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West and the Rest:
Is the G7 Living on
Borrowed Time?



Contents

01	Binary Choices Before the Global South Ong Tee Keat	01
02	Can the New G7 Commitments Survive Internal Political Uncertainty? Zhang Jieling	08
03	The G7 and the New World Order Miguel Otero-Iglesias	15
TIO Spotlight Talk	The G7 and India: Modi's Balancing Game An Interview with Qian Feng	19
Youth Voices	Multilateral Forum or Political Bloc: The G7 and the Perils of "Moral Leadership" Gabby Green	25

Binary Choices Before the Global South

Ong Tee Keat



- Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute
- President of the BRI Caucus for Asia Pacific

At long last, the club of the world's seven most advanced economies, the Group of Seven (G7), realized it was necessary to reach out to the Global South at the 2023 Hiroshima Summit. This year, the G7 summit in Italy saw a continued engagement with certain selected developing countries, albeit symbolically.

Amid the current changing dynamics, to weather a contested global order, the collective G7 needs to recalibrate itself to deal with challenges including strategic interoperability and rising aspirations from the rest of the world.

While the G7 still sustains multilateral heft to a certain extent, the sway it holds is getting increasingly irrelevant in the changing world. The strategic interoperability with the developing and underdeveloped worlds that were once lorded over can no longer be taken for granted. Similarly, the G7's legitimacy to formulate rules and policies for global governance is now being contested.

From the perspective of this "rich nations club," developing countries and emerging economies that are referred to as the so-called "Global South" (as is habitually portrayed in the narratives of the collective West - including its Asian ally Japan) are simply too large a collective economy to ignore, though their voices generally remain faint in contemporary global governance.

Over the past five decades, the G7, representing a combined 10% of the global population, has consistently and persistently dominated global trade and the

international financial system, while also holding sway on global matters that involve policy coordination.

As of today, the aggregate GDP of its seven member states still remains robust, making up about 44% of the global economy in nominal terms, although this is a spiraling decrease from nearly 70% three decades ago.

The G7's 30% contribution to world GDP in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms is ostensibly dwarfed by 58% of the worldwide GDP held by the Global South, of which the original five members of the BRICS group currently contribute 32%. The "threat" posed by the Global South is getting increasingly real as the relevance of the G7 in global governance declines.

Throughout the year-long G7 presidency of Japan in 2023, enhancing economic cooperation with the Global South appeared active on the group's agenda. An "outreach session" inviting representatives of governments from emerging economies, namely Australia, Chile, India, Indonesia, and Kenya, along with representatives of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), was held for the first time at a G7 Trade Ministers' Meeting. The session, intended for building new supply chains to link G7 and the Global South, was apparently in sync with the Supply Chain pillar under the framework of the US-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF).

Amid the escalating geopolitical competition between China and the US, tensions with China have been a centerpiece of the G7 agenda since last year's Hiroshima Summit. At the 2024 G7 Summit, a large part of the final communiqué was dedicated to the concerns posed by China's economic expansion. It referenced Beijing dozens of times, more in an adversarial tone, thereby marking a more hawkish attitude toward China than ever before.

Reading between the lines, beyond rhetoric of economic security that the G7 avowed to undertake lies the unsettling fear of China's growing sphere of influence in the Global South through its mammoth Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). As of August 2023, 152 countries across Asia Pacific, Africa, the Americas, and beyond, most of which are from the Global South, have committed to embarking on this mega endeavor. This, in itself, is a vote of confidence in the BRI, a direct rebuff to the unsubstantiated allegation of a "debt trap" against China by the collective West.

To counter the BRI, the G7-sponsored Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) remains high on the agenda, albeit with very little information made accessible to the needy developing nations. The 600 billion USD pledged by the leaders of the G7 and the European Union (EU) for PGII, which was characterized as a relaunch of the US-led Build Back Better World (B3W) partnership in 2021, has yet to be seen as a viable solution to the ever-widening infrastructure finance gap.

In the public domain, the G7's inaugural 600 billion USD pledge promised a litany of ambitious infrastructure projects in the Global South. The yet-to-be-born projects involve railways and green energy, including an economic "corridor" linking India to Europe via the Arabian Peninsula, as well as a trans-African corridor connecting Zambia to Angola via the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to name a few. Alongside this, partnerships were fostered with Indonesia, Vietnam, South Africa, and Senegal in their respective energy transitions from fossil fuels to renewable power.

However, beyond the rhetoric and hubris, to marshal 600 billion USD by the end of 2027 is, in itself, a tall order, as the respective G7 member states' governments have so far provided little hard cash. Nor have they raised much private capital from investors.

A case in point is the G7-promised Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) project in Indonesia, which is supposed to mobilize 20 billion USD to help the country switch from coal-fired power to renewable energy, but was delayed as the G7 countries haggled over funding, half of which was earmarked for the private sector. This differentiates the PGII projects from those of BRI, which are funded by Chinese state-controlled banks.

Henceforth, it's still premature to conclude that the G7-sponsored PGII model posed a viable alternative to rival the decade-old BRI, albeit the former has widely been touted as "values-driven, high-impact, and transparent."

In this context, Japan has consistently been skeptical, if not critical, of the quality of BRI infrastructure projects undertaken by Chinese state-owned enterprises. In 2015, Japan presented the Partnership for Quality Infrastructure, ostensibly intended to rival the BRI with its forte in infrastructure development. Yet, under close scrutiny, the much-touted "high-quality" Japanese projects that used to capture the imagination of some state actors in Southeast Asia have yet to leave any convincing footprints of "quality infrastructure" in the region and beyond.

Along with India, Japan is well remembered for its joint effort in launching the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor in 2017. The United States and Australia later harmonized their efforts with these two countries under the framework of the Quad - the minilateral Quadrilateral Security Dialogue dedicated to serving the US "Indo-Pacific" security interest. Yet, the promised initiative has sunk into oblivion ever since, thereby casting more apprehension among Global South nations toward the infrastructure agenda backed by Washington and its allies.

In enhancing engagement and cooperation with the Global South, Japan has been a consistent and steadfast contributor among the seven advanced economies. This is supposed to be viewed positively in light of bridging the widening gulf of the Global North and South. Yet, in reality, the modus operandi of Washington appears to override all in any of the multilateral or minilateral pacts. The collective G7 is no exception.

Interestingly, while acknowledging the existing trust deficit between the Global South and the G7, the Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry, Yasutoshi Nishimura, who co-chaired the 2023 G7 Trade Ministers' meeting, said, "We don't intend to build new walls to keep others out or form blocs of countries in the name of economic security, but rather aim to further enhance trade and investment with trusted partners."

To reconcile his pledge of no intention "to build new walls" with what Washington is doing to keep China out of the IPEF supply chain on the pretext of hedging against over-dependence on China is indeed difficult.

Parallel to this, Washington's relentless efforts to build a "small yard, high fence," as was described by President Biden's National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan, in denying Beijing's access to cutting-edge technologies on a grandiose rationale of national security, conspicuously contrast against Nishimura's words.

In the same vein, what appears even more oxymoronic is that while the G7 is trumpeting its leading role in maintaining and developing a free and fair-trade order, the US sanctions and punitive tariff hikes have time and again been weaponized against countries deemed detrimental to Washington's interests. Dictates of the US exceptionalism are virtually having the final say vis-a-vis the WTO in addressing any trade disputes. This is mirrored by the lavish use of such platitudes as "rules-based order" among the collective West in maintaining their grip on global governance, where the US dictates are allowed to prevail at the expense of the United Nations Charter.

If anyone were to judge the G7's commitment to upholding good global governance by mere words, Minister Nishimura's pledge to "continue to work for the development of the world economy and global peace and prosperity while cooperating fully with the Global South" would presumably present an image that the G7 and China are virtually on the same page as far as global peace and prosperity are concerned.

To be fair, Nishimura did not have a crystal ball to gaze at when he made the remarks at the G7 Trade Ministers' meeting last year before the G7 summit in 2024, but the position of G7 and the EU on freezing the Russian financial assets amounting to 325 billion USD, which were largely held in their territories across Europe, was not anything abrupt or unexpected. Such contemplation has long been looming at the behest of Washington.

At the G7 summit in mid-June 2024, the decision to lend Ukraine 50 billion USD interest accrued from the frozen Russian assets amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine military conflict was provocative enough to ignite strong retaliatory moves from Russia.

In this context, the US Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellen, who is an architect of the plan to use Russia's central bank assets to help Ukraine, can claim an initial triumph with her brainchild at this stage. She should be well aware of the tit-for-tat risks in her calculus. The credibility and integrity of the financial institutions involved in the move would be left at stake, precipitating a yet-to-be-known impact on the European banking industry as well as the Euro. As the brunt is more likely to be borne by her trans-Atlantic allies, her indifference to the potential backlash is thus anticipated.

To the world at large, it's common sense that the decision would dash any hopes of brokering peace in the ongoing kinetic conflict. However, this is Washington's least concern, as the conflict is dubbed a proxy war instrumental in "bleeding" Russia to its decline.

Meanwhile, the G7 summit's decision scripted in the communiqué may have left many quarters across the world skeptical of its probability of being implemented, given that several leaders of the G7 are now either in political limbo or booted out of office after the summit. Beyond the long shadow cast on the outcome of the summit, perhaps the key triumphs the G7 can celebrate are the visibly enhanced trans-Atlantic agreement on solidarity over issues of countering China more

assertively and the consensus reached on aiding Ukraine financially with frozen Russian assets.

On the outreach to the Global South, as a follow-up to the Japanese inaugural effort last year, the Italian host continued the engagement by inviting 12 developing countries to the summit. Ostensibly, the foregrounding of Africa took center stage at the 2024 summit. The G7's African outreach via new policies rolled out is primarily motivated by Europe's current need to diversify its energy sources following the Ukraine conflict, on the one hand. On the other hand, it's also a collective intention of the US-led G7 to rival China's influence on the vast continent, which has long been plundered its rich mineral resources by the Western colonists.

In this context, the Energy for Growth in Africa initiative launched to invest in sustainable industrial and infrastructural development in Africa is a clear case in point. The newfound fever for investing in Africa has been revved up. Aside from the G7, individual Western countries are of no exception in jumping onto the bandwagon. For instance, Italy on its own, under the Mattei Plan, has promised grants and loans worth 5.5 billion EUR to several African countries in the name of helping develop their economies.

Be that as it may, the way forward for development in Africa lies in sustainability and equitability. China, through its egalitarian partnership model under the BRI framework, has made impressive inroads in Africa, while the investability-driven initiatives spearheaded by the G7 remain to be seen. In reality, the nightmarish economic plundering footprints of the European colonial powers stay etched in the memory of most emerging economies in Africa.

Like Africa, the entire Global South will continue to be wooed by major powers scrambling for power dominance and strategic resources, but gone are the days of predatory economic subjugation by the contending powers. Pursuant to redeeming their respective sovereignties from the colonial masters, the developing countries and emerging economies have every legitimate right to claim concomitant peace and economic prosperity, which are not mutually exclusive. Instead, both are co-dependencies that reinforce one another.

While the 2024 G7 Summit was dangling big carrots of promising investments to the Global South and singing assertive, if not combative, tunes against China and Russia, little did the world anticipate the offer presented by Beijing at the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence two weeks later.

Beijing announced its renewed commitment to keeping the spirit alive alongside bringing common development via South-South cooperation and the bridging of the Global North-South gulf to the table. These were made deliverable through the avenues of the three Chinese global initiatives, which are rooted in the ideal of building a global community of shared future - an epitome of the embodiment of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

The binary choices before the Global South are now obvious. It is not an ideological face-off, as is trumpeted by the collective West. Instead, competing offers mark a defining moment for the Global South to choose between peaceful coexistence and hegemonic primacy for themselves and the world as we enter a multipolar era.

Can the New G7 Commitments Survive Internal Political Uncertainty?

Zhang Jieling



• Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute

On June 15, the leaders of the wealthiest countries in the world concluded the three-day 50th G7 summit in Apulia, Italy, with an official statement that underscored ongoing challenges and aimed to address pressing global issues.

The G7, home to over 776 million people, includes the advanced industrialized economies of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, with representatives from the European Union (EU) also attending. It represents around 60% of the global net wealth and about 44% of the global economy, and has been widely viewed as an important constituent of the global governance system and a key contributor to the stability of global economic and financial relations.

This year, G7 leaders held six working sessions focusing on: Africa, climate change, and development; the ongoing situation in the Middle East; Ukraine conflict; migration; "Indo-Pacific" and economic security; and AI, energy, and Africa-Mediterranean.

With the exception of the host, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, the other attendees were all politically weakened at home, and many were busy with elections. Despite being haunted by domestic issues, the G7 leaders managed to deliver a strong message of unity concerning matters they believe might affect Western stability, particularly regarding Russia, China, and the Middle East.

G7's Expanding Engagement with the Global South

The G7 attempted to broaden its engagement beyond Western nations by taking some emerging powers on board. Recent years have seen the Global South countries altering world economic and political dynamics, though they do not form a coherent and organized grouping with a leader and a secretariat. Nevertheless, the Global South represents a tangible geopolitical force. As the geopolitical and geoeconomic landscape shifts, the G7's exclusivity clashes with the demands for a bigger say in global affairs from the Global South.

In adjusting to this new paradigm, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni invited a record number of leaders from countries and international organizations, including Pope Francis and the leaders of Ukraine, India, Brazil, Argentina, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kenya, Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, and Mauritania, for extended sessions. The goal of the expanded guest list, as Meloni said, was to "strengthen its dialogue with nations in the Global South."

Obviously, Prime Minister Meloni aimed to bridge the "West vs. the rest" gap, presenting the G7 as a voice representing more than just the wealthy West.

In the last few years, the G7 governments, led by the Biden administration, have spared no effort in pushing the Global South to join the West in confronting Russia and China. In their eyes, China and Russia intend to change the world order with the aim of diminishing the role of the US and its allies.

Influenced by this mindset, the G7 governments have tried to create what they call an alliance of democracies, dividing the world into two blocs: "democracy and autocracy," with the G7 countries and other nations such as Australia and the Republic of Korea (ROK) on one side, and Russia, China, etc., which are labeled "illiberal," on the other side. This division encompasses not only democracy promotion, but also economics, military cooperation, human rights, and diplomacy.

The G7 summit supported and reaffirmed partnerships with African countries, launching new policies such as the Energy for Growth in Africa initiative, which was expected to contribute to African stability and prosperity. However, these G7 African policies are partially motivated by the desire to counter a rising China. In other words, the G7 seeks to provide Africa with an alternative investor to China.

This strategy is proving futile. Many Global South countries prefer to focus on issue-based cooperation rather than permanent alliances. They do not see any

benefits in choosing between so-called "democratic" and "authoritarian" systems of governance. As the G7-China competition intensifies, African countries are struggling to balance their relationships with these global powers.

Whether admitted or not, democracy takes on a wide range of forms based on different countries' political, economic, cultural, religious, and social backgrounds and histories. It can never be said that Western-style democracy or "liberal democracy" is true democracy, and the rest are "fake" democracy or "authoritarianism," even though there are totalitarian regimes amongst this group. Making hasty conclusions leads to wrong decisions.

The world is not black and white. There are quite a few countries that fall somewhere in the middle of that divide. If the G7 ignores the new realities and misinterprets the needs of the Global South, it will be extremely harmful. The Global South countries won't buy into arguments that irrevocably divide the world into two opposing camps, each representing a distinctive way of political ideology.

Take India as an example. In the ongoing Ukraine conflict, both the G7 and Russia want India on their side. It's no secret that both the US and India see each other as natural allies, and the G7 has a clear interest in dragging the world's most populous democracy, India, into what they describe as a "democratic camp" to increase the efficacy of sanctions on Russia.

Unfortunately, there seems to be no way for the G7 to ask India to do more and take on its democratic responsibilities due to divergent interests and strategic concepts. In fact, India plays both sides with great skill. On one hand, being eager to serve as the indispensable bridge between the North and South, East and West, New Delhi is tempted to strengthen relations with the G7, the United States in particular, with an eye on China. On the other hand, India cannot stop buying Russian arms due to its heavy dependence on Soviet-origin weapon systems, which is a thorn in the flesh for Washington.

In addition, there are other conflicts of interest between the G7 and India that are difficult to iron out. For example, when the G7 countries imposed an import ban on Russian-origin diamonds in the 12th round of sanctions against Moscow, it hurt India's domestic diamond export industry, which uses Russian diamonds as raw materials.

Some people in India are not supportive of New Delhi venturing into global power politics at this stage. They argue that India should prioritize uplifting its

people above the poverty line and improving governance above everything else. In this context, it is unrealistic to expect India to embrace the G7's demands to stop buying oil or diamonds from Russia, or to impose sanctions on Russia. It's understandable for India to maintain a delicate balance in its relationships with the G7 and Russia.

In the foreseeable future, India won't give up its close historical relations with Russia, unless the United States makes substantial concessions. If bilateral relations between the G7 and Russia deteriorate further or a hot war breaks out in Europe, perhaps the United States will consider loosening the restrictions on the provision of US weapons to India to replace Russian weapons.

Anyhow, it won't be an easy job for India to get access to more sensitive technologies from the US. India will have to fight an uphill battle to convince the US Congress and the US State Department to ease the strict rules governing the export of military technology, such as the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR). Since the United States is reluctant to share military technology even with its formal allies, it is doubtful that India will be lucky enough to receive such privileges.

The reverse is also true. Up till now, around 40 countries from the Global South have lined up for membership in the BRICS Plus. That does not necessarily mean the BRICS Plus will become a rival or adversary of the G7, because unlike the G7, which comprises "like-minded" democracies, the BRICS Plus countries are diverse with different national interests and distinct political, economic, social, and cultural systems.

Moreover, there are tensions within the BRICS Plus. The tensions between China and India, as well as between Iran and Saudi Arabia, will have negative impacts on the effectiveness of the organization. With an unresolved simmering border dispute between the world's two most populous countries, how can anyone expect India to ally with China to challenge the Western narratives of international affairs?

During the Cold War era, a Non-Aligned Movement emerged. This could occur today as well. As one of the pivotal swing powers in world politics, India is competing with China for influence in the Global South. More likely, India will engage with the G7 countries, trying to portray itself as a bridge between the West and the rest while retaining strategic autonomy to the greatest extent possible.

As a responsible major country, China has a lot to do to make the Global South in general, and the BRICS Plus in particular, more cohesive, coordinate policy with leaders of these countries to democratize international relations, and support and foster the trend toward a more multipolar world, balancing against American hegemonism and unilateralism supported by the G7.

Old Habits Die Hard.

Since the outbreak of the Ukraine conflict, the reconfiguration of international relations has accelerated much faster than expected. In the face of profound changes unseen in a century, the Global South keeps trying to get the voices of rising powers heard in a Western-dominated world, and has been constantly gaining political, strategic, and demographic influence.

Last August, BRICS leaders agreed to invite six countries, namely Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, to join the group during the annual summit, which The New York Times said had "surprised" some Western countries. The Global South leaders have repeatedly called for "greater representation of emerging markets and developing countries" in international institutions – from the United Nations and its Security Council to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank – seeking to work together toward a more just and inclusive world order.

In spite of the efforts made by the G7 to reach out to the Global South, the gap between the two sides is widening due to the G7's long-standing paternalistic relationship with the developing world, Africa in particular. The G7 regards African nations primarily as recipients of aid instead of fully fledged partners in global affairs.

It seems that G7 governments are eager to deepen collaboration with developing countries on matters of development, food security, energy security, and climate change, to enhance their collective outreach to Africa. At present, there are various aid projects specifically designed for the Global South by the G7, especially those for African countries.

Will G7 governments succeed in galvanizing this West-rest collaboration in the context of the ongoing Ukraine conflict and increased geopolitical competition between the United States and China? It depends on whether the G7 can change its perception and end the "disaster begging bowl" system of international aid. The Global South countries hope to engage with each other on equal terms, treat

each other as equals, and be treated as equals. Some African leaders have already expressed fears about double standards in terms of international aid set by the G7.

The old ways of paternalism are no longer effective. Being perceived as dogmatic and sometimes arrogant, the G7 won't get the expected returns if it simply throws money into development aid without a comprehensive paradigm shift. It must be realized that international aid is not an "us vs. them" game, but relates to building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Doubling Down on Efforts to Defeat Russia in the Ukrainian Battlefield

Just one day before the 2024 G7 Summit began, the US announced a new round of sanctions and export control measures, targeting more than 300 individuals and entities in Russia and China, intensifying the pressure on Russia.

During the summit, the Biden administration announced steps to restrict access to certain US software and information technology services, to crack down on the diversion of goods through shell companies, and to more extensively restrict exports to entities that supply Russia with US-branded items produced overseas. Furthermore, on the sidelines of the event, US President Joe Biden and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky signed a historic 10-year security pact, while a similar deal was signed between Ukraine and Japan.

The summit's most "significant" achievement was the announcement of a plan that drew on earnings from 300 billion USD in frozen Russian assets to provide Ukraine with a 50 billion USD loan to support its efforts in continuing the war against Russia, meeting Kiev's military and reconstruction needs. The G7 leaders reaffirmed their commitment that Russia's sovereign assets within G7 jurisdictions would remain immobilized until "Russia ends its aggression and pays for the damage it has caused to Ukraine."

The new funds will help cover Ukraine's immediate needs. The United States will work with Ukraine and G7 partners in the coming months to work out the details and issue the loan by the end of the year. However, the 50 billion USD loan is essentially a stopgap measure covering Ukraine's current financing gap. If the conflict continues, the West must prepare to make a more sustained financial commitment in the coming years to support Ukraine's defense.

More probable than not, once the conflict ends, more aid will be needed. It cannot be ruled out that the compensation claims for the damages inflicted on Ukraine will exceed the value of the frozen Russian reserves in Europe, which will force the G7 to reconsider whether to seize the 300 billion USD in frozen reserves. Still, perspectives differ as to what strategies their countries should pursue among the G7. There is strong opposition in Europe to confiscating Russian sovereign assets.

The crux of the concerns for European officials is that seizing Russia's sovereign assets would violate international law, weaken the international role of the dollar and the euro, dampen the willingness of countries to hold dollars or euros in their international reserves, and provoke further Russian retaliation against G7 countries, especially those Western firms doing business with Russia or with investments in Russia.

Apart from alleviating Europeans' initial concerns about the adverse effects on the strength of the euro to some extent, the Biden administration was quite successful in convincing other G7 leaders that China is playing an increasingly active role in supporting Russia, which causes direct harm to Europe's security interests, and in exaggerating China's industrial "overcapacity." So far, the G7 governments' attitudes toward China have turned much more assertive, indicating a major shift in their China policies.

In the context of the political right growing as a political force in both Europe and America, the domestic political turmoil in most of the G7 countries could undermine the G7's policy continuity in the next few months. Particularly, the assassination attempt on Donald Trump has worsened a bitter division in America, and will most likely change the landscape of the US presidential election.

This is not good news for the G7. During the first Trump administration, the G7 was effectively paralyzed when then-President Trump disowned the communiqué after it had been agreed on by all other members at the 2018 summit in Quebec, Canada. If Donald Trump were to be reelected, the consequences for the G7 would become very uncertain and would raise doubts over the actual implementation of what had been decided at the Apulia summit. It cannot be ruled out that the G7 will enter a chaotic period of discord and uncertainty after the US presidential election in November.

The G7 and the New World Order

Miguel Otero-Iglesias



- Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute
- Professor at IE University, Madrid, Spain

The Ukraine conflict has made one feature of international relations obvious. The West, including its Eastern allies (Japan and South Korea), is more united than ever, yet simultaneously more isolated from the rest of the world than ever before. With every G7 meeting that passes, this is becoming more evident. The recently concluded G7 summit in Puglia (aka Apulia), Italy, was no exception, despite Giorgia Meloni's efforts to build bridges to the Global South by inviting the leaders of important powers like Brazil, India, and Türkiye.

The diminishing role of the G7 is a structural trend. Since 2018, the BRICS countries have had a bigger share of world GDP in purchasing power parity terms, and the gap has only increased since then.

But politically, the starkest reflection of this structural decline in the power of the G7 is that the West and its Eastern allies have sanctioned Russia for the conflict, but the rest of the world has not. This has come as a shock for many Europeans. The dominant view for a long time in the Old Continent was that due to the soft power of the European Union (EU), if Europe were to be in trouble with Russia, most of the emerging powers, and the US, would come to the rescue, or would at least help or cooperate with Europe, not with Russia. This has not been the case. Quite the contrary, China, which arguably, because of its economic size and political clout, holds significant influence in the Global South, has enhanced, not reduced, its economic and political exchanges with Russia.

This is a reality check for the Europeans and signifies their disappointment when it comes to China. As a high official from the EU told me recently, the Europeans have a strategic partnership with China, but this does not mean much. If you see how your neighbor gets beaten up by a bigger neighbor, and you are scared that this bigger neighbor might come after you afterward, and your strategic friend, rather than stopping this neighbor, maintains business as usual or even enhances its relationship with him, then you know what to expect. The reality is that in February 2022, the EU felt threatened, looked around to see who would come to help, and the only big power that stood by them was again the US. Not only did China "disappoint," India, a democracy and a Quad member, also continued business as usual with Russia. So did Brazil, which is sometimes presented as part of the West. Moreover, Türkiye, a member of NATO and in a customs union with the EU, became the biggest route to evade Western sanctions against Russia.

Of course, most of these countries have their own reasons to behave like this. Russia remains a big country and retains influence. Neither China nor India wants to be on bad terms with their big neighbor. India still remembers the support of the Soviet Union for its independence. China feels more and more under siege from the West and has thus no present incentive to be on bad terms with Russia. As one Chinese international relations scholar told me recently, imagine that China had acted with Ukraine like it did after 9/11. China, like then, could have joined the "international community," condemned the Russian attack against Ukrainian sovereignty, and supported the military efforts to help Ukraine. But would the US have lifted its tariffs, sanctions, and export controls against China? I talked to many US foreign policy experts, and their answers were a resounding "no." So, in many ways, China is stuck with Russia for good and bad. And I am aware that in Beijing and Shanghai there is a debate arguing whether Russia is a strategic asset or a liability for China.

What is clear is that the US wants to contain China, and convince its allies to join it, and the G7 meeting in Puglia is a clear reflection of this. There is a whole page dedicated to China in the final communiqué, and the usual grievances are all there. From a Global South perspective, there are a lot of double standards in this communiqué and in the foreign policy of these nations. There is a solemn pledge to respect and uphold the "rules-based multilateral order," but while this is done in regard to Ukraine, the same cannot be said about the situation in Gaza. The evidence of war crimes against civil population is increasing by the day, but the West, led by the US, is certainly not doing all it can to stop this.

It is also ironic that the communiqué calls for strengthening the World Trade Organization (WTO) when it is the US that is undermining its effectiveness by blocking the renewal of the Appellate Body. The policies of the Biden administration have not changed since the Trump government, and there is no reason to believe that this will change in the future. As a matter of fact, the US has imposed 100% tariffs on Chinese electric cars, without any consideration for WTO rules. So, while the US talks of multilateralism, it certainly does not walk the walk. One does not need to sit in the Global South to see this. The same goes for the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The G7 can ask China to respect the UNCLOS, but this demand loses strength by the fact that the US has never signed the UNCLOS in the first place.

So, to sum up, the G7 meets regularly, and its members are more united than ever in the current geopolitical context, but its influence is diminishing. Yes, in Puglia, many leaders from the Global South attended, and this is positive. Bridges need to be built. Cooperation needs to be strengthened. Yet the gap between the Global North and the Global South, between the West and the rest, or between the OECD countries and the Global South, is still widening. The G7, with the US in the lead, needs to realize that the liberal international order of the Washington consensus is long gone, and a new world order is warranted, one where the state will have a more prominent role than in the past because of the return of industrial policy to manage the digital and energy transitions. Yet this world order cannot be based on a "new Washington consensus," as proposed by US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, which would continue to make the G7 the rule maker, and the rest the rule takers. This will not work. This is slowly becoming a consensus in the EU. There is a feeling that the new world order of multilateralism will need to be co-shaped with the Global South.

Yes, it is important to strengthen the G7, maybe it can even be expanded to South Korea, Australia, and Spain, as it is rumored in Washington, D.C., but without the engagement of the Global South, the new world order will not be multilateral, and for the EU, this is vital. Ultimately, it is the Group of 20 (G20) that needs to work. In conclusion, I hope Ursula von der Leyen will have this as a clear priority in her new mandate.

TIO Spotlight Talk



The G7 and India: Modi's Balancing Game

An Interview with Qian Feng

Qian Feng



• Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute

TIO The 2024 Group of Seven (G7) summit was held in June in Italy. Generally speaking, how would you evaluate this summit?

Qian Firstly, many observers in the West, including the United States, believe that this G7 summit could be considered a gathering of "losers," because except for the prime minister of Italy, leaders from the other six countries face various domestic problems. Some Western media even call this summit the "last supper" of these leaders. It is foreseeable that next year's G7 summit will have a completely different lineup. This shows how Western politics is being dragged down by domestic problems, a state of instability at home.

Secondly, when the G7 was established in 1976, these countries accounted for around 70% of the world's GDP. However, as the world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century, the world's economic center of gravity starts to shift from the North Atlantic coast to Asia.

Now, we are witnessing a rise of emerging economies, with China being a prominent example. According to the 2023 International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, if we measure GDP by purchasing power parity (PPP), the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) collectively account for 31.5% of the world's GDP, surpassing the G7, which now accounts for 30.7%. This trend underscores the diminishing influence of the G7.

Moreover, the West, ironically, claims responsibility for aiding developing countries, while simultaneously proposing hollow initiatives, including the Global Gateway initiative. International analysts have calculated that the G7 countries owe developing countries at least 15 trillion USD in unmet commitment, whether in infrastructure or green, low-carbon development.

So, the G7 has become increasingly unacceptable to the rest of the world. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva pointed out that the G7 gathering to discuss arrangements for the global order, including the economic order, is outdated.

TIO We noticed that at this summit, the G7 invited several major players from the Global South. Interestingly, when taking the group photo, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was arranged in the center. How do you interpret this?

Qian The G7 is aware that their traditional methods alone can no longer guide the international economic order, so it turns its attention to major Global South countries, such as India and Brazil. India, in particular, is playing an increasingly important role, and considers itself the leader of the Global South. With its economy thriving, India has become increasingly active on the international stage, as demonstrated by its invitations to the G7 summit and the NATO summit over the past two years.

For countries like India and Brazil, such platforms offer better connections with the traditional Western economic groups, thereby broadening the scope of diplomacy, increasing the leverage for security, and enhancing economic resilience. However, despite Modi being in the center of the photo, it's more of a symbolic gesture. When it comes to deliberations on critical issues, the West still operates within a small circle. In many ways, even Japan is not fully involved in the most critical discussions within the G7.

TIO Just before Modi attended the G7 summit this year, he had won the national election and secured another term as Prime Minister. How do you evaluate the results of the Indian election?

Qian Regarding this election, it is indeed a historic event. Modi has become the second politician in India's history to serve as Prime Minister for three consecutive terms, following the country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

However, disappointment emerged after the initial optimism. It had been widely believed that after ten years of Modi's leadership, coupled with the strong network and organizational advantages of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the party would have replicated its victory in 2019. However, the BJP did not meet these expectations and performed far worse than before. It has even lost its absolute majority in parliament, which means that Modi's next term will not be unrestrained. He will have to consider the positions of coalition partners and smaller parties on certain issues.

We saw a shift driven by public sentiment. Northern India, the Hindi heartland, has long been the stronghold of the BJP. However, the BJP surprisingly lost in Ayodhya, the constituency where the Ram Temple is located. This shows that many people are not fully convinced by the BJP's narratives of Hindu supremacy. Despite their extensive propaganda, the BJP has failed to deliver economically. Youth unemployment rates are rising, and while India's GDP remains strong and attracts global attention, the average citizen hasn't felt the benefits. People perceive that the economic development has primarily benefited the big conglomerates and corporations supported by the BJP, rather than the ordinary workers.

Moreover, their agricultural policies have benefited very few farmers, which can explain the significant protests from farmers in Punjab. Meanwhile, the BJP's emphasis on Hindu supremacy has marginalized the 14% Muslim population, making them feel sidelined and that their interests and religious rights are not being protected. Consequently, many Muslim voters chose to support the opposition. All these factors have contributed to the outcome of the Indian election.

TIO India has always been seen as independent and ambitious, aiming to maintain its influence in the Indian Ocean. However, in recent years, India seems to be leaning toward the West, frequently attending international meetings such as the NATO summit and the G7 summit. What is your comment on such tendency? Will it continue and intensify, or swing back?

Qian In my view, India originally pursued a non-aligned foreign policy and was a leading country in the Non-Aligned Movement. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, known in Hindi as Panchsheel, were highly valued by India. Why? Because, as a major power, India recognized the need to provide public goods for global peace, development, and stability.

At that time, as newly independent nations, both India and China worked together to implement these principles. Initially, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence guided bilateral relations and benefited neighboring Asian countries. Over time, they gained acceptance worldwide. India took great pride in these principles and was committed to promoting them.

However, India's non-alignment policy has changed over the years. Based on what they call "reformed multilateralism," India now engages in dynamic issue-based balancing coalitions. This shift is particularly evident in its approach to China. In order to compete with and contain China, the US and other Western countries have ingratiated themselves with India in recent years. With strained China-India relations, India has felt the need to leverage external forces to better restrict China. We have seen the US-India relationship grow closer, and this trend is expected to continue during Modi's third term. While India strengthens its relations with the West, it will also try to strike a balance in its ties with other major countries.

India has strong aspirations to be a major power. The founding Prime Minister Nehru's book, *The Discovery of India*, speaks of India's desire to be a major power with a significant voice. Nehru believed that India would never accept being subordinate to any other country. However, the reality indicates that India's current power is insufficient, and it needs to work more closely with the US and other Western countries, as well as with Russia. India aims to navigate between major powers, leveraging their interests to maximize its own national interests and achieve optimal diplomatic expectations.

TIO Indeed, one can say that India's balancing act involves weighing the West on one side and Russia on the other. Even in the context of Western countries being at odds with Russia, India continues to maintain close interactions with Russia. How do you view India-Russia relations?

Qian India and Russia elevated their Strategic Partnership to the level of "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership."

Politically, there are hardly any conflicting interests between the two sides. In terms of the Kashmir issue, which India values most, none of the other four permanent members of the United Nations Security Council openly supported India. Choosing to side with India would cause Pakistan to strongly protest. However, Russia has fully supported India on the issue, which India deeply appreciates.

In terms of defense, at its peak, about 70-80% of India's military equipment was from Russia. As to nuclear energy technology, Russia has been a main provider to India. Despite their close cooperation in other areas, economic exchanges between the two countries were relatively limited. Before the Ukraine conflict, the trade volume between India and Russia was only around 10 billion USD.

However, this situation has changed in recent years, with Russian and Indian economic and trade relations growing rapidly. The main reason is that Russia has been selling discounted crude oil to India, leading to a massive increase in Russian oil exports to India. This has boosted the Indian economy, as India has abundant mineral resources but lacks crude oil. It is expected that the economic and trade exchanges between the two countries will be stable in the long-term.

Meanwhile, India can no longer maintain its previously close defense and military relationship with Russia because of the containment imposed on Russia by the US and other Western countries. Therefore, India chose to distance itself somewhat, although it cannot completely disengage from Russia.

For example, India has reduced the scale of its arms purchases from Russia. The latest figures show that India's proportion of arms purchases from Russia has dropped to about 35%, reflecting a cautious approach to not antagonize the US and Western alliances. India's participation in the Summit on Peace in Ukraine and the bilateral meeting between Modi and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on the sidelines of the G7 summit signaled some support for Ukraine. Yet Modi's visit to Russia a few weeks later in early July was a supportive gesture to Russians during their difficult times. Such a balancing act is consistent with India's current diplomatic strategy.

India's long-term view regarding the Ukraine conflict, as Modi said publicly and also to Putin, is that this is "not the era for war," implying disapproval of the conflict, though he stops short of outright condemnation.

Also, India calls for both sides to cease fire, and pays attention to the humanitarian issues of the Ukraine conflict, including the food crisis. These statements align with India's foreign policy and are similar to that of many developing countries, including China, Brazil, and South Africa. This shows India's current desire to maintain close relations with other Global South countries.

This interview was conducted by Song Xiaofeng, Editor-in-Chief of Taihe Institute.

Youth

Voices



Multilateral Forum or Political Bloc: The G7 and the Perils of "Moral Leadership"

Gabby Green



• Founder of New Global Normal

Each Group of Seven (G7) summit brings renewed debate on the group's relevance in today's world. Whilst critics decry the G7 as a relic of the past, others emphasize its importance as a platform to solve critical global issues.

One of the most common critiques leveled against the G7 points toward its exclusive membership combined with an ambitiously wide scope. Indeed, in an increasingly multipolar world, one aspect is strikingly clear: to maintain relevance, the G7 can no longer rely on hegemonic power alone. This has spurred the G7 into a frenzied charm offensive aimed at winning over skeptical nations in the Global South. From the strategic choice of Puglia (aka Apulia) as a symbolic bridge between "East and West" to the thematic focus on international development, the 2024 G7 Summit saw this charm offensive in full force as leaders attempted to disprove accusations of a "West and the rest" trope.

The group's concern over optics signals a desire to assert legitimacy amongst today's crowded international fora. It also hints at a certain self-awareness of the group's waning influence. In an era where the G7 appears as an increasingly bizarre cohort tasked with regulating global norms and governance, it is important to question the motivations behind the group's quest for relevance.

Despite the tendency to assume otherwise, the G7 as an institution is not stuck in time. The G7 itself has carefully and consciously evolved, continually reshaping itself to preserve an increasingly distant past. Put bluntly, the G7 of today exists as a vehicle for maintaining Anglo-European primacy, deeply embedded in a problematic vision for international cooperation that desperately clings to Pax Americana. In unpacking the group's transformation from its humble origins, we see the G7's standing today as a highly strategic political mechanism that runs antithetical to the multilateralism it espouses. It is this underlying motivation that is the G7's Achilles' heel for securing the legitimacy it so desires.

From Economic Forum to Platform for Global Governance

Born from an ad hoc gathering of finance ministers, the G7 was initially envisioned as a forum for heads of state of the world's largest economies to address pressing economic issues of the 1970s, including the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, the oil shock, and stagflation. At the time, the group accounted for a majority of global GDP (around 70%),¹ making it a practical and representative forum to coordinate economic policy and address these specific challenges affecting its members.

As the initial economic crises that prompted the formation of the G7 subsided, rather than disbanding, the group widened its scope. In the 1980s, the G7 began to take on geopolitical issues, such as the Iran-Iraq conflict and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. This scope widened again at the turn of the century as the G7 took a broader aim at global governance. The G7 of today has pushed forward reform of global trade policy, discussed global pandemic response,² and become increasingly focused on governing global responses to climate change.³

Despite this drastic change in focus, the G7 has remained rigid in structure. Today's G7 is neither economically nor demographically representative of the world, even as its expanded scope covers more multilateral issues. Indeed, as of this year's summit, the G7 accounts for just under half of the global GDP and comprises less than 10% of the global population. The G7 has signaled no intention to expand its membership, opting instead to expand its portfolio of global issues whilst remaining an exclusive club that hearkens back to a different era – and a different purpose, for that matter.

1 Raffaele Trombetta, *Is the G7 Still Relevant?* (London: LSE IDEAS, 2024), <https://www.lse.ac.uk/ideas/Assets/Documents/Expert-Analysis/2024-ExpertAnalysis-Trombetta-G7.pdf>.

2 *G7, Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué*, June 13, 2021, <https://g7g20-documents.org/database/document/2021-g7-united-kingdom-leaders-leaders-language-carbis-bay-g7-summit-communication#section-4>.

3 *G7, G7 Clean Energy Economy Action Plan*, May 20, 2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/20/g7-clean-energy-economy-action-plan/>.

The G7 Rebranded

The G7 was built during Cold War-era bipolarity, and although the group's initial purpose was not one of power politics, its small membership is reflective of a world order driven by Western hegemony.⁴ As the globe becomes increasingly multipolar, the G7's resistance to change is not a case of anachronism, but rather embodies a conscious strategy to meet shifting global dynamics. Developments that have triggered this evolution include the economic and political rise of once-emerging nations such as India and China, and an increasingly assertive (so-called) Global South deeply skeptical of global governance as it stands today.⁵

The G7 has developed from a genuine multilateral forum to a political bloc purpose-built to maintain Pax Americana. The G7 no longer indicates a bipolar world per se, but rather reflects a deep-seated belief in restoring world order to one of hegemony. For a group truly intent on securing global cooperation, a crowded international arena should not represent a threat. Yet, it is precisely the G7's concern over its ability to define and regulate – rather than cooperate – that construes this threat for the group.

The G7's political objective has been evident in its public narrative over recent years. The group has justified its legitimacy as a key actor in global affairs by rebranding itself in terms of possessing a moral, rather than economic, right to leadership. Its transition to a values-based cohesion has been particularly evident in the last decade, as the group has become known as an "alliance of democracies."⁶ In present-day rhetoric, the G7 defines itself as "united by common values and principles" and holding a duty to uphold "freedom, democracy, and human rights."⁷

The group's revamped narrative ordains itself as the defender of a "rules-based international order," a term that first appeared in the 2016 G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Joint Communiqué and has continued to be a key emphasis of subsequent meetings.⁸ This year, for example, Italy outlined its intention to use its presidency to focus on defending the "rules-based international system."⁹ This vague term is synonymous with a US-led world order. Most starkly, during the US-led summit in 2021, American President Joe Biden articulated the G7's purpose in the context

4 Mario Holzner, "BRICS Plus: New World Order After the Pax Americana?," *wiiw*, April 8, 2024, <https://wiiw.ac.at/brics-plus-new-world-order-after-the-pax-americana-n-623.html>.

5 Michelle Jamrisco and Iain Marlow, "The Global South Breaks Away from the US-Led World Order," *Bloomberg*, August 8, 2023, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-08-08/india-brazil-and-rest-of-global-south-break-away-from-the-us-led-world-order>.

6 G. John Ikenberry, "The G-7 Becomes a Power Player," *Foreign Policy*, August 31, 2023, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/08/31/g7-geopolitics-alliance-west-democracies-us-europe-japan-free-world-liberal-order/>.

7 "About the G7," G7 Italia 2024, accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.g7italy.it/en/about-g7/>.

8 G7, *G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Joint Communiqué*, April 11, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000147440.pdf>.

9 "PM Meloni Outlines Italy's Priorities at the Upcoming G-7," *Decode39*, December 22, 2023, <https://decode39.com/8570/pm-meloni-outlines-italys-priorities-at-the-upcoming-g-7/>.

of a defining global struggle between "democracy" and "autocracy."

The value-driven purpose of the rebranded G7 implies that, by virtue of their moral supremacy, the leaders of the G7 have the right to define the rules of the road for "the rest." This year's emphasis on including emerging nations in discussions does little to eschew this alarming implication, precisely due to the built-in power imbalance of the summit itself (emerging nations are invited to participate in the summit at the discretion of the G7). Although we cannot know whether G7 leaders truly believe in this moralistic narrative or whether it is a cynical ploy to conceal the political ambitions of the bloc, it remains the case that this rhetoric impacts global cooperation on pressing issues.

The Elephant in the Room

The weaponization of moral leadership can be clearly observed in the G7's language toward China, where moral leadership acts as a strategic "shielding mechanism" to allow for outward – but not inward – accountability. Although not a member of the G7 (despite China being one of the largest economies, the G7 has yet to invite China on the basis of its political system and low GDP per capita), China's relevance to the forum cannot be overstated. Rhetoric at the turn of the century broadly placed emphasis on opportunities for cooperation with China.¹⁰ However, over the past four summits, China has gone from an "elephant in the room" to a "chief adversary."¹¹ This has notably been in line with the hardening domestic discourse on China in G7 member nations; for some, it is arguably a symptom of ontological insecurity within emerging multipolarity.¹²

In this year's summit, the G7 harshly critiqued China for its supposed economic "overcapacity," condemning China for its subversion of a "rules-based international order" and breaking of international "norms" – a clear example of justification through moral leadership. Yet, a closer analysis of "overcapacity" reveals it as a dubious charge more likely to be a cover for Western protectionism, with questionable implications on global efforts to tackle climate change. It is the language of moral leadership that precisely allows these critiques to go unsaid by the forum.

10 David E. Sanger, "It's Not Just Russia: China Joins the G7's List of Adversaries," *The New York Times*, June 15, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/15/world/asia/g7-summit-china-russia.html>.

11 Stuart Lau, "China Is the Elephant in the Room at the G-7," *POLITICO*, June 10, 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/06/10/china-g-7-492714>.

12 Gabby Green, "How American Exceptionalism Gave Rise to the China Threat Theory," *The Diplomat*, April 16, 2024, <https://thediplomat.com/2024/04/how-american-exceptionalism-gave-rise-to-the-china-threat-theory/>.

Similar discourse also strategically frames discussions surrounding the G7's Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) initiative. The PGII, originally known as the Build Back Better World (B3W) partnership, was established to counter perceived growing Chinese influence in the Global South through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).¹³ In launching the B3W, Biden used stark moralistic language to directly contrast the G7's initiative with BRI, stating that the B3W represents "values that our democracies represent, and not autocratic lack of values."¹⁴ Here, the G7 presents the Global South with a Manichean choice: Chinese "exploitation" or Western "benevolence."

The problem with such discourse is not in its critique of Chinese economic practices (indeed, the BRI is not without valid and important criticism);¹⁵ rather, it is veiled criticism in moralistic, us-versus-them language that pits the G7 and China in a battle of good versus evil, such that the G7 can "do no wrong." This oversimplification harms any genuine effort to secure multilateral cooperation by polarizing discourse and creating an unhelpful (and untrue) binary.

Critiquing China for its lack of engagement alongside the G7's obvious unwillingness to work with China reveals the G7's true purpose as a political bloc. At the same time, simultaneously "inviting" Chinese cooperation in official statements whilst effectively labeling China as an international pariah places China in an impossible position, whereby it is a threat to global peace and prosperity unless it concedes to a "rules-based" (US-led) world order.

Another focus of the summit was China's alleged funding of Russia. This concern was undermined by the language of moral leadership. Commentators of this year's summit were quick to point out the alarming difference between the G7's actions to counter Russia and its insubstantial response to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in which the world has observed blatant violations of international humanitarian law. This is not to draw a moral equivalency between any two wars, but rather to indicate the insincerity and danger of the G7's moral rhetoric, assigning accountability to its rivals whilst shielding itself and its allies from critique.

13 David Sacks, "Will the US Plan to Counter China's Belt and Road Initiative Work?," *Council on Foreign Relations*, September 14, 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/will-us-plan-counter-chinas-belt-and-road-initiative-work>.

14 Joe Biden, transcript of remarks delivered at the Cornwall Airport Newquay, Cornwall, June 13, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/06/13/remarks-by-president-biden-in-press-conference-2/>.

15 Nadia Clark, "The Rise and Fall of the BRI," *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 6, 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/rise-and-fall-bri>.

Beyond the Moral Paradigm

A claim to moral leadership is not problematic in and of itself. It is when this narrative is used to both defend and circumvent the "rules-based order" it claims to protect that it becomes so. Being a democratic system does not entitle a nation to moral leadership; it goes without saying that countries of the G7 must be held as accountable for their actions as others are. We must begin to recognize the G7's moral leadership for what it is: a cover for zero-sum power politics, rather than a genuine effort to cooperate within a multipolar world.

Moving forward, the G7 must reframe its focus in order to secure the legitimacy it desires from "the rest." The G7 can and should be a productive forum for global cooperation. Representing the united front of a historical hegemon, the G7 is in a prime position to lead the transition to a multipolar world order. The G7 should use its platform to engage with rising powers and push forward reforms in international institutions – all with the end goal of setting our existing global architecture up for a new era of global leadership. Of course, doing so will require a monumental shift in strategy that is informed first and foremost by cultural humility.

About this volume

TI Observer would like to thank the following individuals for their time and insights.

Commentators



Ong Tee Keat

- Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute
- President of the BRI Caucus for Asia Pacific



Zhang Jieling

- Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute



Miguel Otero-Iglesias

- Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute
- Professor at IE University, Madrid, Spain



Qian Feng

- Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute



Gabby Green

- Founder of New Global Normal



Song Xiaofeng

- Editor-in-Chief of Taihe Institute

TIO Executive Committee



Zeng Hu

TIO Editor-in-Chief
Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute



Natalie Wang Yuge

TIO Managing Editor
Deputy Secretary-General of Taihe Institute



Lizzie Yin Xiaohong

TIO Senior Editor
Senior International Communications Officer



Ian Zheng Yizhe

TIO Copy Editor
International Communications Officer



Alicia Liu Xian

TIO Honorary Editor
Deputy Secretary-General of Taihe Institute



Einar Tangen

TIO Content Advisor
Senior Fellow of Taihe Institute
Independent Political and Economic Affairs Commentator



Evan Hill

TIO Staff Editor
TI Youth Observer - Digitization and Analytics



Angela Li Heyuan

Assistant Coordinator

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Taihe Institute

www.taiheinstitute.org/en



太和智库
Taihe Institute



Taihe Institute

Address

23/F, ShunMaijinZuan Plaza,
A-52 Southern East Third Ring Road,
Chaoyang District, Beijing

Telephone

+86-10-84351977

Postcode

100022

Fax

+86-10-84351957