

## **G20 must move beyond rhetoric to address global trade inequities: PM**

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**Bernama**

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim urged G20 member states to move beyond rhetoric and take concrete steps to address longstanding global trade inequities, particularly those affecting countries in the Global South.

He noted that while recent G20 discussions have shown an ambitious push for broader consensus on multilateral trade, investment mechanisms, and closing economic gaps between nations, tangible progress remains limited.

“We have seen this very ambitious plan to get this sort of consensus, but in terms of the focus on multilateral trade, increasing mechanisms, investment and ensuring that there are no glaring gaps between countries, it is still lacking,” he said in a podcast interview with Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Anwar, who is also the finance minister, emphasised that countries in Europe and the Global North should use G20’s mechanisms to address the gross inequities that have affected the Global South.

“For too long, unfair trading practices and the exploitation of poorer countries’ resources have gone unaddressed,” he said.

“We no longer want to hear hectoring and lectures or pious platitudes. We want to see concrete action. We are not in the colonial or post-colonial period. These countries are much more advanced, much more astute, and are capable of articulating their vision,” he added.

While acknowledging that there is still a long way to go, he stressed the importance of expressing these concerns firmly at global forums.

“So, it is important that we come to some sort of consensus on this issue. There’s a long way to go, but at least some of us should express ourselves in very strong terms,” he said.

On Malaysia’s potential membership in Brics, Anwar said: “With major players such as South Africa, China, India, and Russia all supporting our membership, we will just go with the process.”

However, he stressed that what is critical is for Brics to focus on new areas, technology, and increasing intra-regional and Brics trade, while continuing engagement with the United States and Europe.

In the 30-minute interview, the prime minister also spoke at length about Brics, Asean, Malaysia-South Africa relations, Malaysia's economic focus, and social policy.

The members of the G20 are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States, the African Union, and the European Union.

This year's G20 summit is the first to be held on African soil.

- Bernama

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