

T20  SOUTH
AFRICA
2025

Midterm Conference

Consolidate and Sustain

P R O G R A M M E

19 – 20 June 2025

Kgorong Building, UNISA, Pretoria, South Africa

Hosted by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), and the Institute for Pan-African Thought and Conversation (IPATC)

#T20SA

www.t20southafrica.org



Dear Esteemed Delegate,

On behalf of the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), and the Institute for Pan-African Thought and Conversation (IPATC), we welcome you to the T20 Midterm Conference.

This gathering marks a pivotal moment in the T20 process under South Africa's historic G20 Presidency. The Think20 (T20), as the official G20 engagement group for think tanks and research institutions, plays a critical role in shaping evidence-based policy recommendations that respond to our most pressing global challenges. From accelerating climate justice and inclusive development to navigating the digital transition and strengthening multilateral governance, the T20 offers a platform where knowledge meets action.

The Midterm Conference provides a timely opportunity to assess the progress of the five thematic Task Forces, deepen cross-regional collaboration, and refine policy outputs ahead of the G20 Leaders' Summit. It is also a space for building solidarity across disciplines, geographies, and sectors - a space where diverse expertise converges in pursuit of shared global priorities.

We are honoured by your participation. Whether you are joining as a scholar, policymaker, civil society leader, or emerging voice in global governance, your contribution is essential to the success of this process. We look forward to rich exchanges, thoughtful reflection, and actionable outcomes that speak to the spirit of cooperation and innovation that defines the T20.

Welcome to Pretoria, and thank you for being part of this important journey!

Warm Regards,

Ms. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos
CEO,
The South African Institute of
International Affairs
(SAIIA)

Dr. Philani Mthembu
Executive Director,
The Institute for Global Dialogue
(IGD)

Prof. Siphamandla Zondi
Director,
The Institute for Pan-African
Thought and Conversation
(IPATC), University of
Johannesburg

DAY 1

Thursday, 19 June 2025

Closed Session

08:30 – 09:00 : Arrival and Registration

09:00 – 09:15

WELCOME REMARKS

- **Prof. Siphamandla Zondi** - Director, The Institute for Pan-African Thought and Conversation, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

09:15 – 11:00

T20 TASK FORCES CLOSED WORKING SESSION TO FINALISE STATEMENTS

11:00 – 11:30 : Break

11:30 – 13:30

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP WORKSHOP

- **Mr. Enrique Mendizabal** - Executive Director, On Think Tanks

13:30 – 14:30 : Lunch



Commencement of T20 Midterm Conference

14:30 – 14:40

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMME

Ms. Sanusha Naidu - Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD)

14:40 – 14:55

OPENING REMARKS

- **Prof. Puleng LenkaBula** - Principal and Vice-Chancellor, UNISA, South Africa
-

14:55 – 15:10

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

- **Cllr. Nasiphi Moya** - Mayor, City of Tshwane, Gauteng, South Africa (TBC)
-

15:15 - 15:45

MIDTERM REFLECTIONS ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN G20 PRESIDENCY

- **Amb. Xolisa Mabhongo** - G20 Sous Sherpa

15:45 - 16:45

PANEL: G20 WORKING GROUP LEADS

MODERATOR

- **Ms. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos** - South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), South Africa

PANEL

- **Ms. Josephilda Nhlapho-Hlope** - G20 Development Working Group
- **Amb. Xolelwa Mlumbi-Peter** - G20 Trade and Investment Working Group
- **Amb. Anesh Maistry** - G20 Artificial Intelligence Task Force
- **Ms. Pamla Gopaul** - African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)
- **Ms. Mpilo Shange-Buthane** - G20 Food Security Task Force

16:45 - 17:45

PANEL: REFLECTION ON GLOBAL INEQUALITY AND THE ROLE OF THE G20

This panel will explore how the G20 can play a transformative role in addressing global inequality in the global financial system. Equality is one of the core themes of South Africa's G20 presidency and this session offers a timely opportunity to reflect on the structural barriers to a more equitable and representative global economic governance system, particularly for developing and emerging economies to evaluate the G20's current and potential influence in addressing them. The discussion will also consider the voices and needs of the Global South, calling for greater representation, solidarity, and accountability within global economic governance.

MODERATOR:

- **Ms. Jhanvi Tripathi** - Observer Research Foundation (ORF), India

PANEL

- **Dr. Luciana Mendes Santo Servo** - Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Brazil
- **Dr. Richard Ponzio** - Stimson Centre, United States
- **Ms. Dianna English** - Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), Canada
- **Ms. Ann Linde** - Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), Sweden
- **Dr. Tinuade Ojo** - Centre for the Study on Race, Gender and Class, South Africa

18:00 – 21:00 : Dinner

DAY 2

Friday, 20 June 2025

08:30 – 09:00 : Arrival and Registration

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMME

Ms. Sanusha Naidu - Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), South Africa



01

Trade and Investment

09:00 - 10:00

PANEL: TRADE AND INVESTMENT

As the global trading system grapples with rising protectionism and intensifying trade tensions, this session will explore the far-reaching implications of these dynamics for regional trade and cooperation. The framework of the G20 emphasises the call for multilateral solutions, while simultaneously advancing regional integration through initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Beyond trade agreements, this session will reflect on the ripple effects of development-oriented investment and the restructuring of global value chains, raising critical questions about the future of inclusive and sustainable economic integration.

MODERATOR

- **Dr. Axel Berger** - German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), Germany

PANEL

- **Mr. Mahendra Shunmoogum** - Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), South Africa (TBC)
- **Ms. Trudi Hartzenberg** - Trade Law Center (TRALAC), South Africa.
- **Dr. Renato Baumann** - Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Brazil
- **Mr. Pradeep Mehta** - Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS), India
- Representative from the B20 Trade and Investment Taskforce

10:00 - 10:20

Q&A / Discussion



02

Digital
Transformation

10:20 - 11:20

PANEL: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The digital economy presents both unprecedented opportunities and deepening inequalities across the globe. As digital technologies become increasingly concentrated amongst a handful of powerful actors, socio-economic disparities are widening both within and between countries. There are options for leveraging the digital economy for the greater good, however, the concentration undermines the transformative potential of digitalisation for sustainable development. The panel explores how the G20 may promote equitable and meaningful digital inclusion in an increasingly concentrated digital economy - ensuring that digitalisation serves sustainable development rather than deepening global and domestic inequalities - by building on the work of Brazil's Digital Economy Working Group, particularly its emphasis on "meaningful connectivity" that encompasses quality of service, digital skills, and affordable access.

MODERATOR

- **Dr Odile Ayodele** - Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa

PANEL

- **Dr. Deepak Mishra** - Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, India
- **Dr. Hector Cardenas** - Consejo Mexicano de Asuntos Internacionales, Mexico
- **Ms. Teki Akuetteh** - Africa Digital Rights Hub, Ghana
- **Dr. Alison Gillwald** - Research ICT Africa, South Africa

11:20 - 11:40

Q&A / Discussion

11:40 - 12:40

PANEL: FINANCING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Financing for development is a central issue for the G20, given its significant role in addressing global challenges like poverty, inequality, and climate change. Reform of the international financial architecture and the multilateral development banks, sustainably addressing sovereign debt, and ensuring a fair and equitable taxation system are all important elements of financing for development. Against this backdrop, this panel seeks to ponder: What can the G20 do to promote and monitor the implementation of the G20 MDB Roadmap for bigger, better and more effective MDBs? What factors shape the relationship between debt, development and infrastructure in low- and middle-income countries and what needs to be done? How can the G20 address high financing costs for developing economies?

MODERATOR

- **Prof. Daniel Bradlow** - University of Pretoria, South Africa

PANEL

- **Dr. Priyadarshi Dash** - Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India
- **Ms. Hannah Ryder** - Development Reimagined, United Kingdom
- **Dr. Garth Le Pere** - University of Pretoria, South Africa
- **Mr. Artem Levenkov** - Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD), Russia

12:40 - 13:00

Q&A / Discussion

13:00 - 14:00 : Lunch

**04**Solidarity for the
Achievement
of the SDGs**14:00 - 15:00**

PANEL: SOLIDARITY FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGS

The world is now only five years from the Agenda 2030 deadline, yet only 17% of the SDG targets are on track, while 35% are stagnating or regressing. Considering carefully what mechanisms and approaches are required to speed up the implementation of commitments made by the G20 on the SDGs, this panel seeks to ponder: What critical enablers should the G20 focus on? How can SDG enablers be scaled up, and what mechanisms can the G20 propose for an integrated approach to help accelerate the achievement of the SDGs? What economic, fiscal and social policies are necessary to promote equality, and what progress are G20 countries making in that regard? How can the participation of poorer countries in global food value chains be enhanced? How are actions to be accounted for?

MODERATOR

- **Ms. Zamiyat Abubakar** - Southern Voice, Nigeria

PANEL

- **Dr. Hesphina Rukato** - Crisis Action, South Africa
- **Ms. Gala Diaz Langou** - Centre for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth (CIPPEC), Argentina
- **Mr. Daryl Swanepoel** - Inclusive Society Institute (ISI), South Africa
- **Dr. Fabio Veras Soares** - Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Brazil
- **Ms. Mildred Nadah Pita** - Head of Public Affairs and Sustainability, Bayer

15:00 - 15:20

Q&A / Discussion

15:20 - 16:20

PANEL: CLIMATE ACTION AND JUST ENERGY TRANSITION

In seeking to ensure that 'no one is left behind' in securing a transition towards sustainable energy systems, due regard must be given to unique national circumstances. Disparities in access to resources and opportunities are reflected at global, national and local scales, and these could be further exacerbated without concrete efforts to ensure just energy transitions. Simultaneously, these transitions occur in the context of rapidly shifting social, technological, economic and biological systems. The panel will reflect on the recommendations emerging from the T20 task force on climate and energy transitions, drawing on diverse sectoral and institutional perspectives.

MODERATOR

- **Dr. Céline Kauffmann** - The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI), France

PANEL

- **Mr. Gaylor Montmasson-Clair** - Southern Transitions, South Africa
- **Dr. Anbumozhi Venkatachalam** - Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, Indonesia
- **Mr. Stuart Mangold** - Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, South Africa
- **Dr. David Obura** - Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Kenya

16:20 - 16:40

Q&A / Discussion



16:40 - 17:10

PRESENTATION OF THE T20 COMMUNIQUÉ

17:10 - 17:20

CLOSURE

- **Dr Philani Mthembu** - Executive Director, Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), South Africa

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Midterm Conference

Sponsors

The T20 South Africa Secretariat gratefully acknowledges the invaluable partnership and support of the following organisations:

