

# G20 Trade Governance, 2008-2018

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## Introduction

### Significance

International trade is a multi-dimensional issue that intersects with many other global governance challenges. As one of the main drivers of global economic growth, efficiency, innovation, job creation and development, there are many reasons as to why policymakers seek to promote an open, multilateral, rules-based trading system. Indeed, contracting trade flows have often come with in financial instability, reduced income growth and significant underdevelopment. It is thus crucial to understand and assess how, how well and why international trade is governed.

Governing global trade *effectively* is hard. For policymakers, the task is often creating a system that incorporates international trade's many overlapping values. These come in three categories; first, trade governance must address cognate financial fields that propel economic growth and stabilize financial markets. Second, in a world where the majority of nations are still considered either emerging markets (EM) or developing ones, ensuring that international trade supports inclusive development is central to reducing global inequality.<sup>1</sup> Third, as the climate increasingly threatens global populations, international trade policy must create a system that harnesses economic activity into modes of production that favors resources conservation rather than exhaustion.<sup>2</sup>

Trade has always been at the heart of the Group of Twenty's (G20) summit agenda as fundamental to supporting its distinctive mission of promoting financial stability and making global governance work for all. In responding to the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC), G20 leaders first gathered in Washington that November, determined to find a lasting solution to the crisis. As the GFC had brought with it a severe contraction in international trade and the economic opportunity, growth and prosperity that trade had previously brought with it, many governments feared a surge in government protectionism. At the same time, the World Trade Organization's (WTO) own solutions to the problem proved insufficient. The ongoing Doha Development Agenda (DDA), launched in 2001, had made little progress, only becoming more strained with new global value chains, intensifying bilateral, regional and plurilateral negotiations and agreements.<sup>3</sup>

At Washington, G20 leaders lay the foundations of what would become ten years of global trade governance. Beginning with a **defensive** trade strategy 2008 to 2010, the G20 would make its first anti-protectionist pledge, vow to continue supporting the multilateral rules-based trade system centered on the WTO and mobilize significant funds for trade finance. Then from 2011-2016, the

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<sup>1</sup> Carolyn Deere Birkbeck, "Introduction: Making Global Trade Governance Work for Development," in *Making Global Trade Governance Work for Development: Perspectives and Priorities from Developing Countries*, ed. Carolyn Deere Birkbeck (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ricardo Melendez-Ortiz, and Trineesh Biswas, "Trade Governance and Sustainable Development," in *Making Global Trade Governance Work for Development: Perspectives and Priorities from Developing Countries*, ed. Carolyn Deere Birkbeck (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 100.

<sup>3</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

G20 would move onto an **offensive** trade governance by prioritizing the development of bilateral, regional and plurilateral trade agreements in the hopes of fostering greater support for emerging markets (EM) and developing countries. The G20 would also begin to add to the trade agenda new directions on supply chain management, and to link trade to employment, the environment and digitalization. In the G20's most recent **adaptive** phase, the G20 is responding to the challenges of protectionism, the need for significant WTO reform, and making sure that global trade governance remains relevant.

## The Debate among Competing Schools of Thought

The causes, causes, and consequences of G20 trade governance continues is the subject of a debate among several competing schools of thought:

The first **crisis-management** school sees the G20 system as effectively working on trade as a response to and solution for the global financial crisis of 2008.<sup>4</sup>

The second **integrity** school believes that the G20's credibility depends on its trade performance. This school believes that evolution of the trading system is in the hands of the G20, and its action is critical for G20 credibility.<sup>5</sup>

The third **counterfactual** school believes that G20 pledges to abstain from protectionism and complete the Doha round of world trade talks have been as "common as they have been toothless". Within the first few months following the financial crisis, seventeen of the twenty countries had violated their anti-protectionist pledge and implemented approximately forty-seven measures to restrict trade "at the expense of other countries".<sup>6,7</sup>

The fourth **unlikely** school argues that the G20 does not necessarily have a common vision of trade-related matters, making any major trade initiative "unlikely".<sup>8</sup>

The fifth **promising** school views the G20 as the major "missing ingredient" of political control" which can play a significant role in global trade governance. Scholars of this thought, such as Pierre Marc Johnson perceive the G20 as having sufficient power to foster a new north-south bargain that would restart a new round of negotiations on multilateral trade liberalization, bring together trade

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<sup>4</sup> Zia Qureshi, "G20: From Crisis Management to Policies for Growth," in *The G8-G20 Relationship in Global Governance*, ed. Marina Larionova and John J. Kirton (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2015) 124.

<sup>5</sup> Camilo Umana Dajud, and Bernard Hoekman, "G20 Credibility Depends on its Trade Agenda: Statement of the Participants in the Third EU-Asia Roundtable" CEPR Policy Portal, 24 September 2014. <https://voxeu.org/article/g20-credibility-depends-its-trade-agenda-statement-participants-third-eu-asia-roundtable>

<sup>6</sup> Daniel W. Drezner, "The Irony of Global Economic Governance: The System Worked," Paper Presented at the CSIS Pacific Forum's 12<sup>th</sup> US-China Dialogue, Center for American Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai, 2012. <https://politics.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Irony-of-Global-Economic-Governance.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Elisa Gamberoni, and Richard Newfarmer, "Trade Protection: Incipient but Worrisome Trends," CEPR Policy Portal, 4 March 2009. <https://voxeu.org/article/trade-protection-incipient-worrisome-trends>

<sup>8</sup> Christopher Findlay, and Bernard Hoekman, "On a Trade-Related Work Programme for More Growth and Better Jobs: Suggestions for China G20 2016" Global Governance Programme," September 2015. <http://globalgovernanceprogramme.eu.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/A-Trade-related-Work-Programme-for-China-G20-2016-final-3.pdf>

with other important issues such as the environment and development, and foster a new system of global governance.<sup>9</sup>

The sixth **united coalition** school sees the G20 as a source of strength in the WTO. The G20's capability to form and lead a united coalition is a significant source of empowerment for itself and its allies. In any international organization, the support of large numbers, such as those found within the G20 strengthens and legitimizes one's claims at the agenda-setting stage. Especially in the negotiation phase, while other coalitions of weaker states may be firm in making their demands, they usually collapse in the endgame, thus destroying the collective negotiation process as well as undermining the negotiation position of individual members. This school argues that the emergence of strong coalitions such as the G20 is a positive development in adjusting bargaining positions and settling an effective trade agenda.<sup>10</sup>

The seventh **insufficient substitution** school believes that the G20 neither is nor can be (nor indeed should be) a substitute for multilateral trade organizations or some of the decision-making processes of the WTO. It argues that any attempt to build a consensus through a G20-level "mini-ministerial" is unlikely to be supported by the rest of WTO members. Moreover, this school believes that reaching a consensus within such a diverse G20 group will be more difficult than it already is at the WTO. In sum, circumventing the processes established at the WTO by taking them to the G20 is unlikely to address problems of inefficiency. It would substitute the G20 for WTO mechanisms and risk reversing important advances that the WTO has made.<sup>11</sup>

## Puzzles

These competing schools of thought certainly offer important insights into how the G20 has governed global trade. Yet, a truly comprehensive analysis of the performance of the G20's trade governance still does not exist. Most of the literature on the G20's efforts on trade remain relatively outdated and are often missing information and updates from the most recent summits. Given that global trade patterns evolve rapidly, it is crucial to update existing studies in order to provide the most accurate analysis possible. Furthermore, most existing studies usually only evaluate the G20's success against one dimension of performance and therefore do not offer the necessary breadth required to account for such a multi-dimensional subject. Thus, the aforementioned debate among competing schools of thought only begins to scratch the surface of G20 trade governance. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a holistic and systematic analysis of G20 trade governance from 2008 to 2019, including how well it performed along nine specific dimensions, why the G20 performed the way it did, and how it shaped this pattern of trade governance.

## Thesis

This study argues that G20 trade governance has worked well for restoring and promoting international trade. It has done so in three main stages: In its first phase (from 2008-2010) the G20 adopted a **defensive** trade governance strategy, predominantly designed to stabilize global financial markets following the 2008 GFC. In order to realize this goal, the G20's defensive strategy relied on an initial anti-protectionist pledge, support for the multilateral, rules-based WTO trading system, and

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<sup>9</sup> John J. Kirton, "The G20: Representativeness, Effectiveness, and Leadership in Global Governance," in *Guiding Global Order: G8 Governance in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. John J. Kirton, Joseph P. Daniels and Andreas Freytag (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2000) 149.

<sup>10</sup> Amrita Narlikar, "New Powers in the Club: The Challenges of Global Trade Governance," in *Making Global Trade Governance Work for Development: Perspectives and Priorities from Developing Countries*, ed. Carolyn Deere Birkbeck (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 144.

<sup>11</sup> Amrita Narlikar, "New Powers in the Club: The Challenges of Global Trade Governance," in *Making Global Trade Governance Work for Development: Perspectives and Priorities from Developing Countries*, ed. Carolyn Deere Birkbeck (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 147.

significant monetary contributions for trade finance.<sup>12</sup> Once financial markets had stabilized, the G20 embarked on its second phase by adopting a more **offensive** stance from 2011-2016. Here, the G20 shifted towards making globalization work for all by expanding the number of bilateral, regional, and plurilateral trade agreements, and developing new courses on supply chain management, the environment, development and employment.<sup>13</sup> The G20 then moved in to its current **adaptive** phase. Beginning in 2017, this new phase responded to a variety of threats to the multilateral trading system in the form of new tariffs and regulatory measures that affect widely-traded goods and services, growing trade tensions between leading members of the G20, increased economic uncertainty and new challenges and opportunities such as digital trade. While this last phase has seen the G20 struggle in coping with new challenging realities, it has also seen the G20 take the lead in reforming the outdated WTO and modernizing global trade agenda by including new subjects such as e-commerce.

This defensive, offensive and adaptive sequence of G20 trade governance is best explained by the systemic hub model of G20 governance. G20 performance was triggered by the shock-activated vulnerability of the 2008 GFC and the need to support failing trade-related institutions such as the WTO. Once the need for the G20 to step in and support trade had been established, its increased trade performance flowed from the converging relative capabilities of its developed and developing members, and its members' common belief in open trade, anti-protectionism and the importance of a multilateral, rules-based system. Finally, the main reason why the G20 has been able to have a lasting impact on trade governance is its central position as a club in the hub of a network of trade-centered institutions, led by CPTPP-11, across an emerging Asia-Pacific without the protectionist U.S. or U.K..

### **The Outline**

Describing and explaining the G20's trade performance requires an analysis that "compactly and coherently" accounts for the G20's trade governance creation, evolution, as well as the forces that combined to cause this specific pattern of behavior.<sup>14</sup> The following sections thus examine the G20's overall performance according to nine distinct dimensions, match this performance to the six causal factors outlined by the systemic hub model of G20 governance, trace critical trade case studies from relevant pre-2008 ministerials and the individual G20 summits from 2008-2018, and offer insights as to what we should next expect at the 2019 Osaka summit. A conclusion summarizes the main findings.

## **G20 Trade Performance:**

The systemic hub model of G20 governance offers nine major dimensions of performance.

### **Domestic Political Management**

On the first dimension of performance, domestic political management, the G20's trade performance has been weak. This dimension is measured by accounting for communique compliments in trade deliberations as well as overall attendance by G20 leaders and ministers. While average attendance by G20 leaders was 95%, no G20 leader has yet to invite their trade ministers to any summit (see Appendix A).<sup>15</sup>

Overall, communique compliments by G20 leaders on trade were low, with only seven compliments made within a trade context from 2008-2018. The first came at the 2011 Seoul Summit. Trade

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<sup>12</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> John J. Kirton, *G20 Governance for a Globalized World* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2013) 36.

<sup>15</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

compliments peaked at the 2013 St. Petersburg Summit, where two trade related compliments were made.

G20 leaders have seldom praised their comrades on issues pertaining to trade. Rather, where compliments have been extended, the G20 have collectively recognized the help given by trade-related international organizations, such as the WTO, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Financial Stability Board (FSB), Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and Bank for International Settlements (BIS) for their inputs and support to G20 trade governance initiatives.

Trade governance has yet to make a significant contribution to the leaders' management of domestic politics. G20 leaders must still attempt to foster a debate and decisions that strengthen global regimes for managing trade that will convincingly address the concerns of their publics and benefit the international community as a whole.<sup>16</sup>

### **Deliberation**

The second dimension of performance, deliberation, is measured by the number and portion of words the specific issue has taken up in leaders' concluding communiqués. In total, trade took up 13,342 words in summit communiqués from 2008-2018. Deliberation peaked at the 2009 summit in London, where trade took 16.1% of the communiqué. Subsequent spikes were perceived following the 2014 Brisbane summit, where trade represented 11.7% of the communiqué, and at the 2016 Hangzhou summit where trade took 12.6% of the communiqué (see Appendix A).

The G20's trade's deliberation performance has thus been mixed throughout the three phases of G20 trade governance. At the first summit in 2008, trade took 12% of the communiqué, suggesting that it represented a side-issue to the finance shocks from the GFC. From 2011-2012, trade's deliberation performance remained relatively low, never exceeding 10% of the communiqué. Following its peak of 12.6% at the Hangzhou summit, trade deliberation reached a historic low of 3.9% at Hamburg, due to the arrival of a protectionist Donald Trump and the deadlock experienced between the supporters of open trade and those who began introducing a protectionist stance. The Buenos Aires Summit's 9.3% deliberation score indicates demonstrates a more favorable deliberative score, as leaders attempted at remedying trade deadlocks (see Appendix A).

### **Direction Setting**

Establishing effective global trade governance is directly linked to the G20's distinctive dual-mission of promoting financial stability and making globalization work for all. In its principled and normative direction setting, trade passages have mirrored the G20's distinct phases of trade governance: First, from 2008-2010, references to trade defensively affirmed the G20's foundational mission of promoting financial stability, as the G20 refuted protectionism and pledged substantial monetary amounts to trade finance. Next, from 2011-2016, the G20's direction setting shifted to an offensive strategy, linked closely to the second mission of making globalization work for all by focusing on trade bilateral, regional and plurilateral trade regimes that benefitted EMs and developing countries.<sup>17</sup> In its third adaptive phase, direction setting performance has reflected a mixture of these distinctive missions. The G20 attempts at stabilizing economic uncertainty and reforming the WTO so that the multilateral trade system works to the benefit of all Members (see Appendix A).

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<sup>16</sup> Colin Bradford, "G20 Summitry: The Need for Global Political Leadership," *Centre for International Governance and Innovation*, Prescriptions for the G20: The Cannes Summit and Beyond Series (18 October 2011).

<https://www.cigionline.org/publications/g20-summitry-need-global-political-leadership>

<sup>17</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

## Decision Making

Since its first 2008 summit in Washington until its 2018 summit in Buenos Aires, the G20 has made a total of 166 commitments on trade. This is equal to 67% of the 2,457 commitments the G20 has made on all issue areas during this time (see Appendix A).

The G20's decision-making performance has mirrored its three distinct phases of trade governance. In its defensive phase from 2008-2010, the G20 made 51 trade commitments. It made its highest portion of trade commitments (when measured as a proportion of overall commitments) at the 2010 Toronto Summit, where a total of 9 (or 15% of total commitments) were produced. In its second offensive phase from 2011-2016, the G20's trade decision-making performance increased slightly.<sup>18</sup> In this phase, the G20 made a total of 69 commitments. In its current "adaptation" phase that since 2017, the G20 has made 31 trade commitments. At the 2018 Buenos Aires summit, the number of trade commitments dropped to a historic low. Here, the G20 made only five trade-related commitments, representing 4% of the overall commitments achieved (see Appendix A).

## Delivery

On the trade commitments assessed or members' subsequent compliance, overall delivery is low. They average of +0.33 or 67%, which is "well-below" the summit's overall all-issue average of +0.42 or 71% compliance (see Appendix A).<sup>19</sup>

Compliance peaked following the 2009 London Summit (at +0.50), the 2015 Antalya Summit (at +0.60) and the 2016 Hangzhou Summit at (+0.65). Two summits had negative compliance—the 2011 Seoul Summit (-0.05) and the 2013 St. Petersburg Summit (-0.35). Although compliance rose since 2014, no summit surpassed compliance of +0.65 or 83% (see Appendix A).

## Development of Global Governance

The sixth dimension of performance is the G20's development of global governance. Here, the G20 mostly concentrates on supporting outside institutions related to trade, most notably the WTO rather than developing ones inside the G20 itself.<sup>20</sup>

At the 2012 Los Cabos summit, the G20 did add a Trade Ministerial. Trade Ministerials took place again in 2014 and 2015. At the 2016 Hangzhou Summit the G20 made 11 references to its own institutions and created the Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity (GFSEC) to manage the growing U.S.-China trade dispute.<sup>21</sup>

## Distinctive Mission Done

The seventh dimension measures how well the G20 has achieved its distinctive dual-mission of promoting financial stability and making globalization work to the benefit of all. It draws from and expands upon the earlier dimension of direction setting (which takes into account the number of commitments related to the G20's missions) to assess how much these missions were achieved in real time.<sup>22,23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>19</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>21</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>22</sup> John J. Kirton, "Explaining G20 Summit Success," G20 Information Centre, 17 December 2013.

<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/biblio/kirton-aiia-2013.html>

<sup>23</sup> Alissa Xinhe Wang, and John J. Kirton, "G20 Development Governance," G20 Information Centre, January 24, 2019.

In promoting financial stability, trade has played a part in reducing high inflation rates in Western economies, allowing consumers to increase their purchasing powers. The multilateral trading system has often been praised for increasing real wages worldwide as well as offering consumers a wider variety of products, highlighting that it played a part in leveling the playing field and making sure that globalization not only benefits a few, but as much of the population as possible.<sup>24</sup>

### **Deaths Delayed**

The eighth dimension of G20 performance is the deaths that were either delayed or prevented due to the G20's work on trade. Given its outcome-oriented nature, quantifying the exact number of deaths that have been avoided as a direct result of G20 trade governance is almost an impossible task<sup>25</sup> That being said, it is possible to describe how trade can benefit populations by stimulating growth, innovation, job creation, development and reducing poverty – thereby increasing overall global living standards and extending life expectancy.<sup>26</sup> Here trade is assessed as an economic determinant of health in general as well as the impacts of the specific health-related provisions of trade-agreements and trade.

When taking into account how trade is directly linked to other critical issue areas – the number of deaths the G20's trade performance has indirectly delayed exponentially increases. The intersection between trade and issues including, but not limited to sustainability highlight this point. On sustainability, increased global trade and by extension the spread of goods, services and ideas certainly has the power to unlock important shifts in global economic processes. For instance, trade enables cutting-edge technology to get to where it is needed, and makes the newest and most efficient machinery available (having the potential to prevent accidental work-related deaths from outdated equipment as well as providing a cleaner, more sustainable environment).<sup>27</sup>

### **Difference Made**

The ninth dimension is the difference made on the specific subjects of G20 governance itself.

In 2017, world merchandise trade recorded its strongest growth in six years. Here G20 performance was strong until 2018. The Director-General of the WTO noted that the ratio of trade growth to GDP had returned to its historic average of 1.5, “far above” the 1.0 ratio experienced following the GFC in 2008.<sup>28</sup> Since then, however, trade flows stalled, mostly in response to the deadlock between the United States and China.

When measuring the difference made by the G20's performance on trade to trade itself, there remains the question of just how much changes in trade flows are caused by the work of the G20. In this respect, while the G20's trade record has demonstrated a dedicated agenda to expanding the multi-lateral rules-based trading system, many of the G20's commitments specifically relate to initiatives implemented by other international organizations dedicated to the cause, such as the WTO.

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<sup>24</sup> Fredrik Erixon, “The Economic Benefits of Globalization for Business and Consumers,” European Centre for International Political Economy, January 2018. <https://ecipe.org/publications/the-economic-benefits-of-globalization-for-business-and-consumers/>

<sup>25</sup> Alissa Xinhe Wang, and John J. Kirton, “G20 Development Governance,” G20 Information Centre, January 24, 2019.

<sup>26</sup> Erik Solheim, “Why Trade can Save the Planet, if we do it Better,” United Nations Environment Program, 2 October 2018. <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/why-trade-can-save-planet-if-we-do-it-better>

<sup>27</sup> Erik Solheim, “Why Trade can Save the Planet, if we do it Better,” United Nations Environment Programme, 2 October 2018. <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/why-trade-can-save-planet-if-we-do-it-better>

<sup>28</sup> World Trade Organization, “World Trade Statistical Review, 2018,” Geneva, 2018. [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/wts2018\\_e/wts2018\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/wts2018_e/wts2018_e.pdf)

As is often the case with these measurements, while there may be correlation between the G20's commitments and expanded global trade following the GFC, there is no conclusive proof that these outcomes are a direct cause of G20 efforts. That being said, rather than write the G20's efforts off as unsubstantial, it is more useful to recognize that G20 efforts have certainly contributed to the increase in global trade flows.

## Causes of Performance

What causes this particular cadence of G20 trade performance? It is well accounted for by the six causes highlighted within the systemic hub model of G20 Governance<sup>29</sup>:

### Shock-Activated Vulnerability from Connectivity

The first cause of the G20's changing trade performance is shock-activated vulnerability. It provides insights as to why the G20 felt compelled to act decisively to include trade in its first summit agenda. The smaller shocks initiated by Donald Trump in his U.S.-China trade war are consistent with the lower G20 trade performance on deliberation, direction-setting and decision-making since he arrived in 2017.

Global trade has dropped three times since the end of World War II; following the "oil-shock" recession of 1974-1975, after the "inflation-defeating" recession of 1982-83, and again after the "Tech-Wreck" recession of 2001-02.<sup>30</sup> While G20 Finance Ministers had stepped in to remedy the trade-inhibiting shocks that had come from the cognate fields of finance as early as 1999, it was the severe contraction in trade from the GFC that sent shockwaves through the global community that action needed to be taken, fast. To this end, G20 leaders acted decisively and effectively.<sup>31</sup>

Though trade was not the primary cause of the GFC, it was among the consequences that suffered most; world trade volume both during and following the GFC experienced its steepest contraction since the Great Depression in the 1930s.<sup>32</sup> As G20 leaders gathered for their first Summit in Washington, they immediately took defensive measures to lay the foundations for stabilize financial markets and make sure members refrained from heading towards inward-looking regimes. To this end, the shocks of the GFC led the G20 where leaders largely all accepted traditional Keynesian theory and the logic of Adam Smith and David Ricardo to increasingly embrace the "critical importance of rejecting protectionism...and not turning inward in times of financial uncertainty." This further pledged to "refrain from raising new barriers to investment or to trade in goods in services".<sup>33,34</sup> The shock of the GFC led to "solid" and "substantial" increases in performance on the dimensions of deliberation, direction-setting and decision-making.<sup>35</sup>

While there have been no similarly severe, surprising non-state initiated trade shocks akin to those experienced following the GFC, the increasing trade tensions facing the G20—most noticeably between the U.S. and China—deepened uncertainty among leaders especially in 2018. In the same way that many leaders continued to push for open and transparent trade in times of uncertainty in 2008, the bulk of the G20 has reaffirmed these principles since 2017.

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<sup>29</sup> John J. Kirton, *G20 Governance for a Globalized World* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2013) 40.

<sup>30</sup> Richard Baldwin, "The Great Trade Collapse: What Caused it and What Does it Mean?" CEPR Policy Portal, 27 November 2009. <https://voxeu.org/article/great-trade-collapse-what-caused-it-and-what-does-it-mean>

<sup>31</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>32</sup> John J. Kirton "The G20 System Still Works: Better than Ever," *Caribbean Journal of International Relations & Diplomacy* 2, no.3 (September 2014) 43.

<sup>33</sup> G20 Information Centre, "Declaration of the Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy," Washington, D.C., 15 November 2008. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2008/2008declaration1115.html>

<sup>34</sup> John J. Kirton, *G20 Governance for a Globalized World* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2013) 42.

<sup>35</sup> John J. Kirton, "G20 Trade Governance," Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.



### **Multilateral Organizational Failure**

The second cause of performance, multilateral organizational failure, has substantially higher salience in explaining the G20's trade performance. The latter mirrors the WTO's declining ability to adequately respond and adapt to policing the global trade regime, highlighted by the WTO's delay in advancing and then the death of the DDA, its failure to conclude its trade facilitation agreement on its own, and its inability to reform its dispute settlement mechanism.

Calls for WTO reform date back to the late 1990, as governments became increasingly frustrated during the eight long years that followed the WTO's Uruguay Round of negotiations. The Uruguay Round was increasingly viewed as a "bum deal", weighted against the interests of developing countries. To address these qualms, the WTO launched its Doha Development Agenda in 2001 in the immediate wake of the shocking 911, but the DDA failed to amount to anything substantial. Thus the G20 began to seriously bolster the WTO's efforts – both by rejecting protectionism and reaffirming the multilateral, rules based international order – as well as developing its own strategic orientation to modernize the outdated body.<sup>36</sup>

### **Predominant Equalizing Capability**

The third cause of G20 trade performance is the globally predominant and internally equalizing overall and specialized capabilities of the G20 – compared to those upheld by other institutional alternatives – at providing significant contributions explaining its overall trade performance.<sup>37</sup>

By 2008, 12 of the world's leading 20 traders (in terms of exports and imports) were members of the G20.<sup>38</sup> While the highly ranked Western economies had traditionally led global trade governance through their G7 summit, the growing economic and trade capabilities from countries such as China, India and Brazil propelled G20 performance.

As the G20 presents a much more accurate reflection of the global balance of political and economic power than other PSIs (such as the G7), the decisions arrived within the body are likely to have greater "efficacy and durability" than their more "elite" and exclusive counterparts. Overall, the G20 had the benefit of improving the fairness and efficiency of global trade governance.<sup>39</sup> This reality certainly helps explain the substantial and solid success of the G20's trade performance on decision-making, deliberation and direction-setting.

### **Common Principles and Characteristics**

The fourth cause of the G20's overall performance trade governance is the common and converging characteristics and principles of its member countries, grounded in the increasing share of trade in each member's GDP. This shows a common desire to uphold an open, transparent, rules-based multilateral trade system. These common principles were reflected following the G20's 2016 Hangzhou Summit, at the recently-established G20 Trade and Investment Working Group, where Ministers agreed to the G20 Guiding Principles for Global Investment and Trade Policymaking. On top of this, following their July 2016 meeting, Trade ministers outlined within this set of guiding

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<sup>36</sup> Sylvia Ostry, "What Can We Expect Next?" *International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development* no. 5, 10 (August 2006): 3.

<sup>37</sup> John J. Kirton, "Explaining G20 Summit Success," G20 Information Centre, 17 December 2013. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/biblio/kirton-aiia-2013.html>

<sup>38</sup> The World Trade Organization, "World Trade Developments in 2007" [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/its2008\\_e/its08\\_world\\_trade\\_dev\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2008_e/its08_world_trade_dev_e.htm)

<sup>39</sup> Amrita Narlikar, "New Powers in the Club: The Challenges of Global Trade Governance," in *Making Global Trade Governance Work for Development: Perspectives and Priorities from Developing Countries*, ed. Carolyn Deere Birkbeck (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 140.

principles, that they agreed to provide the necessary “political leadership” to “promote inclusive, robust and sustainable trade growth” – solidifying their common beliefs on the matter.<sup>40</sup>

When these common political principles clash, performance falls. This is most apparent in the G20’s third phase of its trade governance. Most noticeably, as the U.S. has rejected the shared principles of open-trade, with Britain’s Brexit referendum and the arrival of Donald Trump, the G20’s deliberation, direction-setting and decision-making dropped. This was most visible at the 2018 Buenos Aires summit, which produced the lowest number of trade commitments of any of the 13 G20 summits from 2008 to 2018. At Buenos Aires, U.S. protectionism intensified, and the UK’s Brexit approached its scheduled arrival.

### **Political Control, Capital, Competence and Commitment**

The fifth cause, domestic political control with its many components is salient in explaining the G20’s trade governance insofar that it explains the success of particular summits in advancing the trade agenda compared to others. In this respect, most summits had medium control, as the level of each component was mixed. Among the most personally committed free traders, U.S. President George Bush in 2008 was a lame duck, Canadian Prime Minister Steven Harper had a minority from 2008 to 2011, and Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott in 2014 had precarious position and was soon deposed.

Two critical cases stand out; the 2016 Hangzhou Summit and the 2017 Hamburg Summit. When a G20 host has strong domestic political cohesion – especially true for China, a one-party state, where Xi Jinping has firm political control – it is easier to advance a particular agenda. To this end, the strong trade performance that emanated from Hangzhou can be explained by Xi’s prioritization of trade as an issue, as well as his tough domestic control.

The case of Hamburg highlights how a particular Leader’s competence can affect G20 performance. While many were skeptical that the Hamburg summit would produce in the face of deadlocks between open-trade supporters and the U.S., Angela Merkel’s strong competence as an experienced host and as the leader of a highly export dependent economy was able to propel a favorable agenda.

The hosting effect grounded in the personal competence, conviction and continuity of the host leaders’ political cohesion, is backed in the China-Germany cases by their high relative economic and trade capability (cause 2), its high or growing export dependence (cause 4) and Germany’s membership in the regional EU and G7 (cause 2). Hosting could thus be a candidate to become a seventh cause in its own right.

### **Club at the Hub**

The ongoing support provided by the G20’s trade agenda can best be explained by its position as the club at a hub in a network of plurilateral and multilateral institutions. This dimension of performance is especially true to explain its offensive trade governance from 2011-2016, where the G20 began pushing for increased bilateral and pluralateral FTAs. As the G20 represents a group with 20 members from all corners of the world, and with their own trading capacities, each individual leader brings with them their own network of involvement in global PSI’s, most of which deal with trade, as well as institutional experiences in trade. Each leaders’ unique position helps explain the invited guests to the G20, especially the high attendance at each summit from the trade-oriented WTO. In this light, the G20’s position as a club at the hub of a network of trade institutions is salient at explaining the ongoing support that the G20’s commitments have shown towards the WTO’s multilateral, rules-based trade system.

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<sup>40</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Annex III: G20 Guiding Principles for Global Investment and Trade Policymaking,” Shanghai, 10 July 2016. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2016/160710-trade-annex3.html>

Extending on this, the G20 summits have often taken place in close proximity with important WTO Ministerial Meetings and rounds of negotiations – acting as a preliminary space for negotiations to set off on the right track. This was particularly the case for the 2013 St. Petersburg Summit, where many of the G20’s deliberative negotiations surrounded the upcoming Ministerial Conference in Bali that year. These initiatives were reflected later at the 2015 Antalya summit in preparation for the WTO’s Ministerial Conference in Nairobi. However, the Buenos Aires Summit, which preceded the WTO’s own 11<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference by 10 days. Many have shown the reverse effect, where G20 leaders left it to the forthcoming multilateral, ministerial meeting, rather than deal with the different subject itself.

## Critical Case Studies

The causal path to the observed levels and phases of performance can be seen more clearly through a detailed process tracing of the causal effect sequence in critical cases, including those where G20 trade performance is relatively high and relatively low.

### The Pre-2008 Ministerials

The G20 was created as a response to the Group of Seven’s (G7) perceived need to “broaden the dialogue on key economic and financial policy issues among systemically significant economies”, as outlined within the Finance Ministers’ Report to the Heads on Strengthening the International Financial Architecture endorsed by G7 leaders at the Köln Summit in June 1999.<sup>41</sup> Since its founding, trade was at the root of its distinctive dual-mission of promoting financial stability as well as ensuring that globalization works to the benefit of all. In December 1999, the first ever Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting took place in Berlin, where participants reaffirmed the importance of “continued progress” by the WTO toward multilateral liberalization of trade that would bring “broad-based benefits” to the global economy.<sup>42</sup>

As the process of globalization continued to rapidly increase, driven by unprecedented technological change, G20 finance ministers recognized the need to respond to these new developments. At the 2000 Finance Ministers meeting in Montreal, contributors discussed the benefits of globalization, and pointed to increased trade liberalization as a way for people worldwide to see “improvements in living standards” as well as a means for developing countries to increase access to “goods, capital and ideas,” thus achieving rapid and enduring growth which would “attack income inequalities and reduce poverty”.<sup>43</sup>

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the G20 remained confident in its ability to sustain its growing economies. At their 2001 meeting in Ottawa, Finance Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to free trade and open international markets as a “key source of global prosperity”. They also welcomed the much-anticipated Doha Development Agenda (DDA) and committed to work together to achieve multilateral trade liberalization that “accelerates progress against poverty and promotes growth”.<sup>44</sup>

In 2002, India became the first emerging economy to host the G20 Finance Ministers meeting in New Delhi. Ministers and governors recognized that there remained significant work to be done in

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<sup>41</sup> G20 Information Centre, “The Group of Twenty: A History”.  
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/docs/g20history.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting,” Berlin, 15 December 1999. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/1999/1999communiqué.htm>

<sup>43</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors,” Montreal, 25 October 2000. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2000/2000communiqué.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors,” Ottawa, 16 November 2001. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2001/2001communiqué.pdf>

order to unlock the full benefits associated with freer trade. Here, members underscored the need to reduce existing barriers to trade, as well as phasing out trade-distorting subsidies. Ministers also acknowledged the gap that existed between advanced economies (AE) and their EM counterparts. They pledged to establish trade-related technical assistance in order to support developing countries' capacity to participate in global trade practices.<sup>45</sup>

In the face of growing trade stalemates in the DDA process, G20 Finance ministers used their fifth meeting in Mexico to call on all members of the WTO to “re-energize the negotiation process” toward the fulfillment of the DDA.<sup>46</sup> Echoing these calls at the following 2004 meeting in Berlin, Finance ministers shifted from the old multilateralism to pluralateralism, suggesting greater regional cooperation and integration as important steps for “national economies in opening up trade and financial flows” and achieving gradual improvements in competitiveness.<sup>47</sup>

In 2005, the G20 finance ministerial took place in China. Finance Ministers moved back to emphasize the need for a successful WTO Doha Development Round as a critical measure for achieving its mission of ensuring globalization “truly benefits all countries”.<sup>48</sup>

Against the backdrop of increasingly favorable macroeconomic conditions with high growth at low inflation rates, the 2006 meeting in Melbourne saw Finance Ministers link stable economic growth to freer trade. In highlighting the threat to global prosperity posed by protectionism, the G20 urged for a successful Doha Development Round as essential to “securing more open trade” and reducing the risk of economic and financial instability.<sup>49</sup> The subsequent 2007 followed suit.

At Kleinmond, South Africa in 2007, the G20 reaffirmed its commitment to work with relevant trade authorities to “reach a rapid and successful conclusion to Doha”.<sup>50</sup>

By the time the G20 Finance Ministers held their meeting in Sao Paolo, the 2008 American-turned-Global Financial Crisis was well underway. In response to this shock, the G20 expressed concern of the spreading international crisis on the real economy through trade, along with currency transmission channels. For the G20, it was crucial for the international community to “resist protectionist pressures” and to continue to support a “prompt and ambitious conclusion” to the DDA.<sup>51</sup>

### **Stage I: The G20's Defensive Trade Governance**

From its inception at the leaders-level in 2008, up until the 2011 Cannes summit, the G20's trade governance was defensive. As a shock-activated response to the devastating GFC, the G20 adopted

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<sup>45</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Finance Ministers’ and Central Bank Governors’ Meeting: Delhi Communiqué,” 23 November 2002. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2002/2002communiqué.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: Fifth G20 Finance Ministers’ and Central Bank Governors Meeting,” Morelia, 26 October 2003. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2003/2003communiqué.html>

<sup>47</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors,” Berlin, 21 November 2004. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2004/2004communiqué.html>

<sup>48</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors,” Xianghe, 16 October 2005. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2005/2005communiqué.html>

<sup>49</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors,” Melbourne, 19 November 2006. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2006/2006communiqué.html>

<sup>50</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors,” Kleinmond, 18 November 2007. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2007/2007communiqué.html>

<sup>51</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué of the Meeting of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors,” Sao Paolo, 9 November 2008. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2008/2008communiqué1109.html>

its first anti-protectionist pledges, contributed billions in trade finance and devoted much needed attention to EMs and developing countries.<sup>52</sup>

### ***Washington 2008***

The first leaders-level G20 summit took place in Washington, D.C., from 14-15 November 2008. In the midst of the severe global recession, the G20 came together in a joint-effort to lay the foundation for reform that would prevent any future crisis of this kind. Guided by the shared belief that open trade acted as an essential stimulus for “dynamism, innovation and entrepreneurship” that leads to “economic growth, employment and poverty reduction” the G20 renounced any anti-protectionist measures. In taking this initial defensive pledge to freer trade that would fight off future crisis, G20 leaders promised to “refrain from raising new barriers to trade in goods and services” as well as move away from “imposing new export restrictions.”<sup>53</sup>

### ***London 2009***

The London Summit on April 1-2, 2009, took place at a desperate time as the global economy was in the “depth of the most severe global economic contraction since the Great Depression of the 1930s.”<sup>54</sup> In this respect, the G20’s main focus at London was on creating significant banking reform as well as fiscal and monetary expansion to stimulate the economy.

At London, the G20 took their defensive trade strategy to the next level by making substantial monetary contributions to their commitments. As part of their “Global Plan for Recovery and Reform” the G20 agreed to ensure the availability of \$250 billion of support for trade finance over the next two years, which would substantially help restore credit, growth, and jobs in the world economy. This new source of trade finance would significantly benefit EMs and developing countries, in particular as they faced disproportionate challenges from the current downturn in the global economy. As the engines of growth, EMs and developing countries would benefit the most from increased trade finance.<sup>55</sup>

At London, the G20 further reiterated the need to minimize “any negative impact on trade and investment”, especially in the form of retreating into protectionism, as well as remained committed to “reaching an ambitious and balanced conclusion to the DDA”.<sup>56</sup>

### ***Pittsburgh 2009***

The G20 met again in 2009, this time in Pittsburgh from 24-25 September. Here, the G20 leaders confirmed that their “forceful” response to the GFC had helped “stop the dangerous, sharp decline in global activity” as well as stabilize financial markets. Furthermore, the G20 noted that international trade flows had started to recover. They promised to continue to “work together” to ensure that their trade policies “remained collectively consistent...with balanced trajectories of growth.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> John J. Kirton, “G20 Trade Governance,” Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>53</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Declaration of the Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy,” Washington, D.C., 15 November 2008. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2008/2008declaration1115.html>

<sup>54</sup> John J. Kirton, *G20 Governance for a Globalized World* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013) 270.

<sup>55</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Global Plan for Recovery and Reform,” London, 2 April 2009. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2009/2009communique0402.html>

<sup>56</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Global Plan for Recovery and Reform,” London, 2 April 2009. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2009/2009communique0402.html>

<sup>57</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders Statement: The Pittsburgh Summit,” Pittsburgh, 25 September 2009. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2009/2009communique0925.html>

In welcoming the swift implementation of the \$250 billion trade finance initiative, the G20 reaffirmed previous commitments made at Washington and London, vowing to keep markets “open and free” and minimize any negative impact on trade from domestic policy action.<sup>58</sup>

### ***Toronto 2010***

At Toronto, the Canadian host Prime Minister Stephen Harper made trade a top priority. Amidst a decisive move to unilaterally reduce Canada’s import tariffs on capital machinery in order to comply with the G20’s vision of all members having full-free trade. In the summit preparation process, Canada proposed that the G20 agreed to eliminate all of its members’ “nuance tariffs” but consensus was not secured for this move (Kirton, 2013).

At the summit, Harper devoted 15% of the summit’s commitments to trade related issues – the highest percentage seen throughout the first 13 summits from 2008 to 2018 (see Appendix A).<sup>59</sup>

Moreover, G20 leaders agreed to renew for a further three years (until the end of 2013) their anti-protectionist pledge by “refraining from raising or imposing new barriers to trade in goods in services...imposing new export restrictions... or implementing WTO-inconsistent measures to stimulate exports and commit to rectify such measures as they arise”.<sup>60</sup> The Toronto summit also saw the G20 commit to maintain momentum for “Aid for Trade”, which included a call to international agencies such as the World Bank and other Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) to “step up their capacity” and support trade facilitation to boost world trade output.<sup>61</sup>

Here the personal trade liberalizing conviction, economic competence and G20 experience of Harper, now serving as host stands out as a cause. So does the high export dependence of his Canadian economy. Harper’s sherpa had also previously served as the deputy minister of trade.

### ***Seoul 2010***

The 2010 Seoul Summit marked the last one for the G20’s defensive trade governance. Building on its previous promises, at Seoul the G20 reaffirmed its commitment to free trade, anti-protectionism as well as insisting on concluding the DDA.<sup>62</sup>

Additionally, G20 leaders aimed to focus efforts to resolve the most “significant bottlenecks” to trade by specifically addressing regulatory reform pertaining to EMs and developing economies. For the African continent, in particular, the G20 committed to support the regional integration efforts of African leaders, including by helping them realize their vision for “a free trade area...through the promotion of trade facilitation and regional infrastructure”.<sup>63</sup>

## **Stage II: The G20’s Offensive Trade Governance**

By 2011, the defensive strategy taken by the G20 in its previous defensive phase had worked “well enough” to prevent a protectionist spiral from decreasing international trade flows. In its next offensive phase, the G20 focused on facilitating trade through bilateral and multilateral trade

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<sup>58</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders Statement: The Pittsburgh Summit,” Pittsburgh, 25 September 2009. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2009/2009communique0925.html>

<sup>59</sup> John J. Kirton, “G20 Trade Governance,” Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>60</sup> G20 Information Centre, “The G20 Toronto Summit Declaration,” Toronto, 27 June 2010. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/to-communique.html>

<sup>61</sup> G20 Information Centre, “The G20 Toronto Summit Declaration,” Toronto, 27 June 2010. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/to-communique.html>

<sup>62</sup> G20 Information Centre, “The Seoul Summit Document,” Seoul, 12 November 2010. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/g20seoul-doc.html>

<sup>63</sup> G20 Information Centre, “The Seoul Summit Document,” Seoul, 12 November 2010. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2010/g20seoul-doc.html>

agreements and pushed for increasing regional trade deals elsewhere. It was also in this offensive phase that the G20 established new policies on supply chain management, the environment, development, and other social goods.<sup>64</sup>

### ***Cannes 2011***

The 2011 Cannes Summit was hailed as a “Summit of Substantial Success”.<sup>65</sup> On trade, the G20 reaffirmed its standstill commitments made in Toronto until the end of 2013. While the G20 stood by the DDA mandate, leaders recognized that it needed to be reinvigorated. To this end, the G20 pledged to pursue “fresh, credible approaches” to furthering negotiations – especially with regards to including the concerns of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).<sup>66</sup> In choosing to contribute more efforts towards establishing a “more effective” rules-based trading system, the G20 promised to adopt a more active role in “improving transparency” on trade relations, as well as taking steps to enhance the functioning of the dispute settlement mechanism.<sup>67</sup>

### ***Los Cabos 2012***

As the G20 met in Los Cabos, global recovery continued to face some challenges; financial markets remained strained, fiscal imbalances were still prevalent, and confidence remained low. In standing behind their belief that open trade led to the necessary conditions for sustained global recovery, the G20 reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the centrality of the WTO’s “predictable, rules-based, transparent multilateral trading system”.<sup>68</sup>

2012 was also significant as it saw the first ever ‘Trade Ministers’ meeting. It was held in Puerto Vallarta, from 18-20 April. In leading up to Los Cabos, Trade Ministers introduced the relevance of regional and global value chains to world trade – pointing to their crucial role in fostering economic growth, employment and development. In welcoming these successful advances, the G20 leaders praised the Trade Ministers’ discussions, and promised to continue progress towards these important initiatives.<sup>69</sup>

### ***St. Petersburg 2013***

Trade was put at the center of Russia’s G20 agenda for its St. Petersburg Summit in September 2013. The G20 committed to new initiatives to strengthen the multilateral trading system. To this end, the G20 emphasized the importance of increasing regional trade agreements (RTAs) and committed to supporting a new Transparency in Trade (TNT) Initiative – a partnership between the African Development Bank (ADB), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Bank – which hoped to identify new trade opportunities and facilitate trade flows.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> John J. Kirton, “G20 Trade Governance,” Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>65</sup> John J. Kirton, “Cannes 2011: A Summit of Substantial Success.” G20 Information Centre.  
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/analysis/111104-kirton-cannes-perf.html>

<sup>66</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Cannes Summit Final Declaration – Building Our Common Future: Renewed Collective Action for the Benefit of All,” Cannes, 4 November 2011.  
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2011/2011-cannes-declaration-111104-en.html>

<sup>67</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Communiqué: G20 Leaders Summit,” Cannes, 4 November 2011.  
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2011/2011-cannes-communique-111104-en.html>

<sup>68</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders Declaration,” Los Cabos, 19 June 2012.  
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2012/2012-0619-loscabos.html>

<sup>69</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders Declaration,” Los Cabos, 19 June 2012.  
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2012/2012-0619-loscabos.html>

<sup>70</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Declaration,” St. Petersburg, 6 September 2013.  
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2013/2013-0906-declaration.html>

At the time, a significant number of new RTAs were being negotiated. In order to ensure full compliance with existing transparency obligations under the WTO, the G20 pledged to keep any new agreed upon RTAs consistent with WTO principles as well as reaffirm that RTAs were to remain “complementary to, not a substitute for,” the multilateral trading system”.<sup>71</sup>

Furthermore, in preparation for the upcoming 9<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference (MC9) in Bali that December, the G20 stressed the importance in ensuring proper rules enforcement. Given the ongoing stalling of the DDA, MC9 was seen as “a stepping stone” to further multilateral trade liberalization and progress in DDA negotiations – providing the new confidence in the multilateral trading system.<sup>72</sup>

In the lead up to the summit, Russia proposed that the APP, due to expire in 2013, be extended. China rejected, saying the focus should be only on making the WTO work. In the end, the APP extension was secured.

#### ***Brisbane 2014***

The G20 leaders met for their ninth Summit in Brisbane from 15-16 November 2014. HER, the G20 decided to set an ambitious goal of lifting the G20's GDP by 2% by 2018 – naming an increase in trade and competition as crucial to achieving this.<sup>73</sup> The G20 recognized that trade and competition constitute powerful drivers of “growth, increased living standards, and job creation”.<sup>74</sup>

Building off of previous targets set at St. Petersburg, the G20 agreed to strengthen the trading system by working to ensure that “bilateral, regional and multilateral trading” remained efficient and complied with WTO rules. Moreover, there were also two major offensive moves.

First, the G20 welcomed the breakthrough achieved between India and the United States that would help “the full and prompt implementation” of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). In accordance with this, the G20 further committed to implement “all elements” of the Bali package and to “swiftly” defining a WTO work program on the “remaining issues” of the DDA.<sup>75</sup>

Second, at the conclusion of the Brisbane Summit saw China and Australia formally sign their first ever free trade agreement – aiming to increase the access for Australian beef and wine exporters while boosting Chinese carmakers and electronics producers.<sup>76</sup>

#### ***Antalya 2015***

The G20 met the following November in Antalya, Turkey. In recognizing that global growth remained below pre-GFC levels, the G20 prioritized to reform cyclical and structural factors. At Antalya, the G20 strongly committed to better “coordinate efforts” in order to reinforce trade and investment, especially through their newly-implemented Adjusted Growth Strategies. Effectively,

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<sup>71</sup> G20 Information Centre, “Advancing Transparency in Regional Trade Agreements,” St. Petersburg, 6 September 2013. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2013/2013-0906-rta.html>

<sup>72</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Declaration,” St. Petersburg, 6 September 2013. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2013/2013-0906-declaration.html>

<sup>73</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Communiqué,” Brisbane, 16 November 2014. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2014/2014-1116-communiqué.html>

<sup>74</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Communiqué,” Brisbane, 16 November 2014. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2014/2014-1116-communiqué.html>

<sup>75</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Communiqué,” Brisbane, 16 November 2014. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2014/2014-1116-communiqué.html>

<sup>76</sup> Daniel Hurst, “China and Australia Formally Sign Free Trade Agreement,” *The Guardian*, 17 June 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jun/17/china-and-australia-formally-sign-free-trade-agreement>



these strategies would help the growing number of Small-to Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in G20 countries at all levels of economic development to participate in the global economy – adding efficient input to global value chains.<sup>77</sup>

In continuing their efforts to roll-back on protectionism, the G20 called on the coordinated efforts of the WTO, OECD and UNCTAD to resume their reporting on trade and investment restrictive measures. They also requested that their Trade Ministers meet on a regular basis and continue playing “a central role” in promoting multilateral trade. Extending on this request, the G20 pledged to support the Working Group.<sup>78</sup>

Ahead of the WTO’s Nairobi Ministerial Meeting (MC10), the G20 pledged to increase efforts to implement any outstanding elements of the Bali Package – especially those on agriculture and development. The G20 also agreed to promptly ratify and implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement and continue efforts to ensure bilateral, regional and plurilateral trade agreements complement one another.<sup>79</sup>

### ***Hangzhou 2016***

China hosted its first ever G20 Summit in September 2016. The meeting brought together the G20 leaders, the heads of seven international organizations, as well as the heads of several developing countries – invited especially for this Summit. As a watershed event for the Chinese leadership, President Xi Jinping set specific priorities for a successful summit – including trade, financial stability and sustainable development.<sup>80</sup>

The preparatory process for the 2016 Hangzhou Summit was extensive. Beginning with an initial Sherpa meeting in January, subsequent Ministerial-level meetings began drafting the agenda for the much-anticipated Summit. On 26 May, at the briefing for Chinese and foreign journalists on the G20 Hangzhou Summit, Foreign Minister Wang Yi outlined the 10 major results China hoped to achieve. On trade, this statement read: “China has promoted trade and investment to be put at the top of the G20 agenda”, building the G20 Trade Ministers Meeting, Trade and Investment Working Group and other institutionalized platforms for this purpose. Moreover, China’s strategy aims at taking facilitation measures to “reduce trade cost” and “increase trade financing” so as to reverse the perceived downward trend of trade growth.<sup>81</sup>

At Hangzhou, the G20 took many steps to promote international trade. The G20 endorsed its newest Strategy for Global Trade Growth, under which the G20 was expected to “lead by example...to lower trade costs...boost trade in services, enhance trade finance, promote e-commerce, and address trade and development”.<sup>82</sup>

Despite these promises, there was a noticeable gap between the aspirations outlined by the G20, and their individual actions following the Summit. Most notably, as the G20 reiterated their joint “opposition to protectionism on trade...in all its forms”, many members continued in their

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<sup>77</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Communiqué,” Antalya, 16 November 2015.

<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2015/151116-communiqué.html>

<sup>78</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Communiqué,” Antalya, 16 November 2015.

<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2015/151116-communiqué.html>

<sup>79</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Communiqué,” Antalya, 16 November 2015.

<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2015/151116-communiqué.html>

<sup>80</sup> John J. Kirton, “G20 Trade Governance,” Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>81</sup> Wang Yi, “Strive to Achieve Ten Results from G20 Hangzhou Summit,” G20 Information Centre, 26 May 2016. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2016/160526-wang-yi.html>

<sup>82</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Communiqué: Hangzhou Summit,” Hangzhou, 5 September 2016. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2016/160905-communiqué.html>

protectionist practices – in this vein, the number of trade and investment barriers within G20 countries began to increase, in conjunction with an evident rise in regional preferential arrangements.<sup>83</sup>

### **Stage III: The G20's Adaptive Trade Governance**

By the beginning of 2017, the G20 was met with new challenges in the form of new tariffs and regulatory measures that affected widely-traded goods and services, as well as the reality of growing trade tensions and increased economic uncertainty. It was time for the G20 to adapt to this evolving trading context. Unlike the 2008 GFC, these mini shocks were deliberately initiated and targeted by members states within the G20 and aimed at others ones. It was unclear if they would thus be easy to control.

#### ***Hamburg 2017***

The experienced G20 German host assumed the G20 chair on December 1, 2016. Without wasting any time, Angela Merkel published her top priorities for the upcoming Hamburg Summit, anticipating that it would be a difficult one. Amidst rampant skepticism surrounding the benefits of globalization and rising populist and protectionist threats, Merkel saw it crucial to place trade at the top of the Summit agenda. Indeed, Merkel alongside the many proponents of open trade within the G20 seemed to be on a “collision course” with the newly elected United States President Donald Trump. Trump would later come to Hamburg with a noticeable “personal conviction” that multilateral trade had produced devastating bilateral imbalances that harmed the United States.<sup>84</sup>

The combined effects of open-trade skepticism with the lack of a Trade Ministers’ meeting signaled early on that the 2017 Hamburg summit had the potential of being a resounding failure on trade. As Sherpas gathered in Germany a month prior to the Summit, they were met with extremely difficult negotiations. On the one hand, the “ambitious” German host saw Germany as the leading voice needed to counter the growing “anti-protectionist”, “anti-globalization” wave.<sup>85</sup> On the other side, stood the United States, whose preferences would thwart any and all substantial trade progress made at previous Summits.

In facing these challenges, the German presidency prioritized deepening cooperation on trade; setting the stage for increasing support for the rules-based multilateral trade system, with the WTO at the center. In addition, Merkel saw it important to examine how implementation of the protectionism standstill could be made “more effective”. Perhaps as an attempt to re-ignite trade talks by making them more relevant to the evolving technological landscape, digital trade and the impact of the digital technology on trade was placed as a focal topic for the first time.<sup>86</sup>

At Hamburg, the G20 emphasized the importance of mutually-advantageous trade and investment frameworks in the context of non-discrimination and fighting unfair trade practices. To this end, the G20 strived to “ensure a level playing field” by continuing to promote transparency for predictable and “mutually beneficial trade relations”.<sup>87</sup> In attempting to reform the uneven playing field, the G20 promised to “constructively engage” in WTO discussions surrounding the important topics of E-

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<sup>83</sup> Scott Kennedy, “The Hangzhou G20 Summit: The Ambiguous Gap Between Aspiration and Action,” *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, 7 September 2016. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/hangzhou-g20-summit-ambiguous-gap-between-aspiration-and-action>

<sup>84</sup> John J. Kirton, “G20 Trade Governance,” Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>85</sup> John J. Kirton, “G20 Trade Governance,” Lecture, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2019.

<sup>86</sup> G20 Germany 2017, “Trade and Investment G20 Goals,” <https://www.b20germany.org/nc/priorities/trade-investment/ti-g20-goals/>

<sup>87</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Declaration : Shaping an Interconnected World,” Hamburg, 8 July 2017. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2017/2017-G20-leaders-declaration.html>

commerce and digital trade. Not only would this update the current trade practices, improving the digital economy landscape could further equalize trade between countries.<sup>88</sup>

### **Buenos Aires 2018**

While celebrating ten years since the first G20 Summit, leaders met in November 2018, Buenos Aires in the midst of the largest trade tensions to date. Though the communique recognized strong trends of economic development, it made only a passing reference to “current trade issues” within the G20 – cautioning that they represented a potential threat to synchronized global growth as well as financial vulnerabilities and geopolitical concerns.<sup>89</sup>

The G20 did acknowledge the importance of the “interface between trade and the digital economy” as well as the potential benefits both trade and investment bring to growth, productivity, innovation, job creation and development, yet there were no concrete steps taken towards ensuring the survival of the current multi-lateral rules-based trading system.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, for the first time in G20 history, there was no mention on protectionism – as the United States firmly objected to such wording.<sup>91</sup>

On the eve of the conclusion of the Buenos Aires Summit, the leaders of the world’s two leading economies met to discuss their future trade relations. In an attempt to diffuse the ongoing trade war, the United States and China “recognized the contribution” that the multilateral trading system had made but noted that the system was “currently falling short of its objectives...and that there was significant room for improvement”.<sup>92</sup>

Prospects for the G20’s capacity to effectively govern trade were at a historic low following Buenos Aires. With a growing nationalist sentiment among G20 countries, the group faced doubts over its ability to “deal with trade tensions...and other geopolitical differences” among its members.<sup>93</sup> That being said, a sliver of hope remained -- and pointed to the G20’s newly-adopted adaptive stance within the third phase of trade governance. Most notably, all G20 leaders agreed on the need to reforming the WTO and pledged to discuss the issue during the following summit in Osaka.<sup>94</sup>

### **Osaka 2019**

G20 Leaders would next convene in Osaka, from the 28-29 June 2019. On 11 March 2019, Japan’s G20 Sherpa, Koji Tomita, briefed the UN General Assembly in New York on preparations for the Summit, highlighting preliminary discussions on important issues. Alongside the importance of addressing aging populations, Tomita stressed the urgent task of “restoring confidence in the multilateral trading system” and underscored WTO reform as a top priority for Osaka. Extending on

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<sup>88</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Declaration: Shaping an Interconnected World,” Hamburg, 8 July 2017. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2017/2017-G20-leaders-declaration.html>

<sup>89</sup> Mikhail Svetlov, “G20 Summit Backs WTO Reform ahead of Trump, Xi Trade Talks,” *Consumer News and Business Channel*, 1 December 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/01/g-20-summit-backs-wto-reform-ahead-of-trump-xi-trade-talks.html>

<sup>90</sup> G20 Information Centre, “G20 Leaders’ Declaration : Building Consensus for Fair and Sustainable Development,” Buenos Aires, 1 December 2018. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2018/2018-leaders-declaration.html>

<sup>91</sup> Luis Andres Henao, “A Look What Happened at the G20 Summit in Argentina,” *Associated Press News*, 2 December 2018. <https://www.apnews.com/bb1fa48f2cf04a23b3f07291fdc466a3>

<sup>92</sup> Mikhail Svetlov, “G20 Summit Backs WTO Reform ahead of Trump, Xi Trade Talks,” *Consumer News and Business Channel*, 1 December 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/01/g-20-summit-backs-wto-reform-ahead-of-trump-xi-trade-talks.html>

<sup>93</sup> Mikhail Svetlov, “G20 Summit Backs WTO Reform ahead of Trump, Xi Trade Talks,” *Consumer News and Business Channel*, 1 December 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/01/g-20-summit-backs-wto-reform-ahead-of-trump-xi-trade-talks.html>

<sup>94</sup> Luis Andres Henao, “A Look What Happened at the G20 Summit in Argentina,” *Associated Press News*, 2 December 2018. <https://www.apnews.com/bb1fa48f2cf04a23b3f07291fdc466a3>

this, Tomita acknowledged the important “political impetus” the G20 could lend to a “better functioning WTO”.<sup>95</sup>

Concerns arose surrounding the “truncated” time-frame for Japan’s Presidency, mostly a response to the Osaka Summit being held in June.<sup>96</sup> Many participants in the preparatory phase noted that the effectively-shortened presidency meant that there should be greater emphasis on implementing the existing policy agenda – rather than adding any new topics that could seemingly complicate matters. On trade, this meant emphasizing free trade, science and technological innovation as well as WTO reform.<sup>97</sup>

While the Japanese G20 Presidency came at a time of growing fears about the forum’s capacities to manage global trade, the coming months certainly provide an important opportunity for the G20 to adapt to these challenges and improve multilateral cooperation across its diverse policy agenda.<sup>98</sup>

## Conclusion

In tracing the history of the G20’s trade governance, it is clear that the G20 has worked well for restoring and promoting international trade, and has done so in three main stages.

In its first phase (from 2008 to 2010) the G20 adopted a **defensive** trade governance strategy, predominantly designed to stabilize global financial markets following the 2008 GFC. In order to realize this goal, the G20’s defensive strategy relied on an initial anti-protectionist pledge, support for the multilateral, rule-based WTO trading system, as well as significant monetary contributions towards trade finance.,

Once financial markets had become relatively stable, the G20 embarked on its second phase of trade governance and adopted a more **offensive** stance from 2001 to 2016. Here, the G20 shifted its focus more towards making globalization work for all by expanding the number of bilateral, regional, plurilateral and component multilateral trade agreements, as well as developing new directions on supply chain management, the environment, development and employment.

Third, the G20 then moved to its adaptive phase of trade government. Beginning in 2017, this new phase appeared in response to a variety of threats against the multilateral trading system in the form of new tariffs and regulatory measures that affected widely-traded goods and services, growing trade tensions between members of the G20 and increased economic uncertainty and new challenges and opportunities, such as digital trade. While this last phase has seen the G20 struggle in acclimatizing to new challenging realities, it has also seen the G20 take the lead in trying to reform the outdated WTO as well as modernizing the global trade agenda by including topical issue areas such as e-commerce.

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<sup>95</sup> Faye Leone, “G20’s Osaka Summit to Grapple with Technology Governance,” International Institute for Sustainable Development. 12 March 2019. <https://www.google.com/search?q=iisd&oq=IISD&aqs=chrome.0.0j69i60j0l4.1080j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

<sup>96</sup> Johnathan Luckhurst, “Prospects and Possibilities for Japan’s 2019 G20 Osaka Summit,” German Development Institute, 19 December 2018. <https://blogs.die-gdi.de/2018/12/19/prospects-and-possibilities-for-japans-2019-g20-osaka-summit/>

<sup>97</sup> Johnathan Luckhurst, “Prospects and Possibilities for Japan’s 2019 G20 Osaka Summit,” German Development Institute, 19 December 2018. <https://blogs.die-gdi.de/2018/12/19/prospects-and-possibilities-for-japans-2019-g20-osaka-summit/>

<sup>98</sup> Johnathan Luckhurst, “Prospects and Possibilities for Japan’s 2019 G20 Osaka Summit,” German Development Institute, 19 December 2018. <https://blogs.die-gdi.de/2018/12/19/prospects-and-possibilities-for-japans-2019-g20-osaka-summit/>

According to the WTO's most recent forecast, global trade volume (in terms of merchandise trade) is projected to fall to 2.6% by the end of 2019 – down from 3.0% earlier in 2018. This slowdown in global trade flows was broad-based and reflected the many new tariffs and regulatory measures that affected widely-traded goods and services, as well as the reality of growing trade tensions and increased economic uncertainty in 2018. Speaking in Geneva in April 2019, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo warned that trade could not “play its full role in driving growth” in the current hostile environment, urging governments to come together to solve ongoing trade tensions so that more focus could be placed on “charting a positive path forward” for global trade.<sup>99</sup>

These unfavorable statistics notwithstanding, there is significant potential for trade growth to rebound back to 3.0% by 2020. In order to realize a positive expansion in global trade flows, however, members of the global community will have to become serious in coordinating their efforts to ease these numerous tensions. As the largest, most relatively consolidated PSI, there is ample opportunity for the G20 to encourage global trade cooperation and do so in a liberalizing way. Given the inability of the WTO's large membership to arrive at an agreement, it is up to the G20 to pave the way for effective reform of the global trading system that corresponds with its dual-distinctive mission of promoting financial stability and making globalization work for all.

Speaking at the G20 Buenos Aires Summit, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe outlined his priorities for the upcoming Osaka Summit, scheduled to take place from June 28-29, 2019. First and foremost, he prioritized promoting free trade – which stands as a promising signal for a potential solution for remedying current trade stagnation.<sup>100</sup> In referencing the G20's historical record, Japan – as a strong, competent host – has the potential to preform high in meeting its priorities. The WTO has already remarked that, in preparing for the upcoming summit, G20 countries continue to initiate a “significantly higher number” of new trade remedy investigations, compared to the number of trade remedy actions they terminate.<sup>101</sup>

On this note, the G20 should continue focusing on existing agenda items, such as creating an effective e-commerce trade strategy, as well as WTO reform, rather than expanding the agenda to include new items. This will ensure that negotiations don't become overwhelmed and increase the chances of favorable outcomes. Moreover, the G20 should continue to persuade its membership to maintain an open-trade mindset. Despite the seemingly uncompromising nature of the U.S., it should refrain from allowing any other of its members to head down a similar path.

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<sup>99</sup> World Trade Organization, “Global Trade Growth Loses Momentum as Trade Tensions Persist” [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/pres19\\_e/pr837\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres19_e/pr837_e.htm)

<sup>100</sup> John J. Kirton, “Japan's Priority Agenda for its G20 Osaka Summit 2019,” G20 Information Centre, 1 December 2018. <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/analysis/181201-kirton-osaka-priorities.html>

<sup>101</sup> The World Trade Organization, “World Trade Statistical Review, 2018.” Geneva, 2018. [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/wts2018\\_e/wts2018\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/wts2018_e/wts2018_e.pdf)

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**Appendix A: G20 Trade Performance, 2008-2018**

Compiled by Brittany Warren, Maria Marchyshyn and Jane Filipiuk

| Year                | Domestic political management |                        | Deliberation |      |           | Direction setting   |                       | Decision making |         | Delivery   |             | Development of global governance |         |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|------------|-------------|----------------------------------|---------|
|                     | Attendance                    | Communiqué compliments | Words        |      | Documents | Financial stability | Globalization for all | Commitments     | Overall | Compliance | Assessments | Inside                           | Outside |
|                     |                               |                        | #            | %    |           |                     |                       |                 |         |            |             |                                  |         |
| 2008 Washington     | 100%                          | 0                      | 439          | 12   | 0         | 2                   | 1                     | 5               | 5%      | +0.27      | 3           | 1                                | 2       |
| 2009 London         | 100%                          | 0                      | 1,009        | 16.1 | 0         | 2                   | 2                     | 14              | 11%     | +0.50      | 1           | 0                                | 12      |
| 2009 Pittsburgh     | 100%                          | 0                      | 906          | 9.7  | 0         | 2                   | 2                     | 6               | 5%      | +0.05      | 1           | 1                                | 9       |
| 2010 Toronto        | 90%                           | 0                      | 524          | 4.6  | 0         | 0                   | 0                     | 9               | 15%     | +0.15      | 1           | 0                                | 12      |
| 2010 Seoul          | 90%                           | 0                      | 986          | 6.2  | 0         | 0                   | 1                     | 17              | 11%     | -0.05      | 1           | 2                                | 20      |
| 2011 Cannes         | 95%                           | 1                      | 1,329        | 9.4  | 0         | 0                   | 1                     | 15              | 5%      | +0.25      | 1           | 3                                | 20      |
| 2012 Los Cabos      | 95%                           | 1                      | 1,033        | 8.1  | 0         | 0                   | 1                     | 10              | 6%      | +0.25      | 1           | 1                                | 16      |
| 2013 St. Petersburg | 90%                           | 2                      | 1,770        | 6.2  | 1         | 0                   | 3                     | 12              | 4%      | -0.35      | 1           | 1                                | 33      |
| 2014 Brisbane       | 90%                           | 1                      | 1,062        | 11.7 | 0         | 0                   | 2                     | 9               | 4%      | -0.03      | 2           | 0                                | 7       |
| 2015 Antalya        | 90%                           | 0                      | 897          | 6.2  | 0         | 0                   | 0                     | 14              | 12%     | +0.60      | 3           | 1                                | 13      |
| 2016 Hangzhou       | 95%                           | 1                      | 2,045        | 12.6 | 0         | 0                   | 4                     | 24              | 11%     | +0.65      | 4           | 11                               | 34      |
| 2017 Hamburg        | 95%                           | 1                      | 1,342        | 3.9  | 0         | n/a                 | n/a                   | 29              | 5%      | +0.55      | 1           | 1                                | 16      |
| 2018 Buenos Aires   | 100%                          | 0                      | 787          | 9.3  | 0         | n/a                 | n/a                   | 5               | 4%      | n/a        | n/a         | 0                                | 1       |
| Total               | -                             | 7                      | 13,342       | -    | 1         | 6                   | 17                    | 166             | -       | -          | 20          | 22                               | 195     |
| Average             | 95%                           | 0.5                    | 1,112        | 8.9  | 0.08      | 0.5                 | 1.5                   | 13              | 7.5%    | +0.33      | 1.7         | 1.7                              | 15      |

Notes:

Domestic political management: attendance refers to the number of leaders present at the summit;  
 Deliberation: the number of words on the subject in the outcome documents issued in the leaders' name, the percentage of the total words and the number of dedicated documents to the issue. 2018 included the two documents that count for coding, i.e., the Leaders' Declaration and the Buenos Aires Action Plan.

Direction setting: the number of references to the G20's two foundational missions.

Decision-making: the number of commitments identified by the G20 Research Group in the summit's outcome documents. 2018 includes only the Leaders' Declaration.

Delivery: compliance as assessed by the G20 Research Group; (the number of commitments assessed).

Development of global governance: the number of governance mechanisms developed within the G20 and the number of governance mechanisms developed outside of the G20.

n/a = not available. - = not applicable.