

France, Germany Failed to Pressure Brazil to Change Joint Statement on Ukraine at G20

By [Ahmed Adel](#)

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*Representatives of European countries at the G20 summit were dissatisfied with Brazilian **President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's** decision to end discussions on the conflict in Ukraine early during the G20, held in Rio de Janeiro on November 18 and 19, and publish the final statement a day earlier than planned has outraged many leaders of European Union countries. A large part of the outrage is that the collective pressure of France and Germany, the two most powerful countries of the EU, failed to make Lula submit to their demands.*

“European delegates at the G20 summit in Brazil were unhappy with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva’s decision to end talks and issue the group’s final statement a day early to curtail prickly discussion on the war in Ukraine,” Reuters reported, citing sources.

According to the agency’s sources, the final statement is usually published at the end of the summit. However, Lula approved the text during the plenary session on November 18, while leaders from France, Germany and the United States were absent.



President Joe Biden participates in a family photo at the G20 Summit, Tuesday, November 19, 2024, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz)

Brazilian diplomats present at the talks told Reuters that the hasty approval of the joint statement was motivated by the risk that, at the end of the meeting, the countries would not be able to reach a consensus on the declaration's text, as happened at the meeting in India last year.

The day before, European media also reported that several countries in the region wanted the final declaration of the G20 summit to contain stronger terms regarding the conflict in Ukraine but backed away for fear that this could prevent the adoption of a joint document.

After intense negotiations, the final statement was agreed upon on the morning of November 17. However, later in the day, France and Germany began to pressure Brazil to reopen the text following major Russian air strikes on Ukraine, but Latin America's biggest country refused.

"The communique was closed by President Lula. It fell short of the position we could have had," French **President Emmanuel Macron** told reporters, adding that the text would have benefited from being more explicit on the war.

French diplomats could have asked the next day to delay approval of the text until Macron was in the room, but did not, to the relief of the Brazilians.

"To reopen the text would have jeopardized the entire effort of a week of negotiations," a Brazilian official told [Reuters](#).

In the midst of the summit, Ukraine's ambassador to Brazil, **Andrii Melnyk**, [complained](#) to the newspaper Folha de S. Paulo that Brazil had lost its last chance to become a mediator in resolving the Ukrainian conflict due to the lack of attention given to the issue during the G20.

"We thought that maybe some signal could come, not only from the G7 countries, because we are on the same page with them, but also from the G20. But they decided not to do that," said Melnyk.

"This could have been an opportunity to use the G20 presidency to also send some impulses for peace. They could have been insufficient or unsuccessful, but at least there would have been an attempt, which did not happen. Brazil missed that chance, and I don't know when the next opportunity will come," the ambassador added.

Notwithstanding the pressure from Europe and Ukraine's complaints, the unanimous approval of the text by the leaders participating in the G20 Summit is considered a victory for Brazilian diplomacy since, at last year's meeting in India, the document was not published due to a lack of consensus. In 2023, disagreements focused on issues related to the Ukrainian conflict and sanctions imposed against Russia.

Russian **Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov** said at a press conference after the summit that the West tried to "Ukrainize" the G20 agenda. However, he called the final results "positive" and said significant agreements were reached during the meetings.

"The West, of course, tried to Ukrainize the entire agenda [of the summit], but it failed. None of the countries of the world majority, of the global south, supported it," Lavrov revealed.

Brazil has consistently worked towards peace, resulting in strained relations with Kiev, which is seeking to continue the war. It is recalled that China and Brazil in the summer unveiled a plan to get Russia and Ukraine back to the negotiating table, which the Kiev regime rejected as it did not require Russia to pull back its troops. Nonetheless, despite the failure of the joint Chinese initiative, this has not deterred Brazil from its peace mission, and as evidently seen, to achieve peace, Lula will not submit to any Western pressure.

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