



International Relations

Second Voice of the Global South Summit

Tags:

- **GS Paper - 2**
- **Groupings & Agreements Involving India and/or Affecting India's Interests**
- **India and its Neighbourhood**
- **Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests**

For Prelims: Voice of the Global South Summit, G20 summit, G-77, Brandt Line, Loss and Damage Fund, United Nations, IMF, World Bank, SAARC, ASEAN, BIMSTEC

For Mains: Resurgence of Global South, Challenges for India as a Voice of the Global South.

Why in News?

India recently concluded its second 'Voice of the Global South **Summit**' (**VOGSS**), held virtually. This summit follows the inaugural summit in **January 2023**, signaling India's commitment to fostering solidarity among nations and **consolidating its leadership in the Global South**.

What are the Key Highlights of Second VOGSS?

- **Themes:** The inaugural session centered around '**Together, for Everyone's Growth, with Everyone's Trust**', while the concluding session emphasized '**Global South: Together for One Future.**'
- **Objectives of the Summit:** Disseminating **outcomes of** he hosted by India and ensuring sustained momentum for effective implementation of G20 decisions, with a **specific focus on the interests of developing countries**.
- **Key Outcomes:**

- **Global South Center of Excellence**
'DAKSHIN': Indian PM inaugurated this initiative, aimed at **fostering collaboration among developing nations** by serving as a knowledge repository and think tank.
- **Thematic Discussions:** Ministerial sessions delved into a wide array of topics, including **Sustainable Development Goals, energy transition**, climate finance, digital transformation, women-led development, counter-terrorism, **and global institution reforms.**
- **Call for Restraint Amid Israel-Hamas Conflict:** India articulated deep concern regarding the plight of civilians affected by the Israel-Hamas conflict.
 - He emphasized the urgent need for all **involved parties to exercise restraint**, prioritize the safety of innocent civilians, and work towards **de-escalation.**
- **5 'Cs' for Global South:** India also called for 5 'Cs' for the Global South: **consultation, cooperation, communication, creativity and capacity building.**

What is Global South?

▪ About:

- The **Global South**, often misconceived as a purely geographical concept, encompasses diverse countries, **drawing upon geopolitical, historical, and developmental factors.**
 - While it is not **solely defined by location**, it broadly represents nations **facing developmental challenges.**
 - Many countries included in the Global South are in the northern hemisphere,

such as **India, China** and all of those in the northern half of Africa.

- Whereas, **Australia and New Zealand**, both in the southern hemisphere, are not in the Global South.

▪ Historical Context:

- **Brandt Line:** The line was proposed by former **German Chancellor Willy Brandt** in the 1980s as a visual depiction of the **north-south divide based upon per-capita GDP**.

- This line symbolizes the **global economic divide**, zigzagging across continents, encompassing parts of **Africa, the Middle East, India, and China**, excluding Australia and New Zealand.

- **G-77:** In 1964, the Group of 77 (G-77) countries came into existence when they signed a Joint Declaration during the first session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva.

- The G-77 became the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries at the time.

▪ Resurgence of Global South:

- **Economic Dynamics:**

- **Economic Imbalances Exposed by Covid-19:** The pandemic amplified **existing economic disparities**, disproportionately impacting Global South countries due to **limited healthcare infrastructure**, disrupted supply chains, and heavy reliance on sectors vulnerable to lockdowns.
- **Shifts in Trade and Supply Chains:** Reevaluations of global supply

chains post-pandemic and in **context of recent geopolitical conflicts like Russia-Ukraine war**, opened discussions on repositioning production centers, providing an opportunity for some Global South economies to restructure and enhance their roles.

○ **Geopolitical Realities:**

- The Global South's collective voice **gained traction in international forums like G20**, altering power dynamics and prompting greater consideration of their perspectives and interests.

○ **Environmental and Climate Impact:**

- **Vulnerability to Climate Change:** The Global South is **disproportionately affected by climate change**, driving discussions on **climate adaptation**, resilience-building, and the need for equitable global climate action.
- **Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development:** Emphasis on sustainable development goals, **renewable energy investments, and environmental conservation initiatives within the Global South** attracted global attention and support.

What Evidence Showcases the Escalating Influence of the Global South?

- The establishment of the 'Loss and Damage Fund' during **COP27 in Egypt** highlighted the **disproportionate burden faced by the Global South**.
- Japan's G7 summit made a commendable effort to include countries like **India and Brazil**, fostering a more inclusive dialogue.

- The expansion of BRICS to **11 members** emphasized increased engagement with the Global South.
- The **G-77 summit in Cuba** successfully brought together numerous developing nations to address critical issues.
- The inclusion of the 55-nation African Union in the G20 signifies a growing recognition of African nations' global significance and their valuable contributions to shaping the global order.

What are the Challenges for India as a Voice of the Global South?

- **Addressing Divergent Interests:** The Global South comprises countries with varied **political ideologies, economic structures, and geopolitical ambitions**. Harmonizing these differences to present a unified stance on global issues like trade, climate change, and security can be challenging.
- **Overcoming Power Asymmetry:** The Global South includes **both emerging powers like India, Brazil, and South Africa, alongside least developed countries**.
 - Balancing power dynamics within this group and ensuring equitable representation can be challenging, as stronger nations might overshadow the concerns of smaller, less influential countries.
- **Negotiating with Global Powers:** Advocating for the interests of the Global South amidst the dominance of global powers demands strategic negotiation skills. India must navigate its relationships with established powers like the US and the EU, ensuring that the **voice of the Global South is heard and considered in global decision-making processes**.
- **Resource Constraints:** India needs to balance its own developmental needs with its role as a representative of the Global South. Limited resources and competing domestic priorities within Global South countries often pose challenges for India.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen Regional Alliances:** Forge stronger alliances within regional blocs such as SAARC, ASEAN, and BIMSTEC to collectively address regional challenges, foster economic cooperation, and enhance regional stability.
- **Facilitate South-South Cooperation:** Promote collaboration and knowledge sharing among **Global South nations**, leveraging each other's strengths in areas like technology, healthcare, education, and sustainable development.
- **Advocate for Equity in Global Governance:** Push for reforms in global governance structures such as the United Nations, IMF, and World Bank to ensure fair representation and greater decision-making power for the Global South.
- **Address Climate Change and Sustainability:** India can lead by example in adopting sustainable practices, **investing in renewable energy, and advocate for global efforts to combat climate change** while considering the developmental needs of Global South nations.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. In which one of the following groups are all the four countries members of G20? (2020)

- (a) Argentina, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey
- (b) Australia, Canada, Malaysia and New Zealand
- (c) Brazil, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam
- (d) Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q. 'The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order.' Elaborate. (2019)

