

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](http://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**  
Chief Executive,  
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)

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**14:40 – 14:55**

## **OPENING REMARKS**

- **Prof. Puleng LenkaBula** - Principal and Vice-Chancellor, UNISA, South Africa
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**14:55 – 15:10**

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

- **Cllr. Nasiphi Moya** - Mayor, City of Tshwane, Gauteng, South Africa
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**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
- **Mr. Michael Sachs** - Africa Experts Secretariat

**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
- **Prof. Tinuade Ojo** - Centre for the Study on Race, Gender and Class, South Africa

**18:00 – 21:00 : Dinner**

# DAY 2

T20 SOUTH AFRICA 2025

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

- **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, Kenya
- **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:

