

## **MAINSTREAMING THE AFRICAN UNION INTO THE G20**

**Monday, 1st July 2024 | 15:00-17:00 IST | 10:30 - 12:30 WAT | 11:30 - 13:30  
CAT | 12:30 - 14:30 EAT | 12:30 - 14:30 SAST**

**VIF, New Delhi  
(Hybrid)**

### **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

In 2023 during India's G20 presidency, the African Union (AU) achieved a significant milestone by becoming a full member of the Group of Twenty (G20), marking a pivotal moment for Africa's integration into global economic discourse. This membership presents a unique opportunity for African countries to influence global economic policies in ways that can drive sustainable development and economic growth across the African continent. The G20, as a major global economic cooperation platform, involves the world's largest economies, which collectively represent about 80% of global GDP. Additionally, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has deepened its economic and strategic footprint in Africa, investing in critical sectors such as renewable energy, infrastructure, and technology, which complement the broader G20 objectives and can further leverage African economic strategies.

In the 2023 G20 leaders declaration, India welcomed the African Union as a permanent member of the G20 and expressed strong belief in the AU's contribution to addressing the global challenges of recent times. India commended the efforts of all G20 members which facilitated the AU's accession during its presidency. Acknowledging Africa's crucial role in the global economy, India committed to strengthening ties with and supporting the African Union to realise the aspirations under Agenda 2063. Additionally, India reiterated its strong support for Africa, including through the G20 Compact with Africa and the G20 Initiative on supporting industrialisation in Africa and LDCs, and advocated for further discussions on deepening cooperation between the G20 and other regional partners.

However, the transition into an effective participant in the G20 requires strategic alignment, capacity building, and enhanced collaboration among AU members to present a unified stance on critical issues such as sustainable development and climate action, trade, food security,

health, regional integration and connectivity. Therefore, given this membership, there is an imperative to equip the AU secretariat and country representatives with the requisite knowledge and strategies to navigate G20 processes and leverage this platform for Africa's benefit.

## **OBJECTIVES**

This seminar aims to discuss strategies to enhance the AU's effective participation and integration in the G20. By bringing together leading experts, policymakers, and stakeholders from both the African Union and G20 member states, it will explore actionable steps for effective participation of Africa in the G20 discourse. The focus will be on why and how to develop a coordinated and strategic approach and a road map for the AU to effectively advocate its economic and development agendas, ensuring that Africa's unique challenges and opportunities are adequately addressed in global economic policies.

## **OUTCOMES**

1. Contribution to the current discourse on underlining the AU's engagement in the G20, ensuring that Africa's economic and developmental priorities are effectively communicated and pursued
2. Broad understanding of a Road Map for AU's integration into the G20, well in time for the G20 Summit in South Africa in 2025
3. Increased intra-Africa collaboration through bodies such as AfCFTA, AfDB, UNECA
4. Increased cooperation between Africa and India on a range of bilateral and multilateral instruments

## AGENDA

### INAUGURAL REMARKS: 15:00 – 15:20 hrs

- **Dr Arvind Gupta**, Director, VIF
- **Puneet R Kundal\***, Additional Secretary, East & Southern Africa Division, MEA

### OPENING REMARKS: 15:20 – 15:45 hrs

- **Amb Anil Sooklal**, South African Ambassador at Large for BRICS and Asia
- **Amb Gurjit Singh**, Former Ambassador to Germany, Indonesia, Ethiopia, ASEAN and the African Union

### ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION: 15:45 – 16:30 hrs

- a. Key areas for integration (trade, investment, etc)
- b. Mechanisms for translating G20 recommendations into actionable policies and practices in Africa
- c. Implementation strategies, including capacity building
- d. Role of development partners

**MODERATOR: Mr Pradeep S Mehta**, Secretary General, CUTS International

### PANELLISTS:

**Halima Noor Abdi**, Senior Advisor on Trade in Goods, African Union Commission

**Kwame Owino**, Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Kenya

**Dode Seidu**, Chief Executive, Africa Trade Academy, Accra-Ghana

**Dr Mustafa Taher Ali Saasa**, Chairman, Raj Group of Companies, UAE & Rwanda

**Vera Thorstensen**, Professor, School of Economics in Sao Paulo, Fundacao Getulio Vargas (FGV), Brazil

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

**Dr Ruchita Beri**, Consultant with the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA)

**Dr Swati Singh**, Director, International Trade Policy Division at Confederation of Indian Industry

**Manish Chand**, Founder & CEO, Editor-in-Chief, India Writes Network

### Q&A SESSION: 16:30–16:50 hrs

Participants to ask questions and engage directly with the panellists.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS AND WAY FORWARD: 16:50-17:00 hrs

**Amb. Anil Trigunayat**, Distinguished Fellow, VIF

*\*To be confirmed*