

Prospects for the G7 Hiroshima Summit

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Introduction

The G7's 49th annual summit is a truly historic one. For three days, from May 19 to 21, 2023, in Hiroshima, G7 leaders will simultaneously confront two genuinely existential threats to the planet and its people as a whole. The first is the danger of nuclear weapons proliferation and even war in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, arising from Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Iran's drive to acquire nuclear weapons, nuclear-armed North Korea threatening its neighbours and a militarizing China practising to invade Taiwan. The second threat is climate change, relentlessly driving global temperatures toward liveable limits and approaching critical tipping points beyond which there is no return. Accompanying this deadly duo are the interconnected crises of economic resilience and economic, energy and food security, health and development. Also prominent on the summit agenda are gender equality, human rights and democracy, digitalization and science and technology. Inspiring the G7 approach to its agenda are two perspectives: first, "upholding the international order based on the rule of law, ... firmly rejecting any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force or the threat to use nuclear weapons, as Russia has done, or the use of nuclear weapons," and second, "strengthening outreach to the Global South, by demonstrating G7's contributions to the issues of their concern" (see Appendix A).

Participants

To confront these threats, Japanese prime minister and summit host Fumio Kishida, at his second regular G7 summit, will join French president Emmanuel Macron and Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau at their eighth, US president Joe Biden at his third, German chancellor Olaf Scholz at his second, Italy's prime minister Giorgia Meloni and the United Kingdom's prime minister Rishi Sunak at their first, and the European Union presidents Charles Michel and Ursula von der Leyen at their fourth. Invited leaders will come from the Indo-Pacific countries of India, Indonesia (from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Australia, Korea, Vietnam and the Cook Islands (from the Pacific Islands Forum), as well as Comoros (from the African Union) and Brazil. Also invited are the heads of the United Nations, World Bank, International Energy Agency (IEA), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, World Trade Organization and World Health Organization (WHO).

Priorities

Security, the G7's first priority, features regional security in Europe, led by further sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine (see Appendix A). It includes strengthening a free, open Indo-Pacific, amid China's threat to neighbouring democracies. As highlighted by the summit's location in Kishida's hometown of Hiroshima, it includes reducing the threats of nuclear war, weapons proliferation and poor civilian reactor safety, by taking realistic, practical steps toward a world without nuclear weapons. It embraces tackling crime and corruption and the overall need to defend democracy and human rights throughout the world.

The economy, the second priority, starts with strengthening economic security by building resilient supply chains for critical minerals, other key goods, essential technologies and infrastructure, and by countering economic coercion, non-market practices and malicious digital misuse. It includes restoring non-inflationary growth through fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policy and strengthening financial stability through better financial regulation and supervision. It extends to trade, investment, infrastructure, travel and tourism, new partnerships for transparency, and overcoming vulnerabilities in the global food system.

Ecology and energy, the third priority, is led by climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Leaders will offer a blueprint to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, reduce their own by 45% by 2030, strengthen energy security through clean and renewable sources, help climate-vulnerable people, and ask all major emitters to assist.

Food security, the fourth priority, confronts the current food crisis and its short-term issues, through actions to ensure access to affordable, safe, nutritious food for everyone and build resilient food security. It includes identifying structural vulnerabilities in the global food system and paths to close them.

Health, the fifth priority, begins with countering the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, and learning its lessons to strengthen the global health architecture for prevention, preparedness and response for the pandemics sure to come. Leaders will do so by shaping a new pandemic accord, better International Health Regulations and a richer Pandemic Fund, all with a better equipped WHO at the core. They will spur success on sustainable universal health coverage for the UN high level meeting in September. They will also address HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, chronic and non-communicable diseases, zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance, and mental and brain health, especially as dementia spreads among the rapidly aging populations in key G7 members.

Development, the sixth priority, starts with restoring growth in poor countries and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) due by 2030, through helping vulnerable people, raising development finance and countering non-sustainable debt.

For gender equality, leaders will seek to synergize efforts to advance women in security, the economy and society. On digital governance they wish to standardize norms based on digital free flow with trust and advance science and technology. On human rights and democracy, they will act against disinformation and increasingly authoritarian regimes in China, Russia, North Korea, Iran and elsewhere.

To strengthen the G7's global governance, leaders will work with multilateral organizations amid a changing balance of power and cascading crises, cooperate with the major growing democracies led by India, and intensify the G7's relationship with the G20 and G7 engagements groups.

The Argument

On this very broad and highly demanding agenda, the G7 leaders at Hiroshima are on track to produce a strong performance. They will be driven by the severe, sustained shocks that make them aware of their countries' vulnerabilities, the failure of other international institutions in response, their own globally predominant and internally equalizing share of critical capabilities, their common democratic convictions and characteristics, their solid domestic political control, and their presence in their valued club at the hub of an expanding network of global summit governance. But their strong supply of urgently needed global governance will still not be enough to meet the even stronger demand for global governance, especially on the existential issue of climate change.

Japan's G7 Plans, Priorities and Preparations

The Launch

To prepare the Hiroshima Summit, Japan started early, on January 3, 2023, by identifying what the summit was about. Kishida soon started travelling to meet all his G7 counterparts in their capitals.

For the summit, Japan set no singular theme, nor plan to mobilize money. It sought instead to manage several enormous issues, Russia's invasion of Ukraine being the central one. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky was invited to address the Hiroshima Summit.

Also important were China, Brazil and India, all becoming more vocal on global issues and less willing to follow the G7's lead. The G7 knew it should not be seen as being too focused on Ukraine, be seen as having double standards and not listening to other countries' priorities and views. Some G7 participants wanted to ensure the group listened to countries that represent the broad group of emerging and developing countries, and to help identify what was important to them.

In late March Japan announced it had invited several emerging economies and other countries, emphasizing the Indo-Pacific, but with appropriate representation from other parts of the world. It knew the north-south split would arise, but would work to achieve agreement among these guests and the G7 leaders on key issues.

In addition to Ukraine and climate change, there were the inherited issues made worse by the war in Ukraine. Food security was the first and energy insecurity next.

Pre-Summit Visits

Propelling progress on these priorities were Kishida's pre-summit visits to his fellow G7 leaders. In January he travelled to the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France and Italy. Germany's leader travelled to Tokyo in March.

Pre-Summit Special Summits

Another powerful push came from the G7's virtual summit on February 24, with Ukraine's Zelensky presenting his priorities there. That summit's four-page communiqué affirmed the G7's distinctive foundational principles of open democracy once and human rights twice (see Appendix B). It produced 39 commitments, with 38 on Russia's war against Ukraine and one on the natural disaster caused by the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria. In its institutional development of global governance, it made four references to three institutions within the G7 and 10 references to seven outside institutions. Those inside institutions were the finance ministers with two, and the G7 Ambassadors Group and the new Enforcement Co-ordination Mechanism with one each. The outside institutions were the UN with three, and, with one each, the G20, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the multi-agency donor coordination platform, the IMF, the International Criminal Court and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Pre-Summit Ministerials

Major momentum came from the 14 G7 ministerial meetings Japan scheduled at the start of its hosting year, and the one they added afterward (see Appendix C). Of this very high number of ministerials, nine were scheduled before the summit and six afterward.

G7 ministerial meetings began on February 23, when G7 finance ministers and central bank governors met in Bengaluru, India, on the margins of the G20 meeting they were attending there. They produced a consensus "G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Statement on Russia's War of Aggression against Ukraine and its Impact on the Global Economy." It contained nine paragraphs and 1,204 words. The first seven paragraphs were on the war and the final two on the economy, development and debt relief, but even the latter two began with a link to the war. The statement contained 23 commitments.

In contrast, the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors at Bengaluru failed to produce a consensus communiqué of their own (see Appendix D for a list of G20 ministerial meetings). They were left with only the "G20 Chair's Summary and Outcome Document: First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting," with 16 paragraphs and 3,855 words, plus an annex of 1,027 words. The summary's third and fourth paragraphs – the only two on Ukraine – clearly specified that they were "taken from the Bali Leaders' Declaration [and] were agreed to by all member countries except Russia and China." China had now joined Russia's side.

The G7's centrality expanded when its finance ministers and central bank governors met on April 12 on the margins of the semi-annual IMF-World Bank meetings in Washington DC. There they issued a consensus

“G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Statement” of eight paragraphs and 775 words, and an annex of 448 words. The statement opened with a paragraph on the global economy, followed by four on Ukraine, then one on supply chain resilience for macroeconomic stability, climate change and development, and one on support for low- and middle-income countries.

G20 finance ministers and central bank governors also met in Washington but were unable to issue even a chair’s summary this time. They went backward from the Bali Summit in November 2022 and even further from their own performance in Bengaluru seven weeks before.

The G7’s stand-alone ministerial sequence began on April 15–16, when ministers of climate, energy and environment met in Sapporo (Houlie 2023). They made 343 commitments, the highest ever since environment ministers started meeting in 1992.

On coal, at Sapporo ministers committed to prioritizing “concrete and timely steps towards the goal of accelerating the phase-out of domestic unabated coal power generation in a manner consistent with keeping a limit of 1.5°C temperature rise within reach and urge others to join us,” “to end the construction of new unabated coal-fired power generation as identified in the IEA’s Coal in Net Zero Transitions report in 2022” and “to work with other countries to end new unabated coal-fired power generation projects globally as soon as possible to accelerate the clean energy transition in a just manner” (G7 Climate, Energy and Environment Ministers 2023). But ministers agreed on no specific deadline, even as they needed to move twice as fast to do so by 2023 (Champenois 2023).

G7 foreign affairs ministers met on April 16–18 in Karuizawa in Nagano Prefecture. Their communiqué contained an introduction and 24 sections with 9,244 words. It included section 16 on “economic resilience and economic security” and section 17 on “development finance and infrastructure.”

Their meeting was preceded by the G20 foreign ministers meeting in New Delhi on March 2, which failed to issue a consensus communiqué.

G7 agriculture ministers met in Miyazaki on April 22–23. Their communiqué contained 3,347 words, including the annex.

G7 labour and employment ministers met in Kurashiki City, Okayama Prefecture, also on April 22–23. Their communiqué contained 5,579 words.

G7 digital and tech ministers met in Takasaki, Gunma Prefecture, on April 29–30. Their communiqué contained 6,547 words.

G7 finance ministers and central bank governors met again in Niigata on May 11–13. They would discuss recent US bank failures due to digital bank runs, the US debt ceiling, moves to stop Russia’s sanctions evasion and financial aid to Ukraine (with its finance minister making a video presentation on this) (Reuters 2023).

Compliance Momentum

Further momentum for performance comes from G7 members’ very strong compliance with their leaders’ priority summit commitments made at Elmau last year. By January 6, 2023, as Japan’s year as host began, average compliance had already reached 85%, as assessed by the interim compliance report produced by the G7 Research Group. By late April, it had risen further, with the preliminary final findings at 91% compliance. Compliance with the 2022 Elmau Summit was thus on track to be tied at this historically highest ever level with the 2021 Cornwall Summit for two consecutive years, for the very first time. Both covered the first years of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and the highly politically experienced and internationalist Joe Biden was president of the United States.

By late April 2023, there was complete compliance of 100% with the two Elmau commitments on regional security in Ukraine, with one on energy, with two on democracy and human rights, and with two on economic growth and trade. Close behind at 94% came one each on crime and corruption, labour and employment, and infrastructure. At 88% were one each on non-proliferation, terrorism, development, gender equality and digitalization. Lagging behind were the two each on climate change at 85% and health at 82%, and the one each on the environment and on food and agriculture at 81%.

Sherpa Meetings

By mid April, G7 members that agreed that Zelenskyy would participate in the first session of the Hiroshima Summit. The G7 statement would say, as at Elmau, that they were there for Ukraine for as long as it takes. Members were conscious that it would look like a retreat if they said instead they were there for Ukraine for as long as their systems can sustain it.

The summit would issue several communiqués and separate statements. There would be a very long communiqué, despite Japan's suggestion to curtail it. As of May 2, there would be five stand-alone documents. The US was encouraging Japan to issue the statements separately at intervals throughout the summit.

One statement would be on nuclear non-proliferation. It would send a positive message. Woven in would be the concern about the irresponsible behaviour of China and Russia — about China not being transparent about its nuclear weapons counts, and Russia's threats to move nuclear weapons into Belarus.

A second statement on a food security action plan would be issued jointly with the invited leaders. Elmau committed \$4.7 billion to food security, but Japan had decided focus on the statement rather than on mobilizing money, to avoid putting stress on domestic G7 government systems that would then concentrate on committing money. Nonetheless, there might be an aggregate dollar amount specified in the communiqué.

A third statement would be on economic security. It would refer to “countries of concern” with some references to China directly. The 2021 Cornwall communiqué was the first time the G7 leaders returned to referring to China in a major way but now did so with a more negative tone. However, there were more references to China — 14 in all — in the 2022 Elmau outcome documents. The Elmau Summit admonished China by referring to its “non-market policies” and “non-transparent and market-distorting interventions and other forms of economic and industrial directives.”

The passages on China would include export controls, outbound measures, supply chains and other issues that the EU's von der Leyen had referred to in her speech on March 30. The G7 has discussed supply chain issues in the past, but Japan's current push for economic security to be discussed at Hiroshima raised the question of carefully defining economic coercion. The G7's sanctions against Russia and Belarus could be considered a form of coercion. So is it allowable when the G7 takes such action but not when others do? The discussions on trade and economic security also sought a careful consideration of “decoupling” by G7 countries finding likeminded markets elsewhere. The new phrase from von der Leyen was “de-risking,” which could appear in the Hiroshima communiqué.

In 2021 the UK created a G7 experts panel to consider the G7 response to acute shocks to the global economy, as management of the macroeconomy was still core to the G7's work. By 2023 the focus had become the resilience of the global economy to shock, such as the rise of a major non-market economy — China — or acute shocks such as the Covid-19 pandemic. The word “resilience” would be woven through many of the Hiroshima Summit documents.

A fourth separate statement would be on gender equality. The subject would also be threaded throughout the documents. So too would the G7's commitment to democracy, human rights, the rule of law and inclusion overall.

Global health would feature less at Hiroshima, as the Covid-19 pandemic had been brought under control, and in early May the WHO declared it was no longer a public health emergency of international concern. There was now a sense that the world was better prepared for a pandemic than it had been in 2020. Nonetheless, there was much work done to prepare the world for the next one, and hope that the G7 would agree on language that would produce meaningful results to integrate the many initiatives underway to improve pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

Japan's focus would be on universal health coverage. The US wanted to make up lost ground due to Covid-19, especially with regard to vaccinations. There would be few, if any, financial commitments but there would be benchmarks to meet. Several members had spoken about mental health and there was a private sector representation asking the G7 to amplify the message on Alzheimer's.

With regard to Japan's major priority of outreach, some G7 members such as the US resisted the term "Global South," but were prepared to go along with it.

Some difficult issues persisted at the sherpa meeting in late April (Foy, Inagaki and Sevastopulo 2023). A US proposal to replace the sectoral sanctions against Russia with a full export ban (with exemptions for agricultural, medical and other products) was included in the draft communiqué, as the existing system allowed Russia to import advanced technology. But the EU and Japan considered this unrealistic and did not agree to this proposal. However, there was agreement to restrict "circumvention and evasion" of existing sanctions and act against those "wilfully supporting the financing of Russia's war" by pressuring Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Central Asian states. Sherpas also agreed to keep reducing Russian energy imports, to prevent "the reopening of avenues previously shut down by Russia's weaponization of energy" and to create a "traceability mechanism" on Russian diamonds to reduce its export revenue.

Prospective Performance

Regional Security: Russia-Ukraine

On Russia's war against Ukraine, G7 leaders will expand their measures to prevent any evasion and circumvention of existing sanctions, including financial transaction facilitators that support the financing of Russia's war (Foy, Inagaki and Sevastopulo 2023). They would thus agree to "close loopholes that allow [third country] jurisdictions to access and re-export restricted G7 goods, services or technology to Russia" (Fleming and Foy 2023).

They will also further reduce their imports of Russian energy and prevent the "reopening of avenues previously shut down" (Foy, Inagaki and Sevastopulo 2023). They would produce plans for a mechanism to trace Russian diamonds to reduce Russia's revenue from such exports (Cornish, Fleming and Dempsey 2023). However, they are less likely to agree on a US proposal, resisted by Japan and the EU, to ban Russia's exports completely (beyond agriculture, medical and other products) to replace their existing sector-by-sector approach.

Economy

On Japan's priority of "Economic Resilience and Economic Security," the leaders will focus on resilient supply chains, non-market policies and practices, and economic coercion.

They will build on the commitments made by their finance ministers and central bank governors on April 12, who, on economic resilience, promised: "we will stand firm to protect our shared values, while preserving economic efficiency by upholding the free, fair and rules-based multilateral system and international co-operation," in ways that should enhance social, economic and ecological transformation (G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors 2023).

On enhancing supply chain resilience, to maintain macroeconomic stability and energy security and increase sustainability, G7 finance ministers and central bank governors (2023) committed to “strengthening collaboration among G7 members and partners through the effective use of our respective public finance tools, based on the ‘High-level Policy Guidance for Public Finance Tools to Build Resilient Supply Chains in the Era of Decarbonization.’” This included supporting “low- and middle-income countries to play bigger roles in supply chains and enhance their value addition.” They also promised to “explore the development of a mutually beneficial partnership with low- and middle-income countries, in collaboration with Multilateral Development Banks and relevant international organizations.”

On the global economy and financial sector, the finance ministers and central bank governors reiterated their “determination to maintain macroeconomic and financial stability” and noted that “central banks remain strongly committed to achieving price stability.” Noting that the financial system was “resilient,” they promised to “continue to closely monitor financial sector developments and stand ready to take appropriate actions to maintain the stability and resilience of the global financial system.”

At Hiroshima, as discussed above, leaders would issue a separate statement on economic security, a concept that Japan now strongly pushed.

The statement would refer to “countries of concern,” as well as some references directed at China, especially with regard to export controls, outbound measures and supply chains.

Dimensions of Performance

Based in part on the leaders’ statement on February 24, the number of statements agreed for issuance the Hiroshima Summit and the volume of outcome documents produced at the pre-summit ministerial meetings, AS WELL AS ON AN ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS OTHER FACTORS DISCUSSED BELOW, the leaders’ achievements at Hiroshima across the six major dimensions of performance will be strong (see Appendix E).

Domestic Political Management

Domestic political management should be strong. The attendance of G7 leaders will very likely be complete, as it has always been. The G7 is now holding a three-day summit, rather than the usual two days. The elite media are obliged to travel with and report on their leader to those back home. There will thus be more chances for photo ops and front-page stories to appear.

Coverage will be boosted by the summit’s location in Kishida’s hometown, and speculation that he might call a general election if the summit went well for him. Kishida’s approval rating boost in April was due to part to his foreign policy success in visiting Ukraine. Zelensky will appear again with Kishida on the summit’s centre stage, if only virtually this time.

Deliberation: Conversation and Conclusions

Private deliberation at Hiroshima will be strong, with the G7 having a three-day summit.

The large but manageable number of guest participants — seven country and seven heads of international institutions — will reinforce the range and diversity of private deliberations, especially as almost all the guest country leaders are from democracies, and the major ones have been to G7 summits in the recent past. This is especially so for Zelensky, who will lead off the Ukraine discussion, as he did the virtual special summit on February 24. The fact that all the guests will have a substantive focus — on food security — for a discussion with G7 leaders as equals, will enhance the quality of their private dialogue.

Public deliberation will be strong. There is no doubt that there will be a consensus communiqué, unlike at the G20. The G7 leaders will produce several agreed statements, expanding the number and range of subjects addressed.

Direction Setting

Direction setting should thus be strong. The five statements will allow for more explicit consensus on fact, causation and rectitude, and affirmations of the G7's distinctive foundation mission of open democracy and human rights.

Decision Making: Commitments

Decision making should be strong, in the number, range and strength of the commitments produced in the leaders' name. The issuance of several separate statements on specific subjects will help here.

Delivery: Compliance

Delivery through compliance with these commitments should be strong. This is due in part to the large number and breadth of pre-summit ministerial meetings, which have coincided with, and plausibly caused, higher compliance with the leaders' summit commitments on the same subjects in the past.

Development of Global Governance

The institutional development of global governance should be significant. For institutions inside the G7, no initiative to create new ones are planned. But for institutions outside the G7, global governance will be enhanced by the large number of heads of major multilateral organizations participating as guests, and doing so as equals on key subjects such as food. Standing out here could be the World Bank and the WFP, whose new heads were very recently appointed by Biden.

Powerful Propellers of Performance

Propelling the Hiroshima Summit to a strong performance are the present and prospective condition of the six proven powerful causes of G7 summit governance. For Hiroshima these are the severe, sustained shocks that make the leaders aware of their countries' vulnerabilities, the failure of other international institutions in response, their own globally predominant and internally equalizing share of critical capabilities, their common democratic convictions and characteristics, their solid domestic political control, and their presence in their valued club at the hub of an expanding network of global summit governance.

Shock-Activated Vulnerability

G7 members' shock-activated vulnerability is very strong and broad, led by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, food insecurity, climate change and health.

The leaders themselves recognized such shocks 17 times in their four-page communiqué issued at their special summit on February 24. Sixteen references were to Russia's continuing war of aggression, atrocities, assault, attacks or brutal invasion against Ukraine, with one on the "catastrophe" of the deadly earthquake that struck Türkiye and Syria on February 9.

In the communiqués from the ministerial meetings, which started in late April, their ministers added many more. Ministers of climate, energy and the environment at Sapporo on April 14–15 made several references to shocks and vulnerabilities.

Ministers of foreign affairs in Nagano on April 18 made 25 references to shocks and 26 to vulnerabilities. These included 19 to Russia's aggression against Ukraine in its various aspects, and another four to the Covid-19 pandemic and one on health emergencies, three on humanitarian crises, one on the Turkish/Syrian

earthquake, one on “multiple crises” and one on the environmental “triple global crisis” (G7 Foreign Ministers 2023). There was one reference to economic vulnerabilities and five to natural disasters.

Ministers of agriculture at Miyazaki on April 23 made eight references to shocks, with eight on Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, and one on the Covid-19 pandemic, but none on the food crisis itself.

Ministers of labour and employment in Kurashiki on April 23 made 21 references to shocks. The Covid-19 pandemic had 10, Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine nine, and climate change and inflation one each.

Media-highlighted shock-activated vulnerabilities were also strong and broad, with only health retreating from the prominence it had before. Democracy came first, followed by the economy.

Multilateral Organizational Failure

Multilateral organizational failure to control these shocks was strong and broad, propelling the G7 Hiroshima Summit to produce a strong performance to fill the gap. On security, the Permanent Five members of the UN Security Council, with Russia and China wielding their vetoes, has failed to stop or reverse Russia’s invasion and destruction of Ukraine. The IAEA has failed to reduce Russia’s threat to Ukraine’s nuclear power plants. The IMF has failed to produce strong, sustained, non-inflationary and financial stability, and its World Bank twin, with the departure of David Malpass and the appointment of Ajay Banga, has not restored development or provided the needed debt relief to developing countries. UN Climate, UN Biodiversity and the UN Environment Programme are struggling to prevent climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and no multilateral energy organization exists to provide affordable energy supply, stability and security. On health, the WHO faces fragmentation from several new health institutions and initiatives, as well as resignations due to sexual misconduct.

Although the gap is partly filled by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the emerging Quadrilateral summit in the Indo-Pacific, it is largely left to the G7 to do the job.

Predominant Equalizing Capabilities

The collective global predominance and internal equalization of the capabilities of G7 members will partly propel Hiroshima’s performance.

The global share of G7 members’ gross domestic product at current exchange rates has declined since the group’s predominance in 1990, right after the Cold War victory. In 2023, however, “measured in comparable terms (at ‘purchasing power parity’), the economies of the US and its allies remain some 80 per cent bigger than those of China and Russia together” (Wolf 2023).

Moreover, from a low against the US dollar in November 2022, the euro’s value rose steadily to February 2023, then resumed its rise in March after a dip to reach its highest level in a year on April 13 (*Financial Times* 2023).

Moreover, on many of the critical capabilities, from defence spending and supplying arms to Ukraine, the G7’s traditional predominance endured, led by the US.

Common Convictions and Characteristics

The democratic commonality among G7 members strengthened, to reach a high degree. From 2021 to 2022, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index, Japan and France rose from a flawed to a full democracy (see Appendix F). The G7 now comprises five full democracies, with only the US and Italy as flawed ones.

Domestic Political Control

The leaders' domestic political is substantial. It is led by host Japan, the powerful US and Germany, Italy and the EU, and it is solid in France, the UK, and Canada. Together the G7 leaders bring a total of 25 years of experience at the regular, annual G7 summits, led by Macron and Trudeau with seven years each. Every leader is highly likely to remain in office, without an election, following the Hiroshima Summit for at least another year, unless Kishida decides to call an election to improve his rising position before that.

In host Japan, Kishida's LDP coalition with the New Komeito party has majority control of both legislature chambers. He faces re-election as LDP leader only one year later. His LDP won four of five by-elections on April 23, in a surprising advance. After a prolonged slump, his public approval ratings spiked following his surprise visit to Ukraine on March 21. By April 30, public support for his cabinet had risen to 52%, above 50% for the first time in eight months, and up four percentage points from March, while disapproval was only 40% (Nikkei Staff Writers 2023).

In the US, Biden's Democratic Party narrowly control the Senate but is narrowly behind in the House of Representatives. He and the Congress face an election in November 2024, one year and a half after the Hiroshima Summit. His persistently low approval ratings have started to rise, along with the economy, in 2023. On April 25 he announced that he would run for re-election, as polls showed that he would again narrowly beat Donald Trump, the leading prospective Republican candidate.

In Germany, in the 2021 general election, the leftist Social Democratic Party (SDP) led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz had narrowly won the vote with 25.7% of the vote (Politico 2023b). In the February 2023 regional elections, the centre-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU) overtook the SDP's 18.5% with 27.5% of the vote. As of May 8, 2023, polls suggested that national parliament voting intention would deliver a CDU victory with 29% of the vote, with the SPD trailing with 18% and the Greens at 16% (Politico 2023b; Chazan 2023). Still Scholz's Social Democratic Party has a solid, if strained, coalition with the Green's and Free Democratic Party, giving him control of both legislative chambers. He does not face re-election for another two years, in 2025.

In France, Emmanuel Macron was re-elected in April 2022 with 58.5% of the vote, beating far-right candidate Marine Le Pen who took 41.5% (AFP 2023). Macron's Renaissance Party controls the National Assembly, with the next election in 2027. But after his controversial and unpopular pension reform in mid-January 2023, his popularity has plummeted as France experienced violent street protests in Paris and many other major cities. By May 5, Macron's approval rating had plummeted to 28%, with a disapproval rating of 71% (Politico 2023a). According one French pollster, should an election be held today, Le Pen is projected to win (AFP 2023).

In the United Kingdom, Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party has sole control of the legislature, with the next election due in 2025. However, the party has done poorly in recent by-elections and city council elections and the deputy prime minister resigned in late April for bullying his subordinates. Polls show the government is deeply unpopular, and that the opposition Labour Party would secure 44.4% of the vote, compared to the Conservatives 28.5%, were an election held today (Politico 2023c).

In Italy, Giorgia Meloni, the country's first female prime minister, won the September 2022 election as leader of the right-wing Brothers of Italy Party, forming a coalition with two other right-wing parties. By February 2023, Meloni's popularity had risen from 26% during the fall election to above 30%, while support for her coalition partners waned (Williams 2023). Her stable coalition has control of both legislative chambers. The next election is due on December 22, 2027.

In Canada, Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party has a minority of seats in the House of Commons but its "supply and confidence" agreement with the social democratic New Democratic Party would keep it in power until the next election due by October 2025. The popularity of Trudeau and his party, however, was below or at

best equal to, that of the opposition Conservative Party and its new right-wing leader, Pierre Polievre. Trudeau's approval rating, by March 23, declined to 37% from the end of 2022 (with the disapproval rating standing at 57%) (Angus Reid Institute nd). Should an election be held now, the Conservative Party would gain enough seats to win a minority government (Fournier 2023).

As for the European Union, the next presidency elections — chosen by EU national heads of state or government — will be in 2024, with the European Commission presidency elected in October and European Council presidency in December.

Club at the Network Hub

The status of the G7 as the valued club at the hub of an expanding network of global summit governance was a strong propellor of performance. It was seen in and strengthened by the full participation of all leaders in the G7's special summit on February 24, although there were fewer special summits than in 2022. The value of the G7 was further seen in Kishida's pre-summit meetings with all his G7 partners.

Biden fully supports inventing, institutionalizing and investing in plurilateral summitry. He has thus mounted several such meetings, including a second Summit for Democracy and the Major Economies Forum in 2023, and the first Quad summit with Japan, India and Australia (both invited to Hiroshima) in 2021.

Conclusion

At Hiroshima, G7 leaders will build on this strong start to do the bigger, bolder things that only they can do and that the world badly needs. Their actions will flow from and strengthen the G7's distinctive foundational mission of protecting and promoting open democracy, individual liberty and social advance everywhere. With G7 leaders now acting together with great unity, the Hiroshima Summit promises to produce a significant performance for the world.

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Appendix A: Issues to Be Addressed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit

Reproduced from the official website of the 2023 G7 presidency, April 24, 2023
<https://www.g7hiroshima.go.jp/en/summit/issue/>

Background. The international community is now at a historic turning point, having experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and being faced with Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which has shaken the very foundation of the international order.

Two Perspectives

- **Upholding the international order based on the rule of law:** Demonstrating G7's strong determination to uphold the international order based on the rule of law, firmly rejecting any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force or the threat to use nuclear weapons, as Russia has done, or the use of nuclear weapons.
- **Outreach to the Global South:** Strengthening outreach to the Global South, by demonstrating G7's contributions to the issues of their concern.

Issues to Be Addressed

Regional Affairs

- **Ukraine:** Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a challenge to the rule-based international order and the G7 has responded in a united manner. The G7 will continue to strongly promote sanctions against Russia and supports for Ukraine.
- **Indo-Pacific:** The G7 will reaffirm and strengthen cooperation on the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."

Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation

The G7 will deepen discussions to send a strong message that it will advance realistic and practical efforts to take us from "the reality" of the harsh security environment to the "ideal" of a world without nuclear weapons.

Economic Resilience and Economic Security

First appearance in the G7 Leaders' Communiqué at the Elmau Summit. The G7 will work on issues such as resilient supply chains, non-market policies and practices, and economic coercion.

Climate and Energy

While the importance of ensuring energy security is reaffirmed in the face of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the goal to achieve net-zero by 2050 based on the Paris Agreement remains unchanged. The G7 will show its blueprint for various pathways towards resilient transitions, noting different national and regional circumstances, while calling on major emitters to make further efforts.

Food

Given the current food crisis, it is urgently needed to ensure access to affordable, safe, nutritious food for all and to develop resilient food security. To this end, the G7 will identify structural vulnerabilities in the global food system and set pathways to overcome them, while addressing pressing food issues in the short term.

Health

Based on the lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic, the G7 will build and strengthen the global health architecture, especially prevention, preparedness and response for future pandemics. In addition, the G7 aims to contribute to achieving more resilient, equitable and sustainable universal health coverage as well as promoting health innovation to address various health challenges.

Development

Toward achieving all the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, the G7 will hold discussions on the current development issues with the view of supporting vulnerable people left behind in crisis, taking into account the concept of the “human security” and the “human-centered approach.” Responses to opaque and unfair development finance will also be discussed.

Areas such as **Gender, Human Rights, Digitalization and Science and Technology** will also be highlighted.

Appendix B: G7 Summit Performance, 1975–2023

Year	Grade	Domestic political management		Deliberation			Direction setting	Decision making	Delivery		Development of global governance		Participation		
		# communiqué compliments	Spread	# days	# statements	# words	# references to core values	# commitments	Compliance	# assessed	# ministerials created	# official-level groups created	# members	# participating countries	# participating international organizations
1975	A–	2	29%	3	1	1,129	5	14	+0.08	2	0	1	6	0	0
1976	D	0	0%	2	1	1,624	0	7	1		0	0	7	0	0
1977	B–	1	13%	2	6	2,669	0	29			0	1	8	0	0
1978	A	1	13%	2	2	2,999	0	35	+0.14	3	0	0	8	0	0
1979	B+	0	0%	2	2	2,102	0	34			1	2	8	0	0
1980	C+	0	0%	2	5	3,996	3	55			0	1	8	0	0
1981	C	1	13%	2	3	3,165	0	40	0	2	1	0	8	0	0
1982	C	0	0%	3	2	1,796	0	23	–0.71	1	0	3	9	0	0
1983	B	0	0%	3	2	2,156	7	38	–0.56	2	0	0	8	0	0
1984	C–	1	13%	3	5	3,261	0	31	–0.47	2	1	0	8	0	0
1985	E	4	50%	3	2	3,127	1	24	+0.27	2	0	2	8	0	0
1986	B+	3	25%	3	4	3,582	1	39	–0.43	1	1	1	9	0	0
1987	D	2	13%	3	7	5,064	0	53	+0.29	1	0	2	9	0	0
1988	C–	3	25%	3	3	4,872	0	27			0	0	8	0	0
1989	B+	3	38%	3	11	7,125	1	61	–0.07	4	0	1	8	0	0
1990	D	3	38%	3	3	7,601	10	78	–0.11	4	0	3	8	0	0
1991	B–	1	13%	3	3	8,099	8	53	+0.38	2	0	0	9	1	0
1992	D	1	13%	3	4	7,528	5	41	+0.71	3	1	1	8	0	0
1993	C+	0	0%	3	2	3,398	2	29	+0.57	2	0	2	8	1	0
1994	C	1	13%	3	2	4,123	5	53	+0.71	2	1	0	8	1	0
1995	B+	3	25%	3	3	7,250	0	78	+0.29	1	2	2	8	1	0
1996	B	1	13%	3	5	15,289	6	128	+0.42	23	0	3	8	1	4
1997	C–	16	88%	3	4	12,994	6	145	+0.26	11	1	3	9	1	0
1998	B+	0	0%	3	4	6,092	5	73	+0.42	13	0	0	9	0	0
1999	B+	4	22%	3	4	10,019	4	46	+0.45	10	1	5	9	0	0
2000	B	1	11%	3	5	13,596	6	105	+0.74	29	0	4	9	4	3
2001	B	1	11%	3	7	6,214	3	58	+0.47	20	1	2	9	0	0
2002	B+	0	0%	2	18	11,959	10	187	+0.36	24	1	8	10	0	0
2003	C	0	0%	3	14	16,889	17	206	+0.61	20	0	5	10	12	5
2004	C+	0	0%	3	16	38,517	11	245	+0.53	33	0	15	10	12	0
2005	A–	8	67%	3	16	22,286	29	212	+0.65	28	0	5	9	11	6
2006	B+	6	44%	3	15	30,695	256	317	+0.40	28	0	4	10	5	9
2007	B+	12	100%	3	8	25,857	86	329	+0.54	31	0	4	9	9	9
2008	B+	8	78%	3	6	16,842	33	296	+0.46	29	1	4	9	15	6
2009	B	13	67%	3	10	31,167	62	254	+0.54	26	2	9	10	28	10
2010	C	10	89%	2	2	7,161	32	44	+0.53	20	0	1	10	9	0
2011	B+	14	67%	2	5	19,071	172	196	+0.55	18	1	0	10	7	4
2012	B+	7	67%	2	2	3,640	42	81	+0.55	22	0	1	10	4	1
2013	B+	13	60%	2	4	13,494	71	214	+0.58	25	0	0	10	6	1
2014	B	6	44%	2	1	5,106	42	141	+0.68	21	1	0	9	0	0
2015	B+	2	25%	2	2	12,674	20	376	+0.63	31	1	4	9	6	6
2016	B–	22	63%	2	7	23,052	95	342	+0.45	23	1	1	9	7	5

Year	Grade	Domestic political management		Deliberation			Direction setting	Decision making	Delivery		Development of global governance		Participation		
		# communiqué compliments	Spread	# days	# statements	# words	# references to core values	# commitments	Compliance	# assessed	# ministerials created	# official-level groups created	# members	# participating countries	# participating international organizations
2017	B	2	25%	2	4	8,614	158	180	+0.57	21	1	2	9	5	6
2018	B+	0	0%	2	8	11,224	56	315	+0.64	30	1		9	12	4
2019	B-	6	57%	3	10	7,202		71	+0.52	22	1	0	9	8	8
2020		0	0		1	795	0 (1)	25	n/a	n/a	0	0	9	8	4
2021		4	2%	3	3	20,677	130	429	+0.81	22	0	0	9	4	
2022				3	9	19,179	118	547	+0.82	21			9	5	8
2023 February							3	39							
2023 Hiroshima				3	5 ^a								9	8	7
Overall total (1975–2021)		191	15.57 %	122	254	496,971	1,400	6,404		567	21	101	420	183	99
Overall average (1975–2021)		4.1	0.3%	2.7	5.4	10,165.8	31.1	124.6	+0.4	14.9	0.5	2.3	8.7	3.8	2.0

Notes:

Grade: Kirton scale is A+ = extremely strong, striking, standout, historic; A = very strong; A- = strong; B+ = significant; B = substantial; B- = solid; C = small; D = very small; F = failure (including made things worse).

Domestic political management: # communiqué compliments = the number of favourable references to G7/8 members by name. Spread = number of G7/8 members complimented.

Deliberation: # days = the duration of the summit; # statements = number of official statements issued in the leaders' name; # words = number of words contained in the official statements. ^aplanned or estimated.

Direction setting: # affirmations of G7/8 core values of open democracy, individual liberty and human rights contained in official documents.

Decision making: # commitments contained in the official documents as identified by the G7 Research Group.

Delivery: Compliance with selected commitments assessed as follows: 1975–1989 assessed by George von Furstenberg and Joseph Daniels; 1990–1995 assessed by Ella Kokotsis; 1996–present assessed by the G7 Research Group. # commitments: number of commitments assessed. Compliance score for Hiroshima 2023 is from the preliminary final compliance report.

Development of global governance: # ministerials created = number of institutions created at the ministerial level; # official-level groups created = number of institutions created at the officials' level. Institutions are created at or by the summit, or during the hosting year, at least in the form of having one meeting take place.

Participation: # members = number of leaders of full members, including those representing the European Community from the start; Russia started as a participant in 1991 and became a full member in 1998, and stopped participating in 2014; the G4 met in 1974 without Japan and Italy and later that year the G6 (without Canada) met. # participating countries = number of full members plus number of leaders from other countries. # participating international organizations = number of heads of international organizations.

Appendix C: G7 Ministerial Meetings

Sideline Meetings

- February 23, 2023: G7 finance ministers and central bank governors, Bengaluru, India
Communiqué with 1,204 words and 23 commitments
- April 12, 2023: G7 finance ministers and central bank governors, Washington DC
Communiqué and annex of 1,223 words

Stand-Alone Meetings

Pre-Summit (9)

- April 15–16
G7 ministers on climate, energy and environment, Sapporo, Japan
- April 16–18
G7 foreign ministers, Karuizawa, Nagano Prefecture
- April 22–23
G7 agriculture ministers, Miyazaki
- April 22–23
G7 labour and employment ministers, Kurashiki City, Okayama Prefecture
- April 29–30
G7 digital and tech ministers, Takasaki, Gunma, Gunma Prefecture
- May 11–13
G7 finance ministers and central bank governors, Niigata
- May 12–14
G7 science and technology ministers, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture
- May 12–15
G7 education ministers, Toyama and Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture
- May 13–14
G7 health ministers, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture

Post Summit (5)

- June 16–18
G7 transport ministers, Ise-Shima, Mie Prefecture
- June 24–25
G7 ministerial meeting on gender equality and women's empowerment, Nikko, Tochigi Prefecture
- July 7
G7 justice ministers, Tokyo*
- July 7–9
G7 urban development ministers, Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture
- October 28–29
G7 trade ministers, Sakai City, Osaka Prefecture
- December 8–10
G7 interior and security ministers, Mito, Ibaraki

* The justice ministerial meeting was added to the list of meetings originally published on January 3, 2023, on the G7 Hiroshima website.

Appendix D: G20 Ministerial Meetings

Finance and central bank governors	Bengaluru	February 25
Foreign ministers	New Delhi	March 1–2
Finance ministers and central bank governors	Washington	April 12–13
Development ministers	Varanasi	June 11–13
Agriculture ministers	Hyderabad	June 17
Tourism ministers	Goa	June 21–22
Education ministers	Pune	June 22
Finance ministers and central bank governors	Gandhinagar	July 17–18
Labour and employment ministers	Indore	July 21
Energy ministers	Goa	July 22
Environment and climate sustainability ministers	Chennai	July 28–29
Anticorruption ministers	Kolkata	August 9–12
Ministerial meeting on women empowerment	Gandhinagar	August 9–11
Joint health-finance ministers	Gandhinagar	August 10
Digital economy	Bengaluru	August 19
Health ministers	Gandhinagar	August 18-19
Culture ministers	Goa	August 23
Trade and investment ministers	Jaipur	August 24–25
Joint finance and energy ministers	New Delhi	September 8

Appendix E: Summary of Causes of G7 Hiroshima Summit Performance

Proximate Causes

- Compliance
 - Interim: January 6 – 85%
 - Final: Preliminary (April 23) – 91%
- Special Summits: 1
 - February 24: 39 commitments (38 on regional security)
- Ministerial Meetings: 15
 - Pre-summit: 9
 - Climate: April 16; 343 commitments
 - Post-summit: 5

Structural Causes

Shocks

- Leaders, February 24 17 (16 Ukraine, 1 Syria earthquake)
- Finance ministers and central bank governors, February 10 (9 Ukraine, 1 debt crisis)
- Finance ministers and central bank governors, April 6 (5 Ukraine, 1 global financial crisis)
- Climate, energy, environment
- Foreign affairs
- Agriculture, April 8 (7 Ukraine, 1 Covid-19 pandemic)
- Labour/employment, April 21 (9 Ukraine, 10 Covid-19, 1 climate, 1 inflation)

Appendix F: Democracy Scores of G7 Members, 2022

Country	Category 2021	Category 2022
United States	Flawed	Flawed
Japan	Flawed	Full
Germany	Full	Full
France	Flawed	Full
United Kingdom	Full	Full
Italy	Flawed	Flawed
Canada	Full	Full

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index 2022 Report: Frontline Democracy and the Battle for Ukraine

Notes: 1 = full, 2 = flawed, 3 = hybrid, 4 = authoritarian