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## **G7 leaders in Hiroshima to pressure Russia, and close ranks in the face of China**



Leaders of the Group of Seven meet this week in Hiroshima (West of Japan) to harden their tone against Russia 15 months after its invasion of Ukraine, and to adopt a common front towards the rising Chinese superpower.

**[Source Link](#)**

## Our Views

The Group of Seven (G7) began in 1973; then called the Group of Four (G4), namely the United States, the United Kingdom, West Germany, and France. Japan and Italy later joined, making it the Group of Six in 1975, followed by Canada in 1976. Starting in 1981, the group's meetings have been attended by a representative of the European Union. Russia officially joined the G7 in 1998, changing the group to G8. However, Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 angered the other members who decided to suspend its membership, returning the group's name to "G7". In 2017, Russia officially left the group, which became the largest and most developed group of countries in the world. The group meets annually to discuss and coordinate solutions related to major global issues, especially in the areas of trade, security, economy, and climate change.

The upcoming meeting of the G7, scheduled for May 19-21 in the Japanese city of Hiroshima, is preceded by a series of preparatory meetings, on top of which are the meetings of the G7 foreign ministers in Karuizawa, Nagano held April 16-18,<sup>1</sup> along with meetings of finance ministers and central bank governors. All these meetings, as expected, focus heavily on the security dimension related to the Russian-Ukrainian war.

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The G7 Japan 2023 Foreign Ministers' Communiqué can be viewed at:  
<https://www.state.gov/g7-japan-2023-foreign-ministers-communication/>

The G7 is also associated with frequent activity with civil society, most prominently the so-called Think7 (T7), a meeting of some of the largest think tanks in the world to discuss international issues, and to prepare policy papers for topics of importance to the G7. The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES) has made significant contributions to the T7 and prepared several policy papers on the requirements of economic development in the countries of the global South (developing and least developed countries).

T7 came up with several recommendations that are worthy of note on occasion of the summit of leaders to be held within days. Most importantly, bridging the G7 and the G20, and creating a dashboard to follow up on the adoption and implementation of efforts of T7 and T20. The following are the most important recommendations<sup>2</sup> issued by T7-Japan in April 2023:

### **a. Broad lines**

#### **Bridging the G7 and the G20:**

Current systemic environmental, geopolitical, and socioeconomic changes bear obvious risks. At their spring meeting in April 2023, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank released sluggish global growth forecasts. They noted that both the G7 and BRICS could hamper growth if they favored competition over cooperation in areas such as inflation and debt, climate finance, just energy, agriculture transition, and sustainable infrastructure investments.

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted from the Think7 Japan Communiqué: [https://www.think7.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/T7JP\\_Communique.pdf](https://www.think7.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/T7JP_Communique.pdf)

Prosperity and peace also hinge on ensuring a rules-based policy environment. By contrast, the increasing weaponization of food, trade, and reserve currencies and the lack of multilateral agreement on international financial institution reform pose huge short- and long-term risks. Rising geopolitical tension and unilateral approaches to national security could further undermine global supply chains and their socioeconomic benefits, while challenges to rules-based trade could weaken economic growth through the end of the decade.

Meanwhile, the world's high level of attention to the deadly war in Ukraine following the Russian Federation's invasion in 2022 has sometimes overshadowed other regional tensions and armed conflicts, which are equally brutal for those affected, as acknowledged by the G7 Japan 2023 Foreign Ministers' Communiqué. Yet unlike other conflicts, the war in Ukraine is contributing to geopolitical fragmentation as it deepens divergences between the G7 and some Group of Twenty (G20) members. One immediate consequence is the weakening of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while increasing official development assistance (ODA) to address the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine has affected ODA for lower-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa and risks contradicting G7 partnership efforts with Africa. The conflict has also elevated nuclear deterrence within geopolitics, not only in Europe and the Russian Federation but also in the Indo-Pacific, and beyond, which could undermine decades of non-proliferation efforts.

In a world exposed to a combination of immediate and long-term threats, we need new proposals for progress, which can come from bridging the G7 and G20 and recognizing the roles of civil society, science, and gender equality for inventing and implementing new policy solutions. Think tanks believe that G7 countries' high innovation and transformation capabilities should be mobilized to support science-based policy-making and the development of a new generation of international social and human science programs and visionary, inclusive monetary and investment policies.

The nexus between peace and development, including post-conflict reconstruction, has reached a level of importance not seen since the aftermath of World War II. The preliminary findings of the independent panel of scientists appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the triennial evaluation of the 2030 Agenda suggest a return of extreme poverty and extreme hunger. These experts also warn of the impossibility of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the presence of the high and pressing debt crisis, unmatched climate emergencies, and high levels of violent conflicts. As the 2030 Agenda itself is exposed to many risks, shaping integrated responses to achieve more ambitious social outcomes has reached a new level of urgency.

To avoid a 'lost decade of growth' (World Bank), T7 Japan proposes a new holistic approach. The G7 should proactively lead the promotion of public research and development that favors evidence-based and science-based policies. Another priority is to realize new measurements of economic, social, and environmental prosperity that consider people's well-being globally.

**Joining forces across the G7 and G20:** Think tanks have realized that the impacts of the G7 and G20's respective decisions have often been difficult to assess, particularly in the current time of crises. Such a deficit of accountability is no longer an option. Following the call of the Think20 (T20) Indonesia in 2022, think tanks from the G7 and G20 have recognized the unique value added of enduring and ambitious cooperation across the G7 and G20. T7 Japan has therefore built on the organization of task forces initiated by T7 Germany and those which originated under T20 and created an advisory council of eminent experts.<sup>3</sup> In addition, T7 Japan has systematically established close ties and coordination with T20 India, including with African counterparts and the emerging T20 Brazil.<sup>4</sup>

To help bridge G7 and G20 actions and create additional channels of communication among T7 and T20 experts that can amplify their voices and make their respective arguments more impactful, the T7 Japan Communiqué will be supplemented by a joint statement issued by T7 Japan and T20 India ahead of the G20 India summit. In addition, T7 Japan invites G7 and G20 engagement groups to join T7 and T20 for a 'Seven-Twenty joint call to action' for peace and development.

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<sup>3</sup> The four T7 Japan task forces (TF) are: TF 1 - Development and Economic Prosperity, TF 2 - Wellbeing, Environmental Sustainability, and Just transition, TF 3 - Science and Digitalization for a Better Future, TF 4 - Peace, Security, and Global Governance. They have been tasked with creating 16 policy briefs and 4 issue papers.

<sup>4</sup> The principles of regular, structured T7-T20 collaboration were discussed between T7 Germany and T20 Indonesia. T7 Japan has sought to consolidate this space for dialogue with T20 India in 2023 and T20 Brazil in 2024, and beyond the current G20 troika to South Africa in 2025.

To make it easier to assess the impacts of decisions by the G7 and the G20 and enhance transparency and accountability against the backdrop of global uncertainty, T7 Japan has moreover initiated a prototype G7/G20 open-source dashboard. The dashboard also aims to facilitate the development of policies under rotating G7 and G20 presidencies and improve their continuity.

## **b. Detailed points**

### **1. Addressing Intersecting Crises**

*1.1. Addressing Systemic Risks for Global Peace and Nuclear Nonproliferation*

*1.2. Addressing the Rampant Crisis of the International Financial System and Resolving the Ballooning Debt Crisis*

*1.3. Addressing the Climate and Biodiversity Crises and Strengthening Environmental Diplomacy*

### **2. Reigniting the 2030 Agenda**

*2.1. Recognizing the Universality and Centrality of the 2030 Agenda*

*2.2. Tackling the Return of Hunger*

*2.3. Investing in Global Science Systems and Research Infrastructure*

*2.4. Learning in the 21st Century: A Vision for Resilient Human Capital Development*

### **3. Initiating the Design of a G7/G20 Dashboard**

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