

The Think 20 in Argentina

By **JULIA POMARES**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CIPPEC AND CO-CHAIR, THINK 20 (T20)



JULIA POMARES is the Executive Director of CIPPEC (Centre for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth), an independent non-profit organization that works on building better public policies. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and an M.A. in Comparative Politics and Research Methods from the London School of Economics and Political Science as well as a B.A. in Political Science from Buenos Aires University (UBA). She is specialised in governance issues with a focus on institutional reform and accountability, and in use of evidence in public policy design and evaluation.

We are living in times of unprecedented change. Dissatisfaction with globalisation is no longer limited to a handful of developing countries but has now spread into advanced nations. Years of successful international cooperation have given way to disagreements between countries on trade, tax issues, technology, and the environment.

The G20 was successful in handling the global financial crisis of 2008 and containing its aftershocks. Since then, the G20 played a fundamental role in promoting international financial stability. Unfortunately, and despite the importance of today's global challenges, the world does not seem to perceive them with the same sense of urgency. Climate change, food security, the distribution of the costs and benefits of trade and technology and rising inequality are global challenges that create negative externalities.

The Think 20 (T20) is an open and independent network of think tanks from around the world that seeks to develop concise, research-based policy recommendations to enable a broader vision in directing the G20 policy making process. It seeks to demonstrate that technical knowledge is at the service of the world's population and countries' growth and development.

It is our duty as members of think tanks, to produce evidence and actively look for new solutions in order to achieve an economically prosperous, environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive future. The current scenario calls for a collaborative enterprise, global problems demand cooperative responses and institutions that can generate stable commitments. In our current context, multilateral institutions are finding it difficult to reach global solutions. The G20 is more important than ever before - no one country can solve these challenges by itself.

In 2018, during Argentina's G20 presidency, the Argentine Council for International Relations (CARI) and the Centre for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC) were mandated by the Argentine government to organise and co-chair the T20 process during Argentina's G20 presidency. At the start of the process, the working groups were organised into 10 separate task forces that have been working on concrete and relevant policy challenges. These task forces provided a platform for the free exchange of evidence-based views and opinions

among experts from more than 150 think tanks and senior representatives of the private sector and international organisations from over 60 countries. This successful process resulted in more than 80 policy briefs with evidence-based policy recommendations to address global challenges such as climate change, food security, multilateral trade, global inequality and more.

In September 2018, we hosted the T20 Summit in Buenos Aires where we presented the policy recommendations gathered in the T20 Communiqué. We were honoured to hand this document to President Mauricio Macri, at the Summit, which was attended by over 1,000 participants from more than 68 countries.

Global challenges such as climate change, food security and the distribution of the costs and benefits of trade and technology are collective action problems. Countries have little incentive to implement individual solutions because these are costly and imply conflicts of interest, and those who instigate solutions will not be the only ones to reap the benefits. However, global well-being is unattainable if each country is not prepared to make concessions and promote international cooperation.

Our recommendations include that the G20 should start a dialogue to redesign the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and prevent worsening recent trade frictions. The main aim is helping societies adapt to the productive, technological, and social challenges of the twenty-first century. A creative agreement between G20 leaders prioritising the principle of cooperation would help kick start the much-needed reform of the WTO and strengthen the international trading system.

A second and urgent goal is to fulfil the Paris Agreement. The G20 needs to play a central part in the fight against climate change. If current trends continue, global warming will exceed the 2°C limit increase by 2050. Only immediate cooperative action on the part of the international community, led by the G20 countries, can reverse this situation.

A third goal, is to promote a New Social Contract a high-quality education system that enables workers to collaborate and interact with next-generation AI. There should also be a social protection system that protects those who may become displaced as not everyone may be able to adapt readily to new technologies. Closing gender gaps must be at the heart of this new social contract as gender economic equity is imperative for the global economy. **F**