

## **GLOBAL SUMMITS**

**Rosendo Fraga**

**Director of CARI's Foreign Relations and Armed Forces Committee**

The annual BRICS Summit will take place from June 20 to 24 virtually given the circumstances created by the war in Ukraine. The five countries that make up this group of emerging powers (Brazil, India, China, South Africa and Russia) have avoided condemning the latter in the votes of international organizations and forums, as a result of the war in Ukraine. This is also the attitude assumed by most of the regional powers of Asia, Africa and Latin America. For this reason, the group will surely show a neutrality favorable to Russia in the conflict. The formal agenda of the Summit will deal with promoting multilateralism, safeguarding fairness and justice in international affairs, improving global economic governance, working in solidarity to combat COVID-19, boosting global economic recovery, advancing cooperation efficient and practical, and accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The members of the so-called BRICS Plus will also participate in a session. It is made up of Argentina, Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Senegal and Thailand. In this group of countries, a position similar to that of the BRICS has prevailed with regard to the war in Ukraine. They have avoided voting against Russia and have not participated in economic sanctions.

On June 23 and 24, the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the 27 countries that make up the European Union takes place in Brussels, at a crucial moment in the war in Ukraine. It takes place on the 4<sup>th</sup> month of the Russian invasion. Unlike at the beginning of the war, differences are now evident within the EU. French President Emmanuel Macron has publicly stated that Russia should not be "humiliated" in the final phase of the conflict. For its part, Germany has maintained its resistance to stop supplying Russian gas, which Moscow has now decided to reduce. Both countries view with concern the prolongation of the war, which increases the continent's economic problems and creates a source of instability that could become chronic. In that regard, the countries that have been under communist rule (those of Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltics and the Balkans) maintain a more aggressive position against Russia, demanding greater solidarity with Ukraine. The acceptance of

the start of the process for Ukraine to become part of the European Union reflects these types of differences. The countries mentioned are in favor of accepting the start of this process, as a sign of political solidarity with Ukraine. For their part, France and Germany have argued that inclusion rules should not be ignored. The President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen from Germany, has specifically pointed out the problem created by the lack of effective anti-corruption regulations in Ukraine. It should be remembered that Russia is firmly opposed to the incorporation of that country into NATO, but not into the EU, as it stated in the frustrated negotiations carried out by Turkey for a meeting between Putin and Zelensky.

From June 26 to 28, the annual meeting of Heads of State and Government of the G7 (made up of the 7 largest economies in the world with a liberal-democratic system) will take place in Schloss Elmau, Germany. All the countries in the group are members of NATO, with the exception of Japan, a country that is part of the allies of the Western military alliance in Asia and is a solid strategic partner of the United States in the Indo-Pacific. The seven countries have condemned the Russian invasion and have voted against it in all international forums and organizations. But there are differences. On the one hand, the Anglo-Saxon group (the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada) maintains the position of continuing the war effort until Russia loses its offensive military power. For their part, the three countries that are members of the European Union (Germany, France and Italy) have shown a tendency to seek an eventual cessation of the war. Regarding the application of economic sanctions, they have had a common action, including Japan. The energy issue also shows differences. The seven Heads of Government, including Biden, will participate in the meeting. Despite this, the formal agenda of this Summit aims to achieve more equitable progress, discuss the effort for a more sustainable, economically more stable world, the priority for health, a better future and strengthen unity. Five countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America have been invited to the Summit: India, Indonesia, South Africa, Senegal and Argentina.

Finally, on June 29 and 30, the Annual Summit of NATO Heads of State and Government will take place. The leaders of the G7 participate in it, with the exception of Japan. The 30 countries of the Western military alliance are almost entirely members of the European Union. But three Anglo-Saxon actors that play a decisive role in the Ukraine conflict are not: the United States, the United

Kingdom and Canada. NATO, due to its composition, transforms the war in Ukraine from an intra-European conflict into an intra-Western one. The review of the war in Ukraine will be the central theme, as well as the future role of the Western military alliance in it. The central issue to be discussed will be the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the possible accession of Sweden and Finland to the defense alliance. Preventing this is a crucial point for Russia, because it would see its border with NATO extended by 1,300 kilometers through Finland. The Summit was preceded in June by military maneuvers by the member countries in the Baltic, where there are the two countries that aspire to join, abandoning their traditional neutrality, which in the Swedish case has been going on for more than two centuries, and in the case of Finland dates from World War II. The formal impediment is the one posed by Turkey, the only Muslim country in the alliance, which has most of its territory in Asia. The incorporation of new partners must be approved unanimously and the Turkish government opposes the incorporation of the two Nordic countries, arguing that they have in their territory leaders and militants of the Kurdish minority that Turkey considers terrorists. Sweden has taken some steps in the direction claimed by Erdogan, but it is not clear what will happen. It should be noted that, at the same time, Turkey plays a central role in the ongoing negotiation between Russia and Ukraine to agree on a corridor that allows the maritime exit through the Black Sea of the grain production of Ukraine and Russia, which they export accounting for 30 % of the world's wheat production. The non-NATO countries that are supporting its military effort and meet monthly are Kenya, Liberia, Morocco, Tunisia, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Qatar, Jordan, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina. , Colombia, Ireland and Kosovo.

In conclusion: the BRICS Summit will show a neutral stance towards the war in Ukraine, but in fact it will be more favorable to Russia, which is part of the group; the meeting of the European Union will focus on the war in Ukraine and will have as a central issue whether or not the process of incorporation of that country and Moldova begins; the meeting of the G7 leaders will also focus on the unfolding of the war between Moscow and Kyiv, and will surely highlight the not entirely coincident approach between the Anglo-Saxon group and the others; finally, the NATO Summit will seek to revitalize and make more efficient the military effort in favor of Ukraine, and in particular the provision of more modern and lethal weapons systems.