

US G20 Move - A Signal to ICJ, A Diplomatic Challenge for India

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What's in Today's article?

- US G20 Move Latest News
- Rubio's Boycott: A Response to South Africa's Case Against Israel
- US Moves to Undermine The Hague Courts
- Uncertain Future for the G20 Under Trump 2.0
- India's Stakes in G20 and Possible Scenarios
- US G20 Move FAQs

US G20 Move Latest News

- US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced he will not attend the **G20** Foreign Ministers' meeting in Johannesburg, criticizing South Africa for using the summit to push "DEI and climate change" under the guise of solidarity and sustainability.

- President Donald Trump accused South Africa of land confiscation and mistreating certain groups, vowing to cut future funding until an investigation is conducted.
- Trump's ally Elon Musk has also claimed, without evidence, that South Africa follows an anti-white policy.

Rubio's Boycott: A Response to South Africa's Case Against Israel

- Marco Rubio's decision to skip the G20 meeting is primarily linked to South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which has been gaining international backing.
 - **ICJ (International Court of Justice):** A UN judicial body that handles disputes between states.
- Prominent Republican leaders have condemned the ICJ, calling it biased against Israel.
- They even threatened sanctions against countries supporting potential ICC arrest warrants for Israeli leaders.
 - **ICC (International Criminal Court):** Established in 2002 under the Rome Statute, it prosecutes individuals for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

South Africa's Countermove

- In response, South Africa and Malaysia launched a campaign to protect ICJ and ICC rulings, forming the nine-nation "Hague Group" to defend Palestinian rights and challenge US attempts to weaken international courts.

US Moves to Undermine The Hague Courts

- During his first term (2017–21), President Trump imposed sweeping sanctions on the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- The Biden administration later reversed these sanctions, backing ICC investigations into Russian war crimes in Ukraine.
- US support for the ICC weakened after the court sought arrest warrants for both Israeli and Hamas leaders.
- In response, the US House of Representatives passed a new ICC sanctions bill, now under Senate review.

Uncertain Future for the G20 Under Trump 2.0

- While Rubio's criticism appears directed at South Africa as G20 chair.
- However, it raises concerns about the new US administration's commitment to the multilateral platform if it chooses to disengage.

Upcoming G20 Meetings and US Participation

- The G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting is set for February 20–21, with the Leaders' Summit scheduled for November 22–23.
- President Trump, along with other global leaders, is expected to attend.
- South Africa holds the G20 presidency until November 2025.

Trump's Approach to G20

- During his first term, Trump's "America First" policies led to friction within G20 but also reshaped its agenda, shifting focus from free trade to "reciprocal trade" in line with his trade war against China.
- Unlike his first term, where the US remained engaged despite tensions, a more radical second-term agenda could see Trump deprioritizing the G20, potentially undermining cooperation within the group.

India's Stakes in G20 and Possible Scenarios

- India has positioned the G20 as a more effective platform than the UN for addressing global challenges.
- Its leadership of the Global South has benefited from the G20's rising influence and India's active role in the group.

US Support Under Biden vs. Uncertainty Under Trump

- The Biden administration backed India's G20 presidency in 2023, seeing India as a bridge between the Global North and South.
- However, Trump 2.0's priorities differ significantly, raising concerns about continued US engagement.

Worst-Case Scenario: US Disengagement from G20

- If the US skips the South Africa G20 summit or withdraws entirely, it would weaken the group and potentially increase Russian and Chinese influence, complicating India's strategic interests.

Alternative Scenario: Tactical Negotiations

- Rubio's tweet could be a pressure tactic, signalling a desire for negotiations.
- If South Africa adopts a more conciliatory stance, US participation may continue, reducing negative impacts on G20 and India.

India's Diplomatic Challenge with the Global South

- A transactional Trump administration may not value India's role as a Global South leader.
- If US-Western support for India's bridging role diminishes, India's diplomatic positioning could face new hurdles.

US G20 Move FAQs

Q1. Which are the G20 countries?

Ans. G20 includes 19 nations and the EU, featuring major economies like the US, India, China, Japan, Germany, and the UK.

Q2. What is the purpose of G20?

Ans. The G20 addresses global economic stability, trade policies, sustainable development, and financial cooperation among the world's leading economies.

Q3. When was G20 in India?

Ans. India held the G20 presidency in 2023, hosting the Leaders' Summit in New Delhi on September 9–10, 2023.

Q4. Where is the headquarters of ICJ?

Ans. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is headquartered in The Hague, Netherlands, serving as the principal judicial body of the UN.

Q5. Who is the Indian judge in the ICJ?

Ans. Judge Dalveer Bhandari has represented India at the ICJ since 2012, after being re-elected in 2017.

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