

**PARLIAMENTARY
DIPLOMACY FOR CLIMATE
ACTION AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT: CHALLENGES
AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The world faces a climate crisis that exacerbates preexisting economic, social, and environmental challenges. Such crises, which reach well beyond borders and impact countries in a myriad of ways, call for collective and coordinated answers, encompassing all sectors of society. At the international level, a number of agreements are negotiated and signed to enhance the countries' capabilities to address these overlapping challenges. At the domestic level, in turn, it is critical for commitments made internationally to translate into tangible laws and public policies.

The Legislative Branch takes on a key role in this context. In addition to passing and endorsing instruments negotiated internationally, legislators are accountable for monitoring the implementation and promoting compliance with said agreements, including by recommending complementary and synergistic legislations. As such, expanding and enhancing legislators' engagement spaces in forums in which international agreements are drawn up is of the utmost importance, thereby strengthening parliamentary diplomacy efforts. This type of diplomacy comes forward as a significant tool for helping ensure that answers to global challenges are implemented effectively as well as suited to local needs.

The purpose of this policy brief is to examine existing challenges and opportunities to bolster Brazilian parliamentary diplomacy, bringing a special focus on the fields of climate change and sustainable development. To this end, the document maps out the main parliamentary engagement channels within the scope of regional institutions such as the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), in addition to key international forums such as the G20, Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and BRICS. Building on the three later forums, this policy brief takes a deep dive into the current negotiation agendas, examines how climate change and sustainable development-related subjects have been addressed, and explores

potential pathways for parliamentary engagement. Finally, it seeks to carry out a general assessment of the main opportunities and challenges concerning an enhanced parliamentary engagement in multilateral forums, besides submitting a number of policy recommendations geared towards bolstering Brazilian diplomacy in the fields of climate change and sustainable development. The recommended measures for Brazil include the following:

- 1 To develop a national parliamentary diplomacy strategy to help guide and bolster parliamentary engagement in international forums, besides defining objective criteria for participating in such forums;
- 2 To promote the capacity building of parliamentarians and their advisory staff in foreign affairs matters;
- 3 To help expand and institutionalize channels for parliamentary engagement in multilateral forums, including the G20, climate COPs, and BRICS, as well as strengthen regional parliaments such as PARLAMAZ.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world faces a climate crisis that exacerbates preexisting economic, social, and environmental challenges. Such crises, which reach well beyond borders and impact countries and people in a myriad of ways, call for collective and coordinated answers, encompassing all sectors of society. Governments, companies, civil society organizations, and most importantly, parliaments need to unite efforts to tackle such challenges holistically and with the urgency that the climate emergency requires. At the international level, a number of multilateral agreements are negotiated and put in place to enable the countries to more effectively answer these interrelated crises. Nevertheless, at the national level, laws and public policies should endeavor to translate international commitments into tangible measures.

The Legislative Branch plays a key role within this context. In addition to passing and endorsing instruments negotiated internationally, legislators are accountable for monitoring and promoting compliance with said agreements, including through

complementary and synergistic legislations. Thus, expanding and enhancing engagement spaces for legislators in multilateral forums is of the utmost importance, thereby strengthening parliamentary diplomacy efforts – a significant tool to help ensure effective global answers that are also suited to local needs.

Starting from this diagnosis, this policy brief aims to examine existing challenges and opportunities to bolster Brazilian parliamentary diplomacy, bringing a special focus on the fields of climate change and sustainable development. To this end, the document seeks to map out the main channels of participation for parliamentarians within the scope of regional institutions such as the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), in addition to key international forums such as the G20¹, Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and BRICS².

1. Even though the G20 and BRICS are not forums focused mostly on environmental discussions, this subject area is gaining increasing prominence in their negotiation agendas. Recognized by the Brazilian presidency of the G20 as priority topics, climate action and the promotion of sustainable development are addressed both directly and indirectly by numerous G20 Working Groups (WGs) and Engagement Groups. Within the specific realm of BRICS, these subjects are also gaining traction – an example is the announcement made by the New Development Bank (NDB) that it will ramp up its investments in projects targeting climate mitigation and adaptation. To learn more, please access: <https://www.ndb.int/about-ndb/general-strategy/>.

2. Initially consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, and China, and subsequently, South Africa, BRICS is an informal gathering of the world's main emerging economies. In 2023, the group expanded after new members joined, namely Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

This is an ideal time to share assessments of this nature, given that Brazil is presiding over the G20 negotiations in 2024, whereas in 2025 it will host COP30 and take over the BRICS chairmanship. The research herein is based on a bibliographic review of specialized literature and a documentary analysis of national legislation documents, as well as official statements delivered in selected international forums. In addition, the authors conducted 12 semi-structured interviews³ with parliamentarians, parliamentary advisors, and representatives of climate change and sustainable development-focused organizations both in the Brazilian parliament and within international negotiations.

Besides this introduction, the policy brief consists of four other sections. The second section addresses the concept of parliamentary diplomacy, recognizes the main types of engagement for this model of diplomacy, and looks at how this activity

has been carried out at the regional level, more specifically, at the MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR) and Amazon Parliament (PARLAMAZ). The third section, in turn, delves into three additional forums, namely the G20, climate COPs, and BRICS. Building on the three later forums, the analysis examines how climate change and sustainable development-related subjects have been addressed in international negotiations, and explores potential pathways for parliamentary engagement. The fourth section, in turn, assesses the existing opportunities and challenges concerning an enhanced parliamentary engagement in multilateral forums as well as in parliamentary diplomacy-related activities. Finally, the fifth and last section submits concluding remarks and policy recommendations geared towards bolstering Brazilian parliamentary diplomacy, particularly in the fields of climate change and sustainable development.

3. Interviews were conducted with the following individuals: MP Arlindo Chinaglia (PT-SP), MP Duda Salabert (PDT-MG), MP Nilto Tatto (PT-SP), MP Tarcísio Motta (PSOL-RJ), City Councilor Vinicius Parracho (PSD - Porto Seguro City Council, BA), Beatriz Pagy (Rede Mandatos C - Clima de Eleição), Fabrício Côrtes (Federal Senate), João Cerqueira (Ibama), Malini Mehra (GLOBE), Marcos Aurélio Pereira (Federal Senate), Sarah Darcie (Clima de Eleição), and Tiago Amaral Ciarallo (Federal Senate).

2. PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

DEFINITIONS AND KEY FUNCTIONS

The concept of parliamentary diplomacy is widely defined as a “the full range of international activities undertaken by parliamentarians in order to increase mutual understanding between countries, to assist each other in improving the control of governments and the representation of a people and to increase the democratic legitimacy of inter-governmental institutions⁴.” The main characteristics of parliamentary diplomacy include flexibility, the ability to interact with several actors – such as Heads of State and leading government officials, and representatives from the civil society, private sector, academia, and other parliaments –, and

engaging in multiple realms, ranging from the local, national and regional, to the global level⁵.

In Brazil, parliamentary diplomacy generally occurs through three key avenues, namely: i) incorporating international treaties into domestic policies; ii) parliamentary participation in regional forums and parliaments; and iii) parliamentary engagement in multilateral negotiation forums⁶. The first two will be addressed in this section, whereas the third, which is the main focus of this policy brief, will be explored in greater detail in the following section.

4. Weisglas, Frans; Gonnée de Boer. “Parliamentary Diplomacy”. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 2, no. 1 (2007), p. 93, 94.

5. Stavridis, Stelios. “A diplomacia parlamentar: o papel dos parlamentos no mundo.” In *Diplomacia parlamentar: perspectivas a partir das Américas*, ed. B. T. Luciano, K. L. P. Mariano e R. N. Bressan, São Paulo: Editora Cultura Acadêmica, 2023.

6. Indicators for Democratic Parliaments. “Parliamentary Diplomacy”, 2023, <https://www.parliamentaryindicators.org/indicators/effective/key-parliamentary-powers/parliamentary-diplomacy>.

2.1 Parliamentary diplomacy in the national context

The 1988 Brazilian Federal Constitution assigns the Legislative Branch the task of deliberating on international agreements made by the Executive Branch. In turn, parliamentary oversight of proceedings for such international agreements takes place mostly within the scope of two permanent commissions: the House of Representatives' Commission on Foreign Affairs and National Defense (Comissão de Relações Exteriores e Defesa Nacional da Câmara dos Deputados - CREDN) and the Federal Senate's Commission on Foreign Affairs and National Defense (Comissão de Relações Exteriores e Defesa Nacional do Senado - CRE)⁷. Moreover, there are thematic committees – either temporary or permanent – that are

responsible for addressing several foreign affairs-related subjects.

Additional spaces for engaging in parliamentary diplomacy activities include Parliamentary Fronts and Groups. The main competencies of the latter entail enhancing inter-parliamentary relations between the National Congress and parliaments of other countries. There are currently 112 groups registered or pending registration in the House of Representatives⁸ and the Federal Senate⁹. Notably, among those already registered is the Environmentalist Parliamentary Front (Frente Parlamentar Mista Ambientalista), which collaborates with civil society to support measures aimed at promoting sustainable development¹⁰.

2.2 Parliamentary diplomacy at the regional level

The involvement of Brazilian parliamentarians in foreign affairs is not restricted to deliberations within the National Congress¹¹. As a member of MERCOSUR and ACTO, Brazil, for instance, is afforded the right to participate in both PARLASUR and PARLAMAZ, which are

intergovernmental parliaments established with the purpose of debating subjects of common interest and setting forth mutual cooperation strategies for its members. The next two subsections bring forth information on both institutions.

7. Herculano, Luciene. “O Legislativo e a política externa brasileira: o desempenho da Comissão de Relações Exteriores e de Defesa Nacional da Câmara dos Deputados e da Comissão de Relações Exteriores e Defesa Nacional do Senado Federal nos governos Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva”. Master’s Thesis, Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, 2014.

8. “Grupos Parlamentares”, (“Parliamentary Groups”), House of Representatives, <https://www.camara.leg.br/internet/deputado/grupos-parlamentares.asp>.

9. The full list of all Parliamentary Groups and Fronts can be found in the following link: <https://www25.senado.leg.br/web/atividade/conselhos>.

10. “Conheça” (“Discover,” freely translated), Environmentalist Parliamentary Front, <https://www.frenteambientalista.com/conhe%C3%A7a>.

11. “Órgãos do Parlamento” (“Parliament Bodies”), Federal Senate, <https://www25.senado.leg.br/web/atividade/conselhos>.

2.2.1 The MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR)

Initially consisting of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, MERCOSUR was constituted in 1991, underpinned by several bilateral arrangements spearheaded by Brazil and Argentina¹². Following the signing of the Protocol of Ouro Preto in 1994, MERCOSUR gained the status of a legal entity, thereby enabling the bloc to enter into international agreements and institute MERCOSUR's Joint Parliamentary Committee, which was renamed PARLASUR in 2007¹³.

Located in Montevideo, Uruguay, PARLASUR is composed of parliamentarians from MERCOSUR's member states, which presently includes Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela,

with the latter suspended from the bloc since 2017¹⁴. Currently chaired by Fabiana Martín (Argentina, LLA), and with Adolfo Mendonza (Bolivia, MAS-IPSP), Arlindo Chinaglia (Brazil, PT), Derlis Maidana (Paraguay, ANR), and Mario Colman (Uruguay, PN) serving as its vice presidents, PARLASUR consists of 43 Argentine, 18 Bolivian, 45 Brazilian, 20 Paraguayan, and 23 Uruguayan parliamentarians¹⁵, all of whom serve four-year tenures and can be re-elected to office¹⁶. PARLASUR's Brazilian parliamentarians are appointed by their political parties and coalitions, according to the proportional representation criteria¹⁷. Due to its intergovernmental nature, PARLASUR's rulings are not automatically binding for its member states, but, instead, require the approval of their respective National Congresses¹⁸.

12. Batista, Paulo. "O Mercosul e os interesses do Brasil". *Estudos Avançados* 8, no. 21 (May 1994): 79-95, <https://www.scielo.br/j/ea/a/8dW8FHKG9smDqt8Ks58TH4g/?format=pdf>.

13. "História" ("History"), Mercosur Parliament. Montevideo, 2024, <https://www.parlamentomercosur.org/innovaportal/v/4495/2/parlasur/historia.html>.

14. "Decisão sobre a Suspensão da República Bolivariana da Venezuela no MERCOSUL", MERCOSUR, 2024, <https://www.mercosur.int/pt-br/decisao-sobre-a-suspensao-da-republica-bolivariana-da-venezuela-no-mercotel/>.

15. The list consists only of legislators currently in office.

16. "Parlamentares", Mercosur Parliament, <https://www.parlamentomercosur.org/innovaportal/v/19833/2/parlasur/parlamentares.html>.

17. The election of PARLASUR members takes place in a joint House of Representatives-Federal Senate session. Parliamentarians vote for a list of candidates previously appointed by the parties. After all ballots are cast, the names of the elected representatives are then registered and disclosed to PARLASUR. MERCOSUR's Internal Regulations state that all PARLASUR members must be elected by citizens of their own countries through direct, secret, and universal ballots. If the elections are not held, the national parliaments will be required to nominate temporary representatives, as is currently the case in Brazil. MERCOSUR Parliament. Mercosur Internal Regulations. Resolution no. 2. Montevideo, 2015, <https://www2.camara.leg.br/atividade-legislativa/comissoes/comissoes-mistas/cpcms/normativas/resolucao-no-2-de-2015-cn.Parlamento.do.MERCOSUL>. MERCOSUR Parliament. Mercosur Internal Regulations. Montevideo, 2007, <https://www2.camara.leg.br/atividade-legislativa/comissoes/comissoes-mistas/cpcms/parlamento.html/regimento-interno-do-parlamento-do-mercotel-portugues>.

18. Mattos, Angelo. "Política Externa Brasileira no âmbito Regional: O papel da representação brasileira no Parlamento do Mercosul". *AURORA: Revista de arte, mídia e política*, São Paulo 11, no. 33 (out. 2018): 94-111.

In the past five years, PARLASUR has shifted its attention to negotiations between MERCOSUR and the European Union (EU), more specifically, to the signing of a free trade agreement between the two blocs¹⁹. Nevertheless, PARLASUR is a standing forum dedicated to discussing numerous subjects that are deemed priorities by its members. During the Covid-19 pandemic, for instance, the parliament was convened to enable debates and devise strategies aimed at monitoring activities enforced by these countries to tackle the health crisis²⁰. Lately, the topic of climate change has moved to the forefront of its plenary sessions. As a result, in March 2024, proposals were submitted to establish the Regional Forum on Climate Change of the MERCOSUR Parliament, with its inaugural edition initially scheduled for August 2024²¹. However, as of September 2024, when this policy brief was being drafted and edited, the event had yet to take place.

2.2.2 The Amazonian Parliament (PARLAMAZ)

Originally established in a non-official manner in 1989, when the eight Amazonian countries were deploying efforts to strengthen their ties, PARLAMAZ serves as a deliberative body, bringing together parliamentarians from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela²². In 1995, the cooperation between these countries made further headway after the creation of ATCO, an organization committed to promoting sustainable development in the Amazon region. However, over three decades have elapsed since its establishment, and still, PARLAMAZ lags behind when it comes to being officially recognized under International Law, so that it can be granted the status of a parliament and, as a result, be able to formally join the ACTO framework.

19. The European Commission has a homepage specifically for public viewing of documents, fact sheets, and comparative reports on the treaty, besides the original draft. The information can be accessed through the link: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/mercosur/eu-mercosur-agreement_en. Moreover, additional information on the subject of the MERCOSUR-European Union agreement can be found in the policy brief “Lula’s New Government: Prospects for Brazilian Foreign Policy and Relations with the EU,” published by Plataforma CIPÓ alongside FEPS. Available at: https://plataformacipo.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Plataforma-CIPO_FEPS_Brasil-UE-Policy-Brief_PT.pdf.

20. “Parlasul vai monitorar ações de governos no combate ao coronavírus”. Agência Câmara de Notícias, 2020, <https://www.camara.leg.br/noticias/651706-parlasul-vai-monitorar-acoes-de-governos-no-combate-ao-coronavirus/>.

21. MERCOSUR Parliament. I Regional Forum on Climate Change of the MERCOSUR Parliament. Proposal for provision no. 6 2024, https://sapl.parlamentomercosur.org/media/sapl/public/materialegislativa/2024/2510/npr_37-2024_prop_disp_-i_foro_regional_sobre_el_cambio_climatico_del_parlamento_del_mercosur.pdf.

22. “Criação de Parlamento Amazônico ganha força com Declaração de Belém”. Agência Senado, 2023. <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2023/08/10/criacao-de-parlamento-amazonico-ganha-forca-com-declaracao-de-belem>.

Due to its institutional fragility, PARLAMAZ meetings take place intermittently only. After nearly a decade of inaction²³, the parliament was restored in 2020, and since then, it has been chaired by Senator Nelsinho Trad (PSD-MS). Its sessions are held both in-person, more specifically, at the headquarters of the national parliaments of member states, and online²⁴. In Brazil, the Parliamentary Group of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization has been active in the Federal Senate since 2021, serving as a national coordination space for parliamentarians wishing to participate in PARLAMAZ discussions. Currently consisting of 15 senators and 13 federal deputies, the parliamentary group²⁵ aims to enhance Legislative Branch contributions to help advance sustainable development in the Amazon²⁶.

During the Amazon Summit held in Belém in August 2023, ACTO leaders reinforced the need for PARLAMAZ to be duly institutionalized. The document produced at the end of the Summit, the Belém Declaration, included a commitment to establish a working group responsible for assessing how to strengthen institutional ties between PARLAMAZ and ACTO²⁷. In June 2024, in turn, PARLAMAZ members gathered in Tarapoto, Peru, to entrench the need to institutionalize the body and discuss the participation of Amazonian countries in international negotiations, such as in climate change and biodiversity-focused COPs, in addition to deliberating on the existing opportunities and challenges in promoting the sustainable development agenda in the region²⁸.

23. “Após 9 anos inativo, Parlamaz volta a atuar pela proteção da Amazônia”. Conafer, 2020, <https://conafer.org.br/apos-9-anos-inativo-parlamaz-volta-a-atuar-pela-protecao-da-amazonia/>.

24. “Parlamentares retomam trabalhos de articulação em prol da Amazônia”. Agência Senado, 2024, <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2024/04/17/parlamentares-retomam-trabalhos-de-articulacao-em-prol-da-amazonia>.

25. National Congress members are free to join the Parliamentary Group of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization.

26. “Composição do GPOTCAM” (“GPOTCAM Composition”), Federal Senate, https://legis.senado.leg.br/comissoes/composicao_comissao?codcol=2400.

27. ATCO. *Declaração de Belém* (“Belém Declaration”) (IV Meeting of Presidents of the State Parties to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, Brazil 2023), <https://otca.org/pt/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Declaracao-de-Belem.pdf>.

28. “No Parlamento Amazônico, Sinésio Campos debate soluções para integração dos estados da região”. Assessoria de Comunicação ALEAM, <https://www.aleam.gov.br/no-parlamento-amazonico-sinesio-campos-debate-solucoes-para-integracao-dos-estados-da-regiao/>. “Parlamaz retorna ao Peru para debater Institucionalização e desafios da cooperação amazônica”. OTCA, 2024, <https://otca.org/pt/parlamaz-retorna-ao-peru-para-debater-institucionalizacao-e-desafios-da-cooperacao-amazonica/>.

3. G20, COPS, AND BRICS: AN OVERVIEW OF NEGOTIATION AGENDAS AND ENGAGEMENT PATHWAYS

The participation of Brazilian parliamentarians in multilateral negotiation forums, beyond those concerning the country's immediate geographic surroundings, poses an additional possibility of bolstering parliamentary diplomacy and advancing the country's interests at the international level. Bearing different scopes and institutionalization levels, the G20,

climate COPs, and BRICS provide distinct opportunities for parliamentary engagement. In this section, the policy brief discusses the nature and current state of said forums' negotiation agendas, bringing a special focus on debates surrounding climate change and sustainable development, in addition to the constraints and possibilities regarding parliamentary diplomacy activities in these three spaces.

3.1 The Group of 20 (G20)

Established in 1999 with the purpose of providing answers to the Asian financial crisis, the G20²⁹ was initially a dialogue space for Finance Ministers and Central Bank Presidents of the world's largest economies. In 2008, amid a new global financial crisis, the group elevated its status to include Heads of State and Government, dividing its negotiations into two distinct tracks: the Sherpa Track and the Finance Track.

The G20 members account for nearly 85% of the world's Gross Domestic Product

(GDP), representing two-thirds of the global population, in addition to responding for approximately 80% of all of the planet's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions³⁰. These data evidence how the quest for solutions for a substantial share of the planet's issues is conditional upon an actual commitment made by the countries comprising the group.

Bearing the motto "Building a just world and a sustainable planet," the Brazilian G20 presidency put the subjects of climate change and sustainable development at the

29. Consisting of 19 countries (Argentina; Australia; Brazil; Canada; China; France; Germany; India; Indonesia; Italy; Japan; Mexico; Russia; Saudi Arabia; South Africa; South Korea; Turkey; United Kingdom; and United States), the European Union, and since 2023, the African Union (AU).

30. OECD. "G20 Economies are Pricing More Carbon Emissions but Stronger Globally More Coherent Policy Action is Needed to Meet Climate Goals, Says OECD". *OECD Web archive*, 2021, <https://web.archive.oe.cd.org/2021-10-27/614338-g20-economies-are-pricing-more-carbon-emissions-but-stronger-globallymore-coherent-policy-action-is-needed-to-meet-climate-goals-says-oe.cd.htm>.

forefront of the G20 agenda³¹. To this end, it devised three core initiatives, namely a Task Force for Global Mobilization against Climate Change; a Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty; and a Bioeconomy Initiative³².

Currently, subjects related to the environment, sustainability, and energy transition constitute the agendas of 15 of the 22 Working Groups (WGs) that make up the G20's Sherpa and Finance Tracks³³. Furthermore, these topics are increasingly being discussed by the so-called Engagement Groups, which assemble different segments of society and are in charge of holding debates and submitting proposals to leaders of member states, thereby attempting to leverage the forum's decision-making process³⁴.

3.1.1 The P20

One of the G20 Engagement Groups is the Parliament 20 (P20). Constituted

in 2010, the P20 is a forum composed of representatives from the Legislative Branches of G20 member countries. The purpose of the group is to serve as a platform aimed at enhancing cooperation among parliamentarians and consequently enabling their dialogue with national governments on subjects that permeate the G20 negotiation agenda. One of the main tasks of the P20 is to stir parliamentarians into action to help implement commitments endorsed by the group's members³⁵.

The participation of the parliamentary community in G20 discussions initiated during Canada's presidency in 2010 in response to a proposal submitted by the International Parliamentarians Union (IPU)³⁶. During the subsequent presidencies of South Korea (2011), Saudi Arabia (2012), and Mexico (2013), unofficial consultations with parliaments leaders were conducted, but no final declaration was issued or presented directly to the G20 leaders. It was only

31. The Brazilian presidency set forth the following topics as its main agendas for the G20: 1) social inclusion and combating hunger and poverty; 2) energy transitions and promoting sustainable development in its economic, social, and environmental realms; and 3) reforming global governance institutions.

32. G20. *Nota Conceitual da Presidência Brasileira (Concept note of the Brazilian Presidency)*, Brazil, 2024, <https://www.g20.org/pt-br/documentos/g20-brazil-concept-note-pt.pdf>.

33. Castilho, Alessandra; Folly, Maiara; Albuquerque, Marianna; Mattos, Beatriz. "From Commitments to Results: Strengthening the G20's Role in Promoting Global Climate Action". *Plataforma CIPÓ*, 2024, https://plataformacipo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/CIPO_POLICY-BRIEF_V3-1.pdf.

34. Up to May 2024, the G20 featured 13 engagement groups, namely the C20 (civil society); T20 (think tanks); Y20 (youth); W20 (women); L20 (work); U20 (cities); B20 (business); S20 (sciences); Startup20 (startups); P20 (parliaments); SAI20 (supreme audit control institutions); J20 (supreme courts), and O20 (oceans). To learn more, please access: <https://www.g20.org/en/g20-social/engagement-groups>.

35. "Grupos de Engajamento" ("Engagement Groups"), G20, <https://www.g20.org/pt-br/g20-social/grupos-de-engajamento>.

36. Established in 1889, the main duties of the IPU include helping enable communication, coordination, and the exchange of experience among parliaments and parliamentarians across the globe, in addition to assessing issues of international interest; promoting joint parliament efforts and contributing to an improved understanding of how representative institutions work. Currently, the IPU comprises over 180 member states and works together with the United Nations. Brazil has been part of the IPU since 1954, with 80 Brazilian federal deputies and 17 senators currently serving as members of the institution.

in 2013 that the P20 started releasing official statements. However, its meetings were suspended from 2014 to 2017. The following year, in 2018, during Argentina's G20 presidency, parliamentary meetings resumed, and the P20 proceedings were revamped, partly due to the direct involvement of the IPU³⁷.

Since then, P20 official statements have highlighted concerns about climate change and sustainable development, which have become prominent issues on the group's agendas. During Japan's presidency in 2019³⁸, the P20 statement reaffirmed the critical role of parliaments in addressing climate change and developing long-term strategies for transitioning to low-carbon economies³⁹. The document released by the P20 during the Italian presidency in 2021, for the first time, addressed topics

such as just transition, climate mitigation and adaptation, climate financing, and resilience⁴⁰. The following year, in the wake of the post-covid 19 pandemic recovery, under Indonesia's leadership⁴¹, the P20 statement emphasized multilateralism as the most effective way of responding to global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and economic imbalances. In 2023, during India's chairmanship, the joint P20 statement reaffirmed the commitment made by G20 parliamentary leaders to mitigate climate change by effectively implementing the Paris Agreement as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁴².

Table 1 below presents a timeline of P20 meetings from 2018 to 2024, highlighting the mentions of sustainable development and climate change in the group's statements.

37. "G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20)", Inter-Parliamentary Union, <https://www.ipu.org/about-ipu/strategic-partnerships/g20-parliamentary-speakers-summit-p20>.

38. P20. *6th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (Japan, P20 Joint Statement, 2019), <https://www.ipu.org/event/sixth-speakers-summit-in-context-g20#event-sub-page-documents/>.







39. No records of P20 meetings in 2020 were found during Saudi Arabia's presidency of the group. At the time, G20 member meetings were held strictly online due to the covid-19 pandemic.

40. P20. *7th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (Italy, P20 Joint Statement, 2021), <https://www.ipu.org/about-ipu/strategic-partnerships/g20-parliamentary-speakers-summit-p20>.

41. P20. *8th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (Indonesia, Chair's Summary, 2022), <https://www.ipu.org/event/p20-parliamentary-speakers-summit#event-sub-page-documents/>.

42. P20. *9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (India, P20 Joint Statement, 2023), <https://www.ipu.org/event/ninth-g20-parliamentary-speakers-summit-p20-and-parliamentary-forum#event-sub-page-documents/>.

Table 1. P20 Meetings (2018-2024)







<p>5th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit</p>	<p> Buenos Aires, Argentina</p> <p> 2018</p>	<p>Acknowledging the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs as a roadmap for developing the planet in a fair, equitable, and sustainable way; upholding an open, transparent, just, and non-discriminatory multilateral trade system aimed at furthering global economic growth and sustainable development⁴³.</p>
<p>6th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit</p>	<p> Tokyo, Japan</p> <p> 2019</p>	<p>The need to develop a new economic model using an approach based on green, circular, and solidary economies; investing in green infrastructure and energy efficiency; promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns; recognizing the role that parliaments play in implementing the SDGs; combating climate crisis through strategies to curb emissions⁴⁴.</p>
<p>7th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit</p>	<p> Rome, Italy</p> <p> 2021</p>	<p>Tackling the pandemic, climate change, and inequalities are the main global challenges; the need for just and inclusive transitions underpinned by clean energy, new technologies, and sustainable cities; the G20's leadership in combating climate change in the fields of mitigation, adaptation, financing, and technology transfer⁴⁵.</p>



43. P20. *Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (Argentina, P20 Joint Statement, 2018), <https://www.ipu.org/event/parliamentary-speakers-summit-g20#event-sub-page-documents/>.

44. P20. *6th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (Japan, P20 Joint Statement, 2019), <https://www.ipu.org/event/sixth-speakers-summit-in-context-g20#event-sub-page-documents/>.

45. P20. *7th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (Italy, P20 Joint Statement, 2021), <https://www.ipu.org/about-ipu/strategic-partnerships/g20-parliamentary-speakers-summit-p20>.

<p>8th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit</p>	<p> Jakarta, Indonesia</p> <p> 2022</p>	<p>Recognizing that multilateralism is the most effective means of responding to global challenges such as climate change and economic crises; bolstering the role that the G20 and national parliaments play in speeding up the implementation of the SDGs; parliamentarians' commitment to global frameworks, including the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement, as well as the Convention on Biological Diversity; the need for developed countries to take the lead in mitigation, adaptation, and climate financing, in accordance with the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC)⁴⁶.</p>
<p>9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit</p>	<p> New Delhi, India</p> <p> 2023</p>	<p>The importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the role of parliaments in overseeing its implementation; a more inclusive and revamped multilateralism for purposes of SDGs implementation; commitment with the the Paris Agreement; acknowledging the disproportionate effects of climate change on vulnerable groups, in addition to the importance of international cooperation to reduce disaster risks⁴⁷.</p>
<p>1st P20 Meeting of Women Parliamentarians</p>	<p> Maceió, Brazil</p> <p> 2024</p>	<p>Combating the climate crisis and promoting climate justice; fostering gender-sensitive public policies in the fields of climate change, environmental sustainability, and disaster risk reduction.</p>

Source: Plataforma CIPÓ, based on an assessment of P20 Final Statements.

46. P20. *8th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (Indonesia, Chair's Summary, 2022), <https://www.ipu.org/event/p20-parliamentary-speakers-summit#event-sub-page-documents/>.

47. P20. *9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit*. (India, P20 Joint Statement, 2023), <https://www.ipu.org/event/ninth-g20-parliamentary-speakers-summit-p20-and-parliamentary-forum#event-sub-page-documents/>.

Brazilian parliamentarians are represented at the P20 by the leaders of its two legislative houses⁴⁸. In 2024, the P20 is under the chairmanship of the top official of the House of Representatives, Arthur Lira (MDB-AL), who presided over the 1st Meeting of P20 Women Parliamentarians, which took place from July 1 to 2, 2024, in the city of Maceió⁴⁹. The event was attended by over 170 women parliamentarians from both Brazil and other G20 member states, as well as from additional guest countries, and sought to foster women leaders' engagement in P20 discussions⁵⁰. The gathering addressed subjects such as women's participation in politics and strengthening democracy; climate justice and environmental sustainability; promoting income equality

and autonomy; and combating violence against women. The discussions led to the approval of the Alagoas Letter, which brings 17 recommendations for the Legislative Branches of G20 countries⁵¹.

Given that it consists mostly of parliament presidencies of the group's member states, which are afforded the right to choose a limited number of parliamentarians to follow the discussions, access to P20 meetings tends to be restricted, with the exception of extraordinary editions, as in the case of the 1st Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. As a result, the direct participation of parliamentarians in the G20 agenda, even within the scope of engagement groups like the P20, remains limited.

3.2 The Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Constituted in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (ECO-92), the UNFCCC is tasked with coordinating global responses to climate change-related challenges. Since 1995, UNFCCC signatory countries have assembled at COPs to negotiate new commitments and monitor the

implementation of goals previously agreed upon under the Convention and its legal instruments, such as the Paris Agreement. Signed in 2015, the Paris Agreement aims to keep the rise in average global temperatures substantially below the threshold of 2°C, in addition to deploying efforts to avoid it from exceeding 1.5°C above pre-industrial

48. In 2021, Brazil was represented at P20 discussions by the president of its House of Representatives, Arthur Lira (MDB-AL), and the president of its Federal Senate, Rodrigo Pacheco (PSD-MG). In 2022 in Indonesia, the P20 meeting was not attended by any Brazilian parliamentarian, whether from the House or the Senate. In 2023, however, the president of the House of Representatives, Arthur Lira, once again represented Brazil at the P20 deliberations.

49. Plataforma CIPÓ supported the preparation of the P20 Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, during which it was represented by its Executive Director, Maiara Folly.

50. "1ª Reunião de Mulheres Parlamentares do P20" ("1st Meeting of P20 Women Parliamentarians"), Agência Câmara de Notícias, 2024, <https://infograficos.camara.leg.br/p20women-2024-brasil/>.

51. "Mulheres parlamentares do G20 aprovam 17 recomendações em Maceió". ("G20 Women Parliamentarians approve 17 recommendations in Maceió," freely translated), Agência Câmara de Notícias, 2024, <https://www.camara.leg.br/noticias/1079275-parlamentares-do-g20-aprovam-17-recomendacoes-em-maceio/>.

levels. To this end, countries are required to submit their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every five years, containing increasingly ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions⁵².

In order to transform these targets into tangible actions and ensure their effective implementation, budget forecasts, public policies, and legislations at the national, state, and local levels must be aligned with the objectives outlined in the NDCs. Accordingly, it is crucial for parliamentarians to stay informed about negotiation agendas and commitments established during COPs. This awareness enables them to monitor these commitments actively and ensure that domestic legislation accurately reflects the pledges adopted by States at the international level. Consequently, the opportunities available for legislators to access and engage with COPs negotiations will be explored in depth in the next subsection.

3.2.1 Modalities of participation in COPs

As the UNFCCC's supreme deliberative body, the leading actors at COPs are those authorized to take international decisions

on behalf of party states. These typically include diplomats from Ministries of Foreign Affairs, as well as representatives from other relevant ministries of the Executive Branch, such as the Ministry of the Environment. However, COPs are not restricted to these actors; they are also attended by members of subnational governments, academia, civil society, and the private sector, among other stakeholders interested in engaging and influencing this decision-making processes⁵³.

Attending COPs can take place in a myriad of ways, conditional upon the role of the participant⁵⁴. In general, individuals included in a state's official delegation can be granted one of following three types of credentials, namely that of "Party Head" to those in charge of negotiations; "Party" to individuals who negotiate officially on behalf of their country; or "Party Overflow," which is assigned to members who take on key roles within their delegations, such as advisors, technical staff members, or members of thematic government committees⁵⁵. There are also other credentials that are handed out to representatives of intergovernmental institutions, also known as "IGOs⁵⁶", as well as "Press and Media" credentials awarded to communicators and media outlets⁵⁷.

52. UNFCCC. *Acordo de Paris ("Paris Agreement")*, 2015, <https://brasil.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/Acordo-de-Paris.pdf>.

53. United Nations. *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992. Article 7. https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/application/pdf/conveng.pdf.

54. UNICEF. *O que é Governança Climática? ("What is Climate Governance?")*, Panama, 2020, <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/31661/file/O-que-e-governanca-climatica.pdf>.

55. "UNFCCC Online Registration System: Parties and Observer States User Manual", UNFCCC, 2023, unfccc.int/public/UNFCCC_ORIS_User_Manual-Parties_and_Observer_States.pdf.

56. "Admitted IGOs", UNFCCC, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/parties-non-party-stakeholders/non-party-stakeholders/admitted-igos>.

57. "Requirements for First Time/Temporary Pass", *Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit*, <https://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/request.shtml>.

Besides credentials granted to members of official delegations, there is additionally the “Observer” category, which is given to both non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations that wish to send representatives to follow negotiations. Organizations interested in enrolling in the “Observer” category can do so making a direct request to the UNFCCC⁵⁸. As of the Dubai-hosted COP28 in 2023, 3,804 organizations have already secured this type of accreditation⁵⁹.

Once they are approved as observers, non-governmental organizations are subsequently grouped according to their area of expertise in so-called “*Constituencies*”⁶⁰. So far, there are nine Constituencies, including: i) business and industries; ii) environmental NGOs; iii) farmers; iv) Indigenous peoples organizations; v) local government and municipal authorities; vi) research and independent NGOs; vii) trade

union NGOs; viii) women and gender; and finally, ix) youth NGOs. Each Constituency has its own focal points, responsible for advancing the exchange of information and collaboration with the UNFCCC Secretariat as well as with additional observer organizations.

In addition to Official Constituencies, the UNFCCC Secretariat also recognizes the following as Informal Groups since 2016: Faith Based Organizations (FBOs); Education and Capacity Building and Outreach NGOs (ECONGO); and Parliamentarians⁶¹. Ever since the COP26, the Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE)⁶² has served as a focal point for the Informal Parliamentarians Group. During COP28, GLOBE hosted an unprecedented Parliamentary Pavilion, which brought together legislators from several countries as well as political parties to facilitate the exchange of experiences and discuss climate action strategies.

58. To learn more about the admissions process for the UNFCCC Observer category, please access: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/parties-non-party-stakeholders/non-party-stakeholders/overview/how-to-obtain-observer-status>.

59. “Observer Organizations”, UNFCCC, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/parties-non-party-stakeholders/non-party-stakeholders/overview/observer-organizations>.

60. UNFCCC. *Non-governmental Organization Constituencies*. 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/constituencies_and_you.pdf.

61. “Admitted NGOs”, UNFCCC, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/parties-non-party-stakeholders/non-party-stakeholders/overview/admitted-ngos#Constituencies-in-the-UNFCCC>.

62. GLOBE is a multi-partisan international network of parliamentarians committed to enhancing governance for sustainable development. Since ECO-92, when it held the first-ever parliamentary engagement platform in environmental negotiations, GLOBE has retained its status as the main organization for parliamentary engagement in climate-focused international negotiations.

Figure 1. UNFCCC Constituencies and Informal Groups



Source: Plataforma CIPÓ, based on information provided by the UNFCCC.

63. The Environmental NGO (ENGO) Constituency is the largest Constituency when it comes to number of members, with it being split into two different groups: the Climate Action Network (CAN) and the Demand Climate Justice (DCJ).

In light of the role of parliamentarians in overseeing Executive Branch activities and promoting domestic compliance with climate agreements, GLOBE has consistently advocated for the establishment of an official parliamentarians' Constituency under the UNFCCC in recent years. The creation of such a Constituency would facilitate formal and structured parliamentary engagement with the UNFCCC Secretariat, member states, and COP presidencies, including with regard to negotiation agenda topics. Furthermore, establishing a Constituency would ensure that legislators can obtain accreditation to participate in COPs independently, without having to rely on the Executive Branch for access.

In interviews conducted by Plataforma CIPÓ, representatives from GLOBE and Rede Mandatos-C⁶⁴ highlighted a lack of adequate spaces for parliamentary participation in climate negotiations. Some interviewees noted that the establishment of an official Constituency

would enhance parliamentarians' ability to align domestic legislation with the legally binding commitments negotiated at COPs. Further emphasizing this point, several interviewed Brazilian parliamentarians stressed the unique opportunity COPs provide for exchanging best practices on climate action with their counterparts from different countries. They noted that this experience helps foster strategies to effectively integrate international decisions made by the Executive Branch into national debates, while also promoting broader societal engagement⁶⁵. Other interviewees, however, expressed the view that Brazilian parliamentarians' participation in COPs should align with Brazil's official delegation positions, which requires thorough preparation and robust familiarity with the negotiation agenda. This would enable legislators to effectively monitor and scrutinize the Executive Branch's implementation of climate commitments taken on by Brazil at the international level⁶⁶.

64. The Rede Mandatos-C is an alliance of Legislative Branch leaders who are dedicated to strengthening climate policies across Brazil. Envisioned and undertaken by the election-focused Instituto Clima de Eleição, it is a cross-party network comprising federal, state, and municipal parliamentarians.

65. Interviews granted to Plataforma CIPÓ in March 2024.

66. The subject is also addressed in: Westminster Foundation for Democracy. *Parliaments and the Paris Agreement: Strengthening parliamentary engagement in the development and implementation of international climate commitments. An overview of emerging global experience.* London, 2021,, https://www.parlAmericas.org/uploads/documents/Global_Parliaments_and_the_Paris_Agreement_ENG.pdf.

3.3 BRICS

Consisting initially of Brazil, Russia, India, and China, BRICS is a political coordination group that brings together the world's largest emerging economies. Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the aforementioned countries united for the first time, albeit in a non-official manner, in 2006, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week. In 2009, in the wake of the global financial crisis, the inaugural BRICS Summit of Heads of State and Government was held in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg⁶⁷. Since then, the bloc has undergone two expansions: the first one took place in 2001, when South Africa joined the group, whereas the second happened in 2023, with the announcement that six new members would also compose the group: Argentina⁶⁸, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Dialogue between BRICS members occurs around three core pillars: i) political and security cooperation; ii) financial and economic cooperation; and iii) cultural and

personal cooperation. Some of the group's main expectations include the following: promoting a multipolar⁶⁹ international order and reforming global governance, including organizations comprising the UN System and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) – such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund –, to enable developing countries to have a stronger voice and more equitable representation⁷⁰.

In their efforts to reform the international financial architecture and reshape global governance, BRICS leaders announced the New Development Bank (NDB) during the IV BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil, in 2014. Established to address the financing constraints faced by Global South countries, the “BRICS Bank” aims to fund projects in the fields of sustainable development and infrastructure, benefiting both its founding member states and other emerging and developing economies⁷¹. Simultaneously, the group agreed to create the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA),

67. “A história do BRICS” (“The history of BRICS”), <https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/agenda-internacional/missoes-internacionais/reuniao-do-brics-2023/historia-do-brics>.

68. While it was invited to become a member of BRICS in August 2023, during the XV BRICS Summit, in that same year Argentina officially announced its decision that it would not join the group.

69. The defining trait of the multipolar international order is the existence of multiple centers of power, in other words, of countries occupying leading positions in the international system. Based on this viewpoint, BRICS would come forward as a political platform capable of ramping up the leverage of its member states, and as a result, contribute to the emergence of a new, multipolar-centered order.

70. BRICS. *Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries Leaders*. (Russia, Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries Leaders 2009), <https://brics2021.gov.in/BRICSDocuments/2009/Yekaterinburg-Declaration-2009.pdf>.

71. New Development Bank. *NDB's General Strategy: 2017 - 2021*, 2017, <https://www.ndb.int/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/NDB-Strategy.pdf>.

a mechanism designed to assist countries experiencing balance of payments crises, thereby strengthening the global financial safety net⁷².

Even before the admission of new members, the bloc already included some of the world's largest GHG emitters. Nonetheless, its members, primarily developing nations, often bear the brunt of the long-standing GHG emissions from industrialized countries. Consequently, BRICS Leaders' Declarations frequently emphasize that the Paris Agreement should be implemented in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC)⁷³, advocating that industrialized nations take the lead in reducing emissions while providing financial and technological support to Global South countries.

The bloc has also been advancing initiatives in the fields of climate change and sustainability⁷⁴, such as the Energy Research Cooperation Platform (ERCP BRICS)⁷⁵, established in 2018 to foster cooperation in research and development for renewable energy, as well as the BRICS Action Plan for Energy Cooperation⁷⁶. Meanwhile, NDB is making its own contributions, with a 2022-2026 strategy aimed at allocating 40% of its financial contributions to projects focused on climate mitigation and adaptation⁷⁷.

Similar to the G20, the BRICS agenda includes forums that engages different segments of society, the so-called "people to people mechanisms"⁷⁸, which constitute the third pillar of cooperation among its member states. Notable among these is the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, a platform dedicated to bringing together representatives from

72. BRICS. *Fortaleza Declaration*. (Brazil, IV BRICS Summit, 2014), https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/canais_atendimento/imprensa/notas-a-imprensa/vi-cupula-brics-declaracao-de-fortaleza-15-de-julho-de-2014#:~:text=Acreditamos%20que%20o%20BRICS%20%C3%A9,mundo%20est%C3%A1vel%2C%20pac%C3%ADfico%20e%20pr%C3%B3spero.

73. BRICS. *Johannesburg II Declaration*. (South Africa, XV BRICS Summit, 2023), <http://brics2023.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Jhb-II-Declaration-24-August-2023-1.pdf>.

74. For an assessment of BRICS activities within the climate agenda, see: Folly, Maiara; Castilho, Alessandra; Closs, Marília. "Os BRICS podem (e devem) fazer mais pela agenda climática global". Carta Capital, Aug. 24, 2023, <https://www.cartacapital.com.br/opiniao/os-brics-podem-e-devem-fazer-mais-pela-agenda-climatica-global/>.

75. BRICS. *Terms of Reference for the BRICS Energy Research Cooperation Platform*, 2018, <https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/arquivos/document-0-4212313567488658.pdf>.

76. BRICS. *Road Map for BRICS Energy Cooperation up to 2025*, 2020, <https://antigo.mme.gov.br/documents/1151369/0/Road+Map+para+a+cooperacao+em+energia+no+BRICS.pdf/d49769de-4368-1969-1500-d40db012af0c>.

77. New Development Bank. *New Development Bank General strategy for 2022-2026: scaling up development finance for a sustainable future*, 2019, <https://www.ndb.int/about-ndb/general-strategy/>.

78. The "People to people mechanisms" makes up BRICS' third pillar, which applies to cultural and personal cooperation. Key initiatives within these frameworks include the BRICS Parliamentary Forum; BRICS Academic Forum and BRICS Think Tanks Council; BRICS Women's Entrepreneurship Forum; BRICS Young Scientist Forum; BRICS Civil Forum; BRICS Business Forum; and BRICS Business Council, in addition to the BRICS Film Festival and BRICS Games. To learn more, please access: <https://brics2021.gov.in/index#intro>.

the parliaments of member states. This topic will be explored in greater detail in the next subsection.

3.3.1 The BRICS Parliamentary Forum

Born from a shared desire to enhance cooperation and exchange experiences among parliamentarians, the BRICS Parliamentary Forum seeks to strengthen ties between Legislative Branch representatives from its member states. In doing so, it aims to reinforce dialogue in the political, legal, economic, and humanitarian realms,

while also working to harmonize national legislative systems⁷⁹. The forum also fosters consultations among parliamentarians, with the purpose of coordinating actions and aligning common positions, particularly on the sidelines of meetings held by interparliamentary organizations⁸⁰.

Ever since its establishment in 2015, the BRICS Parliamentary Forum convenes on an annual basis⁸¹, whether in cities of countries presiding over the bloc⁸², or on the sidelines of IPU assemblies, as displayed in table 2, below:









79. BRICS Parliamentary Forum. *Statement of the BRICS First Parliamentary Forum*. (Russia, *BRICS First Parliamentary Forum*, 2015), <http://en.brics2015.ru/documents/>.

80. BRICS. *Ufa Declaration*. (Russia, VII BRICS Summit, 2015), http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/150709-ufa-declaration_en.html.

81. In 2016, 2017, and 2020 two extraordinary Forum meetings were held in light of thematic gatherings such as the BRICS Women Parliamentarians' Forum and BRICS Young Parliamentarians' Forum.

82. The Forum meetings are not always held in the same country presiding over the bloc. As Table 3 illustrates, specific editions (2016, 2018, 2019, and 2021) took place on the sidelines of meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly in countries that do not comprise the bloc. Brazil has yet to hold an edition of the Parliamentary Forum, even though it has hosted the BRICS Summit in 2010, 2014, and 2019.











Table 2. BRICS Parliamentary Forum Editions (2015-2024)

<p>1st BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Moscow, Russia</p> <p> 2015</p>	<p>The importance of interparliamentary cooperation among BRICS countries and coordination of joint initiatives on peace and security; establishment of international institutions; and global governance reform⁸³.</p>
<p>1st BRICS Women Parliamentarians' Forum</p>	<p> Jaipur, India</p> <p> 2016</p>	<p>Enhancing the strategic partnership within all three sustainable development pillars: helping developing countries secure financing and gain access to technologies, as outlined in the UNFCCC; contributing to environmental preservation and enhancing food security; strengthening the involvement of women parliamentarians in helping to implement and monitor the SDGs⁸⁴.</p>
<p>2nd BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Geneva, Switzerland (on the eve of the 135th IPU Assembly)</p> <p> 2016</p>	<p><i>Information not available in public domain sources.</i></p>
<p>3rd BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Saint Petersburg, Russia</p> <p> 2017</p>	<p>Fostering cooperation among BRICS country legislators.</p>



83. BRICS Parliamentary Forum. *Statement of the BRICS First Parliamentary Forum*. (Russia, BRICS First Parliamentary Forum, 2015), <http://en.brics2015.ru/documents/>.









84. BRICS Parliamentary Forum. *Jaipur Declaration*. (India, Meeting of the BRICS Women Parliamentarians' Forum, 2016), <http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/160821-parliamentarians.html>.

<p>1st BRICS Young Parliamentarians' Forum</p>	<p> Saint Petersburg, Russia</p> <p> 2017</p>	<p>Strengthening youth engagement in parliamentary diplomacy through the establishment of the International Youth Parliamentarian Association (IYPA); promoting global governance of cyberspace with the participation of young professionals; protecting personal data; encouraging the use of technologies such as blockchain; fostering sharing economy and sustainable consumption principles⁸⁵.</p>
<p>4th BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Geneva, Switzerland (on the eve of the 139th IPU Assembly)</p> <p> 2018</p>	<p>Fostering exchanges among BRICS parliamentarians, including women parliamentarians.</p>
<p>5th BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Belgrade, Serbia (on the eve of the 141st IPU Assembly)</p> <p> 2019</p>	<p>Cooperation among BRICS countries in the field of health.</p>
<p>6th BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Online (under Russia's presidency)</p> <p> 2020</p>	<p>Promoting global stability, security, and innovative growth.</p>
<p>2nd BRICS Young Parliamentarians' Forum</p>	<p> Saint Petersburg, Russia</p> <p> 2020</p>	<p>Enhancing global security and advancing progress in the field of digital development; regulating the digital economy and ensuring digital sovereignty; fostering youth entrepreneurship and harmonization of education among BRICS countries, in addition to constituting dialogue spaces for young parliamentarians⁸⁶.</p>



85. Young Parliamentarians Forum of the BRICS Countries. *First Young Parliamentarians Forum of The BRICS Countries Action Plan*. (Russia, 1st Young Parliamentarians Forum Of The BRICS, 2017), https://southafrica.fes.de/fileadmin/user_upload/YPFBRICS_Action_Plan.pdf.

86. The final document of the 2nd BRICS Young Parliamentarians' Forum is not available in public sources. However, in 2020 Russia's acting presidency of the BRICS disclosed a note with the meeting's activities, which can be accessed at: <https://eng.brics-russia2020.ru/news/20200306/298540/Deputies-MPs-take-part-in-BRICS-Young-Parliamentarians-Forum-.html>.

<p>7th BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Madrid, Spain (on the eve of the 143rd IPU Assembly)</p> <p> 2021</p>	<p>Inclusive and equitable post-pandemic economic recovery.</p>
<p>8th BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Online (under China's presidency)</p> <p> 2022</p>	<p>Fostering exchanges among legislative bodies of BRICS countries; promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</p>
<p>9th BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Johannesburg, South Africa</p> <p> 2023</p>	<p>Implementing the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs; strengthening multilateralism; the role of parliamentary diplomacy in promoting peace, a fairer international order, sustainable development, and inclusive growth; boosting South-South cooperation⁸⁷.</p>
<p>10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum</p>	<p> Saint Petersburg, Russia</p> <p> 2024</p>	<p>Enhancing global governance through an increasingly representative multilateral system; enhancing inter-parliamentary dialogue; promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms; the importance of energy security and promotion of energy transitions, in accordance with national conditions⁸⁸.</p>

Source: Plataforma CIPÓ, based on official BRICS Parliamentary Forum documents.

87. BRICS Parliamentary Forum. *Joint Declaration Statement*. (South Africa, 9th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, 2023), https://bricspf.parliament.gov.za/storage/app/media/documents/9th_BRICS_PF_Joint_Declaration_Statement.pdf.

88. BRICS Parliamentary Forum. *Joint Declaration*. (Russia, 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, 2024), <http://council.gov.ru/en/activity/docs/en/158744/>.

At the 9th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding⁸⁹ (MOU) was issued, formalizing inter-parliamentary cooperation among BRICS member states. The document outlines key objectives for the Forum, including the development of an unified cooperation strategy among legislative bodies and the coordination of efforts to help strengthen inter-parliamentary relations on issues of mutual interests. In 2024, during the 10th Parliamentary Forum held in Saint Petersburg, Russia, a protocol was drafted establishing organizational guidelines for BRICS Parliamentary Forum meetings and deliberations⁹⁰.

The rules for participating in BRICS Parliamentary Forums adhere to a well-defined process managed by its member states and the forum itself. This typically involves formal invitations submitted by government representatives to members of relevant parliamentary commissions, such as those related to foreign affairs, though participation may also extend to other events, such as BRICS ministerial meetings. In 2024, during the 10th edition of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, Brazil was represented by its 1st Vice President of the Federal Senate, Senator Veneziano Vital do Rêgo (MDB-PB).

More broadly, participation in the BRICS Parliamentary Forum is facilitated through invitations issued by the presidents of the host country's parliaments to their counterparts in other member states. These, in turn, have the discretion to form a parliamentary delegation to attend the forum. Therefore, there is a noticeable lack of objective criteria for determining the composition of delegations to attend these discussions. Within the Brazilian National Congress, in addition to the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Commissions (CREDN and CRE), BRICS-related matters are addressed by the BRICS Parliamentary Front⁹¹, which includes both federal deputies and senators, as well as by the BRICS Parliamentary Group⁹², limited to senators. Both mechanisms share the common purpose of monitoring legislations, conducting public actions, and other official activity related to Brazil's involvement in the BRICS. They also organize public hearings, workshops, and other events on subjects of interest to the group; promote exchanges with parliamentary counterparts from BRICS countries; and track congressional proceedings related to BRICS-relevant issues.

89. BRICS Parliamentary Forum. *Memorandum of Understanding on the BRICS Parliamentary Forum*. (South Africa, 9th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, 2023), <https://bricspf.parliament.gov.za/documents-outcomes>.

90. BRICS Parliamentary Forum. *Protocol to the Memorandum of Understanding*. (Russia, 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, 2024), https://brics-russia2024.content.rcmedia.ru/upload/docs/2024-07-12-11-Protocol_to_the_Memorandum_of_Understanding_on_the_10th_BRICS_Parliamentary_Forum.pdf.

91. "Frentes Parlamentares" ("Parliamentary Fronts"), House of Representatives, <https://www.camara.leg.br/internet/deputado/frenteDetalhe.asp?id=54310>.

92. "Grupo Parlamentar de Relacionamento com o BRICS" ("BRICS Parliamentary Group"). Federal Senate, <https://www25.senado.leg.br/web/atividade/conselhos/-/conselho/gp-brics-sf>.

4. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BRAZILIAN PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

Both the academic literature and interviews conducted for this policy brief highlight parliamentary engagement in multilateral forums as an opportunity to increase legislators' awareness of the complexity and urgency of global challenges and needs, including climate change mitigation, energy transition and promotion of sustainable development. By gaining a deeper understanding of these discussions, parliamentarians can foster more informed domestic dialogues, creating a conducive environment for the swift ratification of international agreements and the development of new legislation aligned with global goals. A notable example is the approval of South Africa's "Climate Change Act"⁹³ following the participation of one of its parliamentarians at COP28 in Dubai⁹⁴.

Interviewees additionally stressed the potential of parliamentary diplomacy to elevate domestic issues to the international stage, providing greater visibility to local needs and challenges

within multilateral spaces. Accordingly, parliamentary diplomacy reinforces the role parliamentarians play in generating awareness of the processes and negotiations they are engaged in – including those of an international nature – among their respective electorate and constituencies.

Moreover, the interviews emphasized multilateral forums as valuable spaces for exchanging information on successful climate legislation from certain countries, which could be adapted and applied in others. Another notable example is the creation of the East African Legislative Assembly Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change (EALA), which was established following the participation of a female representative of the East African Regional Parliament – comprising seven African countries – at COP28. This Forum has since organized capacity-building initiatives aimed at enhancing local legislators' knowledge of climate change-related legislation⁹⁵.

93. "President Cyril Ramaphosa assents to Climate Change Bill", South African Government, <https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements/president-cyril-ramaphosa-assents-climate-change-bill-23-jul-2024#:~:text=President%20Cyril%20Ramaphosa%20has%20signed,the%20global%20climate%20change%20response>.

94. "I attended COP28: this is what I did next Hon. Cedric Frolick MP", GLOBE Legislators, <https://globelegislators.org/i-attended-cop28-this-is-what-i-did-next-hon-cedric-frolick-mp/>.

95. "I attended COP28: this is what I did next Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza MP", GLOBE Legislators, <https://globelegislators.org/i-attended-cop28-this-is-what-i-did-next-hon-francoise-uwumukiza-mp/>.

However, the interviewees also identified several institutional, bureaucratic, technical, language, and budgetary barriers that hinder parliamentarians' engagement in international agendas. These challenges include restrictions on participation, a common issue for the P20, where involvement is typically limited to the presidencies of legislative houses—except for the notable P20 Women Parliamentarians Forum held during Brazil's G20 presidency. Similarly, the BRICS Parliamentary Forum operates primarily through invitations extended to members of specific parliamentary commissions, further constraining participation. In contrast, climate COPs are generally more open, even though, as previously mentioned, the lack of a Formal Constituency for parliamentarians often hinder legislators' participation in official negotiation agendas and spaces. This results in fragmented parliamentary involvement at COPs, which can sometimes be limited to participation in side-events in country-specific pavilions.

This fragmented participation in multilateral forums by Brazilian parliamentarians can also be partly attributed to the lack of a cohesive national parliamentary diplomacy strategy, which exacerbates many of the recognized challenges outlined in this policy brief. One aspect stressed in the interviews is the lack of planning, which often results in approvals for parliamentary trips and missions being granted only a

few days before the international events. This not only drives up logistical costs but also hampers parliamentarians' ability to prepare effectively in advance. Such preparation is essential for transforming parliamentary participation in these forums into tangible benefits for society, including the development of legislative proposals aligned with international commitments and the creation of mechanisms to effectively monitor the activities of the Executive Branch. Therefore, formulating a national strategy for parliamentary diplomacy that sets specific goals and includes a monitoring timeline would maximize the domestic advantages of international experiences. This approach would also optimize funds and improve budgeting transparency.

Additional limitations identified include language barriers that hinder the ability to follow debates, as translation services into Portuguese are often not available during multilateral negotiations. Other challenges mentioned involve financial constraints, along with pressing domestic needs and priorities associated with legislative terms, which frequently conflict with international discussions.

The table below outlines the opportunities and challenges associated with parliamentary diplomacy. Drawing from the identified gaps, the next section offers recommendations aimed at enhancing parliamentary diplomacy efforts in Brazil.

Figure 2. Parliamentary Diplomacy Opportunities and Challenges

OPPORTUNITIES



Elevating attention to domestic needs and priorities within international forums.



Spaces for dialogue and exchange of best practices among parliamentarians across different regions of the world.



Increase legislators' awareness of pressing global challenges.



Elevate the technical quality of domestic debates related to global concerns.



Increase local societies' awareness of international processes and negotiations.



Promote greater alignment between national legislation and international commitments.



Enhance the effective oversight of Executive Branch actions to ensure compliance with international commitments.

CHALLENGES



Lack of a cohesive national parliamentary diplomacy strategy.



National priorities and needs that take precedence over global issues.



Fragmented parliamentary participation, often limited to side-events in forums such as COPs.



Language barriers.



Restrictions on formal participation in platforms such as the P20 and BRICS Parliamentary Forum.



Delayed approval for trips and foreign missions increases logistics costs and undermines the technical preparation of parliamentarians.



Budget limitations that restrict involvement in international activities.

Source: Plataforma CIPÓ.

5. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognizing the opportunity to enhance Brazilian parliamentary diplomacy during the 2024-2025 biennium – when Brazil will preside over the G20, BRICS, and COP30 – this policy brief identified the challenges and opportunities for parliamentary diplomacy in both regional institutions like PARLASUR and PARLAMAZ, as well as global forums such as the G20, climate COPs, and BRICS. Among these, the climate COPs stand out as particularly accessible spaces for parliamentary engagement. On the other hand, the absence of an Official Parliamentary Constituency at COPs poses a challenge for more effective coordination among parliamentarians of different nations, in addition to hindering their ability

to monitor intergovernmental negotiations and promote the enforcement of agreed commitments. Under the G20 and BRICS frameworks, while institutionalized channels for parliamentary participation exist, such as the P20 and the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, access for legislators remains limited due to strict participation criteria set for each forum. These institutional challenges are compounded by various bureaucratic, technical, language, and budgetary barriers, as outlined in the previous section.

To enhance Brazil's parliamentary diplomacy and effectively address the existing challenges while capitalizing on available opportunities, the following measures are recommended:

1

To develop a national parliamentary diplomacy strategy to help guide and bolster parliamentary engagement in international forums, besides defining objective criteria for participating in such forums.

This strategy should outline clear objectives and specific targets for parliamentary diplomacy, identifying key thematic areas and priority forums for engagement. Additionally, it should include a comprehensive schedule, a budget forecast for implementation, and well-defined criteria for parliamentary participation in multilateral forums. By addressing these aspects, the strategy will enhance predictability, reduce logistical expenses, increase transparency, and enable parliamentarians to adequately prepare for events, ultimately maximizing the effectiveness of international missions.

The development of this strategy should be inclusive, engaging not only parliamentarians from multiple parties and representatives from appropriate government bodies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Presidency's Secretariat of Institutional Affairs, but also members of civil society, academia, and international organizations.

2

To promote the capacity building of parliamentarians and their advisory staff in foreign policy matters through the following measures:

- **Technical training activities** targeting parliamentary advisory staffs and **public hearings** conducted in collaboration with key ministries and institutions – especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministério das Relações Exteriores – MRE) –, the House of Representatives' Center for Qualification and Training (Centro de Formação, Treinamento e Aperfeiçoamento da Câmara dos Deputados – CEFOR), as well as academic institutions and civil society organizations. The primary aim of these initiatives is to inform and enhance Brazilian parliamentarians' understanding of the strategic role of parliamentary diplomacy. This includes identifying key engagement opportunities, emphasizing the importance of international commitments undertaken by Brazil – particularly in the areas of climate change and sustainable development – and providing an overview of the current landscape of multilateral negotiations.
- **International thematic workshops within the National Congress** to connect Brazilian parliamentarians with their counterparts in other national and regional parliaments, as well as international parliamentary organizations. These initiatives would facilitate the identification of shared interests and challenges, fostering an exchange of experiences and best practices. Furthermore, these workshops would promote the adaptation and replication of successful legislation from other countries in Brazil, thereby strengthening collaborative efforts among parliamentarians.

3

To help expand and institutionalize channels for parliamentary engagement in multilateral forums, including the G20, climate COPs, and BRICS, as well as strengthen regional parliaments such as PARLAMAZ.

- **For the P20**, it is recommended that the P20 Women Parliamentarians Forum, which was established during Brazil's G20 presidency, be formalized as a permanent forum featuring preparatory online meetings and one annual in-person event.

- **Regarding climate COPs**, it is recommended that the Brazilian Executive and Legislative Branches help foster the formalization of a Parliamentary Constituency within the UNFCCC. This measure would facilitate the exchange of experiences among legislators from different countries and strengthen parliamentary engagement in the official negotiation agenda of the Convention.
- To contribute to these efforts, **this policy brief recommends that the Brazilian presidency of COP30 appoint a Parliamentary Envoy⁹⁶** with the following attributions: i) to promote synergies between Brazilian Congress agendas and COP30 presidency goals; ii) to engage parliamentarians from other countries to champion and support the priorities of COP30; and iii) to collaborate with the UNFCCC Informal Parliamentary Group to elevate its status to that of an Official Constituency, thereby formalizing parliamentary engagement in UNFCCC processes.
- **With regards to PARLAMAZ, it is recommended to advance its institutionalization and inclusion in the ACTO framework to create a more official and permanent space for deliberations among legislators from Amazonian countries.** This would ensure more regular parliamentary sessions, provide adequate facilities for deliberations, enhance PARLAMAZ's institutional memory, and increase transparency regarding its composition and scope of activities.

Overall, Brazilian parliamentarians are encouraged to strengthen their efforts in monitoring the international commitments undertaken by the Executive Branch, including those related to the G20, climate COPs, and BRICS. Additionally, they should strive to align these commitments with proposed bills and deliberations in the National Congress.

96. The role of Special Envoy or Thematic Champion already exists within climate COPs. In 2022, the Egyptian presidency appointed the first female Youth Envoy, Dr. Omnia El Omrani, with the purpose of fostering youth engagement for preparatory processes ahead of COP27. The following year, the COP28 Presidency nominated Shamma Al Mazrui to fulfill the duty of the first Youth Climate Champion. After acknowledging the importance of the position, the remaining member states decided to make the role of Youth Climate Champion official, which must be appointed by the current COP Presidency for purposes of fostering youth participation in UNFCCC processes. Brazil should follow suit and consider appointing a Special Parliamentary Envoy or COP30 Parliamentary Champion, aimed at expanding parliamentary engagement in climate-related discussions.

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ABOUT PLATAFORMA CIPÓ

Plataforma CIPÓ is an independent, non-profit, women-led Brazil-based think tank dedicated to international cooperation to promote climate action and sustainable development, from Latin American and Global South perspectives. CIPÓ develops evidence-based research and promotes dialogue and coordination between multiple actors to influence public policies, connecting the local to the global.

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