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PARLIAMENTS IN THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

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Abstract: this paper describes the origin, design, implementation and results of the P20, the Parliamentary Speakers' Summit of G20; review the role, importance and perspective of the Parliaments in the Global Governance System; and proposes ways to face its current and future challenges.

Introduction. Modern diplomacy has to compete and interact with a much wider dynamic of agency, conduct itself in a more-time sensitive manner, and be applied with a greater technical orientation. Furthermore, to a far greater extent than in the past, diplomacy is wrapped up with domestic policy-making and political/societal demands about governance across an extended spectrum of issue areas. Diplomacy today takes place among multiple sites of authority, power, and influence: mainly states, but also including religious organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multinational corporations, and even individuals, whether they be celebrities, philanthropists, or terrorists (Andrew Cooper, Jorge Heine and Ramesh Thakur, "Introduction: The Challenges of 21st Century Diplomacy", The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy: 2nd Edition, 2015).

Global Governance System. In the 20th and 21st centuries, international organizations (IOs) and particularly international intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) have become major arenas for diplomacy and decision-making. The universe includes less formal IOs such as the Group of Seven and Group of Twenty (Margaret Karns and Karen Mingst: "International Organizations and Diplomacy". Chapter 7: The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy, 2015).

Group of Twenty. The Group of Twenty (G20) is a leading forum of the world's major economies that seeks to develop policies to address the global challenges. The G20 is made up of the European Union and 19 countries: advanced economies (Australia,

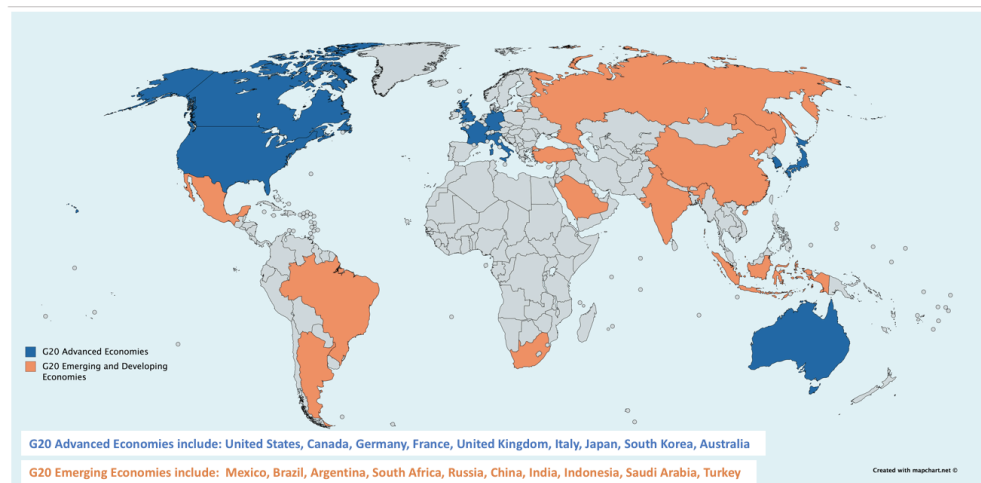
Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US); and emerging economies (Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey).



Collectively, G20 members represent all inhabited continents, 85% of global economic output, two-thirds of the world’s population and 75% of international trade.

It was President George W. Bush who called the first meeting of the G20 at leader’s level, to be held in Washington DC on 15 November 2008. Since then, the G20 has become a regular part of the landscape of global international institutions (Andrew Cooper, Jorge Heine and Ramesh Thakur, “Preface”, The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy, 2015).

G20 NATIONS OVER THE WORLD MAP



Role and importance of the parliamentary perspective. The Parliaments decision to meet in the context of G20 should not surprise anyone. During 2018, under the Argentine presidency, not only did the seven groups of affinity of the G20 meet but also they provided conclusions, recommendations, statements or communications. These groups are composed of representatives of different sectors including companies (B20); civil society organizations (C20); trade unions (L20); scientists (S20); study groups and experts (T20); women’s organizations (W20) and young leaders (Y20). They were joined by other groups such as the different religions (the Interfaith Forum or I20); the cities (U20, which brings together Mayors); and the judicial power (J20), the conference of presidents of the supreme courts of G20 members.

During the opening speech of the Parliamentary Forum of the G20 in Buenos Aires in October 31st, 2018 Congressman Emilio Monzó, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina said: “We, the Parliaments, have decided to listen to the voice of all these groups

and outline our own voice for the next Heads of States and Governments Summit that will take place on November 30 and December 1”.

As the fox told the Little Prince in the famous book of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: “The essential is invisible to the eyes.”

All countries have some form of representative system of government. According to IPU, the Inter-parliamentary Union, out of 193 countries, 79 have bicameral and 114 unicameral parliamentary systems, making a total of 272 parliamentary chambers with over 46,000 members worldwide.

The need to strengthen the world’s democracies, their political systems, and in particular their Parliaments is quite evident. Ignoring them only generates greater uncertainty, conflict, and gravely affects governance, putting at risk not only the citizens, but governments themselves.

Excluding parliaments from the analysis and debate of global challenges does not seem wise.

We are not talking here about the Campaign for a UNITED NATIONS PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (UNPA), a political body elected by the world’s citizens, a proposal as old as the UN itself, which origins can be traced back to the days of the French revolution in the 18th century. But it is not understandable why the G20’s governments have created several official engagement groups, empowering Civil Society, which is totally desirable, while avoiding the intervention of their Parliaments, an opportunity not just to guarantee political pluralism, but also to properly prepare them for future discussion in order to enact the necessary laws to implement the decisions adopted at global level.

The IPU officially declares: “With increasing globalization, citizens all over the world feel left behind. Parliamentarians are representatives of the people and therefore have a critical role in bridging the gap between citizens’ expectations and global governance”. Therefore: “Since their first World Conference in 2000, the Speakers of Parliaments have consistently noted that IPU is called upon to provide a parliamentary dimension to international cooperation.”

“We are committed to increasing parliaments’ role in global affairs, helping to overcome the democratic deficit in international relations, and ensuring that international commitments are translated into national realities.”

However, the intense and dizzying dynamic of a changing world was taking IPU and hence parliaments increasingly away from the new decision-making centres.

The IPU’s main strategy to ensure the participation of parliaments in the global governance system was to set up a strategic partnership with the UNITED NATIONS (UN) to guarantee “a parliamentary voice is heard in global decision-making processes”. That partnership is underpinned by a renewed cooperation agreement and bi-annual resolutions of the UN General Assembly. In this way, the IPU brings a parliamentary component to global discussions, including through the Annual Parliamentary Hearings at the United Nations; helping mainstream global commitments into the day-to-day work of national parliaments and supporting parliaments in their vital role of holding governments accountable when implementing multilateral agreements.

The participation of parliaments through the IPU in the UN and other IGOs such as the WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO) does not seem sufficient, since the G20 has been growing every year, adopting more and more non-financial and long-term issues.

The P20 has allowed the IPU to land in an area so far unexplored.

Brief History of the Parliamentary G20.

Since the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of the G20 in 2008 there have been five meetings dedicated to the parliamentary dimension; the last one was held in Buenos Aires in 2018, where for first time it was called “P20”, a forum in which representatives of parliaments can exchange views on policies related to globalization issues (Marcin Szczepański and Etienne Bassot, “The Group of Twenty (20), Setting the Global Agenda”, EPRS European Parliamentary Research Service, January 2015).

G20 Parliamentary Speakers’ Summits	Ottawa	Seoul	Riyadh	México City	Buenos Aires
G20’s Members	2010	2011	2012	2013	1 st P20 2018
Argentina	A	VP	P	P	P
Australia	-	-	-	-	-
Brazil	M	P	P	P	VP
Canada	P	P	P	P	M
China	VP	VP	VP	VP	VP
European Union	VP	VP	VP	VP	VP
France	VP	VP	-	M	VP
Germany	-	-	-	-	M
India	VP	P	VP	-	P
Indonesia	M	P	P	VP	VP

Italy	VP	VP	VP	-	VP
Japan	VP	VP	-	M	M
United States of Mexico	VP	P	A	P	M
Russian Federation	VP	P	VP	VP	VP
Saudi Arabia	P	P	P	P	P
South Africa	P	-	-	P	P
South Korea	P	P	P	P	M
Turkey	P	P	P	VP	P
United Kingdom	M	M	-	P	M
United States of America	A	M	-	-	A
P: Speaker/Presiding Officer	5	9	7	7	5
VP: Deputy Speaker / VP	8	6	5	5	7
M: Member of Parliament	3	2	-	2	6
A: Ambassador	2	-	1	-	1
Absents:	2	3	7	5	1

On Friday, November 1st, 2018 the fifth and last Parliamentary Meeting on the G20, and first formally identified as “P20”, successfully came to an end. In addition to the logistics, the real achievement was to reach a joint statement by consensus. A single country’s opposition would have been enough to make the document fall through.

To summarize, the leaders committed to work together to find lasting solutions to the key challenges of a changing world, including in particular the future of work; financing for development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs, which include fight against poverty and zero hunger, climate change, fight against corruption, the empowerment of women and young people, quality education for the new era of technology and innovation; as well as a renewed commitment to multilateralism. It was a statement in line with the vision of the Argentine presidency of the G20 to build consensus for a fair and sustainable development.

Parliamentary leaders also expressly pointed out that it is necessary to work on what they called the “democracy gap” in international relations, demanding that the voice of Parliaments be systematically heard in the context of multilateral meetings, including G20 leaders’ summits.

Finally, they reaffirmed their commitment to continue the joint work initiated in Buenos Aires among Speakers of Parliaments of the G20 countries and the European Union, welcoming a new P20 summit in Japan in 2019.

The level of participation was one of the highest among the parliamentary meetings of the G20: 19 participants representing to the G20's members plus the Kingdom of Spain, a permanent guest, represented by their two Speakers; The Netherlands, represented by the Speaker of its Senate and the 1st Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives; and Chile, represented by the Speaker of its Lower Chamber. Jamaica, in addition, participated in representation of the CARICOM, being represented by the Speaker of its Senate.

Taking into account both chambers in the case of the bicameral systems, the P20 in Argentina counted with the participation of 12 parliamentary speakers (from Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Chile, Spain, India, Jamaica, The Netherlands, South Africa and Turkey); 11 deputy speakers/VP (from Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Italy, The Netherlands, Russia and the European Union), MPs from 6 countries (Germany, Canada, Korea, Japan, México and the United Kingdom) and one ambassador (from the USA).

Has the P20 been successful?

While the EPRS's report states that "the Speaker's Consultation" –in reference to the 4 first versions- has proven to be a useful forum for the exchange on issues related to globalization", it adds: "Nevertheless, it suffers from a certain weakness due to the lack of consistent coordination with the leader's summit". It further states: "When it is linked to the presidency of the Summit, it happens afterwards; but the meeting in Saudi Arabia was not linked to the presidency. And some recent presidencies, such as France, Russia and Australia, did not convene any parliamentary meeting."

According to the aforementioned authors, "There are a number of reasons why ... Some may fear in general for the development of new layers of institutional structures and the costs related to it. Commonwealth countries such as the UK and Canada are traditionally reluctant to give a political role to their parliamentary speakers. Others like China consider the Speaker's Consultation as a place for exchanging experiences but in no way, it is regarded as a body which could be perceived as challenging the legitimacy of the leaders".

In my opinion, there has been a mixed interest among the G20 member countries in the parliamentary meetings associated with it, with little or no presence at all from some G7 countries in contrast to an active participation of the rest.

Canada has been the G7 member country with the highest parliamentary commitment in the five meetings held up to date, having participated in all of them; France, Italy, Japan and the UK participated in four out of five; while Germany and the US only participated in one. However, the participation of the MP from Germany was limited to the Forum organized

previously to the Speakers' Summit last year; and the role of the US Ambassadors in 2010 and 2018 was merely formal (protocol).

Australia is the only country that has not participated in any of the meetings.

Regarding the rest of the world, the BRICS Brazil, Russia and China participated in all the meetings; India in four out of five; and South Africa in three.

As the quoted work of EPRS expresses: "Participation varies from country to country, with the general tendency showing that the BRICS and emerging economies present stronger interest and commitment." Comparatively, only one of the G7 members – representing 14% of the group's total- participated in all the parliamentary meetings of the G20, against three out of five -60% of the total- of the BRICS.

From Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) the parliaments of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico participated in all the meetings. The rest –Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Indonesia and Turkey- as well as the European Union- participated in all the meetings.

Jorge Argüello, an Argentine ambassador, distinguishes two large groups within the G20: the makers of the rules (*rule-makers*), the G7; and the rest, which are limited to following them (*rule-takers*). Note that the G7 countries Parliamentary Speakers have not only a low participation in the G20 parliamentary meetings but also their own gathering space, the Parliamentary G7, that has been meeting systematically for many years, having held the 16th last meeting between 5-8 September, 2018, just a month and a half before the P20 Summit. The meeting was held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, registering a full presence of Speakers from Canada (Geoff Regan), France (Carole Bureau-Bonnard), Germany (Wolfgang Schäuble), Italy (Roberto Fico), Japan (Tamadori Oshima), UK (John Bercow) and the US (Ed Royce). The European Parliament was also invited (Pavel Telička).

Considering this solid articulation, experiences of dialogue and consensus are unknown regarding the parliamentary G20 of the rest of the G20 countries, including the BRICs, which has its own Heads of State and Government Meetings.

P20's current and future challenges.

There was a general consensus on the good performance of the G20 Argentine presidency and almost perfect attendance of Heads of State and Government. The Summit held on November 30 and December 1st of 2018 in Buenos Aires ended a process of more than 50 meetings that took place throughout the year, mostly in Argentina, but also in other cities around the world.

In addition to the Sherpas and Finance Channels, thematic ministerial meetings were held, those of the affinity groups, and at the same time many others, including the P20 itself.

However, analysing the Annex to the Declaration, it is noted that any references to the P20, parliaments or parliamentarians are omitted, which is not very promising, limiting the recognition to the G20 affinity groups, the only groups formally recognized by governments.

The House of Councillors of the National Diet of Japan has decided to host the 6th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20) in Tokyo on Monday, November 4, 2019. In Japan's "Save the Date" letter this event is considered "an important occasion for leaders of legislative bodies in G20 countries and their guests to discuss global issues and to deepen mutual understanding not just of each other's experience but of how to coordinate international cooperation, the fruits of which can then be reflected in future legislation and government oversight".

Once again the G20's Parliamentary Meeting will take place after the G20 Leaders' Summit, this year organized by Japan in Osaka on the 28th and 29th of June.

Conclusions and roadmap.

Japan represents a huge opportunity for the P20.

It is vital to move towards the P20 institutionalization, including the definition of an organizational design and a methodology that guarantee the promotion of a deep, serious, and above all genuine, broad and plural parliamentary debate, articulated with the G20 and the main international organizations' agendas, in particular the United Nations and the Inter-parliamentary Union. It is essential to project it onto the rest of the world's democracies and include the dialogue with Civil Society organizations represented in the affinity groups.

Basic ideas for a P20's Roadmap:

- P20's members should request to their governments an explicit support to and recognition of the P20, which has not taken place yet.

As the cited work of the EPRS mentioned, "The European Parliament representatives at the Speakers' Consultation have always pleaded strongly for further development of the parliamentary dimension. It is argued that the globalisation process lacks a democratic dimension and checks and balances. While it is unlikely that the parliaments of the 20

countries will agree on a G20 assembly in the near future, the integration of the Speakers' Consultation into the official activities of the G20 would already be an improvement".

During the 2018's Buenos Aires P20 the EP's VP, Pavel Telička, from the Czech Republic, who also participated on the G7's parliamentary meeting in Halifax stressed the need to effectively implement the decisions taken by the P20 and formulated a novel proposal: the participation of parliamentary leaders in some instance of the G20, to be able to transmit the result of the debates and the consensual matters in representation of the voice of the people.

- As Senator Federico Pinedo, Speaker of the Argentine Upper House summarized during the closing remarks of the 2018 P20's Buenos Aires Meeting, the desire of the majority of Parliaments present was to "try to turn the P20 meetings into a formal and permanent event of the G20 meetings every year".
- Should the P20 be organized mirroring the G20's in terms of participants invited, proposed agenda, applied methodology to apply? If the answer is yes, it will be necessary:
 - to create a Parliamentary Sherpa Channel.

Preparations of the P20 Summits should revolve around "Parliamentary Sherpas", official representatives of leaders of participating members. The term "Sherpa" has its roots in mountain climbing, and it refers to an assistant who guides climbers to the summit of a mountain. P20 Sherpas, through their close communication, proceed with the preparations for a successful summit meeting.

- To adopt the troika system as the framework for steering the P20 process.

The "troika" consists of the current, previous, and next P20 presidencies and the 3 members cooperate with one another in preparing for the P20 Summit. During Japan's presidency, Japan should work closely together with Argentina (2018 presidency) and Saudi Arabia (2020 presidency).

- To promote the full participation of Parliaments of G20's members, in particular Australia, Germany and the US.

In addition, P20 should invite to the parliaments of the same countries and international organizations than the G20 invites. For example, in 2018, during the Argentina's presidency, Spain, The Netherlands and Chile were invited; and in 2019, during the Japanese's presidency, Spain, The Netherlands, Singapore and Vietnam were invited.

In addition, it will be necessary to find a way to invite the parliaments of the countries in charge of the presidencies of economic blocks such as this year Thailand in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations); Egypt in the AU (African Union), Chile in APEC (Asia – Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum); and Senegal in NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development).

- To interact and work closely with parliamentary organizations and networks such as, primarily, the INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION, and eventually its associate members, international parliamentary assemblies and similar bodies; permanent observers and others, such as the OECD Global Parliamentary Network.

- To establish an articulation between the agendas of G20 and P20, beyond the possibility Parliaments decide to discuss and expand the agenda and review priorities.

Main themes of this year G20 in Japan were global economy; trade and investment; innovation; environment and energy; employment; women’s empowerment; development; and health.

- To start the dialogue or re-enforces with G20's engagement groups and other interest groups like Interfaith, Justice, Education and Urban 20.

- To guarantee a way to formally submit the P20’s Joint Declaration each year to the G20’s leaders for its consideration and analysis, including if possible a reference to the legislative tools necessary to carry out the proposals adopted, and the consensus reached.

- As it happens with the UN’s Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, P20’s members shall aim at fostering the implementation of G20’s consensus, its application and its follow-up.

- Each P20’s member, represented by the Speakers or their delegates, must find the best way to socialize the agenda issues within their respective parliaments, to ensure the legitimacy of their positions facing governments and the Society at domestic and global level.

In summary, the key is that Parliaments must take P20 seriously and improve the way it is ran.