

G20 leaders call for comprehensive ceasefires in Gaza and Lebanon

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G20 leaders attend an event launching the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty at the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on November 18, 2024 [Eric Lee/Pool via Reuters] Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva says poverty and hunger the 'product of political decisions'.

Rio de Janeiro, November 19 (RHC)-- Leaders of the Group of 20 major economies have called for “comprehensive” ceasefires in Gaza and Lebanon, while also stressing the need for cooperation on climate change, poverty reduction, and taxing the ultrarich.

The economic forum met in Rio de Janeiro on Monday as leaders sought to shore up multilateral consensus on issues of concern amid heightened global tensions and United States President-elect Donald Trump’s return to the White House in January.

Ukraine dominated the agenda on day one of the two-day summit after Washington gave Kyiv the green light to strike Russian territory with long-range missiles supplied by the United States. In their final declaration, G20 leaders eked out a narrow consensus on Ukraine, welcoming “all relevant and constructive initiatives that support a comprehensive, just, and durable peace”, while again condemning the “threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition”.

The G20 leaders also called for a “comprehensive” ceasefire in Gaza, in line with a U.S.-proposed United Nations resolution urging a permanent halt to fighting in return for the release of all captives held by Hamas. Their statement expressed “deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian situation” in the Palestinian enclave. It also expressed concern over the “escalation in Lebanon” and called for a ceasefire enabling “citizens to return safely to their homes on both sides of the Blue Line”, a demarcation line dividing Lebanon from Israel and the occupied Golan Heights.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has made extreme poverty and hunger a focus of the summit, with the group’s final statement endorsing cooperation on effectively taxing “ultra-high-net-worth individuals.” Lula, who grew up in poverty, earlier opened the summit by unveiling a global initiative aimed at tackling poverty and hunger, emphasising that such challenges are “not the result of scarcity or natural phenomena” but the “product of political decisions”.

Eighty-one countries signed the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty – which is also backed by multilateral banks and major philanthropies – including 18 of 19 G20 nations.

Argentina, led by right-wing President Javier Milei, was the only G20 country not to support it.

Argentina also partially dissented from several points in the G20’s final declaration, including content related to the UN’s previous 2030 sustainable development agenda, which Milei has referred to as “a supranational programme of a socialist nature”.

Lula’s opening speech also highlighted the widespread impact of climate change.

There was no climate breakthrough in the final declaration, however, as leaders merely recognised the need for “substantially scaling up climate finance from billions to trillions from all sources”.

They did not stipulate who would provide the funds, but agreed on the need to set a goal for how much money rich nations should give poorer ones by the end of the UN’s COP29 climate change summit in Azerbaijan.

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