trading system and respond effectively to the evolving policy environment. There is a need for a pro-development global trade architecture that prioritises cooperation among G20 members to help developing economies build resilient and diversified economies capable of withstanding external shocks such as pandemics, climate change, protectionism, and commodity price fluctuations. A strengthened and development-oriented WTO is essential to accelerating development and industrialisation in the Global South economies.

We encourage the G20 to expand investment and capacity-building initiatives that empower informal traders to enter formal markets. G20 initiatives must advance women- and youth-led SMEs by improving access to blended finance, capacity-building, and market facilitation. Micro-entrepreneurs and locally produced goods and services should be incentivised to strengthen regional value chains. We call for scaled-up investment in trade-related infrastructure, including maritime ports, inland waterways, cross-border facilities, rail, road, and air logistics systems to enhance industrialisation and promote sustainable and inclusive value chains.

### **INCLUSIVE CLIMATE JUSTICE, A JUST TRANSITION AND ENERGY DEMOCRACY**

The world remains off track from the Paris Agreement, with warming projected toward 2.5°C. As the G20 accounts for 77% of global emissions, its leadership is indispensable in meeting 2030 targets. The climate crisis demands urgent, transformative action grounded in justice, equity, and shared responsibility.

We affirm a people-centred Just Transition as essential to a fair, ambitious, and development-oriented global climate response. This approach moves the world beyond mitigation-only, prescriptive, and siloed sectoral models toward a holistic and integrated framework that recognises diverse national circumstances and capacities. We underscore that all nations hold an inalienable Right to Development and



must be enabled to pursue equitable pathways toward our shared climate and sustainable development objectives.

We emphasise that the climate crisis must be confronted in a manner grounded firmly in equity, sustainable development, and the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC). For developing nations many of which face carbon-intensive economies, heightened climate vulnerability, and deep socio-economic inequalities the imperative is to balance ambitious climate action with inclusive growth, job creation, and poverty eradication.

At the heart of developing nations' climate response is a people-centred transition Just Transition that places workers, communities, and vulnerable groups at its core. We assert that a well-managed transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient economies can advance global climate ambitions while driving transformative development, reducing poverty, unemployment, and inequality, and strengthening long-term competitiveness, resilience, and shared prosperity.

We call for urgent action to eliminate plastic, chemical, and industrial pollution that threatens biodiversity, food sovereignty and security, human health, and planetary stability.

We urge reparative justice through a Just Transition Facility that channels non-conditional grants and concessional finance to communities, cooperatives, and small enterprises, driving locally led transitions. Integrating debt relief and cancellation mechanisms into climate finance architecture to expand fiscal space for sustainable development. We advocate for the simplification of Access pathways for rural, women-led, youth-led, children and vulnerable groups to ensure measurable, equitable improvements across the globe.

We recognise the urgent need for universal access to affordable, clean energy as a human right by 2030. We argue the transition to harness opportunity from mineral beneficiation and local industrialization for dignified job creation, while offering social protection for workers in fossil-dependent sectors.

## A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCE AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Recognising the outcomes of the recent G20 Africa High-Level Dialogue on Debt Sustainability, Cost of Capital, and Financing Reforms, we note that developing countries continue to face persistent structural distortions in global financial rules and risk assessments that inflate the cost of capital, restrict access to predictable long-term financing, and deepen debt vulnerabilities. Strengthening domestic financial markets is therefore essential to enable developing economies to mobilise local savings, reduce reliance on volatile external flows, and expand inclusive financing instruments.

In advancing the G20's commitment to a more equitable, development-oriented, and responsive international financial architecture, we advocate for further institutional reforms to global financial rules, norms, and practices, including credit rating methodologies, IMF frameworks, and Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) allocation to ensure more transparent, equitable, and predictable assessments of risk for low- and middle-income countries. These reforms must aim to reduce distortions that inflate borrowing costs and constrain access to finance by addressing systemic barriers to global finance, consistent with G20 consensus-building processes.

We support Innovative and Inclusive Financing Mechanisms that lower transaction costs, including remittances, and expand access to long-term financing for sustainable development. This includes leveraging Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and SDR resources for risk-sharing instruments, strengthening the capital adequacy of MDBs by backing ultra-long-term, 'century loans', promoting digital and regulatory reforms for safe and inclusive investment, and considering strategic vehicles such as the harmonisation of African Sovereign Wealth Funds to mobilise domestic resources for long-term development priorities in partnership with public, private, and multilateral actors.

We encourage The Promotion of Sustainable Value Creation and Industrialisation that strengthens local



beneficiation, regional value chains and technology transfer tied to critical mineral sectors. This includes measures that support value-added industrialisation in domestic and regional markets, fosters continental regulatory environments, deepens domestic revenue generation, and regional integration.

We call for Targeted Financing for Vulnerable Groups that develops and promotes financing solutions that are inclusive to people in vulnerable situations, including indigenous communities, women, youth, persons with disabilities, migrants, and queer communities. Such measures should enhance equity, accountability, and sustainable socio-economic transformation.

### BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGS

We note that only 18% of SDG targets are on track, identifying disparities between regions, with Africa experiencing some of the greatest setbacks despite being least responsible for global crises such as climate change, food insecurity, and systemic inequalities.

We recognise the heightened imperative to advance sustainable development, as articulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Pact for the Future, and the African Union's Agenda 2063. We reaffirm that sustainable development can only be achieved through coherent and mutually reinforcing progress across the 5Ps: People Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership, supported by innovative governance frameworks capable of managing competing interests, negotiating complex transitions, and fostering public trust. Their alignment is particularly critical in leveraging the diversity of green, blue, and circular economies through the application of an intersectional approach to development efforts.

We emphasise that effective implementation requires transparent and predictable financing, inclusive governance, and the active participation of all social groups, particularly those most impacted by conflict, economic shocks, and climate disruptions. Advancing these interconnected agendas demands renewed commitment to solidarity, fairness, and shared

responsibility, ensuring that development benefits are equitably distributed and that no one is left behind.

We call for strengthening ethical governance and strong accountability systems through mandatory, regular national reporting to the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), supported by structured, transparent and disaggregated data at sub-national, national, regional and global levels, civil society participation, and evidence-based policymaking.

We strongly encourage closing the SDG financing gap through innovative partnerships, including expanding public-private-philanthropic partnerships, strengthening multilateral financing.

### CONCLUSION

We call for urgent and measurable action from G20 Member States, international organisations, financial institutions, private sector partners, and civil society actors to find inclusive and sustainable solutions that measure progress not only by economic growth, but by dignity, equality, opportunities, and the well-being of all people and the environment.

As part of the long-term impact, we present the G20 Social Summit Legacy Projects as enduring commitments that will carry forward the spirit of South Africa's Presidency. These legacy initiatives are intended to institutionalise people-centred participation, elevate community-driven innovation, advance the rights and inclusion of vulnerable groups, strengthen social justice ecosystems, and ensure that the voices gathered throughout this process remain embedded in future global decision-making spaces. Through this Declaration, we present our shared priorities, commitments, and calls for courageous leadership, renewed solidarity, and a reimagined multilateralism rooted in human dignity.