

C20 Response to the G20 Leaders' Communique

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The Australian C20 welcomes the commitment by the G20 Leaders to a two percent growth target above projection, but believes that the type of growth is crucial and must ensure inclusive, balanced, strong and sustainable outcomes.

We are concerned that the global economy remains fragile. We are also concerned that there are many interrelated factors contributing to the fragility of the global economy that need to be urgently addressed by the G20 if the economy is to regain its stability and strengthen its resilience. The only way to address these challenges and to formulate strong public policy solutions is to build effective collaboration between government, the private sector, organised labour and civil society. We must work together to achieve inclusive, strong, sustainable and balanced growth; growth which is jobs-rich and which provides improved living standards for all, but especially the poorest in our communities.

Each nation's own country growth strategy must deliver measurable growth in the incomes of the bottom twenty percent of households. We commend action to improve growth and create jobs as part of the Brisbane Action Plan; a Plan which must support social and economic development, produce quality jobs and ensure inclusive growth, and reduce poverty and inequality.

The C20 welcomes the G20 commitment to take strong and decisive action to address inequality and reduce poverty in order to deliver on inclusive growth. Inequality must be addressed as a core issue. Efforts must be supported by dialogue with all engagement groups on an equal basis.

Acting Together to Lift Growth and Create Jobs

Leaders need to do more to address the structural and chronic unemployment levels plaguing all nations by raising participation and creating quality jobs in the formal sector, particularly for women and young people. We endorse the commitment to the 25/25 participation target for women, but encourage Leaders to take additional action to improve the income gap between men and women. Implementation of both these measures will reduce inequality and poverty.

We are disappointed that the G20 has not agreed to a similar target to improve the participation rate of the 600 million young people across the globe who are disengaged from the economy. Investment is urgently required in quality apprenticeships, in addition to commitments on education and training, including for in new and emerging work types. We welcome the elevation of the employment taskforce to a working group and encourage the G20 to deep engagement with engagement groups on it.

The C20 encourages work to continue on addressing structural and long term unemployment by strengthening labour markets and ensuring strong and effective social and legal protection systems, including taking action on indentured and child labour. The C20 encourages all nations to adhere to and respect ILO rules and increase efforts to improve the social conditions of all employed people, particularly those in developing nations whose working conditions remain poor and precarious.

The C20 endorses the G20's emphasis on the growth potential of infrastructure, and the additional and much needed investment in productivity enhancing infrastructure to lift growth and create jobs. Leaders' commitment to both public and private sector infrastructure investment is welcome, but we restate our caution for a preference for PPP investment models and risk transfers from the private to the public sector. We support efforts to increase finance available to small and medium enterprises, particularly those which support investment in women's and young peoples' entrepreneurship.

The proposal for the establishment of the Global Infrastructure Hub appears to be a positive step. However, the C20 notes that arrangements for the Hub remain opaque and its benefits unclear. We are deeply disappointed that Leaders have not committed to include civil society or organised labour in its network proposal to share knowledge between government, the private sector, institutional investors, development banks, and international organisations. The Hub should foster collaboration amongst all these groups to improve infrastructure investment. Infrastructure proposals must be based on internationally agreed standards, including high environmental and social performance standards with strong accountability and transparency mechanisms. The G20 should continue its work to ensure positive infrastructure investment for developing nations, supplemented by the new Global Infrastructure Facility, established by the World Bank.

Stronger, more resilient global economy

The C20 welcomes G20 Leaders' commitment to urgent reform of the international taxation system, critical to building more resilient economies, particularly developing economies. We welcome the advances made on the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting Agenda to amend international taxation rules. We welcome the endorsement of the common reporting standard for the automatic exchange of tax information on a reciprocal basis and encourage nations to sign onto the standards. We welcome the undertaking by the OECD to deeper engagement of developing nations in the BEPS project, including by providing assistance in capacity building.

The C20 welcomes the G20's endorsement of a new anti-corruption action plan, and a commitment to advancing the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative and implementation of high level principles for beneficial ownership transparency. We call on G20 Leaders to take further action to agree to public registries of the information on the real owners of companies and other entities, and country by country reports of all basic information about the operation of multinational enterprises operating in our societies.

Strengthening global institutions

As a global institution concerned with strengthening the global economy, the G20 must necessarily be concerned with the effective operation of the international institutions with which it works and upon which it relies. International institutions need to be effective, representative and well resourced. The C20 notes the statements by international organisations on the urgent need to take strong action to address inequality to realise inclusive growth. We are disappointed that the G20 still has not reached agreement to adequately fund the IMF and agree to quota and governance reforms.

Similarly, the WTO and the WHO need to be actively supported and well resourced to be effective and sufficiently nimble to address existing and emerging global issues, all of which impact on global growth, ultimately undermining global stability and security. Urgent issues which need to be addressed include both the large scale movement of displaced persons across the globe including in the Middle East, and the humanitarian and economic impact of the Ebola crisis.

Climate Change and Resource Sustainability

Climate change is a significant geo-political and economic issue. The G20 commitment to strong and effective action to address climate change is welcomed. We applaud the strong statements on climate change from individual G20 members and welcome Turkey's announcement that climate change will be a top priority in 2015. We note the historic China-US emission reduction targets pact and encourage other nations to follow suit to provide additional momentum for an agreement to be reached at the United Nations' climate change meeting in 2015.

Investment in clean energy is urgently required and must be addressed as part of the G20's commitment to increasing global investment in infrastructure. The C20 is disappointed that the G20 has not made a strong time-limited commitment to ending subsidies for fossil fuels, improve energy efficiency, and investments in renewable energy as a means to ensure access to energy for all, thereby enhancing energy security and supporting sustainable and inclusive growth, development and poverty alleviation.

The C20 welcomes the G20's support for mobilising finance for climate adaptation and mitigation through the UN Green Climate Fund. The C20 encourages other G20 nations to follow the example set by the United States and Japan in pledging generously and immediately to climate financing.

We note Leaders' reference to food security and further encourage the G20 to address the relationship between climate change, resource security and water and energy availability. Leaders are encouraged to advance intergovernmental efforts for the UN's post-2015 sustainable development goals, including a recommitment to contributing 0.7 percent of GNI to overseas development aid.

Future Arrangements

The C20 congratulates the Australian Presidency for an efficiently run and engaging G20 meeting. The C20 is firmly entrenched in the G20's architecture and its inclusion is central to the legitimacy of the G20.

We look forward to continuing an international collaboration in 2015 under Turkey's Presidency in pursuing inclusive growth and employment, development, inequality, and climate change for the benefit of all people, particularly the world's poorest.

About the Australian C20

The Australian C20 Steering Committee is comprised of people with diverse backgrounds and experiences. The Australian Government appointed the Members of the Steering Committee in their own right due to their relevant and diverse experiences and talents, and/or because they also lead major Australian civil society organisations.

The Australian C20 Steering Committee has drawn on the networks, talents, concerns and wisdom of the international as well as Australian civil society in developing its policy approaches and in drafting its recommendations. Within the context of the G20's agenda, it is concerned primarily with promoting inclusive and sustainable growth.

Tim Costello	Chair, World Vision Australia
Cassandra Goldie	Deputy Chair, Australian Council of Social Service
Kelvin Alley	Salvation Army
Joseph Assaf	Ethnic Business Awards
Frank Brennan	Australian Catholic University
Jody Broun	Aboriginal Advocate
Ian Callinan	High Court, retired Justice
Tara Curlewis	National Council of Churches of Australia
Julie McKay	Australian National Committee for UN Women
Dermot O’Gorman	WWF
Rob Moodie	Melbourne University
Marc Purcell	Australian Council for International Development
Bills Scales	Swinburne University
Sally Sinclair	National Employment Services Association
Rauf Soulio	Australian Multicultural Council
Helen Szoke	Oxfam Australia
Greg Thompson	Transparency International Australia
Joanne Yates	C20 Sherpa



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The C20 (or 'Civil Society 20') is a platform for dialogue between the political leaders of G20 countries and representatives of civil society organisations