



A future together

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(Mains GS2: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests & Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.)

Context:

- 2021 is a crucial year for the international community, as it tackles the COVID-19 challenge with effective vaccination campaigns that will need to mix national health security and international solidarity.
- Furthermore, all countries will have to lay the foundations for a sustainable, and just social and economic recovery through international cooperation.
- At this particular juncture, Italy will play a very significant role, as the country will be at the forefront of several processes of global governance.

Italy leads global governance:

- Since December 1, 2020, Italy has held the G20 presidency, which will reach its climax with the Rome Leaders' Summit in October 2021.
- Putting health at the top of its priorities, Italy will also host the paramount Global Health Summit on May 21.
- In addition, throughout the year, Italy will also be co-chairing the COP26 with the United Kingdom and will host a Youth Summit and the Pre-COP meeting in Milan in the run up to the Glasgow COP26 summit in November.
- These global appointments not only represent important moments for Italy's international standing, but are also challenging in these unprecedented times.
- When Italy took over the presidency of the G20, the world was in the midst of the worst pandemic in recent history and probably the most severe economic crisis since 1929.

Italy and G20:

- In the difficult context of pandemic, Italy defined the priorities of its G20 presidency being aware that great challenges open new opportunities.
- With this in mind, the Italian Presidency of G20 crafted its priorities on three pillars: “People, planet and prosperity”.

People as priority:

- Italy’s priority is to eradicate poverty and tackle inequality and promote universal access to healthcare.
- A greater inclusiveness should be pursued by protecting the vulnerable and empowering women.
- Italy will work to increase policies that encourage their participation in the labour force and reduce the gender gap in terms of salary and managerial positions.
- Country also want to promote girls’ education and make sure that the progress achieved over the last decade does not vanish as a consequence of the pandemic.
- Italy is keen to not only work for the creation of new jobs, but also to enhance social protection and active labour policies to accelerate the re-inclusion of the unemployed in the workforce.

Planet given highest priority:

- As far as the “planet” is concerned, addressing climate change is a global challenge that cannot be delayed.
- The Italian presidency of G20 will focus on the reinforcement of national commitments under the Paris Agreement and push for the further implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs).
- Italy will also stress the importance of policies in the field of land degradation, biodiversity loss and urban environment, which are crucial components of a green transition.
- This entails reforestation projects and the identification of best practices in the management and renovation of buildings and infrastructure to improve energy efficiency and resilience.
- Italy also works to encourage the promotion of a new model for producing and consuming and to improve access to clean energy.

Prosperity as priority:

- To address “prosperity”, Italy aims at ensuring universal internet access, thus bridging the digital divide and making sure that the digital revolution — accelerated by the pandemic — will be a global revolution leaving no one behind.
- Country is studying how to exploit the potential of digitalisation to contribute to productivity and growth.

- These ambitious projects will be analysed and developed by detailed programmes of 15 working groups that are already meeting on a regular basis.

Italian collaboration with India:

- Italy's aim is to work closely with India on an economic recovery fully based on the principles of sustainability and respect for the environment.
- Italy established a strong partnership on energy transition, which is clearly stated in the Plan of Action adopted by two prime ministers (India and Italy) on November 6, 2020.
- Furthermore, many Italian companies are contributing to India's leap toward a greener economy.
- India and Italy are also keen in developing models that can help prevent — and also tackle — the health challenges that make our communities vulnerable.
- Both countries learnt in past years that health is a global public good, maybe the most important and crucial one for the well-being and proper functioning of our societies, and that's why it needs to be preserved by the entire international community. In this regard, both countries are developing around the possibility of boosting scientific research with projects that can help us further understand the evolution of pandemics and, perhaps, prevent future outbreaks.
- Finally, two countries bilateral cooperation has seen extraordinary improvements in the last few months, also thanks to the progressive digitalisation of our interactions.
- For example, Italy developed a very efficient permanent digital platform with help from Invest India, with whom Italian officials interact on a regular basis to tackle the issues and queries that Italian companies operating in India, especially SMEs, may have to encourage the flow of investments from and towards the two countries.

Conclusion:

- The increasing growth in India-Italy relationship in recent years was appreciated.
- Both countries agreed on regional and international issues and agreed to coordinate closely at multilateral fora especially G-20.
- India and Italy adopted the Action Plan for an enhanced Partnership (2020-2024) to set up priorities, strategic collaboration and mechanisms of a bilateral partnership.