

Foreword from the Editor

This is the first annual special issue of the International Organisations Research Journal published in English. It presents a collection of papers focused on the G8/G20 summity performance, the division of labor emerging over the period of their co-existence, their comparative strengths and limitations, and how the future G8 – G20 partnership can be improved to the benefit of both, prosperity and well-being of their citizens, sustainable and balanced growth of world economy.

Though the papers present the analysis and insights of the authors, they are the outcome of a collaborative research of the International Organisations Research Institute of the University Higher School of Economics and the Munk School of Global Affairs of the University of Toronto. The collection also draws on the wisdom of a network of international experts including analysts from the World Bank, Royal Institute for International Relations of Belgium, University of Ghent and Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea. It opens with reflections from Dr. Vadim Lukov, Ambassador-at-Large, Deputy Representative of the President of Russia in the G8, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Coordinator for G20 and BRIC Affairs, which combine unique practical experience and analytical assessments.

Most of the papers and research findings were debated in the international conference “Partnership for Progress. From the 2010 Muskoka – Toronto Summits to the Seoul Summit” organized by the International Organisations Research Institute of the University Higher School of Economics with support of Oxfam and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom. The debate allowed work out recommendations on the G8 and G20 future coexistence and their engagement with other multilateral institutions:

1. The G8 is a cohesive club that needs not an outside crisis but only an internal sense of collective responsibility and equality to succeed. In contrast, the G20 remains a diverse group that needed the standard financial-economic euro crisis to generate the singular success it had in the macroeconomic domain. But crisis alone is not enough for any Gx success, both Gs should continue to build their respective capabilities.

2. G8 and G20 should coexist and work together reinforcing the system of global governance. They need to work together throughout the year.

3. Their coexistence should be based on the principle of comparative advantage. Thus if we take the energy issues, financing adaptation can be dealt with within the G8 domain, whereas phasing out fossil fuel subsidies or post Kyoto climate targets would require participation of major emerging economies and should be dealt with by the G20. G8 is better placed to work on energy security and nuclear energy, G20 format is needed to coordinate actions to achieve transparency and to facilitate technologies transfers. Both institutions should have their own nuclei of core agenda issues but they also can work on the same things if need be.

G20 should complete the IFIs reform and persevere with the discussion on the reserve currencies system reforms. It can be done only through G20.

Political and security issues should remain within the G8 domain with full respect to and coordination with the United Nations, especially the UN Security Council.

G8 could also continue the dialogue and coordination on such policy spheres as education, health and migration, launched in 2006.

Division of labor on development assistance can work through G20 contribution to economic growth, with eventually enhancing input to aid from the emerging donors, whereas the G8 need to continue meet the responsibilities for both the economic growth and official development assistance.

Thus each institution agenda would provide the supply adequate to its capabilities and meeting the demands of the global community and their own members.

4. Given the diversity of the G20 economies situation one fits all formula often would not be acceptable, list of individual commitments aimed to meet agreed objectives, as stated in the Seoul supporting document, would be a practical working method, but it is essential that they are balanced across countries and do not lump commitments and past actions.

5. Even two G-summits working well together are not enough to meet the great and growing demands for global governance in today’s intensely globalized world. They need to work more closely with at least the major multilateral organizations, supportive academic communities and civil society in several ways.

6. G20 institutionalization should be implemented by structuring its dialogue with both internal and external stakeholders but not by creating a secretariat. The Troika presidencies cooperation should be reinforced. Presidencies rotation principle needs to be clearly defined. These measures will facilitate summits' preparation, ensure long-range planning, agenda continuity, and accountability.

7. G20 engagement with international organizations and third-countries should be more structured and transparent. It will ensure division of labor between international organizations mandated by G20.

G8 has greater outreach potential than G20 given the latter's large membership. G8 should realize its outreach potential and include into the dialogue the countries which have been formerly part of the process, were "qualified" to become members of the G14, in case of the G8 expansion,

and now feel resentment about their non-inclusion in the G20.

8. Interaction with civil society including academia should be made systemic. G8 and especially G20 accountability can be strengthened through engagement with epistemic community. Specifically, an international G8/G20 experts' network can be established as was agreed by some of the conference participants.

Experts can also help to provide public-oriented data flow on the agenda items. This has a special relevance, given the highly sophisticated and technical nature of the G20 topics and the need to communicate the outcomes to the public in the G20 countries and beyond to make the process more transparent and address the legitimacy and efficiency concerns.

Hopefully the recommendation and analysis presented in the issue can serve strengthening G8–G20 partnership, to the benefit of their nations, international cooperation and growth.