T20 Presidency Officially Passes to Indonesia; COVID-19 Recovery Effort Remained the Main Focus for Global Leaders

JAKARTA, 30 NOVEMBER 2021. As the Italian G20 presidency passes the torch to the Indonesian presidency, the leading think tanks worldwide will come together under the Think 20 (T20). A handover event was held on 30 November 2021 by the T20 Italy 2021 Secretariat (ISPI) and T20 Indonesia 2022 Secretariat (CSIS Indonesia and LPEM FEB UI) to symbolize the occasion.

The handover event, titled “From Italy to Indonesia: T20 Contribution to G20 Recovery Initiatives”, tried to discuss key points, such as lessons learned from past T20 presidencies, challenges and priorities ahead of the Indonesian presidency, and expectations to be made in another crucial year for multilateralism. These key points tried to keep in line with the theme of the G20 2022 presidency: “Recover Together, Recover Stronger”.

The handover event invited prominent speakers such as Bambang P.S. Brodjonegoro (Former Minister of Finance and Minister of National Development Planning, Indonesia) and Djisman Simandjuntak (Board Director of CSIS Indonesia), both serving as the Lead Co-Chairs of the T20 Indonesia, Paolo Magri (Chair of the T20 Italy), Fahad M. Alturki (Chair of the T20 Saudi Arabia), Raden Edi Prio Pambudi (Coordinating Ministry of Economic Affairs, Indonesia), serving as Co-Sherpa of the G20 Indonesia, and also Yose Rizal Damuri (Head of Economics Department, CSIS Indonesia) and Riau Mariatul Qibthiyah (Director of LPEM FEB UI), both also serving as Executive Co-Chairs of the T20 Indonesia.

Think-tanks’ Contribution Becoming More Important Despite Challenges in Voicing Messages

Fahad opened the conversation by sharing the insights from the T20 Saudi Arabia’s presidency experience. He emphasized that the global think tanks’ ability to produce timely research and evidence-based policy recommendation for the G20 leaders has become more relevant in the upcoming days as countries worldwide are finding the best way possible to recover from the pandemic. Furthermore, Paolo added that consistent concerted actions with G20 agendas and well-prepared collaboration among global think-tanks have helped resonate critical messages to the G20 leaders. Some of the accomplishments have been reflected in the worldwide health, debt suspension efforts, and climate finance commitment, which Paolo argued have aligned with T20 recommendations. However, Paolo further admitted that expected results have remained limited despite such positive commitments. He first emphasized that having think tanks’ voices heard and considered seriously by the G20 leaders posed a significant challenge that previous T20 presidencies had experienced. Series of global forums hosted by leading think tanks in pooling billions of global audiences put on a good foundation to raise global issues for the leaders. He wished that T20 Indonesia will carry on the effort in pushing the G20 leaders to fully implement the commitments.
Looking for Alternative Ways in Pushing Economic Recovery

The discussion continued to the main event where Bambang P. S. Brodjonegoro and Djisman Simandjuntak shared their insights and visions about Indonesia’s presidency in the roundtable session, moderated by Antonio Villafranca (Director of Research, ISPI). The session highlighted some key discussions, including the most pressing issues in economic recovery and relevant agendas that need to be considered for long-run development. In responding to this topic, Djisman stated that the prolonged economic struggle that many people have endured due to the COVID-19 pandemic had put recovery effort as the main agenda that needs to be taken by global leaders. However, Djisman noticed that government bodies worldwide have limited ways to achieve optimum economic recovery. This is since conventional instruments that leaders have been relying on for the past two years have stumbled to tackle several emerging socio-economic issues, such as rising inflation and a lack of investment in green energies. Djisman, therefore, envisions that the T20 should provide suitable policy recommendations that are modified for each G20 country but remain synergized within each other.

Aligning Recovery Efforts with Other G20 Agendas and Other Global Priorities

Bambang continued by sharing his perspective about the G20 event as agenda-setting for global leaders. In the past, Bambang emphasized that G20 has become a platform that bridges both advanced and developing economies in ensuring stability in the global financial system in response to the aftermath of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. This time, Bambang argued that the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in an economic crisis, has made the G20 event a crisis response forum. At the same time, Bambang also emphasized the need to make the G20 event an agenda-setting forum that helps deliver global issues that evolve before the pandemic. Bambang stated that climate change, digital transformation, and international collaboration in taxation were some examples of these agendas and have also been incorporated into the T20 agenda for 2022. He also emphasized that align with these agendas, global leaders worldwide also have other goals such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), where countries are obliged to achieve tangible goals by 2030. With these challenges, Bambang argued that global leaders should find ways to ensure such agenda-setting should also be aligned with other mutually agreed goals in other international forums.

Delivering Concrete, Feasible, and Actionable Proposals to G20 Leaders

Raden Edi Prio Pambudi shared his closing remarks by elaborating on the G20 Indonesian presidency’s key areas, which are: (i) global health architecture, (ii) digital and economic transformation, and (iii) energy transition. Edi emphasized that the Indonesian presidency of G20 aims to bring collective and concrete actions in these key areas to support recovery. To achieve it, Raden Edi argued that strong collaboration of scientists is essential to transform the vision into tangible goals. The role of think tanks, represented by T20 engagement groups for G20, may contribute to a fruitful discussion in health, economy, climate issues,
and many other issues. Think tanks have previously helped produce studies, strengthen research and development, and analyze potentials in specific sectors that respond to future global needs. With such great relevance, Raden Edi hopes that the think-tank contribution would bring greater prosperity that could be inherited to future generations by sharing concrete, feasible, and actionable proposals.

**Invitation to Submit Ideas through Policy Brief Deliverables**

Yose Rizal Damuri and Riatu Mariatul Qibthiyyah closed the event by announcing the call for policy brief abstract. Yose stated that Indonesia’s presidency’s role in promoting recovery efforts would be strategic as it bridges various interests and concerns shared by countries of G20 members that represent large parts of communities around the world. Yose argued that, as an idea bank, T20 should enable a supportive platform that allows the exchange of ideas among researchers and scholars around the world relevant to agendas discussed in the G20 forums. Such a platform should promote discussions and provide evidence-based recommendations, which would later be recommended to G20 leaders in 2022.

Riatu added that individuals, global think-tanks, and regional and multilateral organizations interested in sharing their ideas should access the [info.t20indonesia.org](http://info.t20indonesia.org) web page to learn more about the mechanism for call for policy brief abstract. She emphasized that ideas submitted through the T20 Call for Policy Brief Abstract would be transformed into research-based actions that will be later shared with the G20 leaders that help mitigate further economic and financial setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen international collaboration for enforcing sustainable development.

*For full coverage of the event, please watch our recorded live stream on our Youtube Channel: https://youtu.be/pSGkboFOgLQ*