

PROCEEDINGS REPORT



The Legacy of Argentina's G20 Presidency in 2018: Priorities, Outcomes and Prospects

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Contributors

Rapporteur

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Editors

Dr. Philani Mthembu is the Executive Director of IGD. Prior to joining IGD, Dr. Mthembu pursued a joint doctoral programme (Dr. rer. pol.) with the Graduate School of Global Politics, Freie Universität Berlin (Germany), and the School of International Studies at Renmin University, Beijing (China); on the topic of the rise of emerging powers as sources of development cooperation in Africa. Dr. Mthembu is a co-founder of the Berlin Forum on Global Politics (BFoGP), a non-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of academic, expert, and public understanding of global politics. He is an alumnus of the Managing Global Governance Programme established by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, designed for young professionals from emerging economies. As an expert, he has actively participated in various international conferences, symposia, and workshops related to global politics. He received his Masters in International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, where he headed the Academic Development Programme for first year students and was elected as an independent candidate to the Student Representative Council.

Ms. Faith Mabera is a Senior Researcher at IGD. Ms. Mabera has a Masters degree in International Relations obtained in 2014, a BA Honours degree in International Relations obtained in 2011 and a BPolSci degree in International Studies obtained in 2010, all from the University of Pretoria. Her research interests include the Responsibility to Protect, African diplomacy, African foreign policy and human security.

Design

Mr. Wayne Jumat

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AfDB	- African Development Bank
ASEAN	- Association of South East Asian Nations
AU	- African Union
BAPA	- Buenos Aires Plan of Action
BRICS	- Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CAADP	- Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CARICOM	- Caribbean Community
EU	- European Union
FES	- Frederich Ebert Stiftung
G20	- Group of Twenty
G7	- Group of Seven
ICT	- Information and Communications Technology
IGD	- Institute for Global Dialogue
IMF	- International Monetary Fund
NEPAD	- New Economic Partnership for African Development
TRIMS	- Trade-Related Investment Measures
UN	- United Nations
WIPO	- World Intellectual Property Organisation
WTO	- World Trade Organisation

Background

The Institute for Global Dialogue, in partnership with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) hosted a seminar at the Burgers Park Hotel in Pretoria on September 26, 2018, on the theme *The legacy of Argentina's G20 presidency in 2018: priorities, outcomes and prospects*. The seminar, which was a follow-up to the seminar hosted previously during July 2018, sought to reflect on Argentina's outgoing G20 presidency, in terms of the outcomes flowing from its agenda, the challenges and the prospects for the G20 agenda building on the 2018 priorities

Seminar objectives

With a focus on the benefits for Africa and the general key focus areas of the Argentine Presidency of the G20, the seminar brought together wide-ranging participants including scholars, academics, diplomats, government representatives, media and civil society. The seminar sought to achieve the following objectives:

- To reflect on what has been carried over from previous G20 summits, including the German 2017 presidency
- To deliberate on what Argentina's G20 legacy has been under its presidency
- To gauge which working processes and thematic issues will be taken forward under Japan's presidency in 2019

This proceedings report presents a synthesis of the discussions at the seminar and summarizes key policy recommendations and implications.

Introduction



Argentina chaired the G20 presidency under the theme *Building Consensus for Fair and Sustainable Development*. Emphasizing fair and sustainable growth as a pillar of development, three priorities were central under Argentina's presidency: the future of work, infrastructure for development, and a sustainable food future. On the back of an ambitious domestic agenda, Argentina's calendar has certainly been a loaded one, hosting 84 working group meetings, 48 Sherpa meetings, 28 finance meetings, and 7 engagement group meetings culminating with the Leaders' Summit. Argentina's President Mauricio Macri was also keen to utilise the G20 platform to advance the interests of the Latin American and Caribbean region and the Global South more broadly.

This dialogue sought to take stock of Argentina's outgoing G20 presidency, reflecting on the outcomes flowing from its agenda, challenges and prospects for the G20 agenda building on the 2018 priorities. Questions that guided this dialogue were: what has been carried over from previous summits, including the German 2017 presidency? What will Argentina's legacy be? Which working processes will be taken forward under Japan's presidency?

Panel Discussion

Ms. Faith Maberera – Senior Researcher, IGD



Setting the scene for the event, Ms. Maberera commenced by indicating that the IGD was a key participant in the T20 summit, hosted in Buenos Aires from the 16th to the 19th September 2018.

The theme of Argentina’s presidency was building consensus for sustainable development, focusing on three priority areas: infrastructure for development, future for work, and a sustainable food future. Some of the key task forces were created around the three priority areas such as future of work, cooperation with Africa, 2030 agenda for SDGs, climate action, construction for development, food security and sustainable agriculture, gender economic equity, trade investment and tax cooperation, international financial architecture for stability and development. The IGD participated in task forces on The Future of Work and Education for the Digital Age, Cooperation with Africa, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ms. Maberera indicated that these task forces came up with 20 key policy proposals captured in the 2018 T20 Communiqué. For instance, relevant to the future of work and education for the digital age, the T20 urged the G20 to ensure that the menu of policy options for the Future of Work is flexible enough to address the range of challenges that G20 countries face; and the creation of a T20 platform for accelerating the jobs of the future. Pertinent to education, a proposal called for the reform of curriculums to cater for competency development and non-formal learning initiatives. For climate action and infrastructure development, the T20 called

for the implementation of comprehensive green fiscal reforms to stimulate the development and use of cleaner energies. Furthermore, for the first time there was a joint statement by the B20, C20 and T20 on climate action with 6 key policy proposals including mainstreaming climate resilience, follow-up of national targets with long-term strategies and alignment of financial institutions with green fiscal reforms. Other notable proposals include the promotion of a trade system with mechanisms to compensate losers from trade; strengthening cooperation on corporate taxation and a fair international tax regime; alignment of G20 reporting the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF 2019) collective reporting on domestic implementation of the 2030 Agenda; and promoting a sustainable food future by attending to consumer needs, reductions in food loss and waste and aligning finance to compliance with safeguards to encourage a global food system that is sustainable and promotes healthy diets.

President Mauricio Macri also sought to position the Argentina G20 presidency as a 'Southern point of view' by placing a development agenda at the centre of the G20 and to convey the voice of the South American region. The emphasis on advancing the interests of the global South is also relevant for South-South cooperation as Buenos Aires prepares to host the UN High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation in 2019, marking 40 years since the adoption of the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (BAPA). The G20 presidency and the ensuing BAPA+40 are significant in Argentina's foreign policy projections in view of its efforts to embody the voice of Latin American and the Caribbean and the pursuit of a broadened stakeholder engagement, including increased representation from the Global South.

Ms. Maberá concluded her discussion by highlighting elements of the Japanese G20 presidency for 2019. It is envisioned that the Japanese presidency will focus on themes such as infrastructure development, Small and Medium Enterprises, fiscal sustainability, a continued focus on the compact of Africa in partnership with the African Development Bank (AfDB), and science, technology and innovation.

Prof. Gladys Lechini – National University of Rosario



Prof. Lechini commenced by highlighting Argentina's approach to its G20 presidency within the broader aims of Argentina's foreign policy and within the context of difficult domestic social and economic settings. In terms of Argentina's domestic setting, it has faced a period of declining

macroeconomic indicators and the erosion of the local political capital of Macri's administration. This situation triggered a currency crisis in April 2017, which forced the Argentine government to request a USD 50 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This was the biggest credit granted by the IMF in its history and it implied Argentina's consequent acceptance of certain political-economic conditions.

She indicated that there have been changes in Argentine foreign policy under the new presidency. Most notably Argentina's approach concerning the Malvinas dispute has changed from one that was confrontationalist to one that is more cooperative. Additionally, its general foreign policy approach has shifted from being ideologically driven to one that is more pragmatic especially when issues of the economy arises as Argentina seeks to attract more foreign investment. Lastly, the Macri presidency has concerned itself with the recovery of Argentina's prestige and image in world politics and has set about doing this through: 1) its reprioritisation of its traditional western partners, 2) Argentina's active, critical and open interaction within the globalisation process and 3) improving its relations with international organisations that was headed by the work of the former foreign minister Susana Malcorra. Prof. Lechini pointed out that Argentina's reinvigorated foreign policy approach has been seen in President Macri's official visits to G7 countries and Argentina's participation in and hosting of major international meetings.

Prof Lechini also indicated that the efforts to promote the Argentine G20 presidency by the Mexican and Brazilian G20 Sherpas in China 2016 had clearly been successful and did not go unnoticed. Argentina's presidency was also a first for a country from South America. Argentina set out its agenda to steer the G20 towards the three priorities: future of work ("unleashing human potential", education lies at the core of this issue); infrastructure for development ("spurs growth and productivity"); and food security for a sustainable future (crucial preservation of agricultural lands, which are not renewable). She noted that despite the pressure placed on Argentina by Germany, to continue with the agenda that it put forth during its presidency, Argentina continued to push for its agenda that sought consensus from all G20 countries.

Prof. Lechini continued her discussion of Argentina's foreign policy noting that Argentina's foreign policy strategy can be described as operating on the basis of concentric circles, which places the Americas first with Africa and the broader Global South situated in the second circle. She described Argentina's foreign policy towards African countries as largely impulse-driven. However, she highlighted the Argentina-South Africa relationship as one that has been long-standing and important making South Africa one of the key African countries for Argentina.

Prof. Lechini indicated that the outreach strategy conducted by Argentine G20 Sherpa, Pedro Villagra Delgado, was consultative in nature with a wide range of stakeholders including civil society, think tanks, and regional organisations. This outreach strategy culminated in Argentina's invitation of the following countries and institutions: Spain, Chile (regional partner), the Netherlands (third biggest investor), Jamaica (as a representative of the Caribbean Community), Singapore (as the representative of ASEAN), Rwanda (as a representative of the African Union), Senegal (as the representative from NEPAD), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF). Prof. Lechini also indicated that under Argentina's G20 Presidency, it undertook an African outreach initiative. The Argentine Sherpa also visited South Africa where he met with South Africa's G20 Sherpa, officials at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation

(DIRCO), and other stakeholders from academic and trade institutions. During the G20 presidency, a special relationship developed between Argentina and South Africa (as the only formal African representative).

Prof. Lechini concluded her discussion indicating that the G20 core agenda and development agenda contain several issues that connect Argentina's, South Africa's and African interests and priorities. However, she highlighted the need to make the participation of these stakeholders meaningful that would require a sophisticated understanding of the opportunities, limitations, and operational practices of the G20. Lastly, she proposed that the Compact with Africa should be broadened to encompass countries from Latin America.

Dr. Julius Gatune – Africa Centre for Economic Transformation



Dr. Gatune discussion focused on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and its linkages with the G20 agenda in relation to sustainable food future. He indicated that CAADP is a key driver for agricultural transformation in Africa as it sets a target of 6% annual growth in

agricultural GDP, while making use of a minimum budget of 10% of public expenditures for the agricultural sector. The G20's sustainable food future adds value and impetus to agricultural transformation across Africa especially as attention is given to significant elements such as: responsible and comprehensive use of soils, reduction of food loss and waste, anti-microbial resistance and agricultural innovation. He however warned that more thought also needs to be afforded to the creation of sustainable value-chains for the agricultural sector.

Dr. Gatune went on to discuss crop yields as one of the important factors that farmers consider, citing the example of cassava farming in Ghana where 45% of farmers use improved varieties and only about 30% have the motivation of improved yields. Dr. Gatune then shifted attention to the agricultural markets, noting that 50% of the food across Africa is now sold in urban areas and due to the urbanisation that is taking place across Africa, many poor people in these urban areas depend on easy to make and ready to eat foods. In addition, the growing middle class in Africa is also spurring on changes in the agricultural markets such as increased demands for foods that are not being grown locally, increased varieties, packaging, and health conscious diets. This means that the agricultural industry and trade is experiencing change and growing demand for certain products such as aromatic rice. For example, in 1961, millet was the second most important food in Africa, but by 2011 it was only 11th. This indicates the effects that changing social patterns and market related factors can have on products. Consequently, the question that remains is whether the farmers can adapt to the changes in markets.

Dr. Gatune progressed to discuss transformation in the agricultural sector indicating that it requires addressing many agricultural value chain challenges. For example when it comes to inputs, concerns arise about the quality and cost of agricultural tools, seeds and labour. In terms of production the challenges are often about low or poor crop yields, the skills of labour or the lack of agricultural equipment. Agricultural logistical concerns are evaluation and reports of post-harvest losses, lack of storage facilities, transport shortage and speed, and dealing with middlemen/women. The processing phase inherently means increased funding, a variety of levels of product development, and access to processing equipment. Challenges related to marketing and distribution that the African agricultural sector have to deal with are low product diversity and quality, inability to address changing markets (catering for urban poor and wealthy), and the dominance of informal markets which undercuts value addition and marketing of products.

Dr. Gatune then turned his attention to the relationship between smallholder, medium scale and large-scale farmers. He pointed out that smallholder farmers in Africa will continue to

be the foundation of agriculture and that it will be crucial to shape a healthy ecosystem where all the different types of farmers will be able to benefit from each other. For example, medium scale farmers are able to provide smallholder farmers with equipment that they require thereby diffusing technologies (received from commercial farmers) to them while also having the role of consultants for small-holder farmers. He identified the need to craft policies that will aid the relationships among these farmers. He also proposed that intermediation among these farmers require innovations for middlemen, the use of information, computers and technologies and transport solutions. Middlemen will remain important because they are relatively trusted by small and medium scale farmers, they are able to provide financial services, knowledge of ICT systems and they are perceived to have insightful knowledge of the agricultural markets. He highlighted the importance of equipping small and medium scale farmers with knowledge and skills of technologies in order to prepare them for the fourth industrial revolution that is underway. For example, knowledge about superfoods that have recently been touted for healthy living such as quinoa, teff and kale, can provide farmers with how their products are received not only in local markets but also global markets. This gives them the advantage of being able to produce the correct foods for their respective markets while also offering them better leverage in bargaining for better prices for their products. Additionally, technology can be used to trace their products to their markets to see where there are increases or decreases in demands for their products, the monitoring of their crops and enabling their irrigation systems. For example, through the application of block-chain technology in the Netherlands, consumers of coffee are now able to see where the coffee has been grown and are able to fund the farmers directly.

Lastly, Dr. Gatune offered policy recommendations on how the G20 can assist Africa in achieving a sustainable food future. Firstly, focus must be placed on the production ecosystem through repositioning medium scale farmers and offering support packages that incentivises the three types of farmers to develop a symbiotic relationship. For example, a fund for the transfer of technology could be established for medium and large-scale farmers to use to develop linkages with smallholder farmers. Secondly, support should be given to the development of business models that seeks to link G20 business schools and businesses,

provide for learning visits, and establish credit guarantees to help roll out new business models. Thirdly, policies should be crafted to reposition medium scale farmers that seek to play bigger roles, and funds need to be made available to middlemen who seek loans especially in Africa where 70% of rice farmers get financing from middlemen. Lastly, innovation systems need to be strengthened through the development of strong linkages between universities and Small and Medium Enterprises in agricultural value chains. Additionally, research grants should be made available for universities in the G20 for collaboration to find innovative agricultural solutions.

Mr. Ashraf Patel – Senior Research Associate, IGD



Mr. Patel initially commenced with an analysis of scholars who looked at the successive waves of industrialisation. He indicated that the work of Polyani, who looked at the post-reconstruction period of World War Two, is quite relevant for today as this work focuses on a period of transition. The model

that he referred to was very stable and predictive, characterised by the emergence of industrial production, organised labour, urbanisation, and certain set patterns such as a labour force largely dominated by men.

Daniel Bell's post-industrial society was very much focused on the techno-industrial wave of the 70's driven by work place organisation. Mr. Patel then discussed Castell's focus on what was called the network society. His work focused on the influence of the internet and techno-centric driven globalisation through Information and Communications Technologies (ICT). He noted the convergence of telecommunication, media, mobile technology and the mass miniaturisation of consumer goods (such as cellular phones). Deregulation of corporate strategy could be seen through the outsourcing of services that resulted in the establishment

of support centres in non-traditional locations such as India, Nigeria and other countries where the labour costs were relatively low.

The 4th industrial revolution has been characterised by the rise of micro-work and labour disruption, the rise of the App-economy has resulted in the weakening positions of labour unions. In terms of structural drivers, Mr. Patel drew on the work of Prof. Andreoni who has spoken about the changes in the productive and industrial policies especially due to the rise of technology use in the economies. There is a need to move towards smarter industrial policies. These changes have been more pronounced in developing countries, especially due to the lack of industrialisation in these countries. Additionally, manufacturing sectors in developing countries have broadly lagged behind the developed world. This can in fact be a target area within the G20 to assist in creating a more inclusive global economy. Additionally, the belief is that complex target industrial policies with a developmental character that straddles the value chains of research and development, designs, supply and production.

Mr. Patel then looked to discuss two scenarios of the nexus of development, the 4th industrial revolution and the potential of South Africa to harness the opportunities that are made available for development. In terms of scenario A, Mr. Patel discussed the capacity of middle-income economies to climb up the global value chains. He questioned whether South Africa's diplomatic and trade and industry elites have the negotiating skills to get: access to technology development platforms and capacity building for Manufacturing Value added growth; open hardware and software access in selected sectors and technology; smart manufacturing hubs (e- cars, smartphones, Agricultural technology), co-development of new products and services in the 4th industrial revolution; better terms at WIPO and TRIMS agreements; and ICT for development and broadband models for developing nations. Mr. Patel then progressed to scenario B, indicating that African countries (inclusive of South Africa) finds themselves in this pattern where there seems to be a continuation of the decades old international financial institution and World Bank Donor Dependency model. Additionally market access is regulated through donor aid. This scenario has resulted in

Africa's dependence on technology and tech-support from Original Equipment manufacturers (OEM).

Mr. Patel continued with his discussion this time turning his attention to technology and inequality where he made use of the 'Uber-economy' and Amazon to indicate the growth of disparaging wealth gaps and the displacement of workers from the economy. He noted that the regulations are more protective of the society and should definitely be studied and adapted to local conditions across the developing world.

The current situation is one where Africa and Latin America remain technological dumping grounds. However, one place where we can see an opportunity to reclaim some of the innovation is in the rise of the 3D movement which makes innovation easier for ordinary citizens.



Discussion



Dr. Mthembu highlighted the challenge of building consensus within the G20 especially with such varying challenges and development targets of individual countries. In addition, the persistent challenge for Africa is ensuring that technology and development opportunities are utilised in a manner that is inclusive of the neglected

communities and that are beneficial to societies because Africans are facing a situation where agricultural products are displaced, and then reintroduced to the African markets, such as sorghum. Opportunely, the issues that have been identified under the Argentine G20 presidency are important to the African continent such as sustainable infrastructure, sustainable agriculture and food security and the 4th industrial revolution.



Dr. Mthembu put forward that we need to consider how we can tap in to the existing capacities in South Africa to inform our approach domestically to address the challenges of the 4th Industrial revolution. Further, we need to apply pressure, as South Africans, on our government and international relations apparatus to utilise

the ability and presence that South Africa has within the WTO. Lastly, he proposed that we need to consider means of ensuring that this particular G20 outreach by Argentina is carried on in the next presidency, and how the Argentina-African relationship can be strengthened in the long term.

Some of the concerns that were expressed by members from the audience were that civil society, or citizen stakeholders, should take responsibility of where funds are spent. Additionally, decisions that are made at the G20 need to be meaningful to ordinary citizens. It was also pointed out that South Africa also needs to start changing its approach of presenting itself as the gateway to Africa particularly for two reasons. Firstly, other African countries have economies that are improving and are attracting more and more investments such as Kenya, Rwanda, Ghana and more. Secondly, it does not help South Africa's desired role as an important advocate for African interests in the multilateral forums because it is taken up as arrogance or perceived self-importance.



Mr. Patel indicated that there growing discourse on the right to inclusive development that is contained in the UN Charter. Developing countries should consider de-linking and shifting the paradigm away from current development, trade and economic models, and in fact consumers in the Global North are beginning to protest around this techno-centricity and capitalistic nature of their economies. Furthermore, there also needs to be stronger regulation that protects society such as that of the EU which has been able to successfully challenge Amazon and Google who are evading tax that impact on government's ability to address societal challenges.

Prof. Lechini cautioned that expectations of continuing the African outreach from an Argentine perspective should be tempered given where Argentina's interests lay in terms of economic focus and the focus of its foreign policy that prioritises economic growth and its immediate region. However, improvement of Argentina's relations with Africa is not impossible. Commonalities need to be found and constantly worked on. Economic relations also need to be further improved.

Closing Remarks

2018 is a significant year as it marks 10 years of the existence of the G20, which has arguably emerged as the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It is important to recall that the establishment of the G20 stemmed from the 2008-09 global financial crisis which demanded a coordinated response to strengthening the international financial regulatory system and implementation of prudent macro-economic policies that would ensure stability, enhance fiscal and monetary stimuli and structural reform for global economic growth.

In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, the agenda of the G20 has broadened to reflect the complex and interconnected, evolving global landscape beset by political, socio-economic and existential crises. The range of crises include climate change, political crises that lead to high refugee flows, the resurgence of populism that undermines social cohesion, threats of trade protectionism and growing discontent with economic globalisation on the back of pervasive horizontal and vertical inequality. In addressing the complexity of these issues, the G20 has also been pressed to evolve accordingly by embracing the role of facilitator for structural change at the global and domestic levels. This evolution has implications for the broader questions of relevance, legitimacy, and representativeness; bearing on the G20's working methods, thematic priorities, stakeholder engagement and composition of membership.

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By revisiting the fact that the G20 is a forum borne out of crisis, it is imperative to constantly reflect on its successes and failures in the past decade; the added value it brings to the discourse on global governance and multilateralism; and the adaptability of its governance capacities to manage geopolitical dynamics while delivering on social contracts, building consensus, restoring trust and enhancing global solutions.

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Programme

The legacy of the Argentina's G20 presidency in 2018: priorities, outcomes and prospects

Date: 26 September 2018

Venue: Sheraton Pretoria Hotel, 643 Corner Stanza Bopape St, Arcadia, Pretoria.

- 09h00-09h30: Arrival & registration
- 09h30-09h45: Welcome remarks
Dr Philani Mthembu, Executive Director IGD
Mr Heinz Bongartz, Country director, FES
- 09h45-10h00: Setting the scene: What has been Argentina's G20 legacy? Perspective from the Think 20 Engagement group – *Ms Faith Mabera, Senior Researcher, IGD*
- 10h00-10h30: Reflections on Argentina's G20 presidency: has it represented the voice of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Global South? – *Prof Gladys Lechini, National University of Rosario*
- 10h30-10h50: Coffee break
- 10h50-11h20: A sustainable food future: policy linkages between the G20 & Africa
Dr Julius Gatune, ACET
- 11h20-11h50: The future of work: the G20 policy context and leveraging technological and industrial innovation for Africa's development. *Mr Ashraf Patel, Senior Research Associate IGD*
- 11h50-12h15: Discussant
Dr Philani Mthembu, Executive Director IGD
- 12h15-13h00: Q &A
- 13h00-13h10: Concluding remarks & vote of thanks
Prof Lesiba Teffo- Director, School of Transdisciplinary Research Institutes, UNISA.

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