



[G20 Summit Takes Place Amid Array of Global Challenges](#)

On Monday and Tuesday of this week, the 2024 Group of Twenty (G20) summit was held in Brazil amid a slew of ongoing global challenges and crises. The forum was expected to be more uneventful than those in years past, due to participants' reservations regarding new commitments in the midst of the longstanding conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, as well as increasing U.S.-China competition. The annual gathering was led by Brazilian President Lula, who sought to garner support for his proposed global humanitarian programs focused on combating world hunger and poverty, while also advocating for gender equality and green policies. A skilled diplomat, Lula carefully conceived of a global humanitarian message that exemplified Brazil's traditional conduct of non-alignment within the international community. Analysts noted Lula's contrast with former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, who played a less active role at these international forums, and tended towards more explicit alignment with the United States and its allies. Though, Brazil's international alignment under both leaders has been marked by its consistent ambiguity. Bolsonaro refused to condemn Putin following his invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022. A departure from non-alignment at this event would have been inconsistent with the Brazilian status quo, as Cristiane Lucena Carneiro, an international relations professor at the University of Sao Paulo noted, "Brazilian diplomacy has been strongly engaged in this task, but to expect a substantively strong and consensual declaration in a year like 2024 with two serious international conflicts is to set the bar very high."

[This year's G20 declaration](#) was fraught with neutral language that emphasized, above all, a united commitment to combat humanitarian issues throughout the world. It included strong pledges of support to eradicate poverty and hunger, as Lula launched the "Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty" on Monday. G20 leaders recognized the need for large-scale financing to implement green policies in low-income countries, but did not mention a transition away from fossil fuels. Creon Butler, Director of the Global Economy and Finance Program at Chatham House cast doubt on these efforts stating that, "Because of the economic stress that advanced economies are under and the debt taken on during the pandemic, the likelihood of a steep change in amounts of international public finance for climate action is pretty unlikely." Lula sought support from G20 leaders who agreed to ensure ultra wealthy individuals are effectively taxed, but failed to reach a binding agreement regarding implementation. Advocates have stated that this tax money could be used to finance these global humanitarian efforts, but an implementation of this proposal is unlikely to occur, due to tax law being a heavily national-level issue.

While the documents called for a response to the humanitarian crises that have resulted from Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Israel's actions in Gaza, the omission of condemnatory language was apparent. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz commented, "It is too little when the G20 cannot find the words to make it clear that Russia is responsible [for the war in Ukraine]. It's not what I would have liked." Putin was absent from this year's summit, stating that he would "wreck" the meeting; a statement that came after Ukraine had urged ICC member Brazil to arrest Putin should he arrive.

Numerous world leaders had indicated a pragmatic shift in relations with China, in an effort to boost their economies. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer met with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday, indicating that he would like to reopen a channel for dialogue, having been noted for his interest in increased economic cooperation with China in order to revive the economy. Starmer was met with criticism for his hesitation to

condemn Chinese officials for sentencing 45 pro-democracy figures this past week, replying “It’s about getting the balance right and that’s why I took a pragmatic approach in the interests of this country to further our interests and have frank discussions where they are necessary.” Despite previous pledges to avoid working with communist officials, Argentinian President Milei spoke with President Xi as well, focusing on commitments to increase economic cooperation. In general, Latin America has been increasingly shifting towards China. Roughly a week ago at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit (APEC) held in Peru, U.S. President Biden announced a \$65 million deal to provide Black Hawk helicopters for anti-drug programs. Meanwhile, at the same time, Chinese President Xi then sent a delegation of several hundred business persons to inaugurate the first phase of a \$3.5 billion shipping port seeking to increase trade volume.

To some observers, President Biden’s appearance at recent international events has become predominantly superficial since Former President Trump won the U.S. presidential election a little over two weeks ago. This is because a sentiment exists that the current Biden administration’s commitments could likely be rendered ineffective upon the imminent arrival of the incoming second Trump administration. Thus, it appears as though various countries around the world have been reevaluating and revitalizing their foreign policy in an attempt to prepare for the new U.S. presidency – with some attempting to court favor whilst others engage in a shift away from the United States as a result.