



C20 Follow Up Statement on
the Outcomes of the G20 Extraordinary Leaders' Summit
G20 Leaders Need to Resume the Decade of Action

The **Civil Society Engagement Group (C20)** welcomes the convening of the [G20 Extraordinary Virtual Summit](#) in response to the **COVID-19 pandemic** and its global impact on people and the economy. We strongly agree with the G20 call for a transparent, robust, coordinated, large-scale, and science-based global response in the **spirit of solidarity**. This response needs to be immediately put into action with the **greatest sense of urgency**.

The G20 leaders have asked many ministers, top officials, and international organizations to meet, report, assess, update, and monitor the impacts of the pandemic. **This crisis is evolving before our eyes and claiming human lives every day.**

The G20 does not need more monitoring to act. We do not need to wait for further assessments on debt sustainability, or the pandemic's impact on employment and trade. Health systems are already struggling to provide appropriate healthcare. **People are already losing jobs and livelihoods.** International trade and traffic is already being disrupted. We need to **deploy a coordinated international response immediately.** Among the first measures in the short term, is the urgent need to loosen the financial requirements from **LICs** and some **MICs** (concessional financing, debt relief/moratorium, wealth taxes) liquidity of resources for countries that have no fiscal space, to deal with the health emergency (more test tools, equipment, etc). We welcome the Leaders' commitment to convene again, and we ask that a follow-up Leaders' Summit in the very near future moves us closer towards recovery and results. We need this action and comprehensive financial initiative now.

We also welcome the G20 promise to "commit to strengthen national, regional, and global capacities to respond to potential infectious disease outbreaks by substantially increasing our epidemic preparedness spending", and we call on governments to end the **fallacy** - practiced for many years - **of cutting spending for health systems in the name of austerity and 'structural adjustment'**. We need a global commitment, starting from G20 members, for a permanent financial commitment to strengthen public health systems and to guarantee universal access.

The world is not short on frameworks for action. We echo the call of the UN Secretary-General in his letter in advance of the G20 Virtual Summit; reminding G20



Leaders that the world has agreed on concrete frameworks for action like the **2030 Agenda** for Sustainable Development and the **Paris Agreement** on Climate Change. They “offer a guiding light for people and planet. We must ensure that the recovery strategy out of this crisis keeps us on track towards these longer-term objectives, building a sustainable and inclusive economy.” **These guiding frameworks were already adopted in the last decade. This new Decade is only meant for Action.** We ask that COVID-19 action plans work in tandem with the existing frameworks. In addition, we ask that the G20 works in consultation with the UN Office of High-Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to guarantee that any G20 plan in response to the pandemic is **human rights-centric**, and takes into consideration the urgent need to relieve the suffering of people living in countries affected by sanctions.

While 50% of students across the world remain out of classrooms, the C20 expresses its concerns about the **complete absence of education** in the Leaders’ statement. We reiterate our demand to G20 Leaders to take immediate action in responding to the substantial impact on education and the dwindling prospects of ensuring access at this moment. We ask that the **G20 convenes a joint Education and Digital Economy Ministerial Meeting** to address the impact of the pandemic on education. In particular, put forth a plan for a short and long-term investment in the **expansion of ICT infrastructure, Ed-tech provision**, and technologies to ensure access for all young people to eLearning, to be accessible across borders in terms of content and access to skilled online teachers. Priority should be put on increasing accessibility to the internet in remote areas in the Global South.

Moving forward, the C20 will steer the expertise and knowledge of its members and [working groups](#) towards providing the G20 with recommendations for the upcoming action plans, and will continue to push for **delivery on the 2030 Development Agenda**.

We express our gratitude to the millions of **health workers** on the frontlines, and the **scientists** searching for a vaccine or a cure. We stand in solidarity with the **communities** that are struggling to cope with our new challenging reality. Human resilience is always tested, but it always prevails.

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Civil Society 20 (C20) is one of the eight Engagement Groups of the G20. It provides a platform of Civil Society Organizations around the world to bring forth a non-government and non-business voice.