



## Outcomes from the First G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting

The first meeting of the Group of 20 (G20) Foreign Affairs Ministers was held on February 21 and 22 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The meeting was led by Brazil's Foreign Minister, Mauro Vieira, and attended by 45 delegations. At the helm of this year's G20, Brazil's priorities include global governance reform, sustainable development and combating hunger, poverty, and inequality.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The meeting addressed ongoing international tensions and discussed global governance reform.
- Western ministers condemned the war in Ukraine, with calls for Russia to be held accountable for its aggression. There were also calls for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict, with the U.S. facing criticism for its recent UN Security Council ceasefire resolution veto.
- Led by Brazil, delegations recognized the need for reforms in key global institutions like the United Nations, World Trade Organization, World Bank, and IMF to address contemporary global challenges. There was consensus on enhancing access to financing for impoverished nations and increasing the representation of developing countries in governance structures.
- Simultaneous to the Ministerial, the Task Force for a Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty had its debut meeting. The group, open to non-G20 members, is championed by President Lula, who throughout his political career has been a staunch advocate for social justice.
- A second G20 Foreign Affairs Ministers' meeting will be held alongside the UN General Assembly in September, aimed at fostering broader debate on global governance reform.

### SUMMARY

In [his opening speech](#), Minister Vieira highlighted the importance of the G20 as a forum to discuss global issues, especially at a time of rising international tensions. Brazil also expressed concerns about the lack of effective action in multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations Security Council, and criticized the disproportionate amount of money spent on military activities compared to aid programs and climate change initiatives. Minister Vieira encouraged all countries to reiterate their commitments under the United Nations Charter and to publicly reject “the use of force, intimidation, unilateral sanctions, espionage, mass manipulation of social media and any other measures incompatible with the spirit and rules of multilateralism as a means of dealing with international relations.”

Attendees conveyed their support for Brazil's G20 presidency and endorsed the Summit's policy agenda. Brazil reiterated its commitment to fostering global unity, expressing disinterest in a fragmented world. In his recent visit to Africa, Brazilian President Lula da Silva emphasized Brazil's G20 policy objectives and [rallied support](#) for the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty. The President aims to inaugurate this alliance at November's G20 Summit, thereby cementing his personal commitment to eradicating hunger as a cornerstone of his policy legacy.

A second G20 Foreign Affairs Ministers' meeting will be held parallel to the UN General Assembly in September. In the spirit of fostering a broader debate on the themes discussed this week and

promoting a “call to action” in favor of global governance reform, the meeting will be open to all UN members who wish to participate.



### Ongoing conflicts

Western ministers [reiterated their condemnation](#) of the war in Ukraine throughout the meetings. British Foreign Minister David Cameron said that "Russia must be made to pay for its aggression" and called out the recent death of opposition leader Alexei Navalny in a Russian prison. The United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, France, and Norway made similar remarks. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov replied with "a set of alternative facts" about events in Ukraine, appearing to be no sign of Russia accepting a ceasefire. In bilateral meetings with Minister Lavrov, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Brazilian President Lula reiterated their support for a diplomatic solution to the conflict and their willingness to aid peace efforts.

Prior to the G20 meeting, Minister Lavrov [described](#) the inclusion of Ukraine in the agenda as "destructive" and the politicization of the group as unacceptable. When asked about Lavrov's comments, China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning [opined](#) that the G20 is the main "forum for international economic cooperation, not a platform for resolving geopolitical and security issues."

Many countries also expressed concern about the conflict in Gaza, underscoring the risk of it spreading to neighboring countries. Several also demanded the immediate release of hostages held by Hamas and of humanitarian aid to Palestine. There were calls for an end to hostilities, with countries repeatedly [criticizing the U.S.](#) for its recent veto of a UN Security Council ceasefire resolution. Many spoke out against the displacement of Palestinians and Israel's announced operation in Rafah. Most countries supported a two-state solution as the only possible solution to the historical conflict.

### Global governance reforms

According to Minister Vieira, delegations [unanimously acknowledged](#) the imperative for reforms within key global institutions, including the United Nations, World Trade Organization, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, among others, to effectively address contemporary global challenges. Regarding the UN, consensus prevailed on its indispensable role in fostering peace, security, and sustainable development. Still, there were calls to invigorate discussions on UN reform, especially concerning its Security Council, advocating for the inclusion of new members, particularly from Latin America and Africa.

Notably, Brazil emphasized its commitment to facilitating this reform process. The country has been advocating for a permanent seat on the UNSC since its inception in 1945, having even formed the G4 alliance with Germany, India and Japan in 2004 to collectively bid for the council's expansion.

Similarly, there was widespread agreement on the necessity of enhancing access to financing for the most impoverished nations and amplifying the representation of developing countries within the governance structures of multilateral development banks and the IMF. Additionally, the pivotal role of the World Trade Organization was underscored, with urgent appeals for the restoration of its dispute settlement system.

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