

C20 FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ



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PREMISE

During 2021, the C20 has continued its commitment, renewing the calls of the international civil society and fostering the dialogue with the G20.

We do this to contribute to building a better world. The world we want to build is comprised of sharing our values, skills and vulnerabilities. It is not a world built only on the strength of the “strong” who are then able to include the “weak” or less fortunate, economically or otherwise. Instead, the world we want is built on a foundation of humanizing and beneficial relationships that share beauty, vulnerability, and skills, founding our societies on the framework of human rights, linking all us in a bond of co-responsibility that at the same time shows and protects the dignity of all human beings.¹ The disparities between what we want to build and what is here today is acutely evident in our times; the COVID pandemic has magnified and exacerbated the vulnerability of all, sparing no jurisdiction nor person. In doing so, the pandemic also showed us that it can be overcome only by sharing knowledge, resources and initiatives. The pandemic revealed a world that was unseen before, where there are no differences between developed and developing countries; a world where we all are developing countries towards justice and dignity, towards a sustainable development based on the respect of human rights, of gender equality and the struggle against all discriminations.

Guided by this perspective, as an Engagement Group, we insisted on the role the G20 should play at the service of, and not in competition with, the multilateral system, particularly in these years affected by a pandemic that involves all persons and countries of the world.

We asked the G20 to be **“stronger in fostering UN frameworks and goals, faster in sharing its financial power, clearer in promoting human rights at home and in the international arena and accountable on its commitments.”**²

While we welcome the effective and inclusive dialogue with some G20 Working Groups, we remain concerned with the sharp asynchronies in the openness, transparency and opportunities for substantive civil society engagement with the process of many other Working Groups, such as the Trade and Investment WG as well as the Finance Track in its entirety. This created tangible difficulties in interacting with the G20 process on economic and financial issues, despite the cordial and continued interaction with the representatives of the Presidency. We therefore reiterate our call for a much deeper integration between **the G20 Sherpa and Finance Tracks in one comprehensive track** with common and consistent modalities for civil society participation, under the responsibility of the Sherpas and Heads of Government.

We renew this call, insisting on the importance of the policy coherence. We consider the **joint ministerial meetings** organized this year as positive step that should be maintained and increased in the next years and we propose again to institutionalize a joint Ministerial Meeting **Development and Finance**.

We also call for an institutionalization of a Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting and of official mechanisms to ensure gender mainstreaming in each G20 Working Group.

¹ Ref. Building a sustainable future for all. C20 Policy Pack 2021 p.5

² Ref. Building a sustainable future for all. C20 Policy Pack 2021 p.8

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

Under the framework of the human rights, we have been guided by **four** overarching principles: the stubborn determination to **leave no one behind**; the necessity of a **gender-transformative approach**; the need for a **comprehensive vision for a real sustainability** and the **policy coherence** to link together the future of the planet and of humankind. This means taking care of *vulnerabilities*, protecting *diversities* and *biodiversity*, putting at the center of the policies women and girls in all their diversity, promoting the *One Health approach*, fostering meaningful environmental and energy policies together with the UN Principles on business and human rights (PBHR) to guide the just transition by tackling together the climate, environmental and social challenges.

Guided by these principles and priorities, the C20 WGs agreed on many recommendations for the G20, presented in our Policy Pack and shared in several opportunities with the G20 officials. Here, we would like to present its highlights in this Communiqué to request bold policy responses, in scope and scale, in order to address the immediate emergencies as well as the underlying structural roots of the situation, as the G20 is approaching its final Summit on the 30 and 31 October.

Building on the three priorities of *People, Planet and Prosperity* which guided the G20 Italian Presidency this year, our recommendations are instead channeled through the framework of ***People, Planet and Democracy***. **No prosperity in fact is possible without the inclusion and the active participation of all!**



People

The impact of the pandemic exacerbated the **deep inequalities** in the world, among and within countries. A strong initiative is still urgent to protect people, support the economies and invest to shape a better world.

Looking both at the current emergency situation today, and the ongoing need for strengthening **global and national health systems**, the G20 must be proactive in fostering the multilateral initiative on **Prevention, Preparedness and Recovery** based on a renewed and stronger leadership of the WHO.

This commitment has to be fulfilled within a concrete responsibility to ensure Universal Access to Health Coverage, a goal that can be reached only through robust public health systems.

Meaningful and inclusive participation of communities and civil society are fundamental for effective health systems that must be **human rights-based, people-centered, equity-focused, and designed through a gender-transformative lens**.

Careful attention must be given to provide adequate **social protection floors** to everyone at all stages of the life cycle by ensuring that all human beings in all their diversity have access to livelihood, to health services, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, are able to address lifecycle risks and shocks, as well as face vulnerabilities created by systematic and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence, including gender-based violence.

A strong action has to be taken towards **tax and financial justice** to provide the needed resources to support inclusive economies based on the respect of workers and consumers by recognizing the value of care and unpaid work.



Planet

This year, the G20 has an opportunity to be a G20 of historic importance, and the field where the G20 will show its real will, coherence, and leadership is the decision on the **TRIPS waiver on vaccines and COVID-goods**. The distribution of the vaccines is outrageously unequal in the world, maintaining the poorest part of the world in more vulnerable conditions and, on the other hand, keeping the world exposed to new strands of the virus. The pledges to donate vaccines are unbelievably far from the real needs. **The only way to increase in the vaccines' production is the TRIPS waiver**. We call the G20 to clearly support this proposal in the WTO. Any veto on the waiver is only to maintain the power in the hands of the private companies that reached an oligopolistic primacy thanks to the public resources provided internationally. **People's lives come before power and profit!**

The climate crisis is already creating very worrying impacts for people and the planet. This year we have reached a new level of awareness of the kinds of problems that await all of us, as we have witnessed and continue to witness extreme and anomalous events, from continuous heat waves to tornadoes and floods, from severe fires to widespread and severe droughts in many parts of the world. This crisis is accompanied by the enormous loss of biodiversity, which undermines the very basis for life and at the same time worsens and is exacerbated by the climate crisis. All of this is having devastating effects.

As the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have shown, we are not separate from each other, not just as human beings but also as human beings and Nature.

We call on a strong commitment **to protect the health of people and the planet consistently**. We welcome the frequent mentions of the One Health Approach in the G20 documents, but we point out that this is ineffective if rigorous and concrete commitments and road maps are not put in place coherently. **The actual pandemic proves that One Health systems are only as strong as its weakest links.**

We call on the G20 to tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis head-on, and moving out of rhetoric, working towards a collective commitment to limit global warming to 1.5°C and reviewing national commitments (NDCs), which the UNFCCC Synthesis Report currently shows are leading to a global temperature increase of at least 2.4°C.

We call also for ending **fossil fuel subsidies** as soon as possible and introducing carbon pricing in a rational way to promote a fair, just, and rapid decarbonization of the economies, making real the promise to phase out coal by 2030. We recommend avoiding false solutions representing risks for the emission reductions, such as nuclear energy, Carbon Capture and Storage technologies and the use of Fossil Gas as a transition Fuel.

We urge that the commitment to allocate at least **\$100 billion annually** by 2025 (Paris Agreement) be kept, and that the financial system be aligned and support the transformation.

To do that, G20 countries must make **climate risk disclosure mandatory** for companies and financial institutions on the basis of the TCFD work as well as include nature related risks and impacts, endorsing the Task-Force for Nature- Related Financial Disclosures (TNFD). We need significant commitments from the G20 at the international level, in the multilateral framework provided by the COP 26 as well as clear and bold initiatives at the domestic level.

G20 must support the imperative of conserving and restoring ecosystem integrity to **biodiversity conservation**, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the prevention of future zoonotic pandemics.



Democracy

We believe that the G20 should contribute to pave the way for a Global Goal for Nature that commits governments to take urgent action to halt the loss of nature. Root causes and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss must be targeted by outlining a series of goals to address the pressures of unsustainable production and consumption on our ecosystems. To reduce the footprint of industrial agriculture and fisheries by supporting transition processes and to promote more resilient and **sustainable agriculture** everywhere, like *agroecology*, is essential.

We need a **just and equitable transition**. As the world increasingly uses more clean, renewable, and efficient energy sources and various forms and types of work that are emerging in our times, workers' and communities' rights and livelihoods must be recognized and supported through sufficient social interventions and other necessary actions.

Protecting peoples' and the planet's life is not enough if fundamental rights and freedoms are not ensured.

The first concern comes from the burden of the **gender inequality** that we still see in all aspects of our societies. Too often **women and girls are victims of exclusion, discrimination and violence, which acts to stifle their potential as agents of change and hurts their opportunities to be included in the design and the implementation of all** policies and in all decision-making processes thus ensuring their full political participation.

A preliminary step is the role assigned to **education** as a fundamental tool to foster awareness of human rights and to build **global citizenship**. Also, education is strictly linked with lifelong learning that has to be ensured to all persons and workers to build a democratic culture.

A further step concerns the economic space. The **UN Principles of Business on Human Rights** must be approved and implemented by the G20 members, as well as internal legislation to preserve the workers right in what is sometimes only called 'just transition'. In particular, we think to the right of people engaged in the increasingly flexible jobs generated by the digitalization of the economy, as the platform workers. A lot still has to be done to remove salaries inequalities and discriminations. **No prosperity is possible when someone is exploited and the distribution of power is unequal.**

A wider observation is on the participation of all in shaping our communities and societies and playing an active role in the economic and social sphere. There we see several risks that are relevant in the medium and long run.

The way **digitalization** is entering the economic and the social sphere is critically important. Digitalization could be a unique contribution to the participation at the political processes, to the effectiveness of health services and education but it must be well-governed with the robust participation of various stakeholders including civil society and women's organizations. In fact, digitalization can widen inequality in any sector (health, education, labour, etc.) due to the **inequitable access** to technology and digital literacy. Therefore, digitalization can strengthen the division of rich and poor, widening the urban-rural gap, increasing gender inequality, affect people with disability, and other form of vulnerabilities due to discrimination. We mention here that Artificial Intelligence (AI), which is an outgrowth of advances in digitalization, can greatly exacerbate these disparities, and needs greater policy attention from the G20 across policy domains.

Insufficient protection of **personal data** is a real threat of people's lives and for our democracies. Stronger concerns are coming from the concentration of power in the virtual

economy and in the ownership of the Internet. Big international companies and platforms, most often not transparent, can play a potential role stronger than the states. Then, the **lack of transparency** allows the diffusion of **fake news, virtual attacks** and **harassment** that are poisoning the democratic debate.

Corruption, secrecy and organized crime have thrived in a world where vast amounts of resources have been quickly mobilized bypassing long-established **anti-corruption enforcement mechanisms**, processes and best practices. As a result, the extensive misappropriation of funds is putting increasing strain on the attainment of equitable and sustainable global development. To tackle corruption related to organized crime is fundamental to enable **stronger participation of civil society**. It can be fulfilled by ensuring accessible freedom of information and right to information laws, using digital methods for persons reporting and whistleblowing, supporting civil society initiatives, and upholding freedom of expression, association and assembly, which means to put UDHR into action.

Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, **'leave no one behind'** in the local governance, promoting the construction of **spaces facilitating participation is essential**. The attention should be paid to the spaces of the **rights holders** (as opposed to the stakeholders only), leaving no one's voice behind. This includes a rights-based approach, guaranteeing and protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs).

Also essential is building and strengthening **multi-sectoral partnerships for development** according to principles and contents of the 2030 Agenda (including a reference to SDG 17) through improved channels for CSO engagement and full participation in public policy development is mandatory.

For the goals above mentioned the **financial** dimension is decisive. The G20 should aim to widen the government **fiscal space** in order to effectively respond to the short term needs while addressing a longer haul approach to development.

The G20 must encompass a multilateral, fair and transparent framework for **debt resolution** under the aegis of the UN, which can adequately recognize the systemic nature of the debt crisis, the co-responsibilities of lenders and borrowers, and provide a legally binding framework for private sector participation.

Additional liquidity to face current challenges is urgently needed; the support to the proposed SDR release and recycling to LMICs is a first step, but the amount of 650 MUSD falls very short of the actual needs.

A FINAL CALL AGAINST VIOLENCE

As a final step we raise our concern on the **threats to dialogue** and the corresponding **growing degree of arrogance and violence**. We see it in many examples, from the *shrinking civic space* to the criminalization and stigmatization of *human rights defenders*, from gender-based violence and *verbal violence on the net* to the *physical abuses* and the *armed conflicts*. The same arrogance that refuses the dialogue, quickly becomes a legitimization of the violence.

We call on all the G20 countries for concrete actions to ensure spaces of democratic dialogue and to **put an end to the violence against human rights defenders**. Persons and civil society actors must be protected from violence, arbitrary investigations and detentions.

Violence is affecting our societies in several ways and we denounce the infesting degree of gender-based violence (GBV) we are seeing today. This deeply-rooted violence is systemic, and it must be addressed as a **structural phenomenon**. **To do so we must** leave behind a reliance on emergency-based approaches. Urgent concrete actions are needed by all G20 countries.

Ultimately, we raise our concern and our sorrow about what is happening in the **areas of conflict**, and recently in **Afghanistan**, where democratic and development processes have been stopped and women and girls are under grave threat. **The wars kill human lives. The deprivation of liberties kills human dignity.**

We dedicate our actions and commitments, as international civil society and Civil 20, to all the victims of any kind of violence and in particular to those who are deprived of freedom. **No goals on People, Planet, Democracy and Prosperity are achieved when at least one is left behind, under the violence and the deprivation of freedom.** Let us learn the hard lessons of this pandemic, and let us acknowledge and take action on this fact we have seen demonstrated: that what affects one, affects all.



The C20 is the Engagement Group of the G20 gathering more than 560 organizations and networks from more than 100 countries working for justice and sustainable development and fighting inequalities.

Website: civil-20.org
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The C20 2021 structured its activity in 8 (WGs) Working Groups (2030 Agenda-Development, Global Health, Climate-Biodiversity-Ecological Transition, Global Citizenship-Education, Gender, Digitalization, Anti-corruption, Finance) and 1 task force (Labour) organizing several virtual meetings with a very vital interaction within the C20 constituency. The result has been the release of several Communiqués of the C20 WGs and of the Statements signed by the C20 Steering Committee, and in some cases jointly signed by other Engagement Groups. The main document collecting the analysis and the recommendations of the C20 WGs is the Policy Pack delivered to the G20 members.

Also, several C20/G20 Official Dialogues has been organized and participation in some official events in the G20 process has been ensured.

