

SCENARIOS

India's G20 gives birth to post-Western world

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The G20 summit held in New Delhi on 9 and 10 September marked a very important transition in the world's political and economic balances. A symbolic shift, embodied by the protagonism of the host country - India, which has recently become the world's most populous nation and is currently the world's fastest rising economic power - and its leader, Prime Minister Narendra Modi. But it is also factual, in that its conclusions,

added to other political-diplomatic events of recent months, sanction the weight now acquired by what is called the 'Global South' in the great game of powers.

Western politicians and commentators have for the most part offered an interpretation of the summit as one of continuity, perhaps seeking to emphasise US protagonism (expressed in agreements such as that on the transport 'corridor' between South Asia, the Middle East, Europe and America stipulated by Biden with India and Saudi Arabia) and a relative marginalisation of China's weight, accentuated by the economic crisis currently underway in the Asian giant. But at a careful glance, and less conditioned by official propaganda, it appears clear that all the main elements that emerged from this G20 converge to create the scenario of a world in which the West can less and less dictate rules and conditions, and is increasingly forced to negotiate with countries that do not accept its 'protection', manifest total autonomy, and pursue their own interests without complexes, often forming a bloc among themselves.

First of all, the official entry of the African Union into the New Delhi Forum, obtained specifically at India's request, strongly emphasises this increased weight of the countries of the South in it, in a growing convergence between Africa and Asia. It should also be noted how, with regard to the 'green' agenda strongly sponsored by Europe and the United States, in the summit's final communiqué, although the usual formulas on the fight against climate change and the goal of 'decarbonisation' appear, no stringent targets are set, and there is a preference for emphasising the push for economic growth of the less wealthy countries and the promotion of alternatives such as bio-fuels. On the Russian-Ukrainian war, moreover, as is well known, a laborious compromise was reached, translated into a generic condemnation of aggression and territorial takeovers by military means, from which, however, any explicit negative reference to Russia was excluded, unlike at the G20 in Bali in 2022.

Finally, if we look at the infrastructural agreement launched by the United States with Saudi Arabia, we can see how it certainly constitutes an attempt by the Biden administration to detach the Islamic country from its proximity to Moscow - recently realised in the common decision to keep crude oil production low by increasing its cost, within OPEC, and to create an alternative to Beijing's 'New Silk Road', but above all, it marks a 180 degree turn from Biden's initial ostracism towards the regime led by Mohammed Bin Salman. Who in the meantime, in addition to opening up to Putin, has mended relations with Iran, his historical antagonist, and officially requested and obtained BRICS membership at the last meeting of that forum, held last August in Johannesburg in a climate of growing competition with the G7.

The overall picture drawn by all these elements is very clear: we have entered the post-Western world, which is beginning to take a definite shape also from an institutional point of view, and it is necessary for the West to come to terms with this fact if it wants to effectively safeguard its founding principles and geopolitical interests.

The post-Western world is not a world in which the relevance of the West must be considered archived: although having lost, compared to a few decades ago, significant shares of world GDP and being faced with respectable competitors, China and India in the lead, the NATO, G7 and EU countries maintain a leadership position in many essential fields of production, technological research and armaments. But they can no longer represent the reality of international relations as if they had stopped at the period immediately following the end of the Cold War, and as if the shocking changes triggered by globalisation had never happened. They can no longer expect to impose their economic and political agenda on a rest of the planet that is no longer willing to conform to their standards in order to be accepted in their 'club', but instead has the means to effectively exert its influence in various ways.

The twentieth-century era of blocs and ideological fences is definitively over, leaving the field to more jagged contrasts and convergences, beneath which the solid and enduring faults of civilisations and cultures must be considered. Categories such as the one, much overused today in the Western ruling classes, of the antithesis between democracies and 'autocracies' are therefore no longer useful for understanding the current world political balances, but may even be misleading: vague categories incapable of grasping the complexities of the coexistence of irremediably heterogeneous political-institutional and cultural models.

Trials of strength and tugs-of-war to affirm the US-led West as the planetary 'watchdog', as was the case with the policies promoted by the Bush Jr administration in

the early years of the 21st century, are now unfeasible. Instead, the West, if it wants to maintain its centrality, must develop strategies appropriate to the new historical phase, hingeing on intelligent military deterrence, realism, and the ability to weave broad, plural, and stable international alliances. At the same time, it must take care to continue to ensure political-economic pluralism and the hope of growing prosperity first and foremost within its own countries, seeking in this way to make them still appear, concretely and not ideologically, as attractive models even for those areas of the world that have arrived at modernisation processes from different cultural roots.