C20 Principles

Background

The Civil 20 (C20) became an Official Engagement Group of the G20 in 2013[1]. Since then, the C20 has grown stronger every year, ensuring that world leaders listen not only to voices representing the government and business sectors, but also to the proposals and demands of civil society, with the aim of protecting the environment and promoting social and economic development, human rights and the principle of leaving no one behind.

As part of the G20 process, CSOs play multiple roles:

- **They provide expertise**: Civil society groups include some of the world's leading experts on a wide range of issues relevant to the G20.

- **They hold governments accountable**: Civil society challenges governments to achieve higher standards and holds them accountable to their own commitments, seeking positive outcomes for society as a whole and pushing for an effective allocation of resources to achieve those outcomes.

- **They explain complex issues in lay terms**: Much government policy is too technical or abstract for non-specialists. Civil society can help citizens understand what these policies mean and how they will impact their everyday lives.

- **They provide balance**: One of the greatest weaknesses of the G20 has been its reluctance to grant civil society the same kind of access it provides to business interests. In a context in which people around the world believe governments are too close to business or only act in their own interests, it is vital to involve civil society to ensure that government decisions reflect the interests of citizens and are worthy of people's trust

- **They collaborate**: Besides acting as a watchdog, civil society is the home of innovators and experts on technology and policy who are able and willing to provide cutting-edge solutions, innovative ideas and support to G20 governments on the key issues of our time.

Taking this into account, we, the more than 800 civil society representatives from all over the world that gathered in Tokyo from April 21st to April 23rd 2019, with the overall goal of preserving and improving the context in which the C20 carries out its activities, endorse the following **C20 Principles**. These principles aim to provide a general framework for all subsequent engagement by the C20 to ensure the sustainability and increasing impact of our collective work. In addition, we commit to maintaining, at least, the basic C20 structure outlined in section B.

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[1] Further information regarding the C20's history can be found in the "History of C20" Annex.

A. C20 Principles

1) **Global character:** The C20 is the global space for civil society organizations from all over the world - from international NGOs to grassroots local groups - aiming to influence the G20. Any local, regional or international organization (whether from G20 or non-G20 countries) wishing to discuss major issues in the global agenda and wanting to have an impact on the G20 is welcome to participate in the C20. Regional balance should always be ensured.

2) **Transparency:** All preliminary and working drafts of C20 pronouncements or decisions should be circulated widely among participating organizations and opened to comment, and all final documents should be made widely available and accessible. Information regarding C20 leadership, structure, procedures and outputs should always be timely, relevant, up-to-date and accurate.

   All C20 outputs must be developed through a transparent, inclusive and participatory process, to provide participating CSOs the opportunity to collaborate in drafting policy recommendations, including the cover statement of the C20 Policy Pack. Once approved, further editing or review of the content of any document prepared by the C20 Working Groups and/or the C20 Steering Committee (SC) and International Advisory Committee (IAC) will not be allowed. Approved documents can only be lightly edited for language clarity and design purposes.

   In order to ensure all potential participants know how the C20 works, this **C20 Principles** document should be permanently featured on the C20 official website.

3) **Independence**: While welcoming input and open debate, ultimate decision-making and sign-off prerogatives on C20 positions belong to C20 member organizations. The C20 is the exclusive domain of civil society, mandated to carry out its work and develop its policy recommendations autonomously, that is, free from undue influence by any non-civil society actors.

4) **Collaboration** To address issues of common interest, the C20 should cooperate with other engagement groups (such as the L20, T20, B20, W20, Y20 etc.) to enhance the impact of the C20's work. Such cooperation must be based on balanced power relations, adequate consultation among C20 members and with agreement of the C20 Steering Committee and International Advisory Committee.

5) **Human Rights, Gender Equality and women's empowerment**. The C20 should identify existing inequalities, forms of discrimination and other human rights violations, and strongly request G20 Governments to tackle gender and other inequalities, promoting the empowerment of women and girls, men and boys both at country and global level.

6) **Inclusiveness:** The C20 is a space for meaningful exchange and cross-country collaboration, which does not tolerate any form of discrimination, including on the basis of geographic location, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, caste, language, age, ability, legal status (e.g., migrant, refugee and statelessness) , ideology, religion or political belief.

   The C20 will use innovative, cost-efficient and practical approaches, including the use of ICTs (e.g., webcasting, videoconferencing and other online tools) in order to foster greater and more diverse participation of civil society actors, particularly from the global south and marginalized groups.

7) **Continuity:** Although the overall themes and priorities of the C20 may vary from year to year, all C20 processes should be guided by the aim of reflecting the perspective and experience of civil society across a diverse range of topics, including those which civil society wants the G20 to address but are not currently on the G20 agenda. For that to happen, each C20 process should always build on its predecessors and ensure that the voices and experience from different parts of the world are taken into account. The C20 structure outlined in section B is viewed as essential for maintaining this continuity.

   In order to ensure continuity, the current C20 Chair will transfer the domain of the C20 website (www.civil-20.org) and social media to the following C20 chair as the G20 Presidency is transferred. Each new chair will ensure that previous years' C20 online content remain available.

8) **Predictability**: In order to contribute to the transparency of the C20, it is crucial to have clear schedules and processes in place that outline a step-by-step approach for every deliverable/product that will be produced for publication on behalf of the C20. These processes must be communicated in advance, as early as possible, with clear deadlines for each milestone of that process. Ideally those processes will include drafting, review, and interaction stages (conference calls, or in-person meetings)

B. Basic C20 structure

On the basis of lessons learned from previous C20 processes, all C20 processes should guarantee, at a minimum, the following structure:

- C20 Troika: The troika structure, which is part of the C20 Steering Committee (SC), allows for dialogue and coordination between the lead civil society organizations from the current, previous and following G20/C20 host countries.

- C20 Chair and Co-Chair: The C20 Chair and Co-Chair are responsible for facilitating the C20 process. The appointment of each year's Chair and Co-Chair is the prerogative of civil society in the host country.

- C20 Sherpa: The Sherpa, chosen each year by the Chair and Co-Chair and whose appointment is approved by the C20 Steering Committee (SC) and International Advisory Committee (IAC), is the main point of contact with external stakeholders (G20 representatives, international organizations, media, other G20 engagement groups). The C20 Sherpa is also responsible for ensuring a fluent and effective dialogue among C20 Working Group Chairs, mainstreaming relevant areas of work and developing – along with the C20 Chair and Co-Chair - the C20 schedule, for approval by the SC and the IAC.

- C20 Secretariat: Responsible for the administrative, financial and logistical coordination tasks.

- C20 Steering Committee: The Steering Committee (SC) is the executive body of the C20 responsible for ensuring that the C20 is an open and diverse space that facilitates the transmission of a broad range of civil society views to the G20. The SC works alongside, and is advised by, the International Advisory Committee. The SC is responsible for leading the process and ensuring that the C20 and its working groups meet regularly among themselves and with government representatives. It also helps coordinate the agendas for in-person C20 meetings. SC decisions are reached by consensus. In the event that consensus is not possible, voting should take place based on a simple majority voting system. SC

composition must be both regional- and gender-balanced, ensuring that local and international organizations are represented.

- International Advisory Committee: Composed of international civil society organizations with experience working within the G20, the IAC functions as an advisory body. Its main roles are to advise the SC on strategic decision-making and contribute to disseminating C20 recommendations among key stakeholders to guarantee more visibility. In consultation with the SC, the IAC is responsible for developing a clear advocacy strategy and plan. The IAC provides advice as required and/or makes suggestions and recommendations when deemed necessary. The IAC should work in tandem with the SC, and maintains regular communication with it.

The SC and the IAC are part of the institutional structure of the C20 and are composed of civil society organizations with expertise in various areas of C20 engagement, invited by the Chair and Co-Chair based on two major criteria: experience of working at C20/G20 level, and geographic and thematic representation. As stated above, when appointing their representatives to the SC and IAC, participating organizations need to ensure a regional and gender balance, with special attention given to the representation of marginalized and underrepresented groups.

To ensure continuity in the IAC and SC, at least two members in each body should stay on from the previous cycle. At the same time the principle of rotation should be applied to both the SC and IAC, with members serving beyond three[2] consecutive years only in exceptional circumstances.

Communication must be fluid between Co-chairs, SC and IAC for decision making on strategic and key issues.

- Working Groups: These are thematic spaces where civil society organizations from all over the world meet in person or online, in order to discuss and produce policy papers aimed at providing concrete recommendations and policy proposals targeting the G20. Collectively, these groups comprise all civil society organizations (both domestic and international) interested in participating actively in the C20 process.

- Working Group Coordinators: Each C20 working group is coordinated by two organizations – one international and one local/national - with relevant experience and/or expertise on the subjects debated within the working group. Their main duties include moderating the discussions of the thematic working groups, drafting policy papers, presenting the recommendations of the group that they coordinate at G20 meetings and reporting on their activities to the C20 Sherpa.

- To ensure that the C20 maintains legitimacy as a representative of the international CSO community, the SC must have an outreach plan to encourage the participation of a diverse range of CSOs from across the world to join and participate in the C20 and its working groups. The aim should be to have as many and as diverse a range as possible of CSOs participating in the development of policy recommendations and advocacy plans. This means that the outreach should take place as early as possible before initial policy recommendations are discussed.

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[2] Three years is chosen for consistency with the standard period of troika membership.

Annex: History of C20 (Civil 20)

Year	Country, City and Month	Civil Society Engagement
2008	US Washington (November)	*(to be described)*
2009	UK, London (April)	*(to be described)*
2009	US, Pittsburgh, (September)	*(to be described)*
2010	Canada, Toronto (June)	*(to be described)*
2010	South Korea, Seoul (November)	Civil G20 Dialogue with Sherpas, Songdo, Incheon during the Sherpa meeting in a form of public panel among about 10 CSOs representatives and 10 Sherpas (Oct.) coordinated by the then GCAP Korea Civil Society access to G20 summit media centre during the Summit in Nov. in Seoul Large joint CSO Demonstration in Seoul a day before the Summit
2011	France, Cannes (November)	Civil Society Meeting with President of France in advance of the G20 Summit, organized by Co-ordination Sud Civil Society access to G20 summit media centre Large joint CSO Demonstration in Nice before Summit
2012	Mexico, Los Cabos (June)	Civil Society meeting in Mexico City including discussion with Sherpa; Civil Society access to G20 summit media centre. CSO meeting just before G20 Summit with Sherpa and Minister of Foreign Affairs.
2013	Russia, St Petersburg (September)	Formalisation of Civil20 as a G20 outreach process. Civil 20 Summit held in Moscow with multinational participation, several preparatory meetings; large online consultation. Civil20 working group chairs attended a Sherpa meeting. Civil Society access to G20 summit media centre. C20 troika meeting with President of Russia. C20 Recommendations to the G20: https://civil-20.org/c20-2013-russia/

2014	Australia, Brisbane (November)	Civil 20 Summit held in Melbourne with some international participation, online consultation. Civil Society access to G20 summit media centre. C20 troika meeting with Prime Minister of Australia. C20 recommendations to the G20: https://civil-20.org/c20-2014-australia/
2015	Turkey, Antalya (November)	Civil 20 Summit held in Istanbul with multinational participation, online consultation with over 90 countries. Plenary dialogue with two Deputy Prime Ministers and Sherpa. First Lady addressed Civil20. The C20 secured Civil Society access to the G20 summit media centre. CSO representatives invited to G20 leaders' reception hosted by Prime Minister of Turkey and facilitated to engage directly with all G20 leaders present. C20 organised joint statement on refugees with all other engagement groups that directly influenced Leaders' communique. C20 recommendations to the G20: https://civil-20.org/c20-2015-turkey/
2016	China, Hangzhou (September)	C20 Summit held, primarily with Chinese NGOs. No civil Society access to G20 summit media centre. C20 recommendations to the G20: https://civil-20.org/c20-2016-china/
2017	Germany, Hamburg, (July)	Civil 20 Summit held in Hamburg with multinational participation, online consultation with many countries. Plenary dialogue with Chancellor Merkel. Civil Society access to G20 summit media centre. C20 recommendations to the G20: https://civil-20.org/c20-2017-germany/

2018	Argentina, Buenos Aires (Nov.)	Civil 20 Summit held in Buenos Aires in August with multinational participation. Plenary dialogue and thematic workshops with G20, International Organizations and Official Engagement Groups representatives. As part of the C20 process an online consultation process of which they participated more than 600 Civil Society Organizations from 45 countries was held. As a result of the process: 18 policy papers, 5 joint statements with the rest of the G20 Engagement Groups and 1 Policy Pack (which was handed over to the Argentinean President) were developed, 2 face to face meetings and 7 side events (2 of them at the IMF and WB Spring and Annual Meetings) were held. C20 got access to 11 G20 meetings and 40 places for the G20 International Media Center. C20 Recommendations to the G20: https: https://civil-20.org/c20-2018-argentina/ C20 Final Report: https://civil-20.org/c20/c20-2018-final-report/
2019	Japan, Osaka (June)	C20, Tokyo on 21-23 April 2019 including Tokyo Democracy Forum (TDF) on 21 April. As a result of the process, C20 delegation handed over 11 policy papers and 1 Policy Pack to Prime Minister Abe on 18 April. 3 joint statements were produced. The C20 secured 40 CSO places in the G20 Summit International Media Centre. C20 Recommendations to the G20: https://civil-20.org/c20-policy-pack-2019-is-out-now/
2020	Saudi Arabia	
2021	Italy	
2022	India	
2023 and beyond	*Remaining presidencies: Brazil, EU, Indonesia, South Africa*	