



A Mexico-India Collaborative Strategic Autonomy

TO NAVIGATE the current international scenario, unpredictable due to the hardships caused by COVID-19 and the pressure put on the rules-based international order, the bilateral relationship between Mexico and India must nurture and strengthen the strategic autonomy capacities of both countries through science and education.

The visit to India by Marcelo Ebrard, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, from March 30 to April 1, promoted Mexico's political, technological, and commercial diversification strategy in the Indo-Pacific, and shows that the privileged relationship with New Delhi is moving toward a strategic partnership.

Recently, India rose to fifth place among the world's largest economies and by 2030 it is estimated to be the most populous country on the planet with more than 1.5 billion inhabitants according to data from the World Economic Forum. Attractive as an expanding market, its development also requires multisectoral engagements with public and private partners.

Such dynamism requires new goals and objectives. Therefore, Mexico and India can base their mutual support to accelerate and strengthen their strategic autonomy in three specific areas: innovation, health, and education.

In terms of innovation, in addition to the plans that FM Ebrard discussed during his visit to India regarding fintech, space cooperation, and data digitisation for health purposes, it will be convenient to continue promoting innovation with a social perspective in additional areas such as artificial intelligence, automation, machine learning, and automobility, whose results would be positive for trade, data management, and energy transition.

Likewise, looking at the efforts made by the Government of India to bank its population through the Unified Payment Interface, which is digital, portable, and scalable, a similar initiative could foster Mexico's economic recovery.

In health, there are ample opportunities for cooperation in biotechnology to produce vaccines, medicines, and immunotherapies beyond



by Guillermo Chavez Conejo
*Head of Political, Press & Concurrency Affairs
Embassy of Mexico to India*

COVID-19. As agreed by FM Ebrard and Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister of AYUSH, it will be essential to increase the bilateral cooperation in traditional medicine given that both countries have a vast heritage on the topic, a legacy for the world from our ancient cultures, and a proud example of the ancestral knowledge of our indigenous communities.

Moreover, it is essential that Mexico sees and understands India from a direct perspective and vice versa, leaving aside the narrative and commonplaces of other visions about our cultures and ideas. For this purpose, both countries could come together in education through a greater exchange of ideas between think tanks such as the Observer Research Foundation, the International Council of World Affairs, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, India Foundation, Gateway House, among others, with their Mexican counterparts such as the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations, and public and private universities such as Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, El Colegio de México, Universidad Iberoamericana, among other prestigious Mexican institutes.

Additionally, shared efforts with proven positive results with organisations such as the Confederation of Young Leaders and Global Youth will also be essential platforms. These alliances have enabled Indian students to collaborate with the Embassy of Mexico in New Delhi, and

also created bridges of understanding, dialogue, and direct friendship with the Mexican student youth.

The innovation pillar could enable the modernisation of the Mexican commercial sector, increase the Government's tax collection, and allow finance inclusion of marginalised social sectors, a common goal of our governments and where Indian fintech companies could merge ideas and knowledge with their Mexican peers.

Self-sufficiency in health will make it possible to face any global health risk with greater and better capacities. Just as India supported its immediate neighborhood and beyond its region under the Vaccine Maitri humanitarian initiative, Mexico could increase its capacity to act in support of Central and South America, as it has already been doing in the last year. Therefore, technology transfer by Indian pharmaceutical companies such as Cipla, Bharat Biotech, and the Serum Institute of India is crucial to achieving this goal.

The educational pillar will allow to boost academic exchanges and will give greater visibility and understanding of the social and regional realities of both countries.

In turn, these proposals will strengthen the Indian footprint in Latin America, deepen the Mexico-India relationship with the aim of reaching a strategic partnership, and will facilitate the insertion of both countries in the Indo-Pacific—a region that ranges from the eastern coasts of Africa to the western coasts of the Americas, from Canada to Chile—in a constructive, peaceful, collaborative way, and in accordance with international law.

In a multipolar world and considering India will assume the G20 presidency at the end of this year, it also must be noted that the self-sufficiency and strategic autonomy that our countries seek are not concepts that subtract our external action from world affairs. On the contrary, they are ideas that add to the international community by counting on two reliable partners who are willing to cooperate and assume global responsibilities within a rules-based international order.