

# Africa takes lead on business agenda

Worlds of business and policy converge in Johannesburg as Africa seeks to set global agenda, writes **Cas Coovadia**

**A**s the global business community turns its gaze to Johannesburg this November, Cas Coovadia, Sherpa of the B20 South Africa, is leading the charge to deliver what he calls “a landmark in global cooperation”.

Coovadia shared insights into the upcoming B20 summit, a first for Africa and the significance of South Africa’s leadership in the G20 and B20 cycle.

“This is not just another summit,” Coovadia says.

“This is the culmination of a year of global dialogue, advocacy and consensus-building. It is Africa’s moment to lead, not just participate, in shaping global economic priorities.”

From November 18 to 20, the Sandton Convention Centre will host the B20 South Africa Summit, bringing together business leaders, policymakers, multilateral organisations and civil society from across the G20 and beyond. The event is expected to draw hundreds of in-person and virtual participants, including top-tier media, youth representatives and SMEs.

Coovadia promises a dynamic and diverse lineup of speakers.

“We are convening voices from across sectors and borders – business leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs – to co-create solutions that work for everyone. The B20 is where business meets policy and where Africa meets the world.”

**Our goal is to leave behind more than headlines. We want frameworks, partnerships and measurable progress**

B20: Industrial growth imperative 



Cas Coovadia says a key focus of the summit is advocacy with his team working to build alignment on 30 recommendations developed through the B20 task forces.

## Leading role

The summit’s theme, Led from Africa. Shared with the World, is more than a slogan. It is a strategic positioning of the continent as a central player in shaping inclusive and sustainable global growth.

“Africa is not on the sidelines of development,” Coovadia says. “We are the engine room of innovation, resilience and inclusive opportunity.”

A key focus leading up to the summit is the advocacy phase, which continues in earnest. Coovadia and his team are working to build alignment and accountability around 30 recommendations developed through the B20 task forces.

These proposals span digital transformation, trade, energy, sustainability and inclusive finance, and are designed to resonate with G20 leaders.

“We are not just here to talk,” Coovadia says. “We want to build a legacy. The initiatives this B20 presidency intends to launch will shape business and policy for years to come. Our goal is to leave behind more than headlines. We want frameworks, partnerships and measurable progress.”

## US engagement

“As South Africa prepares to hand over the B20 presidency, we welcome the strong commitment and participation of the US Chamber of Commerce,” he says.

“Their engagement at our summit signals a shared determination to build on the priorities championed under B20 South Africa and ensure a smooth transition as

the G20 presidency moves to the US from December 1.”

“This will be a globally resonant platform,” Coovadia says.

“We have designed a seamless, high-impact multimedia experience that amplifies key messages, activates influential spokespeople and strengthens South Africa’s global reputation.”

For South African business, the summit is a showcase of capability and opportunity. It is a chance to highlight innovation, attract investment and position the country – and the continent – as a hub for sustainable growth.

“We are connecting Johannesburg to the G20 and Africa to the global economy,” Coovadia says.

He was quick to acknowledge the role of sponsors and partners in making the summit possible. “Their support has been instrumental. Together we are creating a platform for bold ideas, global collaboration and lasting impact.”

With registration still open, Coovadia encourages stakeholders across sectors to participate.

“Whether you are joining us in person or online, this is your opportunity to be part of a conversation that will define the future of global business and policy.”

As the world prepares to gather in Johannesburg, one thing is clear: Africa is not just hosting the conversation.

It’s leading it.

Coovadia is B20 Sherpa and the outgoing CEO of Business Unity South Africa

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