



SPAIN'S
STRATEGY
FOR **ASIA
PACIFIC**
2026-2029





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Letter from the Minister

In an area that is home to 60% of the human race, and whose economy contributes half of all global growth, the Asia-Pacific region is increasingly setting the pace for the rest of the world, including Europe.

This document presents Spain's strategic vision 2026-2029 for Asia-Pacific. This vision stems from the global outlook that characterizes Spain's foreign policy, one that is coherent and has its own distinct identity. The Strategy is the outcome of a series of consultations with the stakeholders underpinning our relations with the countries in the region, including Spain's civil society, businesses, think tanks and the other Government ministries.

The values of Spanish society, including multilateralism, the defence of a rules-based world, international law, human rights, security, peace and equality, and the need to fight against the climate emergency, require a close and diversified relationship with countries such as China, India, Japan and Korea, and with the regional body, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In recent years, Spain has made a sustained effort to bring its relations with the Asia-Pacific region in line with the present geopolitical situation and with our own interests. An increasing number of high-level trips and visits have been made to and/or from China, India, Australia, Korea, Japan and Vietnam. The mechanisms created for political consultations and economic and scientific dialogues enable us to monitor the action plans adopted with countries in the region. Moreover, Spain has strengthened its presence on the ground in Central Asia and reinforced that of the Spanish language in

China and Korea, with the opening of new Cervantes Institutes in Shanghai and Seoul.

Positive trends have also been recorded for trade and tourism between Spain and the Asia-Pacific countries. Many Spanish companies are world leading and offer solutions to the challenges of economic and environmental sustainability in these economies. The Council Foundations established with India, China, Australia and Japan enhance dialogue between our respective societies, through forums and visitor programmes. Spain also seeks to promote relations between the European Union and the countries of the region.

Nevertheless, we can and will do more. We wish to work hand in hand with the countries, businesses and societies of Asia-Pacific for the benefit of all our citizens, via increased reciprocal trade and investment, with more extensive dialogue between cultures and societies, and by fostering collaboration in science, technology and innovation to generate sustainable solutions to the major challenges we face.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation is resolved to lead and support this force for the future, a project addressed in conjunction with all stakeholders committed to strengthening our presence in the world's largest and most dynamic region. Adoption of the 2026-2029 Strategy is a significant contribution towards achieving this goal.

José Manuel Albares
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
European Union and Cooperation

Executive summary

This document, **Spain's Strategy for Asia-Pacific 2026-2029**, is the roadmap by which Spain will guide its actions regarding an area that has become a focal point for international relations. Asia-Pacific is home to 60% of the world's population, contributes 45% of global GDP and is a leading player in innovation and the technologies that will define the future of our societies.

The economic dynamism of Asia-Pacific and its central role in global value chains, accounting for nearly 45% of global industrial production, **underscore its strategic importance**. Global economic growth depends heavily on the region, driven by its dynamic population and the productivity gains from rapid technological development. Asia-Pacific countries have become consolidated in sectors such as information technology, telecommunications, electronics and pharmaceuticals, and play an increasingly prominent role as sources of foreign direct investment. The region is also essential for the green transition and digital transformation, accounting for almost two-thirds of the global production of critical minerals and metals.

This economic strength is reflected in the region's greater political weight and in these countries' legitimate aspiration to play a role commensurate with their importance. At the same time, Asia-Pacific societies are exerting an increasing global influence through the soft power of their cultural and creative industries and the impact of the Asian diasporas.

For Spain, a Euro-Atlantic power with a global outreach, its presence in Asia-Pacific is a top-priority strategic necessity.

The present Strategy establishes a series of **objectives** aimed at strengthening Spain's presence in the Asia-Pacific region. To help achieve these goals, the following **principles** will guide our actions: engage in active dialogue with regional partners in a spirit of partnership; strengthen the European dimension of our policy; reduce risks arising from economic fragmentation; uphold multilateralism and the rule of international law; and coordinate the actions of the private sector, civil society and all government agencies actively involved in foreign policy.

Spain's primary objective in the Asia-Pacific region is to **deepen political relations and economic ties, creating a diplomatic presence in accordance with our global ambitions**. Specific approaches reflecting the region's diversity and complexity will be implemented, with frequent high-level contacts and stable mechanisms for cooperation and dialogue in the political sphere and among businesses, universities and civil society.

In recent years, Spain has taken various actions in this line, with state visits to China in 2018 and from China in 2025, to Korea in 2019 and from Korea in 2021, the first bilateral visits by a Spanish Head of Government to Korea and Vietnam, and the first such visit to India in 17 years. Ministers of Foreign Affairs and with other responsibilities have also visited China, Korea, India, Japan and Pakistan. Furthermore, joint action plans and objectives have been adopted with strategic partners such as China, Japan, Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand and Vietnam. This effort is supported by a robust diplomatic presence, with fifteen

embassies, three satellite offices, and nine consulates general.

In the economic sphere, trade has reached record levels; China is now our leading supplier and the ASEAN nations, together with Japan and India, are key partners. Moreover, there is growing interest in Asia regarding Spanish language and culture, and the Asian communities in Spain are becoming increasingly visible, consolidating a framework of political, economic and cultural cooperation that is strengthening our country's international standing in a region that is crucial to governance and the global economy.

The second objective of this Strategy is to work with Asia-Pacific partners to **achieve shared, sustainable and secure prosperity**. This partnership is essential in a context of reindustrialization, the green transition and digital transformation, marked by the need to diversify our supply chains in order to mitigate risks and vulnerabilities. The region holds a leading position in science and technology and plays a key role in strategic sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductors, robotics, cybersecurity and clean energy. Spain will work to strengthen this relationship by providing institutional support to its companies, whose leadership in sustainability, infrastructure and mobility has the potential to offer sustainable solutions to regional challenges, helping to generate balanced interdependencies. This support will focus on reinforcing public diplomacy, organizing business meetings and investment forums, and strengthening a broad network of trade offices and reinforce mechanisms supporting internationalization, which are essential in such a complex and diverse market.

Attracting a greater volume of Asian investment to Spain, which already exceeds 40 billion euros in strategic sectors, will be achieved by leveraging the strengths of the Spanish economy in terms of institutional

stability, sectoral competitiveness, qualified human capital, low-cost energy and advantageous location as a platform for entry into different markets.

Thirdly, **Spain will contribute to Europe's strategic outreach towards Asia-Pacific**, supporting a European Union policy for the region that responds to European interests and is based on stable frameworks of relations that will both underpin our autonomy and respond to the needs of countries in the region. Trade with Asia-Pacific accounts for 28% of EU exports and 40% of its imports. These values have been rising throughout the century, supported by the consolidation of multiple economic and trade agreements, notably those signed between the EU and Korea, Japan, Singapore, Vietnam and New Zealand. These accords are complemented by Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement signed with Indonesia and the Economic Partnership Agreement with the Pacific States. The EU is currently negotiating similar agreements with the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, India and Australia. Furthermore, the EU aims to strengthen its ties with the signatories of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which would create one of the world's largest free trade platforms.

Despite global challenges, Spain remains committed to multilateralism and cooperation. To this end, it will promote partnerships with Asia-Pacific countries on initiatives that strengthen and reform global governance mechanisms, particularly in areas such as the international financial architecture, development finance, fair global taxation and the energy transition. For this purpose, it will leverage various forums for dialogue, including the United Nations, the OECD and the G20. Furthermore, Spain will focus on priority challenges to the region, like achieving climate resilience, protecting the oceans and biodiversity and combating



Stand of the Embassy of Spain in Vietnam at the EU Village (May 2023). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

desertification, noting that all of these concerns are among our own national priorities.

In the present political climate, in which the multilateral order is weakening and defence spending is on the rise, Spain **favours a partnership built upon peace, security and defence**, consistent with its commitment to regional stability and maritime security. Spain recognizes that Europe's security is closely linked to the stability of the Asia-Pacific region, where maritime tensions, cyberattacks and nuclear proliferation impact directly on supply chains and global security.

Finally, Spain wishes to further strengthen its relationships with Asia-Pacific in **science, innovation and culture and through inter-society connections**. University and scientific cooperation programmes are key to generating knowledge and attracting talent, especially in areas related to the green transition, digital transformation and public health. As a major participant in Horizon Europe, Spain will seek to leverage collaboration with partner countries and with those eligible for funding. Furthermore, Spanish institutions such as the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) and the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), together with regional science agencies, will promote joint projects, foster researcher mobility and cultivate science diplomacy,

consolidating Spain's presence in the region. Spanish culture will continue to be a central part of Spain's presence in Asia-Pacific. In this respect, the work of our embassies, under the direction of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), and that of major cultural institutions such as *Acción Cultural Española* will be strengthened through the organization of exhibitions, performances and collaborations, with special attention to our shared heritage with the Philippines, building upon the success of the Spanish pavilion at Expo Osaka 2025. In parallel, Spain intends to strengthen its public and cultural diplomacy to heighten its influence and cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region. The public diplomacy institution *Casa Asia* and the Council Foundations will continue to expand their scope, promoting mutual understanding and public-private collaboration, while universities, think tanks and specialized academic programmes will consolidate training in Asian studies and foster the exchange of talent.

In this continent, several countries have more than 100 million inhabitants and two have over one billion; therefore, and notwithstanding our cross-cutting objectives, **Spain's lines of action should, to a large extent, be specific and differentiated** for each subregion or country, appropriate to their specific characteristics.

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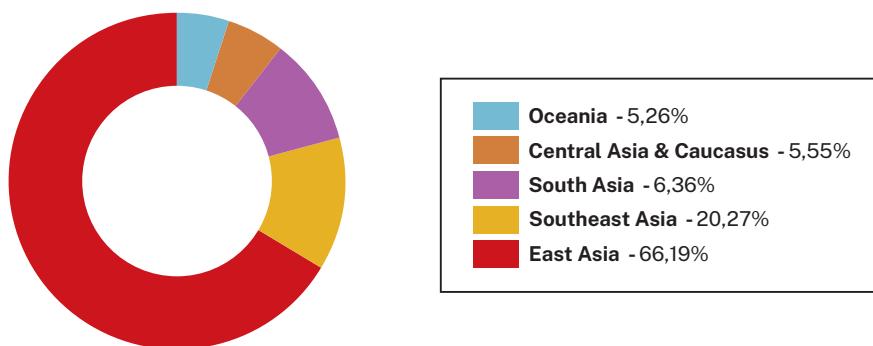
Asia-Pacific in a world in transition

With one quarter of the 21st century now elapsed, it is safe to say that predictions of Asia's increasing global importance have been more than borne out. Illustrating this growing significance, in just over thirty years, the share of global GDP produced by Asia-Pacific economies has risen from 25% to over 45%. Innovation is playing an ever-greater role in this growth. Thus, Asia-Pacific now accounts for 65% of global patent applications, with China, Korea and Japan among the top five countries on the World Intellectual Property Organization ranking. During the above period, fifteen Asian universities have entered the world's hundred most prestigious universities (there were none in 1990). Asia has also entered the space race, with more than twenty active missions (from China, India, Japan and Korea) planned for 2024.

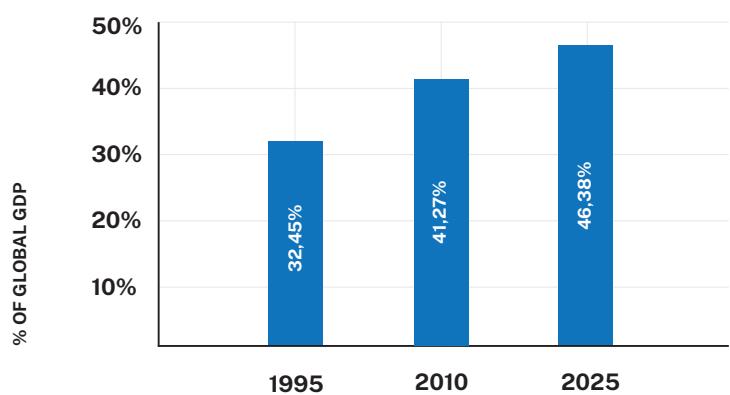
The global demographic transition has taken centre stage in Asia, not only because it is the most populated region on the planet, but also because of the downturn in population growth in countries like China. Nearly 60% of the world's population, 4.8 billion people, live in the region and, according to United Nations projections, by mid-century the population of Asia will continue to form a global majority, thanks to the influence of giants like India and Indonesia. In Asia, the proportion of the population considered middle class already exceeds two billion people—60% of the global total—and this population is rapidly adopting habits such as international tourism, which is returning towards pre-pandemic levels. The Asian population is increasingly urban; 21 of the 30 largest metropolitan areas in the world are located on this continent, and several megacities—including

GDP, at 2025 prices (in billions)

Regional GDP



Rise in Asia-Pacific GDP with respect to global GDP (as real GDP, purchasing power parity, PPP)



© International Monetary Fund

Delhi, Manila, Shanghai, Tokyo and Jakarta—each have over 20 million inhabitants, a magnitude that poses major challenges to sustainability and mobility.

Asia-Pacific's enormous population, combined with the productivity gains derived from the technological development of its leading economies, has led the region to play a central role in the global economy, where Spain has its own part to play.

Asia-Pacific accounts for approximately 40% of global production, 45% of industrial production, and 60% of agricultural, mining and fishing output. Indeed, China alone represents 35% of global industry. Half of all global economic growth is supplied by Asia-Pacific economies; among these, Southeast Asia is emerging as a new engine of the regional and global economy, with growth rates of around 5% per year reported by the ASEAN member states. If this rate is maintained, the area will be the fourth largest economy in the world by 2030. But Asian exports are not limited to manufactured goods and the primary sector; India is a world leader in IT and telecommunications services and is consolidating its position in other vital sectors, such as pharmaceuticals, while Vietnam ranks among the top five exporters of software and electronics.

The global shift in the economic centre of gravity towards Asia-Pacific is having widespread repercussions. Value chains now include a large proportion of products and processes originating in Asia, a transition which has major implications for policies targeting the green transition and digital transformation, as these areas require raw materials and technologies in which Asian economies are increasingly predominant. The region accounts for almost two-thirds of the world's production of critical minerals and metals; thus, 75% of the cobalt imported by the European Union

is obtained from Asia, and 95% of its magnesium comes from China. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted our dependence on imports from Asia in critical sectors such as healthcare. Furthermore, Asia-Pacific is the world's leading emitter of greenhouse gases (accounting for over 50% of the global total), and relies on a mix of energy supply sources to meet the needs of its large populations.

In addition to the above, the Asia-Pacific region is an increasingly important source of foreign direct investment, in all directions. In particular, companies from China, Japan, Korea, India and Singapore are investing heavily in the rest of the world, focusing on growth-driven sectors such as infrastructure, energy, technology and financial services. Attracting these investments, which are often concentrated in advanced technology sectors, is a strategic objective for Spain.

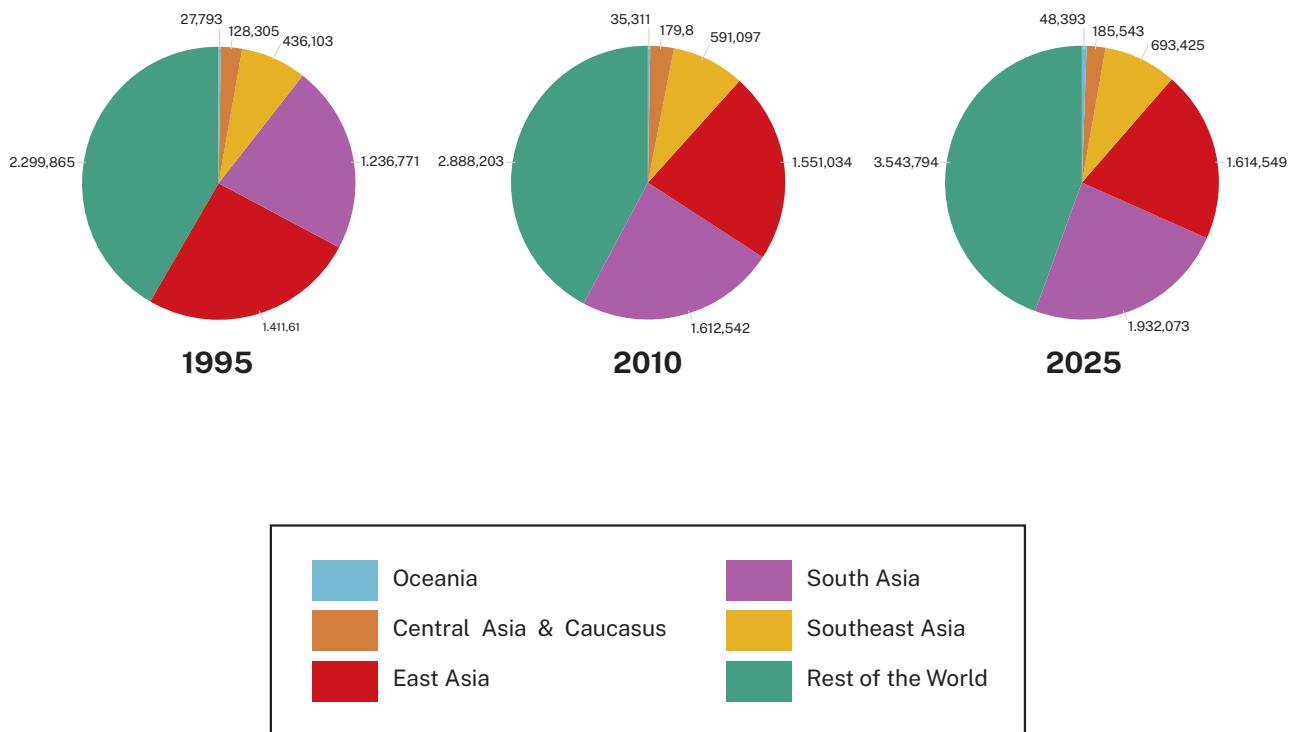
The economic strength of the Asia-Pacific region is reflected in its greater political weight and in these countries' legitimate aspiration to play a role commensurate with their present importance. Both within existing multilateral institutions and through the creation of regional mechanisms, countries like China and India, as well as organisations like the ASEAN, are claiming greater prominence and demanding greater representation in accordance with new patterns of power.

From another perspective, the region also contains multiple areas of tension, in which there is a perceptible shift from rules-based solutions to a more direct exercise of power. This is manifest in controversies over territories and maritime spaces, intrastate conflicts, and the phenomena of terrorism and transnational organized crime, which often impact beyond Asia's borders.

Asia-Pacific societies and cultures, too, are global in extent. The presence of large Asian diasporas in North and Latin America, Western Europe, the Middle East and some

African countries is a major socioeconomic force and an increasingly important factor in cultural diffusion, as are Asian cultural and creative industries.

Asia-Pacific population 1995-2025 (millions)



For Spain, a Euro-Atlantic power with global ambitions, its presence in the Asia-Pacific arena is of paramount importance.

- » **From a political standpoint, Spain should maintain channels of dialogue with all countries in the region.**
- » **From an economic perspective, Spain's institutions and business organisations cannot afford to be absent from markets that represent 60% of global GDP and exhibit high rates of growth.** Furthermore, attracting investment flows from Asia is of strategic interest to the Spanish economy.
- » **In the fields of science, technology and education, the greater integration between our research, development and innovation systems and those of Asia-Pacific is essential, to be able to leverage their dynamism, to generate knowledge and technology transfers, and to promote the mobility of talent, in both directions.**
- » **Culturally, Spain is well positioned due to the global influence of Spanish and the appeal of its heritage, art and traditions,** which should spur us to promote knowledge of our country, to stimulate Asian tourism and to strengthen ties between our civil societies.
- » Given the size of many Asian countries and the importance of our economic relations with them, **Spain's outlook towards Asia-Pacific necessarily has a significant European component**, in these three dimensions:
 - Strengthen European capabilities in order to achieve a more balanced relationship.
 - Defend Europe's political and economic interests.

- Actively participate in European decision-making on Asia-Pacific issues, taking into account both European and purely Spanish concerns.

In the context of this Strategy, the **Asia-Pacific** region is taken to comprise the subregions of Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania (Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Island States).

The concept of the **Indo-Pacific**, which has been adopted in other Strategies, including the EU 2021 Strategy, is both broader (as it includes Gulf and East African states) and more restrictive (as it does not include the Central Asian states).



Workshop school in the Philippines. Photo: © Miguel Lizana / AECID).

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Spain's strategic approach to Asia-Pacific: strengths, interests and principles

In its Foreign Action Strategy 2025–2028, Spain recognizes that partnerships with Asia-Pacific countries and organizations are indispensable for achieving our major foreign policy strategic objectives: namely to strengthen economic security, cohesion, and competitiveness; to maintain the commitment to European security and presence; to uphold the defence of the multilateral order; to cooperate with our partners to address the major challenges of the green transition and of the digital transformation and its governance; to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration; and to build peace and security with a commitment to the multilateral order, international law and human rights. With specific reference to Asia-Pacific, **Spain's main strategic interests in the region** are:

- 1. To represent our country as a committed, global participant**, with a level of presence and dialogue appropriate to the geopolitical weight of the

Asia-Pacific countries, in particular China, Korea, India, Japan, the ASEAN States and Australia.

- 2. To support the strengthened presence of our companies, products and services in these large, fast-growing markets**, under conditions of equal treatment and reciprocity.
- 3. To diversify our economic and trade relations, strengthening trade and attracting investment** to address the uncertainty and risk of slower growth among our more established trade and investment partners.
- 4. To secure raw material supply chains and access the critical technologies required to successfully undertake the ecological transition and digital transformation**, vital to our competitiveness, without compromising strategic autonomy.

- 5. As a responsible partner, to contribute to the stability of the region, via the European Union or through forms of bilateral cooperation.**
- 6. To contribute, as a responsible partner, to the stability of the region, in particular hybrid threats, cybercrime, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.**
- 7. To strengthen the integration of our scientific, technological and educational systems into the innovation networks of Asia-Pacific, leveraging the region's research infrastructure and talent, for example by establishing attraction programmes, to achieve sustainable, shared prosperity.**
- 8. To better portray the factors that make Spain attractive in Asia-Pacific as a cultural, educational, linguistic and tourist power, thereby reinforcing our instruments of soft power.**
- 9. To maintain a diplomatic presence in the region in accordance with the global weight of Asia-Pacific and with our strategic objectives, with particular regard to strengthening our human, organizational and material resources in the continent.**
- 10. To strengthen our political, economic and cultural partnership with the ASEAN countries and in particular with the Philippines, the country in this region with which we enjoy closest historical and human ties.**

The following guiding principles will be adopted to address the above interests, in line with those governing Spain's foreign action and, specifically, its Foreign Action Strategy 2025-2028:

- I. Active, cooperative dialogue with our Asia-Pacific partners**, attentive to their priorities and needs, and seeking to shape responses that benefit both parties.
- II. Reference to the European dimension**, which is fundamental to establishing the terms of our relationship with Asia-Pacific with respect to trade, digital governance and open strategic autonomy.
- III. Preference for policies to secure Spain's integration into global growth and innovation networks, from a strategic perspective.**
- IV. Multilateralism and the rule of international law**, consistent with our conviction that major global challenges cannot be adequately addressed if any of the main actors in Asia-Pacific are excluded.
- V. Effective coordination of efforts to achieve our goals**, with the participation, contribution and involvement of the private sector, civil society and all levels of government.



Spain's stand at the "Food and Hospitality Asia" Fair in Singapore (April 2025). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

A QUALITATIVE LEAP IN SPAIN'S ASIA-PACIFIC PRESENCE SINCE 2018

In recent years, Spain has **notably strengthened its strategic position** in Asia-Pacific, achieving a firm grounding on which to realistically address its forthcoming objectives, notwithstanding the considerable diversity of situations within the scope of this Strategy:

- » **Political interaction with Asia-Pacific countries is becoming more dynamic:** Their Majesties the King and Queen have visited Korea (2019) and China (2025), and the President of the Government has visited Japan for the G20 Summit (2019), China (2023, 2024, and 2025), India (2024), Korea (2022) and Vietnam (2025). These last two were the first bilateral trips by a Spanish Head of Government to these countries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has visited China, Pakistan, India, and Japan, and other ministers have visited Japan, Korea, India and China. Furthermore, a growing number of parliamentary, regional and local delegations are travelling to the Asia-Pacific region.
- » **The growing political attention paid to Spain by Asia-Pacific countries is demonstrated by the frequency of their high-level visits,** notably by the President of Korea (2021), by the Vice President, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of China (2024 and 2025), by the Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam (2023), by the Foreign Minister of India (2025), by the Prime Ministers of Japan, Australia and New Zealand, by the President of Korea on the occasion of the 2022 NATO Summit, and by the Speakers of the Assemblies of Korea and China.

- » **The framework for these strengthened political relations** has been embodied in **joint declarations** with China (2005, 2009 and 2018), Japan (2018), Korea (2021), New Zealand (2021), Australia (2022), India (2024) and Vietnam (2025), and in an **action plan** with China (2025).
- » **Spain maintains a strong diplomatic presence in the Asia-Pacific region**, with 15 embassies, 3 diplomatic offices and 9 consulates general, spanning the entire continent (with the recent addition of the Office in Uzbekistan and the imminent opening of the Consulate General in Bangalore, India). This representation facilitates ongoing dialogue with local authorities, active involvement in the European Union's external action in the region, and the provision of increasingly comprehensive consular services.
- » **Spain regularly engages in political and strategic dialogue, at the level of Secretary of State or Director General, with a growing number of partners in the Asia-Pacific region**, including Australia, China, Korea, the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. These mechanisms of discussion, with varying degrees of formalization, enable the parties to systematically consider all aspects of their bilateral relationships and to present their respective positions on key regional and global issues, thus fostering mutual trust in a volatile international context.
- » **Spain's capacity to promote its relations with Asia-Pacific has also been strengthened** with the creation, in 2025, of the new Sub-Directorate General for South Asia, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation. This new functionality reflects the growing weight of South Asia, especially India, on the global stage, and the interest of other countries in the region, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal, in enhancing their relations with Spain. In 2026, this will be complemented by the reorganization of the competent Directorate-General, which will take on responsibility for relations with the Asia-Pacific region (including Central Asia) and Eastern Europe.
- » **The complementary dimensions of our foreign policy increase Spain's attractiveness as a partner to the Asia-Pacific countries:** the Ibero-American nature of our identity offers opportunities for political projection and for the association of Asian countries with mechanisms in which Spain plays a leading role, such as the Ibero-American Summits. At present, the Philippines, Korea and Japan are associate observer countries at these Summits, and India will join them in 2026. The growing Spanish presence in Africa also makes us an interesting associate for those Asian countries for whom the continent is a foreign policy priority.
- » **In economic and trade matters, Spain holds regular meetings of senior officials (joint commissions) with its main Asia-Pacific partners** (China, Japan, India, Korea, Vietnam and Kazakhstan), to identify opportunities and address obstacles to bilateral trade and investment.

- » **As a Member State of the European Union (the fourth largest in population and economy), Spain is a player and beneficiary of the partnership and dialogue frameworks that the EU maintains with Asia-Pacific.** The high institutional regard for these frameworks is reflected in the periodic summits held with China, Japan, Korea, Central Asia, India and the ASEAN countries, and by the numerous association agreements concluded. Spain has also participated in EU dialogues with other countries, such as Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The EU's network of delegations serves its external relations interests in the Asia-Pacific region and, therefore, those of Spain in matters of exclusive or shared competence. These delegations, moreover, facilitate the "Team Europe" approach that strengthens the actions of the EU and its Member States.
- » **Economic exchanges between Spain and Asia-Pacific are at their highest level ever, and the region's share of Spain's foreign trade continues to grow.** Since 2024, China has been Spain's leading supplier, ahead of Germany and France; trade with ASEAN exceeds €19 billion yearly, and that with Japan and India is close to €8 billion in each case. In certain sectors, such as automotive components and fashion, Asian markets have long been a significant part of Spain's international outreach.
- » **Spain imports from Asia many products and technologies essential for the green and digital transitions, and hence for our sustainability and competitiveness goals.** Almost all the photovoltaic solar panels, 40% of the batteries, nearly 50% of the permanent magnets and 80% of the microchips used in countless industrial processes originate in Asia.
- » **Asian foreign direct investment in Spain is also growing,** especially in strategic and high-growth sectors such as renewable energy and decarbonization, digital technology, advanced manufacturing (including electric vehicles), biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and logistics. The combined investment stock from Australia, Japan and China exceeds €40 billion.
- » **Interest in Spanish language and culture is growing significantly, particularly among young people,** thanks to the projection of our artistic creations, the effect of tourism and the opportunities associated with a global language.
- » **Asian communities are increasingly visible and active in Spanish society,** particularly those of Chinese, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Filipino origin. Cultural expressions such as yoga, Eastern wisdom, Chinese cuisine, manga and K-pop have tens of thousands of followers in Spain, and Asian tourism is recovering after the pandemic-induced hiatus. Asian languages continue to be popular among Spanish students.

Spanish foreign action: representation in Asia-Pacific (2025)



Embassy	Counsellor / Attaché for Defence
Diplomatic Antenna	Counsellor / Attaché for Home Affairs
Consulate / Consulate-General	Counsellor / Attaché for Education
Economic and Commercial Office	Counsellor for Tourism
Chamber of Commerce	Counsellor for Information
Spanish Cooperation Office (AECID)	Counsellor for Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Cervantes Institute Centre	Counsellor for Employment, Migration & Social Security
Recent visits by Spain's Head of State, Head of Government or Foreign Minister	Counsellor for Cultural Affairs
CDTI Headquarters*	Counsellor for Finance

*Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology

3

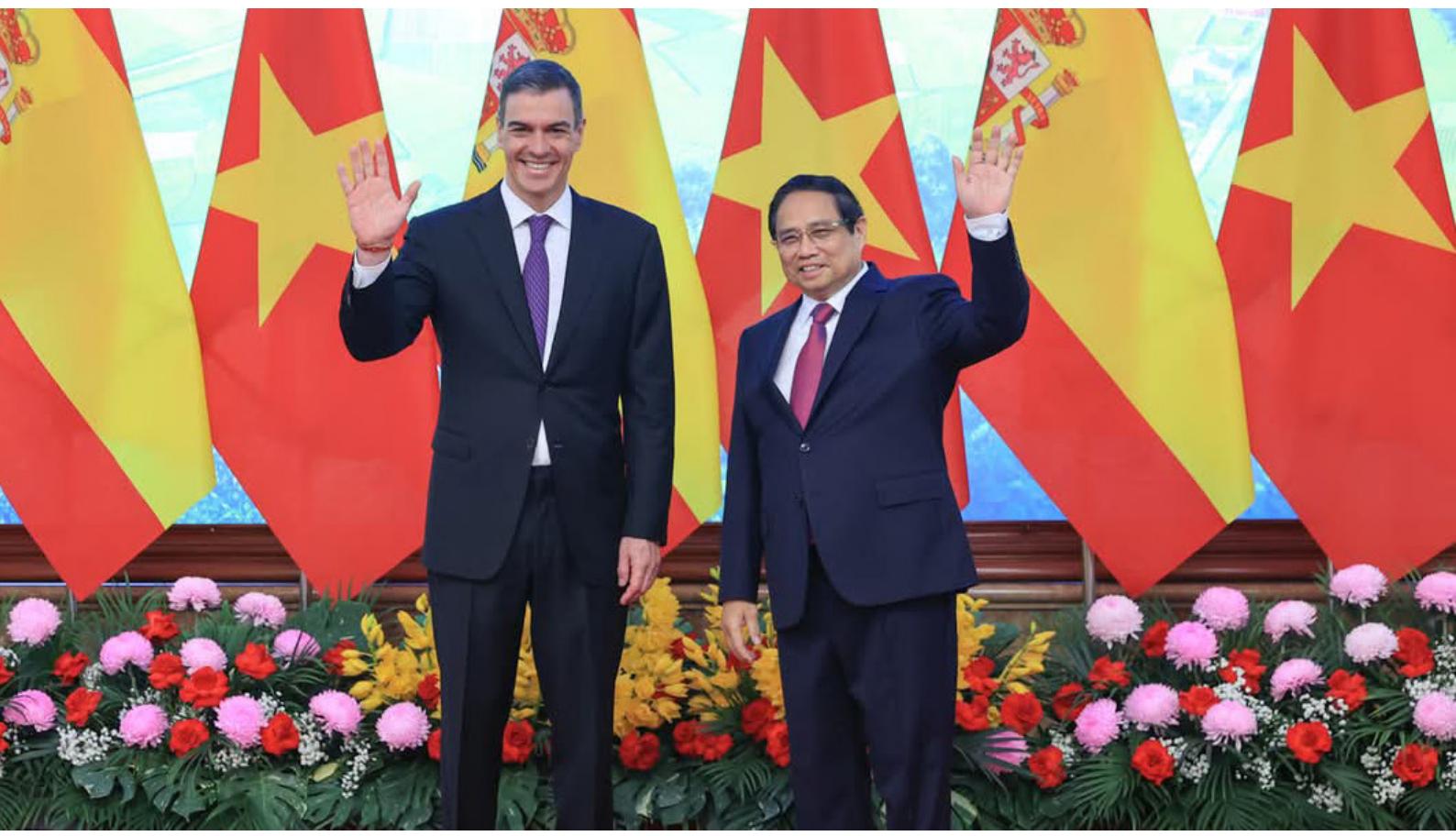
Strategic objectives: deepening Spain's footprint in Asia-Pacific

3.1. FORGING POLITICAL RELATIONS AND ACHIEVING A DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR GLOBAL VOCATION

Spain's primary objective in Asia-Pacific is to enhance its political relations with the countries of the region, taking into account the need to adopt specific approaches commensurate with the enormous diversity of their populations, economies, histories and international standing—greater than on any other continent in the world. Robust political relations, characterized by frequent high-level contact, provide the best foundation for the actions of other stakeholders—such as businesses, universities, civil society and cultural institutions—and are the clearest indication of Spain's commitment to a greater presence in the region, especially in this highly competitive environment in terms of the presence and impact of diverse international actors.

It is of fundamental importance to develop consistent and stable mechanisms for political cooperation and dialogue. The efforts made over the last seven years to extend and deepen Spain's presence will continue, not only with the countries with which we maintain strategic partnerships (Australia, China, Korea, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand and Vietnam), but also with those with whom we hope to reach a similar agreement (India) and with ASEAN, a vigorous organization that plays a central role in the region.

The framework of strengthened political relations, embodied in bilateral action programmes included in joint declarations with



The President of the Government, Pedro Sánchez, with the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Pham Minh Chinh (April 2025). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

China (2005, 2009 and 2018), Japan (2018), Korea (2021), New Zealand (2021), Australia (2022), India (2024) and Vietnam (2025) and an action plan with China (2025), will be developed in all appropriate dimensions and adapted as necessary to new challenges that may arise.

The exchange of high-level trips and visits, the application of mechanisms for political and sectoral dialogue and the deployment of resources in situ will continue to support and promote the implementation of the lines of action contemplated in this strategy, in line with the rapid transformations taking place in Asia-Pacific and complementing actions conducted via European Union mechanisms and initiatives.

In addition to these high-level contacts, the magnitude and dynamism of the Asia-Pacific region warrant a sustained effort by Spain to strengthen its presence, at home and abroad, in support of its foreign policy objectives

in this area. As noted previously, enhancing Spain's presence in Asia-Pacific is a shared endeavour in which businesses and civil society must play their part. However, these actors should be provided with adequate support, tailored to the characteristics of the region that is geographically and culturally most distant from our country. In this respect, effective consular presence is of vital importance in supporting Spanish citizens who live and work in the Asia-Pacific region, and also in facilitating visits from the region for purposes of tourism, study, research or investment.

With the expansion of our administrative capacity and capabilities, the professionals employed in Spain's foreign service will be able to specialize further in Asia-Pacific affairs, placing us on a par with other European diplomatic corps in this respect, and enabling our personnel to acquire not only competence in Asian languages, but also a deeper understanding of the region's major geopolitical and geoeconomic issues

Lines of action: Political relations and diplomatic presence in line with our global vocation

1. *Increase the intensity of high-level visits to countries in the region.*
2. *Conduct annual political consultations and sectoral dialogues with Asia-Pacific countries.*
3. *Establish a strategic dialogue mechanism with China at the ministerial level.*
4. *Update the 2009 Joint Action Plan with Vietnam, with concrete measures to strengthen the relationship.*
5. *Propose a Strategic Partnership with India that details and promotes the multiple dimensions of our relationship.*
6. *Sign a Memorandum of Understanding to consolidate political consultations with Indonesia at the level of Secretary of State/ Deputy Minister.*
7. *Celebrate the Spain-India Year of Culture, Tourism and Artificial Intelligence.*
8. *Create a balanced group of prominent figures from Spain and India to develop ideas and projects of benefit to the bilateral relationship. This group would be comprised of representatives from different communities, regions and sectors.*
9. *Expand the presence of Embassies and Consulates in Asia as part of the diplomatic redeployment, with the dual objectives of strengthening foreign policy and of increasing specialization in Asian affairs among members of the Spanish Foreign Service.*
10. *Establish a new Consulate General in Bangalore.*
11. *Begin construction of a new Chancery building for the Embassy of Spain in Beijing.*
12. *Inaugurate a Diplomatic Antenna in Uzbekistan.*
13. *Open the Embassy of Spain in Azerbaijan, a gateway to Central Asia due to its strategic connection with Asia-Pacific in terms of energy and transportation.*
14. *Include a specialized course on Asia-Pacific international relations in the curriculum of the Spanish Diplomatic School.*
15. *Increase the number of Asia-Pacific students enrolled in the Master's Programme in Diplomacy and International Relations at the Spanish Diplomatic School.*
16. *Expand the network of agreements with Asian diplomatic schools and develop co-operation initiatives with them.*
17. *Encourage the opening of new Asian embassies in Spain, for example in the case of Mongolia.*

THREE STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN EAST ASIA

CHINA

China's rise to global power status continues to generate challenges and opportunities for Spain and Europe. Spain aims to promote a positive and ambitious bilateral agenda with China, strengthening the comprehensive strategic partnership and the excellent bilateral relations currently enjoyed. Over the next four years, existing mechanisms for political, economic and technological dialogue should be maintained to secure the mutual trust needed for us to achieve common goals, including a more balanced economic relationship.

In 2023, Spain and China commemorated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations with the celebration of the China-Spain Dual Year of Culture and Tourism and with the visit to Hainan and Beijing by Pedro Sánchez, the President of the Government. This milestone was the beginning of a period of great dynamism in high-level exchanges, reflected in a steady flow of visits, including the 2024 visits to Spain by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Chairman of the National People's Congress Zhao Leji, as well as the meeting of the Joint Economic and Industrial Commission, which was attended by the Minister of Commerce, Wang Wentao. The President of the Government returned to China in September 2024, where he met with President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang, and the Chairman of the National People's Congress. He also inaugurated the 9th Spain-China Forum and the Business Economic Council, with a strong presence of Spanish companies. Furthermore, Spain opened a new branch of the Cervantes Institute in Shanghai, making it the only country with two official cultural centres in China.

In 2025, Spain and China celebrated the 20th anniversary of their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, an occasion that propitiated the restating of their joint desire to deepen ties through further high-level exchanges: thus, in April the President of the Government visited Beijing, where he signed the 2025-2028 Action Plan together with protocols and memoranda concerning strategic sectors; in June, Chinese Vice President Han Zheng came to Spain; in October, the Spanish Foreign Minister paid an official visit to China at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart and the Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce, Ling Ji, visited Spain with prominent Chinese businessmen; and in November, Their Majesties the King and Queen culminated this series of meetings with a state visit to Chengdu and Beijing.

On this basis, Spain will seek to establish a strategic dialogue mechanism at the ministerial level that will further strengthen and give structural character to the high-level exchanges of recent years.

Access to the Chinese market for Spanish products, services and companies will remain a priority area for political and institutional support, particularly in sectors such as agri-food and automotive industry components, thus increasing our competitiveness. Efforts will also be made to strengthen direct air connectivity and to revise visa policies to enhance tourism to and from China.

Another priority concern will be the promotion of Spanish language and culture.

For example, the teaching of Spanish in China, including its inland regions, will be strengthened through collaboration between the Cervantes Institute and Sichuan University (Chengdu) to promote Spanish in secondary and high schools, to increase the presence of bilingual programmes in public schools, and to provide training for Chinese teachers of Spanish.

JAPAN

Bilateral relations between Spain and Japan have strengthened significantly in recent years, achieving greater depth and cooperation. The objective for 2026–2029 is to further develop these ties by strengthening institutional links at the highest level, including the organization of a State Visit by Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan to Spain, and by consolidating bilateral cooperation within the European and transatlantic framework.

On the political front, the annual strategic dialogue will continue through bilateral consultations at the level of Secretaries of State, the last edition of which was held in Tokyo in November 2025. In addition, **multi-sectoral cooperation will continue to be fostered through the Spain–Japan Forum**, with the participation of governments, the business world, academic institutions and civil society. After the COVID-19 pandemic, this Forum has now resumed its in-person format, with recent editions in Kyoto (2022), Salamanca (2023), Takamatsu (2024) and Barcelona (2025).

From an economic perspective, Japan is consolidating its position as the leading Asian investor in Spain. In recent years, the economic and business agenda has been particularly intense, marked by the Economic Dialogue in 2023 and the visits of the Minister of Economy, Trade and Business to Tokyo in 2024 and 2025. In the coming years, our efforts will focus on strengthening business partnerships in strategic sectors such as renewable energy, with projects involving green hydrogen and offshore wind power, digitalization and telecommunications, infrastructure and automotive components. Furthermore, triangular cooperation will be promoted in third-party markets, particularly in Latin America, exploring synergies between complementary companies and sectors.

To improve connectivity between our countries, further increases in flight frequencies will be pursued. In this respect, the resumption of Iberia's direct flights in 2024 contributed to a very significant rise in bilateral tourism. Thus, over 400,000 Japanese tourists visited Spain in 2024 (32% more than the previous year) and 180,000 Spaniards travelled to Japan (a 57% increase). In the coming years, this trend will be further developed with the facilitation of air connectivity at Narita and Haneda airports (Tokyo).

Spain will seek to strengthen cooperation in matters of security and defence, with an emphasis on continuing joint naval and air exercises and promoting high-value industrial collaborations between Spanish and Japanese companies in the sector. Significant progress in this area has been made in recent years, for example with the opening of a resident Defence Attaché office in Tokyo and with an increasing number of joint exercises being held. A noteworthy aspect in the latter regard was Spain's

participation in the Pacific Skies exercise in 2024 and the port call by the frigate Méndez Núñez at two Japanese ports in the summer of 2025. Furthermore, as a strategic EU partner Spain will continue working with Japan through the implementation of the Security and Defence Partnership, and as a NATO partner, within the framework of the 2023 Individually Tailored Partnership Programme and by strengthening our cooperation with the AP4 partners (Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand).

Scientific and technological relations between Spain and Japan span a wide range of strategic areas and are supported by an active network of shared projects and infrastructure. Notable collaborations include those in fusion energy (IFMIF-DONES), neutrino physics and astrophysics (Hyper-Kamiokande, the Cherenkov Telescope Array), nanotechnology, nanomedicine, smart cities and biomedicine, together with industrial cooperation in sectors such as hydrogen, artificial intelligence, aerospace and new materials, driven by the JSIP (CDTI-NEDO) and EUREKA GlobalStars programmes, among others. In addition, more than 26 projects are currently being funded by the Spanish Research Agency within the framework of CONCERT-Japan, agreements have been concluded between the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), the Carlos III Health Institute (ISCIII) and the Centre for Energy, Environmental and Technological Research (CIEMAT) in areas such as health, genomics, antimicrobial resistance and energy technologies, and Spanish and Japanese concerns jointly participate in various large international consortia. This volume of initiatives reflects the density and diversity of our collaboration, in which Japan has become consolidated as a strategic partner for Spain in science, technology and innovation.

Spain will foster cooperation with Japan in health, innovation and sustainable development, building on the success of Expo Osaka 2025, where the Spanish pavilion, under the slogan “The Kuroshio Current”, was the second most popular, with over 3.5 million visitors, and received the Silver Award from the Bureau International des Expositions and three distinctions at the World Expolympics 2025.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Bilateral relations between Spain and Korea have strengthened considerably in recent years, as evidenced by several high-level exchanges: following the state visit by Their Majesties the King and Queen to Korea (2019) and the visits to Madrid by then President Moon Jae-in (2021) and by then-President Yoon Suk-yeol (2022) for the NATO Summit, Pedro Sánchez became the first President of the Government to travel to Korea on a bilateral visit. In 2025, to mark the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our countries, institutional visits took place, including a trip by the President of the Senate to Korea and a visit to Spain by the President of the Korean National Assembly.

Spain wishes to continue strengthening bilateral political relations through annual consultations within the framework of strategic dialogue, based on the shared values of democracy, human rights, multilateralism and respect for the rule of international law. To this end, existing mechanisms of dialogue will be strengthened in areas such as security, science and technology, defence and the economy, and in geographic

regions of common interest, such as Latin America and the Caribbean. In the latter respect, Spain will continue to act as a bridge between Korea and the Ibero-American Community, as demonstrated at the 4th Korea-SEGIB Forum on Sustainable Finance held in Madrid, and will seek to leverage this strengthened relationship to promote multilateral cooperation.

Spanish-Korean economic relations are a driver of competitiveness and innovation. To enhance these outcomes, reciprocal investment will be encouraged in strategic sectors such as electric vehicle batteries, solar energy and offshore wind, supporting flagship projects like the floating wind farm in Ulsan. In the area of **security and defence**, industrial cooperation will be strengthened by facilitating agreements between cutting-edge companies and by encouraging participation in specialized trade fairs such as FEINDEF.

Scientific and technological cooperation will continue to be a priority area of action, making use of instruments such as the Joint Commission, which was reactivated in 2025 and which has identified opportunities for cooperation in research infrastructures (such as supercomputing, IFMIF-DONES and the European Solar Telescope), biotechnology, artificial intelligence and smart agriculture. In addition, we intend to renew the agreement between the Spanish Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) and its Korean counterpart, KIAT.

Encounters between governments, businesses and civil society will be facilitated by new editions of the Spain-Korea Forum, which will enable participants to address priority issues such as AI and the digital transformation. In this context, Spain will continue to promote the global debate on the responsible use of AI in the military sphere, within the framework of the REAIM Summits, the third edition of which will be held in Spain in 2026, following the second edition in Seoul. This meeting will provide another opportunity for Spanish-Korean collaboration on issues of global interest.

Spain will maintain its commitment to promoting our culture and creative industries in Korea. The opening of the Cervantes Institute in Seoul incorporates a major new asset to an already dynamic cultural outreach programme, which includes well-established networks of cultural exchange between our respective festivals and cultural and creative industries.

3.2. SPAIN AND ASIA-PACIFIC, PARTNERS FOR SHARED, SUSTAINABLE AND SECURE PROSPERITY

Spain's partnerships with Asia-Pacific countries are of paramount importance in the context of our commitment to reindustrialization, the green transition, digital transformation and diversification to reduce risks and the vulnerabilities of our

economy. The level of scientific and technological development being achieved by the largest Asian economies, their wealth of the resources needed for decarbonization, and the presence of leading companies in key sectors such as AI, semiconductors



Cebu–Cordova Bridge built by Acciona. Photo: © Spanish MFA.

(quantum and mature technology), robotics, cybersecurity, quantum computing and clean technologies, make it essential for our foreign policy to pay specific attention to the Asia-Pacific region and to promote meaningful partnerships.

Within a general strategy of prioritizing strategic autonomy, our collaboration with Asia-Pacific partners, at both governmental and business levels, can help us speedily achieve this goal and generate balanced interdependencies.

RARE EARTHS AND CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS

Critical raw materials are a fundamental input for various industrial sectors, particularly technologically advanced ones such as aerospace, defence and semiconductors. Both Spain and the rest of the EU are highly dependent on these materials, especially those sourced from China.

Currently, China dominates the global extraction and processing of the 17 rare earth elements, as well as other minerals termed ‘critical’, such as germanium, terbium, graphite and antimony. This reliance is especially significant from the standpoint of Europe’s strategic autonomy.

In consequence, it is urgently necessary to strengthen alliances with the Asia-Pacific countries that have potential deposits of critical raw materials and rare earth elements, allowing Spain and the EU to diversify the origin of these inputs.

Institutional action to promote shared prosperity is supported, indispensably, by our world-leading companies, which develop products and services that provide solutions to the challenges of sustainability, connectivity and decarbonization in Asian economies. These companies operate in sectors such as water management, renewable energy, healthcare, infrastructure, mobility, port and airport management, smart cities, new agri-food technologies and the blue economy. For them to continue to do so, it is important that they receive appropriate support from the public sector. For the aerospace sector, in both the civil and military dimensions, Asia is a key market, where India and countries in Southeast Asia offer significant opportunities, and where Korea and Japan are valuable customers.

The success stories of these companies should be more systematically promoted throughout the region to create a national image that truly reflects our competitiveness, diversification and reliability as partners. Business meetings, reverse trade missions and investment forums with Asian countries, co-organized by our embassies, chambers of commerce and business associations, either bilaterally or within the framework of EU initiatives, allow us to showcase strengths such as robust protection for domestic and foreign investors within a framework of absolute legal certainty and maximum predictability.

Asian markets are as dynamic as they are complex and diverse, making institutional support and a solid, predictable regulatory framework of vital importance for our exporting and investing companies. The coordinated efforts of the State Secretariat for Trade, the Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations (CEOE) and the Spanish Chamber of Commerce provide companies interested in the Asia-Pacific region with

risk analysis tools and financial advice. ICEX Spain Trade and Investment promotes business and collaboration opportunities, the Spanish Export Credit Agency (CESCE) and the Spanish Development Finance Company (COFIDES) provide financial support, and the Official Credit Institute (ICO) and the Corporate Internationalization Fund (FIEM) offer direct financing for consultancies and feasibility studies—often the first step toward subsequent investment opportunities, and especially important in highly regulated markets and those with high barriers to entry. The conclusion of economic agreements, such as double taxation treaties, increases legal certainty and promotes business.

Spain has a significant presence in the Asia-Pacific region supporting the internationalization of its companies. The network of economic and commercial offices in Australia, China (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong), Korea, the Philippines, India (Delhi and Mumbai), Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, together with permanent forums such as the trade and investment dialogue mechanism with China and the bilateral business cooperation committee with Japan, help identify opportunities and facilitate balanced and mutually beneficial relationships. In newer markets for our companies, such as those in Central Asia, joint commissions with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan enable us to address obstacles and demonstrate official support for our businesses. In the agriculture, fisheries and food sectors, Spain's embassies in China, India and Singapore promote economic diplomacy, facilitate market access and enhance the image of high-quality Spanish products in these highly competitive environments.

As a result of this commitment to Asian markets by both the public and the private sectors, exports to the Asia-Pacific

region are growing significantly in East Asia (China, Japan and Korea) and in the major ASEAN economies (Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), with especially strong performance in the agri-food, capital goods, automotive and spare parts, pharmaceutical, medical device and fashion sectors. The challenge now facing us is to ensure this growth remains stable and can be extended to other markets where potential is as yet untapped, for example in South and Central Asia.

Spanish investment in the Asia-Pacific region has also grown steadily over the last decade. China is the main recipient of this investment, particularly in sectors linked to sustainability and technology, but investment flows are now being diversified

towards India, Japan, Korea and the ASEAN countries. Henceforth, it will be important to take advantage of the investment opportunities created by agreements between the EU and certain Asian countries regarding access to critical raw materials.

Taking into account the importance of a legal framework that protects Spanish investors in the Asia-Pacific countries, Spain has signed Investment Promotion and Reciprocal Protection Agreements with Vietnam (in force since 2011), China (in force since 2008), Uzbekistan (in force since 2003), Pakistan (in force since 1996), Malaysia (in force since 1996), Indonesia (in force since 1995), Kazakhstan (in force since 1995), Korea (in force since 1994) and the Philippines (in force since 1994).

ASIAN INVESTMENT IN SPAIN, DRIVING TRANSFORMATION AND GROWTH

Foreign direct investment into Spain from Asian sources has been steadily increasing, and by 2024 represented nearly 10% of the total. In some cases, such as investment from Japan and Singapore, this FDI exceeded the volume of bilateral trade.

Apart from its sheer volume, Asian investment is of great importance to the Spanish economy, as it focuses on high tech and high value-added sectors, such as renewable energy, digitalization, biotechnology and advanced manufacturing.

Through concerted action by the public administrations and the private sector, Spain aims to continue attracting investment from Asia-Pacific in these and other sectors, showcasing our strengths as a prime investment destination, notably institutional stability, sectoral competitiveness, skilled human capital, low-cost energy and geostrategic value as a gateway to the EU, Latin America, the Mediterranean and Africa. Spain, thus, offers an ideal platform for accessing other European markets through our advanced logistics network and regulatory integration. The fact that Spain is among the top five recipients of greenfield investment projects with the highest innovation value positions it very favourably as a draw for Asian investment.

Spain's Autonomous Communities, municipalities and sectoral bodies play a fundamental role in generating opportunities and attracting investment. In view of our

strengths and the needs of Asian countries, an area warranting particular attention is that of urban and mobility infrastructure, in which Spain is a global leader. In this field, not only our companies but our cities are key factors in Spain's outreach towards the Asia-Pacific region, and the cooperation frameworks that have been established should be leveraged and expanded.

Spain's commitment to the region is compatible with its demand for a level playing field and fair competition, and with decisive action, at both the European and national levels, to preserve our economic security. In the relations with our main trading partners in Asia-Pacific, Spain will continue to seek fair terms of trade, respect

for international trade rules, including those protecting intellectual and industrial property, and protection against anti-competitive or coercive practices. To this end, economic intelligence mechanisms specifically targeting the Asia-Pacific region must be strengthened.

Lines of action: Spain and Asia-Pacific, partners for shared, sustainable and secure prosperity

- 18. Conclude financial protocols to activate instruments such as FIEM with partners in the Asia-Pacific region.**
- 19. Attract foreign direct investment projects that create quality jobs, integrated into local value chains.**
- 20. Consolidate the presence in China, Japan and Korea of Spanish agri-food products, through initiatives that underscore their image of quality and food safety; diversify export destinations toward Southeast Asia, especially the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.**
- 21. Streamline health approval and certification processes to improve access to strategic markets for Spanish agri-food products.**
- 22. Promote strategic agreements with Asia-Pacific countries to facilitate Spain's access to critical resources, technological**
- cooperation and enhanced integration with global supply chains.**
- 23. Expand the network of double taxation avoidance agreements and agreements on the promotion and reciprocal protection of investments to more countries in the region.**
- 24. Strengthen public economic intelligence mechanisms for the Asia-Pacific region.**
- 25. Support the participation of Spanish companies in EU business forums and those of their Asia-Pacific partners.**
- 26. Consolidate cooperation with China, Singapore and Vietnam on industrial and intellectual property rights, updating existing memoranda, implementing the Spain-China Action Plan and negotiating new memoranda on this subject with partners in Southeast and Central Asia.**

INDIA, A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PARTNER

Since liberalization in 1991, **India's economic expansion** has been admired and has generated opportunities at home and abroad. Its economy is the world's fifth largest and has one of its highest growth rates (6–9%, sustained over the last five years). The Indian population (over 1.4 billion) is both a cause and an effect of this growth, exerting a strong impact on the national and international labour markets.

India's growing economic importance has also heightened its political prominence, both in bilateral relations and through its leadership in forums (G20, BRICS, BIMSTEC) and in initiatives such as the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). In some of these, India is a founding member, reflecting its status as an indispensable political actor in the 21st century.

Fuelled by India's rise, **bilateral relations** between Spain and India – established in 1956 – have been reinvigorated, across all sectors. Hence, 2026, signalled as the Spain–India Dual Year, will mark the 70th anniversary of our relations. The visits to India of His Majesty Prince Felipe in 2008, His Majesty King Juan Carlos in 2012 and the Spanish President of the Government in 2024, and the visit to Spain of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2017 illustrate the high priority both sides attach to this relationship. This mutual respect and interest is reflected in the composition of the Spanish Embassy in India, which is currently one of our largest bilateral embassies, with an Ambassador, five diplomatic officers and numerous sectoral advisors. The Indian Embassy in Madrid has also grown, and India also maintains a Consulate General in Barcelona.

Spain engages in **regular dialogue with India** in three joint commissions (on economy, defence and technology) and via three dialogue encounters (on political affairs, security and tourism), complemented by the annual Forums organized by the Spain–India Council Foundation and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), such as the Spain–India Forum, the Young Leaders Forum and the Spain–India CEO Forum.

Spain and India have signed three **joint declarations** (the most recent in 2024, between Pedro Sánchez, the President of the Government, and Prime Minister Modi), twelve international treaties, and thirty-five memoranda of understanding. More than eighty Indian companies already have a presence in Spain, particularly in the fields of telecommunications and pharmaceuticals, while 230 Spanish companies have subsidiaries in India.

Within the period 2026–2029, the Dual Year 2026, focused on Culture, Tourism and Artificial Intelligence, is expected to continue the momentum generated in 2024 by the President's visit. At the political level, a consultation mechanism or even a strategic partnership could help solidify relations between India – an Asian and Indo-Pacific power – and Spain, a European one with a global outlook. It would also be beneficial to establish a regular consultation mechanism between the embassies of Spain and India in third countries, similar to the one Spain has with Japan.

Economically, **joint commissions** should be used as forums to attract more Indian investment and presence in Spain, to enhance Spain's image as a hub for new technologies, and to reduce or eliminate the bureaucratic hurdles faced by Spanish investment in India, with a view to expanding its reach. Strategic sectors such as AI, information technology and defence have great potential in India, but so do other sectors which enjoy strong demand, such as healthcare facilities.

Spain is willing to establish **mechanisms for mobility and talent attraction** with India, to enhance the complementarity between the two economies and contribute to workforce training.

Spain and India have agreed various forms of strategic collaboration in science and innovation. The CDTI, through the India & Spain Innovating Programme (ISIP), has funded dozens of joint projects in biotechnology, renewable energy and advanced technologies. The CSIC and CIEMAT participate in European projects on climate, food and solar technologies, while the Canary Islands Institute of Astrophysics (IAC) collaborates with the Indian Institute of Astrophysics and with the international Thirty Meter Telescope consortium. Furthermore, the ISCIII participates in global networks on rare diseases and genomics. These alliances are complemented by opportunities within the EU-India framework in clean technologies, renewable hydrogen and the circular economy.

Regarding short-term objectives, within the framework of the Dual Year, the next meeting of the joint commission is planned for 2026, and the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding will be renewed, adding new areas of cooperation, including AI. The EU-India framework (Horizon Europe and the EU-India Trade and Technology Council) will be leveraged to position Spanish universities, research centres and technology companies within joint projects related to electric mobility and batteries, renewable energy and hydrogen, the circular economy and waste management.

Spanish culture has been conspicuously present among the Indian population for at least a decade; several successful Indian films have been shot in Spain and interest in Spanish music and cuisine continues to rise. The cultural activities of the Cervantes Institute and other cultural organizations abroad will continue to foster genuine exchanges between two civilizations with enormous heritage and vitality. These aspects will be complemented by the work of the joint group on tourism.

Spain's institutional presence will be greatly strengthened with the opening of the **Consulate General in Bangalore** at the beginning of the period covered by this Strategy, which will facilitate the provision of consular services to this economic and technological centre and to the entire south of the country.

3.3. CONTRIBUTING TO EUROPE'S STRATEGIC PRESENCE IN ASIA-PACIFIC

The European Union's policy towards Asia-Pacific should reflect the search for areas of cooperation based on European interests and on priorities shared with partners in the region. Spain supports the European Union having its own stable, strategic and predictable frameworks for relations, defined jointly with our Asia-Pacific partners. It is important that summits and other high-level dialogue mechanisms between the EU and the region be held regularly, and be viewed as part of a sustained, long-term commitment.

Aware of what is at stake in Asia-Pacific, the EU should continue to raise its geopolitical and geoeconomic profile in the region by expanding its network of free trade agreements with major Asian economies, developing digital partnerships that leverage Europe's importance in the global market and in standards-setting, securing the necessary funding and technology for decarbonization, and strengthening its economic security. The resilience of supply chains, the procurement of critical materials for European industry, and the operation of critical infrastructure such as submarine cables are areas where Europe's economic future is closely linked to that of the Asia-Pacific region.

The European countries must coordinate efforts to address the more structural dimensions of their relations with giants like China and India, particularly those related to the overall framework of economic and trade relations. Initiatives such as the Global Gateway and the Team Europe approach enable EU Member States and institutions to pool resources and efforts and thus generate a greater impact in areas such as the funding of connectivity improvements and sustainable infrastructure.

At the same time, international competition for influence in the Asia-Pacific region means the EU needs to improve the perception of its offerings, presenting them as the best suited to its partners' priorities, and backing up its financial and other commitments with swift implementation on the ground.

Spain must maintain an active profile whilst closely monitoring EU actions in the region, complementing them and supplying its own global perspective. Spain will continue to actively participate in setting and applying the European agenda, ensuring continuity between policies adopted in Brussels and their execution on the ground. Spain's embassies in Asia-Pacific must play a stronger role in formulating and monitoring EU actions, seeking to involve Spanish companies and other stakeholders in their implementation, and portraying Spain as a major player, in Asia-Pacific as well as in Europe.

For the European Union, Spain's presence in the Asia-Pacific region provides fluid communication with key countries and excellent bilateral relations with Europe's partners in the region. Indeed, EU priorities are an integral part of Spain's dialogue with its Asia-Pacific partners. It is necessary to strengthen bilateral dialogue between Spain and its European partners on Asian issues, to share analyses and to identify opportunities for cooperation.

The role of Asia-Pacific in the EU's external economy is substantial and growing, thanks in part to an expanding network of economic agreements. Trade with the region currently represents 28% of EU exports and 40% of imports, and these figures have been rising steadily this century. Asia

is also the destination for 28% of EU foreign investment, although it supplies only 12% of inbound investment. In view of the positive outcomes of the trade agreements that have been signed, Spain is strongly in

favour of the EU expanding its trade agreements to other key partners in the region, given the present volatile context and the widespread reintroduction of protectionist policies.

ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE EU AND ASIA-PACIFIC

The EU has resolved to further strengthen its economic security through trade and economic partnership agreements with several countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Of the free trade and association agreements already signed between the EU and third countries and regions, five are with Asia-Pacific countries —**Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore and Vietnam**— and negotiations for a sixth, with Indonesia, were concluded in 2025.

The Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and **Korea**, in force since 2011, has significantly increased bilateral trade, which amounted to €132 billion in goods in 2022. Similarly, from the year before the entry into force of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and **Japan** (2018) until 2023, total trade flows of goods and services increased by 20.4%, with an average annual growth rate of 3.8%. Japan is the EU's second most important trading partner in Asia, after China.

Trade with **New Zealand** has increased by more than 80% since 2021, reaching almost €1 billion in 2024, following the entry into force of the EU–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement. This agreement opened up significant opportunities for trade and investment for both parties, and there is now a growing presence of Spanish companies in the New Zealand market, as reflected in the first EU–NZ Business Summit (Auckland, 23–24 October 2025).

With **Singapore**, the leading Asian investor in the EU, trade and investment exchanges have been boosted by the EU–South Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA), in force since 2019, and the investment protection agreement. Furthermore, following the signing of the EU–**Vietnam** Free Trade Agreement (2020), bilateral trade has grown by 30%, making Vietnam the EU's largest trading partner among the ASEAN countries.

In another sphere, the conclusion of negotiations for the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with **Indonesia** – ASEAN's largest economy by GDP – will eliminate 98% of tariffs on EU exports and 90% of those on Indonesian exports.

These agreements are complemented by the Economic Partnership Agreement, which is provisionally in effect with four Pacific states: **Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the Solomon Islands**. Many Pacific states are also members of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), of which the EU is the fifth largest trading partner.

The European Union is currently in trade negotiations with **the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, India and Australia**. The successful conclusion of these agreements will have strongly beneficial effects for all concerned. With **India**, a free trade agreement would eliminate barriers, boosting exports from European companies and opening up markets for services. This is especially important as the EU is India's largest trading partner, with trade in goods valued at €124 billion in 2023, representing 12.2% of total Indian trade. Similarly, with **Australia**, a new agreement could lead to bilateral trade in goods and services increasing by approximately 30%.

The EU also aims to strengthen trade ties with the countries of **the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)**. The CPTPP generates 14.4% of global GDP and encompasses a population of 593.2 million people. In consequence, an alliance between the two blocs would create one of the world's largest free trade platforms, representing approximately 35% of global trade, with a combined contribution of 29.1% of global GDP and a joint population of over one billion. This collaboration would build on the existing network of trade agreements between Europe and most CPTPP members and would play a crucial role in achieving secure and resilient supply chains, as well as providing an ideal forum for defining trade rules in areas such as critical raw materials, technology and sustainability.

The EU also has preferential trade frameworks, such as the Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP) and the Everything But Arms Arrangement (EBA), which benefit exports from **Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Pakistan**, and those from **Bangladesh, Cambodia, Kiribati, Laos, Myanmar, the Solomon Islands, East Timor and Tuvalu**, respectively. The frameworks underpin the prominent place of the EU, and in some cases that of Spain, among these countries' export destinations.

In the area of critical raw materials, partners such as Australia and the Central Asian countries are poised to play a significant role in the diversification strategy embodied in the European regulations adopted following the shocks of the pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Spain will contribute to implementing the REPowerEU and RESourceEU plans to diversify supply sources for, among other

minerals, the rare earth elements used in permanent magnets. Through the EU, Spain can leverage the cooperation opportunities created by its critical raw materials partnerships with Kazakhstan (2022), Uzbekistan (2024) and Australia (2024), the latter of which includes a roadmap. The EU also has a cooperation framework with Japan on supply chains for critical raw materials, signed in 2023.

THE EU STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

The European Union launched its Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in September 2021, driven by four main factors: the conviction that to be a global actor it was necessary to articulate its relationship with the Indo-Pacific, an essential geo-political space; the need to provide a comprehensive strategic vision and give visibility to the multiple actions it was already developing in the region; the defence of its strategic autonomy in a context of China-US rivalry; and, finally, the realization that democracy and the rule of law were in decline in the region.

In general terms, a broad geographical scope was chosen for this Strategy, and in line with the element of “Cooperation” in its title, the essential aspect of the new architecture was the development of **partnerships**. Key countries in this respect included Korea, Japan, Australia and India, in addition to which China was considered an essential partner for collaboration on global issues such as climate change. Partnerships were also sought with regional institutions, including the ASEAN-focused regional architecture, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

The actions considered in the Strategy were based upon **seven priorities**, listed below with reference to some of the achievements included in the first outcome report prepared by the EEAS in August 2025, “Council conclusions on EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific”.

1. Sustainable and inclusive prosperity. In addition to the aforementioned Free Trade Agreements with New Zealand and Indonesia, negotiations are now underway with Australia, India, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand. Priority topics in these discussions include creating resilient value chains that are not dependent on a single supplier. In addition, cooperation agreements have been signed with Australia and Japan on critical raw materials and supply chains. In the area of research, innovation and science cooperation, New Zealand and Korea joined the Horizon Europe programme in 2023 and 2025, respectively. Finally, numerous infrastructure development projects are underway in the region under the Global Gateway initiative.

2. Green Transition. A Green Blue Alliance has been established for the Pacific and East Timor, and a Green Alliance has been concluded with Japan. Furthermore, a new regional programme, the Pacific Climate Change Initiative, has been adopted for 2025.

3. Ocean governance. The EU has been a member of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission since 2022, prior to which it already participated in other regional fishery organizations. The EU has ratified the Treaty on Marine Biological Diversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ). Spain was the first individual EU Member State to do so.

4. Governance and digital partnerships. Digital partnerships have been signed with Japan, Korea and Singapore (with Japan, a Protocol on Data Flows entered into force in 2024; with Korea and Singapore, a Digital Trade Agreement has been concluded),

and the existing partnership with India has been strengthened. A Digital4Development Hub for Asia-Pacific has been launched. The EU is supporting the ASEAN Digital Master Plan.

5. Connectivity. To strengthen relations regarding transport-related issues, various dialogues have been established. Thus, an Aviation Summit has been held with India, and a partnership on sustainable and quality infrastructure with Japan has been established; a Transport Dialogue has been held with Korea, and a sustainable connectivity package has been developed with the ASEAN countries, encompassing transport, energy, digitalization, peer-to-peer (P2P) relations, trade and the economy. Furthermore, in the aviation sector, the Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement with ASEAN and an air services agreement with Japan have been concluded, and dialogues on maritime transport and security are ongoing. Dialogues focused on space, a domain of increasing importance for ensuring global connectivity, are also being promoted.

6. Security and defence. Maritime security is a central issue within the Strategy, reflecting the importance of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations, such as EUNAVFOR ATALANTA, deployed since 2008 in the Indian Ocean, which has enabled interaction with numerous Asian countries, confidence building, the development of exercises and the signing of technical agreements with Japan, Korea and Oman; and the more recent EUNAVFOR ASPIDES, deployed since 2024 to escort merchant ships crossing the Red Sea and part of the Indian Ocean. Also noteworthy are the Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean (CRIMARIO II) programme, which enhances participants' capabilities to control key maritime routes; and the Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia (ESIWA) programme, to improve collaboration in areas such as maritime security, cybersecurity, counterterrorism and crisis management. More recently, non-binding Security and Defence Partnerships have begun to be established, and agreements in this respect have already been signed with Japan and Korea.

7. Human security. Humanitarian aid increased by almost 3,000% in 2024 compared to 2023, and over 50% of this (€43 million) was allocated to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Assistance was also provided in response to natural disasters in Myanmar, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Micronesia and Pakistan; in addition, Copernicus services were extended to Pakistan, the Philippines, Australia, Indonesia and Vanuatu.

In 2022, the **EU-Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum** was established as a meeting point for European and Asian leaders to showcase the EU's commitment to the region and the progress made in implementing the Strategy. Since the first event in Paris, this Forum has met annually, with subsequent occasions in Stockholm (2023) and Brussels (2024 and 2025). It is an informal forum, without agreements or joint declarations, structured around plenary sessions at the outset, and roundtables on well-established themes, such as security and defence, economic issues and connectivity, and the green and energy transition.

The relation between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, quite evident in the economic sphere, also exists in other respects. The participation of North Korean soldiers alongside Russian troops in the war of aggression against Ukraine, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the impact of organized crime are some of the issues the EU and Asia-Pacific should jointly address in the search for effective solutions.

The EU is playing an increasingly important role in ensuring the stability of Asia-Pacific, to which Spain will continue to contribute. As an EU Member State, Spain should take advantage of the channels of collaboration created by the security and defence partnerships entered into with Japan and Korea, with further partners expected to join. A prime example of this involvement is Operation EUNAVFOR/ATLANTA, a mission in which Spain has assumed the leadership of the EU presence in the Indian Ocean, with the added value of joint naval exercises with Japan, India, Indonesia and Korea.

EU dialogues and initiatives with Asia-Pacific partners on counterterrorism, cybersecurity and hybrid threats also help raise our profile with countries such as Australia, Korea, India, Japan and Pakistan. The EU-ACT II project against terrorism and organized crime in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan is managed by the Spanish Foundation for the Internationalization of Public Administrations (FIAP). With respect to organized crime, EU-ACT II activities (in effect until 2028) address drug trafficking, financial offences and money laundering. They also include cross-border investigations and seek to increase the role of women in police operations. As regards terrorism, EU-ACT II focuses on strengthening security forces and judicial institutions, combating

terrorist financing, strengthening border controls, protecting critical infrastructure and preventing radicalization.

In humanitarian aid and natural disaster response, Spain will continue to contribute to the EU's efforts in crisis situations such as those experienced by Myanmar and the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and India, and to the EU's action as a key Asia-Pacific partner in global health and pandemic preparedness.

The EU's partnership framework for the green transition includes instruments that combine the decarbonization agenda with concerns about its social impact, such as the Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs) with Indonesia and Vietnam, which are in line with Spain's priority of reconciling these two objectives. Other initiatives with a significant impact in Southeast Asian countries include those enhancing the capacity of local operators to apply traceability standards for palm oil and timber.

Spain aims to play a more active role in Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) funded by the EU, such as the EU-ASEAN Green TEI, launched in 2021 to support measures in climate action, biodiversity protection, the green energy transition and air pollution reduction, among others. An example of a TEI initiative in which Spain participates is one conducted with the Philippines on the green economy, as part of the Global Gateway strategy, aimed at reducing plastic waste and generating sustainable value chains for plastics.

The Team Europe approach, under the Global Gateway initiative, which at all times takes into account the business needs and investment requirements of Asian countries, is also part of the EU's work with its Indo-Pacific partners on connectivity, both physical (infrastructure) and institutional

and regulatory. Agreements such as the comprehensive air transport accord between the EU and ASEAN, signed in 2022—the first interregional agreement of its kind—represent a significant step towards achieving more air connections at lower costs. Regional energy integration initiatives, such as EU support for the ASEAN Power Grid, can offer opportunities for Spanish companies at the vanguard of electricity generation and transmission.

Spain can contribute its experience and capacity in ocean governance through the fisheries commissions that cover areas or species present in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The EU actively cooperates with coastal states in the fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, a co-operation that Spain strongly supports, in line with its defence of the sustainable use of ocean resources.

The EU's digital partnerships with Japan, Korea and Singapore, together with the EU-India Trade and Technology Council, enable structured cooperation from which Spain also benefits. It is within these frameworks that cooperation is developed in critical sectors such as semiconductors, quantum science and technology, 5G/6G, digital governance and cybersecurity. The EU also maintains digital dialogues with Australia and ASEAN.

Spain also remains committed to the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), despite the suspension of the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM) that led to its creation. From its headquarters in Singapore, ASEF provides immense value as an intergovernmental organization dedicated to fostering dialogue between European and Asian civil societies on issues of common interest—primarily culture, education, governance and sustainable development—and its broad membership (with 52 members: 30 European and

20 Asian, plus the European Union and the ASEAN Secretariat). ASEF is an essential asset, fostering European presence in the region, an activity that Spain wishes to preserve and lead.

Lines of action: Contribute to a Europe with a strategic projection in Asia-Pacific

- 27. Systematically promote the objectives and lines of action of this Strategy, in the working groups of the Council of the EU and in the work of all EU institutions.**
- 28. Hold regular consultations on Asia-Pacific with key European partners.**
- 29. Support the conclusion of free trade agreements, digital partnerships, green partnerships and security and defence partnerships between the EU and Asia-Pacific countries.**
- 30. Increase Spanish participation in Team Europe Initiatives and Global Gateway projects, with a concerted effort to inform Spanish companies of the opportunities offered by this framework.**
- 31. Foster processes to incorporate lessons learned from the implementation of the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the subsequent adjustment of its Lines of action, including at the national level.**
- 32. Support EU actions on the blue economy and sustainable fisheries.**
- 33. Strengthen joint work at the local level between EU Delegations and our embassies to consolidate and preserve a permanent Team Europe approach.**
- 34. Reinforce Spain's participation in the activities of the Asia-Europe Foundation.**

3.4. SPAIN'S COMMITMENT TO MULTILATERALISM AND COOPERATION IN RESPONSE TO MAJOR CHALLENGES

Commitment to the multilateral order and the rule of international law is a key part of Spain's external identity and provides a valuable framework for dialogue and cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries.

Indeed, the decades of greatest growth and prosperity for Spain and of this region have been those governed by the multilateral system, with the United Nations and the World Trade Organization at its core,

together with bodies such as the European Union and ASEAN at the regional level. To address emerging challenges to this order, Spain wishes to partner with the Asia-Pacific region on concrete initiatives to preserve, reform and strengthen the multilateral system, combining the necessary inclusiveness with a commitment to the effectiveness of its mechanisms.

A STRONGER RELATIONSHIP WITH ASEAN AND ITS MEMBER STATES

The members of the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** represent an emerging economic bloc that is characterized by its large population (over 660 million people), high rate of economic growth (projected at 4.5% annually until 2030) and strong capacity to attract investment and tourism. ASEAN's increasing political and economic influence is a central dynamic in the Asia-Pacific region, one in which Spain wishes to actively participate.

Spain was admitted in 2022 as a candidate country to become a Dialogue Partner of the organization, and hopes to sign the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TFC) with ASEAN** in 2026. Spain supported the accession of East Timor as the eleventh full member, which took place in 2025. Once the TFC is signed, Spain will seek greater cooperation with the organization on key issues for the stability of the regional architecture, such as security, maritime cooperation, sustainable fisheries and the fight against climate change.

ASEAN's outlook for the next 20 years, presented in the document *ASEAN Community Vision 2045: Our Shared Future*, is a roadmap to make the ASEAN area resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred. This plan has numerous points of convergence with Spain's priorities as outlined in this Strategy, offering many opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.

The EU and ASEAN are like-minded partners united by their commitment to rules-based multilateralism. The growing importance of this relationship has solidified into a strategic partnership. The European Union is ASEAN's third-largest trading partner, accounting for 10.2% of its external trade, while ASEAN ranks third among the EU's partners outside Europe, after the United States and China. The 2022 EU-ASEAN Summit underscored the objective of achieving a free trade agreement between the two supra-regional blocs through a phased approach based on the EU's bilateral agreements with its Member States. In the coming years, Spain will continue to support the EU's Indo-Pacific Cooperation Strategy, backing the

energy dialogue and the advancement of the Global Gateway initiative in the region, in line with the EU-Asia connectivity strategy and the ASEAN Connectivity Master Plan 2025.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, **Spain has held regular bilateral consultations** (annual or biannual) with Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore. **Trade and investment in both directions has increased**, although trade barriers persist. To overcome them, Spain supports the EU's free trade agreement negotiations with Indonesia (now concluded) and the ongoing talks with Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. Spain also supports the accession of Indonesia and Thailand to the OECD.

In recent years, too, there has been a significant strengthening of security and defence relations between Spain and Southeast Asian countries. Our defence industry participates in security and defence forums and trade fairs in the region, exchanges take place between military academies, and we are taking part in bilateral cooperation initiatives in cybersecurity and counterterrorism. In 2025, the Spanish frigate Méndez Núñez was deployed for almost six months in the Indo-Pacific, making visits to five countries in the subregion (Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia, plus Japan and India), and performing joint naval exercises and defence diplomacy activities.

An increasing number of Spanish tourists are visiting Southeast Asia, and growing numbers of travellers from this region are choosing Spain as their tourist destination. This two-way traffic has led to **a strengthening of consular relations and an increase in cultural exchanges**, for example with the establishment of dialogue forums between our civil societies. In addition to the traditional Forum with the Philippines, Casa Asia launched the Spain-Thailand Forum in 2023 and is working to implement this format of meetings between civil societies with Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore. There is also growing interest among Asian students in learning Spanish; accordingly, we will continue to strengthen educational cooperation, the lectureship programme and bilateral cooperation between our respective Diplomatic Schools. Technological and industrial cooperation between the Spanish Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) and its counterparts, especially in Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia, is growing and dynamic.

Thanks to their historical relationship, **the Philippines is a preferential partner for Spain**, a platform for its activities in Asia and the only priority country for Spanish Cooperation in Asia (under the Country Partnership Framework 2025-2028). In the coming years, Spain expects to strengthen this relationship with new agreements and memoranda on financial, social security, and security and defence matters. 2027 will also mark the 80th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations between our countries, providing a valuable opportunity to consider new shared objectives.

The visit of Pedro Sánchez, the President of the Spanish Government, to **Vietnam** in April 2025 demonstrated the political will of both countries to elevate the current

Strategic Partnership to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, by updating the current Spain–Vietnam Joint Action Plan, which has been in force since 2009. There is a clear shared interest in strengthening relations in trade, agriculture and fisheries, education, vocational training, culture and sport, as well in expanding the teaching of Spanish in Vietnam, within a framework of diversifying our foreign relations.

Spain's strong commitment to peace in the Middle East has fostered closer ties with **Indonesia and Malaysia**. We have also explored other areas of cooperation, both multilateral, for example regarding interfaith dialogue and collaboration in technical organizations, and bilateral, focusing on infrastructure development, cybersecurity, and science, technology, and innovation. Indonesia's prominent role in ASEAN (the organisation has its headquarters in Jakarta) and Malaysia's traditional mediating role make them key partners for Spain and the European Union regarding regional challenges such as the conflict in Myanmar, border disputes between Thailand and Cambodia, and tensions in the South China Sea.

In the case of **Thailand**, as well as cooperating in the field of tourism, relations in that of security and defence have intensified, with the recent signing of contracts by Spanish companies, and their participation in tenders currently being offered. Another strategic sector presenting significant opportunities for Spanish companies is that of infrastructure and transport, and a Memorandum of Understanding in this respect is expected to be signed between the two countries.

Singapore is a high-income country and regional hub, with which Spain is having increasingly frequent exchanges and contacts at the international forums and trade fairs it hosts, with a particular view to cooperating on high-tech projects, AI, cybersecurity and healthcare. Opening a resident Embassy in Madrid during the period covered by this Strategy would undoubtedly strengthen our bilateral relations and encourage investment in both directions.

Within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and of multilateral economic governance reforms, Spain will continue to seek common ground with its Asia-Pacific partners regarding issues such as international financial architecture, development finance (following the success of the Fourth Conference in Seville in 2025), resilient supply chains, fair global taxation and the energy transition. Forums such as the United Nations, the OECD (of which Australia, Korea, Japan and New Zealand are members, with Indonesia and Thailand invited to join) and the G20, provide crucial settings for this collaboration.

Climate and the environment

Some of the most pressing global challenges in the Asia-Pacific region include the need for policies to address climate change resilience, to achieve and preserve the sustainable use of the oceans, to protect biodiversity, and to fight against desertification. **These priorities are also of urgent importance and offer opportunities for our own country**, which is a recognized leader in many respects. Our commitment in this area should include working to secure the broad participation of Asia-Pacific countries in major multilateral legal instruments,

such as the Agreement on Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ).

Spain also has a high profile in efforts to combat deforestation and ensure sustainable supply chains, tasks which are of great importance to food producing countries in Southeast Asia. To this end, Spain is a participant in the Dialogue on Forests, Agriculture and Trade in Commodities (FACT Dialogue), which connects producing and consuming countries to achieve sustainable and deforestation-free supply chains. We are also collaborating with the European Forest Institute on the pilot project for the application of the European Deforestation-Free Products Regulation (EUDR) to the supply of palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia.

Global health and the demographic challenge

In the field of global health, there is an evident connection between Asia-Pacific and the rest of the world, as became apparent during the coronavirus pandemic, when Spain supported several Asian countries in their response to the crisis, and in responses to animal epidemics that have led to restrictions on trade in agricultural products. Spain collaborates with countries in the region in multiple health areas, including the promotion of universal health coverage and of the One Health approach. Furthermore, the Spanish organ donation and transplantation system is considered a benchmark by India, China and Japan. As a major donor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which operates in all of the Small Island Developing States (SIDs), Spain will continue to have a positive impact on the health of the region's populations.

Spain is receptive to the exchange of best practices and other forms of collaboration with Asia-Pacific countries facing the

demographic challenge and the aging of their population, and has created collaboration frameworks with China in this area which have aroused notable interest in Japan, Korea and Singapore.

The governance of artificial intelligence

Spain's approach to the governance and applications of AI is shared by many partners in the Asia-Pacific region. Spain will continue to help establish common standards and best practices for responsible AI governance, fostering regulatory interoperability and collaboration in international forums through open, transparent and inclusive discussions. Moreover, Spanish institutions, technology companies and research centres will continue to offer their perspectives to dialogues between Europe and Asia-Pacific on these issues. In addition, Spain will maintain its commitment to the Responsible Use of AI in Military (REAIM) initiative and will support the Asian Development Bank's new information technology centre in Valencia. AI will also be addressed in bilateral initiatives, such as the Spain-India Dual Year in 2026.

Development cooperation and humanitarian aid

In development cooperation, our work with the Philippines, a priority partner and regional hub, under the new Country Partnership Framework 2025-2028, **will be complemented by our contribution to multilateral cooperation programmes with the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific** in sectors such as weather and climate observation, early warning systems and climate services. The Green Climate Fund and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme are other mechanisms



Action Against Hunger project funded by AECID in the Philippines. Photo: © Spanish MFA.

to which Spain contributes and which operate in countries such as the Maldives, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and East Timor. The work of Spanish development NGOs present in Asia-Pacific, especially in the Philippines, will continue to enhance the effectiveness of our cooperation.

The newly-established Spanish Sustainable Development Fund (FEDES) will support regional initiatives and those related to the provision of global public goods. An important consideration is that its geographical scope allows it to consider proposals other than those relating to the

priority countries for Spanish Cooperation. This broader area of action paves the way for the Fund to be activated in the framework of Spain's collaboration strategies with ASEAN and other organizations.

Humanitarian action is a permanent concern in Asia-Pacific, a region that is frequently affected by natural disasters, and where disaster risk prevention and management, and efforts to promote climate change resilience, are essential. Technical cooperation and the search for innovative, science and technology-based solutions must play a significant role in this area.

A GREATER PRESENCE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Spain aspires to play a role in the South Pacific in accordance with its global influence. Despite the geographical distance separating us, the convergence of values and of perspectives on common challenges gives us a privileged position from which to strengthen cooperation in the economic, scientific and cultural spheres, as well as in security and defence.

The deepening of relations with Australia stems from this affinity, as demonstrated by the meetings between the President of the Government, Pedro **Sánchez**, and Prime Minister Albanese at the Global Progressive Action Summit (September 2025), and between the Australian Minister of International Development and the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs during the Fourth Conference on Financing for Development, held in Seville, where a Memorandum of Understanding on gender equality was signed. Furthermore, a mechanism for political consultations exists to monitor our shared agendas at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

Bilateral trade in goods has grown significantly, and now approaches €3 billion annually, while the levels of investment in 2023 amounted to €3.260 billion of Spanish direct investment in Australia, and €15.754 billion of Australian investment in Spain. In the coming years, Spain will seek to strengthen relations between Australia and the European Union through the signing of a Free Trade Agreement and the implementation of the Strategic Partnership on Critical and Strategic Minerals. Furthermore, Spain will continue to support the presence of Spanish companies in the Australian market in the defence, infrastructure and renewable energy sectors, through initiatives such as the Spain–Australia Business Forum.

Traditional security and defence cooperation has been strengthened by the opening of a resident defence attaché office, by exchanges of visits between our authorities, and by the increased expertise of our companies. Spain is committed to the protection of a free and open Indo-Pacific, as demonstrated by its participation in Operation High Mast in 2025 and the Pacific Skies exercises in 2024, the longest-range deployment in the history of the Spanish Air Force. In the coming years, Spain will continue to strengthen these ties. In parallel, cooperation with Australia will be increased within the framework of NATO-IP4 relations in areas such as maritime security, cyber defence and democratic resilience. Space cooperation will also be enhanced through closer ties between the Australian Space Agency and its Spanish and European counterparts.

In the cultural and educational spheres, the growing interest in Spanish as a global language will continue to be fostered through the Cervantes Institute in Sydney and the *Aula Cervantes* in Melbourne. Spain will strengthen the role of scientific and academic cooperation by creating contact networks through student and faculty exchanges, as well as the Association of Spanish Scientists in Australia, and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, based in Barcelona. Furthermore, ties between civil societies will be further supported through the work of the Spain–Australia Council Foundation and its Leaders Programme.

Positive political relations with New Zealand were revitalized following the signing of the bilateral Political Declaration in 2019 and the Strategic Partnership in 2020, culminating in the visit to Spain by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern in 2022. A mechanism for political consultations at the level of Secretary of State has now been established, the most recent meeting of which was held in Madrid in 2024. In the coming years, Spain will seek to maintain these biennial political consultations and further develop the Spain-New Zealand Joint Declaration through an Action Plan. Progress will also be made on signing a Social Security Agreement, and the agreements signed on Seabird Protection (2021) and Educational Cooperation (2024) will be implemented.

Bilateral trade has increased by more than 80% since 2021, approaching €1 billion in 2024. Spain will continue to support the expansion of Spanish companies in the region through its participation in various forums, such as the first EU-Pacific Business Forum (Fiji, September 2025) and the EU-New Zealand Business Summit (Auckland, October 2025). Spain will support the implementation of the European Union-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, signed in Brussels in July 2023 under the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Spain will further strengthen human ties with New Zealand with the implementation of the Working Holiday visa programme, by heightening scientific cooperation via initiatives such as Horizon Europe, and by addressing the increasing demand for learning Spanish. This focus is complemented by the Ministry of Education's existing language assistant programmes with New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

With the opening of a diplomatic mission in Fiji (2015) and its role in facilitating the signing of the Samoa Agreement, **Spain has continued to strengthen relations with other Pacific Island states, particularly through the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), with which** Spain has been a Dialogue Partner since 2014 and aims to become a Strategic Partner in the coming years, in accordance with the new institutional framework announced at the Honiara Summit.

Spain will continue to support the priorities of the PIF partners by contributing to the Pacific Resilience Facility and through its cooperation in combating climate change and preserving marine ecosystems, in line with SDG 14 and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific. In this regard, Spain will promote the entry into force and implementation of the BBNJ Treaty, contributing to the commitment to protect 30% of the ocean's surface by 2030, and will remain involved in negotiating a global treaty on plastics to reduce ocean pollution.

Spain will continue to support **sustainable fishing** in the region and the fight against poaching; in addition, we will strengthen our cooperation on **renewable energy** with the Memorandum signed jointly with Italy, Austria and Luxembourg with the Small Island States of the Pacific in 2014; finally, Spain will participate in financing development projects through, among others, the EU Delegations in Suva (Fiji) and Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea).

Human rights and feminist foreign policy

Spain's commitment to human rights and its feminist foreign policy will continue to be a central focus of our actions, through instruments such as the programme supporting human rights defenders, the promotion of gender equality and LGTBIQ+ rights, and our work with civil society organizations. In the area of gender equality, Spain's actions take into account the diverse situations in the Asia-Pacific region. For example, there are extreme cases like Afghanistan, where 79% of young women aged 15 to 24 are out of education, employment and training, while China, Korea and Japan are making progress in closing gender gaps in areas such as economic

empowerment, health, rights against violence and access to normative institutions.

Spain will continue to coordinate actions with countries in the region that pursue a feminist foreign policy, and will support measures to promote equality in the region within multilateral organizations such as the United Nations.

In the fight against the death penalty, Spain will continue to participate in further dialogues to increase the number of abolitionist countries in the Asia-Pacific region, in collaboration with partners such as the Philippines, Kazakhstan and Mongolia, through the International Commission against the Death Penalty Support Group.

SPAIN, IN SOLIDARITY WITH AFGHAN WOMEN AND GIRLS

Spain will maintain the commitment it has demonstrated in recent years to the human rights and equality of girls and women in Afghanistan. In 2022, **Spain launched the HearUs initiative, aimed at promoting the meaningful inclusion of Afghan women in all political processes related to Afghanistan.** This initiative includes providing regular support for women-led dialogue activities and processes, in parallel to the Doha process, and seeking the accountability of the de facto Afghan authorities before international justice.

Spain also helps make the voices of Afghan women heard in international and regional forums, in collaboration with other countries, to ensure that the defence of the human rights of women and girls in Afghanistan and the needs of Afghan women in exile remain on the international agenda.

In 2025, Spain organized the Third HearUs Conference to continue giving a voice to Afghan women in exile and to promote their participation in all processes related to Afghanistan.

Spain's political support for the accountability initiative adopted by Australia, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands, which have taken formal steps to ask Afghanistan to cease its violations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of



The Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, José Manuel Albares, with Afghan women during the “HearUs 2025” conference (December 2025). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), could lead to the International Court of Justice taking action against that country.

In 2024, Spain, together with Chile, Costa Rica, France, Luxembourg and Mexico, referred the situation in Afghanistan to the Office of the Prosecutor of the **International Criminal Court**, requesting its inclusion in the investigation into the situation in Afghanistan and into the crimes against women and girls committed since the Taliban took power in 2021.

In 2025, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants against the supreme leader of the Taliban, Haibatullah Akhunzada, and against the Afghan Chief Justice, Abdul Hakkim Haqqani, for gender-based persecution in Afghanistan, in violation of Article 7(h) of the Rome Statute.

Lines of action: Spain is committed to multilateralism and cooperation in response to major challenges

- 35.** *Sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with ASEAN and engage in activities as an ASEAN dialogue partner, with a strengthened embassy presence in Jakarta.*
- 36.** *Obtain recognition as a strategic partner by the Pacific Islands Forum.*
- 37.** *Continue Spain's involvement in the REAIM process and other AI governance initiatives.*
- 38.** *Continue supporting the human rights defenders programme in Asia-Pacific.*
- 39.** *Cooperate with countries with a feminist foreign policy, such as Mongolia, and with those which maintain a position aligned with Spain's with respect to gender equality, such as Australia and New Zealand.*
- 40.** *Support initiatives by UN organizations present in the region to strengthen women's political representation and leadership.*
- 41.** *Cooperate with the Philippines within the Global Alliance for Care, by supporting its resolutions at the United Nations.*
- 42.** *Develop a health-related collaboration with ASEAN, within its Socio-cultural Community pillar.*
- 43.** *Identify opportunities for collaboration on social economy projects by promoting alternative and sustainable business models, especially within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.*
- 44.** *Strengthen ties with local civil society organizations in these countries, with feminist organizations in particular, and collaborate with them to organize awareness-raising events.*
- 45.** *Activate the Spanish Sustainable Development Fund (FEDES) to finance operations in Asia-Pacific for the provision of global public goods or regional initiatives aligned with our Cooperation priorities.*
- 46.** *Expand the scope of Spanish Cooperation in the Philippines to include Small Island Developing States (SIDS) partners in the Pacific region.*
- 47.** *Promote stable collaborations with centres of excellence in Asia-Pacific for biomedical research and epidemiological surveillance.*
- 48.** *Strengthen coordination with Asia-Pacific partners in multilateral and UN forums to ensure normative development and the establishment of standards that uphold the objectives of the UN Charter.*
- 49.** *Identify projects and programmes to be jointly developed in UN multilateral forums and organizations.*

- 50. Advocate in favour of human rights, with particular attention to the situations in Afghanistan, North Korea and Myanmar.**
- 51. Promote the abolition of the death penalty and cooperate with abolitionist countries through the International Commission against the Death Penalty Support Group.**
- 52. Promote the accession of Asian states to the Equal Rights Coalition, a public-private coalition for LGTBIQ+ rights, following Thailand's example.**

3.5. SPAIN, A FORCE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY IN ASIA-PACIFIC

As a country with a global perspective, Spain is aware that the stability and security of Europe and other regions of the world, including Asia-Pacific, are **inter-connected**. The potential impact of geopolitical tensions on supply chains to Europe, the effect of maritime insecurity on fishing activity and the risk of cyberattacks are concrete examples of this interconnectedness.

These phenomena are occurring within a global context of a weakening of multilateral norms and institutions, declining global trust and a push to reinforce hard power resources, including military options. In the century to date, the Asia-Pacific region has accounted for 35% of the increase in global defence spending, and this trend is not expected to slow.

The threats to security and stability are numerous and as varied as the region itself, with conflicts within and between states, land and maritime border disputes, and nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation, particularly that of North Korea. Terrorism is especially prevalent in Central and South Asia, and the Asia-Pacific region is one of the global epicentres of international organized crime.

Beyond the primary responsibility for the security of its immediate strategic environment, Spain is aware that a partnership with Asia-Pacific, adapted to the challenges of the 21st century, must address issues of peace, security and defence, an approach that is consistent with Spain's commitment to maintaining international peace and security, to defending non-proliferation, to combating terrorism, violent radicalization, organized crime and illicit trafficking, and to upholding our status as a NATO ally.

The existing bilateral frameworks, together with the EU's new security and defence partnerships with Asia-Pacific countries, and the instruments established for co-operation with NATO's four Indo-Pacific partners (Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand), offer opportunities for Spain to maintain its role as a partner for peace and security, focusing on our areas of greatest expertise and promoting a comprehensive concept of security. Our institutional presence in the region, with Defence Attachés in Australia, China, the Philippines, India and Japan, facilitates a high level of dialogue, which is further strengthened by the network of agreements, memoranda and joint commissions with Asia-Pacific countries.



Visit of the frigate Méndez Núñez to Thailand (August 2025). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

Maritime security

Spain's profile as a force for security in the Asia-Pacific region is particularly evident in terms of maritime security and the fight against piracy, thanks to the excellence of its leadership of Operation EUNAVFOR AT-ALANTA. This operation has exponentially strengthened EU cooperation—as well as bilateral cooperation—on maritime security with countries such as Australia, Korea, India, Indonesia and Japan. The Spanish Navy's constant presence and commitment in the Indian Ocean, the gateway between Europe and Asia, is one of Spain's greatest assets in its projection to the Indo-Pacific region. Participation in military exercises such as Pacific Skies in 2024, and naval deployments like those of the frigate Méndez Núñez in 2019 and 2025, are highly valued by the countries of the region. These efforts foster trust, develop interoperability, strengthen capabilities and promote a

common approach to risks and threats in the environments where they arise.

Cybersecurity

Spain is also a strong partner in the field of cybersecurity, possessing a large number of cybersecurity centres and a robust regulatory framework (the National Cybersecurity Plan 2022, renewed in 2025, and the Industrial and Technological Plan for Security and Defence 2025). These capabilities are now generating collaborative projects with partners in the Asia-Pacific region. The agreement signed by the Spanish National Cybersecurity Institute (INCIBE) with Japan in 2024 paves the way for similar initiatives with countries such as Korea and Singapore, encompassing inter-institutional integration, the cyber industry and the protection of industrial supply chains, together with training and capacity building.

The defence industry

In parallel with Asia-Pacific countries taking a more prominent role in their own security, the Spanish defence industry must continue to strengthen its position in the region. The precedent of Spanish companies playing a leading role in the modernization of the navies of key countries in the region, such as Australia and Thailand, is a significant asset for developing cooperation with other partners like Indonesia and Vietnam. Participation in major industry events in Asia-Pacific, together with institutional support through bilateral agreements and a greater presence at annual security and defence forums like the Raisina Dialogue in India and the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, should progress in tandem, with each facet reinforcing the other.

Organized crime and terrorism

Threats such as organized crime, terrorism and illicit trafficking will continue to be a focus of our attention and will be addressed in collaboration with regional partners. In the fight against terrorism and organized crime, Spain collaborates with Asia-Pacific countries to dismantle criminal markets and organized crime structures with transnational implications and connections in Spain. Of particular concern is the link between Asian criminal groups and the production and trafficking of illegal drugs, as well as human trafficking, online fraud and the counterfeiting of consumer goods and medicines.

Daesh-Khorasan (ISIS-K) has expanded considerably in recent years and is considered a major global terrorist threat. The International Coalition Against Daesh, of which Spain is an active member, has created a Diplomatic Working Group on ISIS-K, with the participation of key Asia-Pacific

countries. Spain also participates in the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) with Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand and Singapore, to combat the financing of terrorism and money laundering. Spanish action to support victims of terrorism will also continue, in cooperation with the Asia-Pacific members of the Global Network of Victims of Terrorism.

Arms proliferation and trade

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the nuclear sphere, poses a challenge to regional and global security. In the Asia-Pacific region, nuclear-armed states that are not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), such as North Korea, India and Pakistan, coexist with NPT states possessing nuclear weapons, such as Russia and China, and others subject to the United States' extended deterrence policy, such as Australia, Korea and Japan. In addition, the signatories to the Treaty of Rarotonga established a nuclear weapon-free zone in the South Pacific. This heterogeneity generates instability due to the diverse nuclear doctrines pursued by the states concerned and makes it very challenging to progress toward nuclear disarmament or to resolve nuclear proliferation crises.

Spain advocates for cooperation to address the arms trade and prevent illegal transfers and the proliferation of conventional weapons, in view of the contribution made by these activities to arms proliferation in countries like North Korea, which has traditionally financed its programme of weapons of mass destruction through illegal arms transfers.

Lines of action: Spain, a force for peace and security in Asia-Pacific

- 53.** *Maintain Spanish leadership in maritime security operations, through the EUNAVFOR Atalanta mission and naval deployments.*
- 54.** *Participate in multinational naval and air military exercises and initiatives.*
- 55.** *Promote the Spanish defence industry's access to Asia-Pacific markets, via institutional support, expansion of the network of bilateral security agreements, presence at the main Asia-Pacific trade fairs, and the organization of seminars with companies (B2B) and government administrations (B2G).*
- 56.** *Develop actions to prevent, detect and respond to hybrid threats, thus executing the 2021 National Security Strategy.*
- 57.** *Intensify counterterrorism coordination in the Asia-Pacific region, through forums such as the Anti-Daesh Coalition and the Global Counterterrorism Forum, fostering capacity building, especially in the countries most affected by terrorism.*
- 58.** *Intensify the fight against organized crime, through EU projects and bilateral cooperation with countries in the region, with targeted cooperation measures for information sharing, training and technical assistance, and strengthen international legal cooperation.*
- 59.** *Contribute to the fight against terrorist financing and money laundering, taking part in forums such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), providing the necessary resources to enable the involvement of evaluators and technical assistance, and potentially participating as observers in the Asia-Pacific Working Group on Money Laundering (APG).*
- 60.** *Cooperate to promote support for victims of terrorism in the region, through initiatives such as the Global Network of Victims of Terrorism, in conjunction with Australia, the Philippines, India, Indonesia and Pakistan.*
- 61.** *Coordinate with Asia-Pacific countries, especially those most aligned with non-proliferation, via multilateral forums and the institutionalization of specific bilateral consultations on non-proliferation and disarmament.*
- 62.** *Intensify political and technical coordination on export controls, through initiatives such as participation in the Annual Export Control Seminars organized by the Government of Japan.*
- 63.** *Encourage Spanish delegations and experts to participate in the Raisina and Shangri-La Dialogues.*



3rd edition of the Japanese Leaders Programme (June 2025). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

3.6. EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE AND FORGING CONNECTIONS IN SCIENCE, INNOVATION, CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Spain wishes to further strengthen the foundations of its relations with Asia-Pacific, in which institutions and initiatives dedicated to promoting science, knowledge, culture and bonds between societies are an essential part.

University, scientific and technological cooperation

For both Spain and Asia-Pacific, university and scientific cooperation programmes are fundamental to generating

knowledge and attracting research talent. Spain aims to strengthen these programmes across all fields of knowledge, but particularly in those most closely linked to the ecological transition, digital transformation and the life and health sciences, an area in which our country is a global leader. As the second EU Member State to join the Horizon Europe programme and the third largest recipient of its funding, Spain is ideally positioned to leverage the participation of Asia-Pacific countries in the programme, regarding both the partner countries (New Zealand and Korea from 2023 and 2025, respectively) and the non-partner countries that are eligible for funding (Japan, India, Singapore, China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines).

Spanish universities are responding to the demand for specialist qualifications for young people by offering Asian studies programmes at all levels. In this respect, annual Asian Studies Meetings are held between universities with these specialized programmes. Prominent institutions include the Central Asian Observatory at the University of Cádiz, the Observatory of Chinese Politics in Pontevedra, and *Casa de la India* in Valladolid, in addition to the cultural centres of Japan, Korea, China and India in Spain, as well as bilateral Chairs and associated programmes. The Ruy de Clavijo scholarships offered by the University of Cádiz and *Casa Asia* fund research and cultural and academic cooperation projects related to Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and to Afghanistan, Iran and Mongolia, in all fields of knowledge.

Spain has acquired an extensive collaborative network with university ecosystems in the Asia-Pacific region, which provides a solid foundation for further exchanges.

The country with which Spanish researchers produce most joint publications is China. Collaborations with Japanese and Korea are particularly strong in the fields of engineering, energy and technology; with Singapore, in smart cities, incubators and joint technology centres; and with India, in science, public health, and information and communication technologies. In addition, an Australian university, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, has a centre in Barcelona.

Henceforth, Spain will support the internationalization of its universities and educational centres towards Asia-Pacific via instruments such as the Spanish Service for the Internationalization of Education (SEPIE), by their presence at education fairs in the region, with the Erasmus+ programme and inter-university agreements to promote the exchange of students, teachers and researchers, and by enabling joint studies and even local centres with Asian partners.

Spain's significant assets in the Asia-Pacific region regarding technological cooperation and science diplomacy are poised to play an increasingly important role. The Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) has five delegations that issue joint calls for proposals and organize business missions to China, Korea, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia and Thailand. Spanish embassies, some with science attachés (such as those in China and Japan), and associations of Spanish scientists in Australia, China, Japan and Singapore work closely to generate opportunities for collaboration. The Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) has concluded bilateral agreements and has signed memoranda of understanding with science centres and parks. It also offers mobility and exchange programmes for researchers, including participation in joint R&D

projects and in international consortia. Moreover, it supports research infrastructure such as the residency programmes for young Spanish and Japanese researchers that were launched in 2025 with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. The CSIC also performs joint activities with AECID in Asia, such as the Chair on neuroscience, neurorights and AI, members of which have visited Singapore, Japan and Kazakhstan.

Priority attention will continue to be paid to strengthening connections between innovation ecosystems in Spain and Asia-Pacific, via agreements between technology centres, R&D centres, universities and startup accelerators. High levels of public and private investment in R&D (4.9% in Korea, 3.3% in Japan, 2.6% in China) offer opportunities for the dynamic ecosystem of Spanish technology startups. The Asian market offers these Spanish startups the chance to develop products and services tailored to highly technological and demanding populations in sectors such as AI, biomedicine, quantum computing, clean energy, smart cities, agricultural technology, e-commerce, and electric mobility. Legislative assistance in this respect is provided by Spain's Startup Law, enacted in 2022.

Large, unique scientific and technical infrastructures are a major driver of scientific and technological excellence, and favour collaboration with countries and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region. In the European context, the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre, the Solar Platform in Almería and the Demo Oriented Neutron Source (IF-MIF-DONES) accelerator in Granada, with Japanese participation starting in 2025, make Spain very well positioned in this respect.

Mobility and talent attraction

The number of Asian university students in Spain, both undergraduate and post-graduate, is rising steadily. In this respect, Chinese students are foremost, followed by those from India, Korea and Japan (among researchers, mobility figures are comparable), while academic exchanges between Spain, Vietnam and the Philippines are also increasing. The Spanish Talent Attraction Plan, the Spain Entrepreneurial Nation Strategy (E/ENE) and the excellent quality of our human resources, as recognized by Asian companies investing in Spain, offer reciprocal opportunities for the greater integration of human capital into research, development and innovation. A priority for Spanish planners is to ensure that talented individuals who choose to study in Spain should subsequently become part of our productive sector, through employment or entrepreneurship.

Programmes to attract talent from the Asia-Pacific region to Spanish universities and to our national science, technology and innovation system should be vigorously pursued, to provide an alternative to the traditional preference of Asian students for Anglo-Saxon countries. Success in this regard requires planners to promote Spain as a destination, facilitating visas and smoothing other procedures related to settling in Spain, as well as designing specific mobility and exchange programmes for countries and fields of knowledge of particular interest. These initiatives should complement the efforts already being undertaken by Spanish universities and research institutions through agreements, programmes and scholarships.

SPAIN'S PRESENCE IN ASIA-PACIFIC: A STORY WITH MANY CHARACTERS

Spanish technology facilitates connections between different islands in the **Philippines** archipelago, such as the bridge between Cebu and Mactan, which improves transport infrastructure and promotes economic growth in the region, and Spanish participation in the Southern Commuter Rail project, which includes the construction of a 7.9-km railway line on a viaduct and three new stations in Manila.

The non-profit association Eat Spanish was founded in 2018 by a group of Spanish chefs living in **Australia**. As well as chefs, the association includes local producers, importers of Spanish products and other professionals in the food industry. The association organizes dialogues about gastronomy to promote local sourcing markets and to discuss creative and commercial aspects of the industry.

In **Vanuatu**, Spain is funding a project by the International Union for Conservation of Nature to install an electrical grid providing power to rural communities.

Three million people consume clean drinking water thanks to the Tseung Kwan O desalination plant in **Hong Kong (China)**, the Nhieu Loc Thi Nghe treatment plant in **Vietnam** and the Laguna Lake water treatment plant in the **Philippines**, owned by the company Acciona.

The physicist José Ignacio Latorre, a world authority on quantum physics, has directed the Centre for Quantum Technologies in **Singapore** since 2020, spearheading the country's participation in the global race for quantum computing and representing a benchmark for knowledge transfer between Europe and Asia.

The Vicente Ferrer Foundation, present in **India** since 1969, began working in **Nepal** in 2023 with a programme addressing essential areas for transformation: education, health, housing, ecology and, especially, the needs of vulnerable communities, such as women and people with disabilities.

The Inditex Chair at the University of Dhaka (**Bangladesh**) is an academic initiative conducted in collaboration with several universities in Galicia that has been promoting the teaching of Spanish language and culture since 2010, and which offers training in Spain to Bangladeshi teachers.

Indra manages air traffic at the mega-hub of Chengdu, **China**, one of the few cities in the world with two international airports. The company has been present in China since 1997 and is a leader in the country's air traffic control sector, with more than 15 control towers and over 1,000 air traffic control systems, covering 60% of China's airspace.

In **Korea**, where population aging and rural depopulation are major challenges, the Galician startup Aldealista has attracted interest in Asia with its model that connects housing, employment and community in rural areas. In October 2025, during the Galicia-Asia Economic Corridor forum held in Lugo, preliminary cooperation

agreements were signed with delegations from Korea, Japan, China and Singapore. As a result, Korea has committed to funding a pilot project in Galicia to study its potential adaptation to rural contexts in Korea.

In **Japan**, the Spanish scientist Carlos M. Duarte was awarded the 2025 Japan Prize in the Bioproduction, Ecology and Environment category for his pioneering work on blue carbon and the resilience of marine ecosystems. His research has contributed to understanding how oceans can act as carbon sinks and has raised awareness of the need to protect marine habitats in the face of climate change. This award strengthens scientific ties between Spain and Japan and positions Spanish research at the forefront of the international debate on the conservation of marine biodiversity and ocean ecosystems.

In **Uzbekistan**, six Spanish trains made by the Talgo company cover the high-speed line that links the capital Tashkent with Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva, reducing the Tashkent-Samarkand journey time from almost five hours by road to just two hours, and thus contributing to promoting human, commercial and cultural exchanges, as was previously achieved by this section of the Silk Road.

Spanish culture and language

Spanish culture, as a way of life, is central to our presence in the Asia-Pacific region and constitutes an essential dimension of Spain's relations with the countries of the region. Spanish cultural actors contribute to our image as a creative nation, committed to preserving and promoting its rich tangible and intangible heritage (such as that embodied by the Camino de Santiago), proud of its popular culture, and at the forefront of contemporary artistic expression.

Thanks to the work of our embassies, under the direction of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), and with input from major public cultural institutions, including *Acción Cultural Española*, Spanish culture is present in the region's major cities, with exhibitions, performances and collaborations, and

it is now expanding beyond the main urban centres. Shared cultural traditions, as is the case in the Philippines, provide a powerful platform for collaboration with local stakeholders. Spain also benefits from its twin status as a European and an Ibero-American country, which allows us to collaborate on initiatives promoting both cultural spheres, thanks to the EUNIC network and collaboration with Ibero-American embassies and cultural centres.

Interest in our culture and in the economic opportunities associated with Spain have generated soaring demand for services related to the Spanish language. Spanish-language learning in Asia, nurtured by the work of several generations of Hispanists, has undergone a remarkable surge, driven by the perception of our language as an asset in the diplomatic sphere, a source of commercial and employment opportunities, and a form of expression in some of the

greatest audiovisual and musical successes of our time.

Spain has significant resources to meet this demand and will continue to expand them. The Cervantes Institute already has seven major centres in the region (Delhi, Manila, Beijing, Shanghai, Sydney, Seoul and Tokyo) and smaller ones in Hanoi, Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, as well as branches in Bangkok and Melbourne. Its centres in Delhi and Manila rank first and second, respectively, in academic activity within the global network, and each year over 15,000 candidates take the Diploma of Spanish as a Foreign Language (DELE) exams in the Asia-Pacific region. More than forty MAEC/AECID teaching assistants are working in ten Asia-Pacific countries and two regional offices of the Spanish Ministry of Education have been established, one in China (which also provides services for Korea and Japan) and the other in Australia (responsible for the rest of the Pacific), with technical advisory services in Bangkok, Manila, Melbourne, New Delhi and Wellington. These facilities are of major importance in both formal and non-formal education; among their initiatives, training scholarships are offered for teachers of Spanish.

In Japan alone, 228 universities offer Spanish-language courses, while in China, 100 higher education institutions offer Spanish to 60,000 students and instruction in Spanish is becoming increasingly popular, approaching the levels of Japanese and Russian. According to the Spanish Federation of Associations of Spanish Schools for Foreigners (FEDELE), 10% of their students now come from Asian countries. Bangladesh and other countries have expressed interest in signing cultural cooperation agreements in this respect with Spain.

Sport

Spanish sport is a cultural, social and economic phenomenon that brings prestige and visibility to our country among broad swathes of the population. Our competitions and athletes project values of excellence, fair play and equality, inspiring young people and generating collaborative initiatives on the ground, such as the schools launched by the foundations of major football clubs in India, Kazakhstan and Singapore. Asia-Pacific is also a huge market for audiovisual services related to sport: it is estimated that almost half of La Liga's global audience resides in Asia-Pacific.

Tourism and connectivity

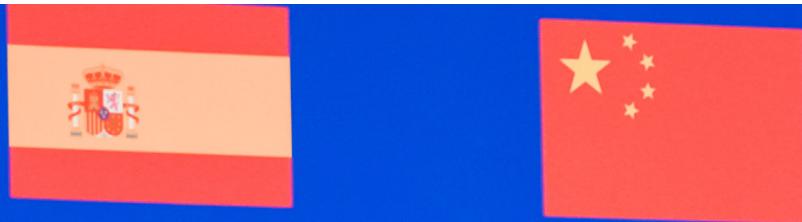
Asian tourism to Spain is on the rise, registering the strongest growth of all our foreign markets (14% in 2024 compared to 2023), with especially significant increases in tourists from China, Japan and Korea. Direct air connections (14 Asian destinations are served by 10 airlines from two Spanish airports), visa facilitation (with procedures such as the cascade system, which sequentially extends validity periods), working holiday programmes (such as those developed with Australia, Korea, Japan and New Zealand), and the expansion of the network of tourism offices (currently located in Tokyo, Singapore, Beijing, Guangzhou and Mumbai) all contribute to maintaining this upward trend in high-potential markets. Spain is also improving its attractiveness compared to other European countries, and it is the fastest-growing European country in terms of connections with China.



Headquarters of the Instituto Cervantes in New Delhi. Photo: © Spanish MFA.

From a qualitative perspective, Asian tourists bring great value to our economy. Their preference for cultural, gastronomic, sporting and ecological experiences, their higher spending levels (almost €3,000 per person

per trip), and the tendency to concentrate their trips during holiday periods in their home countries, which do not coincide with those in Spain, both contribute to diversification and reduce seasonality.



中国西班牙论坛第九次会议

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2024年9月9日 北京

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9 de septiembre, 2024 Beijing



The President of the Government, Pedro Sánchez, at the 9th edition of the Spain–China Forum (September 2024). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

Public diplomacy and communication

Public diplomacy broadens the scope of our engagement with the Asia-Pacific region beyond institutional channels and business initiatives. Acknowledging the value of this activity, Spain has several institutions that are dedicated to providing public diplomacy with the Asia-Pacific region.

The **Casa Asia** consortium, established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European

Union and Cooperation, the Government of Catalonia and the City Councils of Barcelona and Madrid, carries out multidimensional work from its headquarters in Barcelona and Madrid, and collaborates with other leading institutions in Spain and Asia. Casa Asia contributes to creating and disseminating knowledge about Asia in Spain and vice versa. Thanks to its proximity to Asian communities at home and abroad, it is a powerful instrument for integration and inclusivity, while also leveraging the channels these diasporas maintain with their

communities of origin. In the age of misinformation, *Casa Asia* plays a valuable role as a creator of quality content about Asia and in disseminating accurate information that counters prejudice and ignorance of a geographically and culturally distant reality. The new headquarters in Barcelona will further enhance the visibility of the institution and its mission.

In addition, the Spain-China, Spain-Japan, Spain-India and Spain-Australia Council Foundations are instruments playing a vital role, ensuring the sustained involvement of our institutions, companies and universities in public-private partnerships with their respective countries, based on shared responsibility and maximizing the use of our assets. Their success encourages Spain to consider creating new foundations for public diplomacy with other Asia-Pacific partners. Through forums with China, Korea, the Philippines, Japan and Thailand, together with visitor programmes and training activities, *Casa Asia* and the Council Foundations provide the framework and resources that facilitate our outreach to partner countries, with results that have been visibly favourable since their inception.

Complementing our public diplomacy institutions, the work of our international network with local opinion leaders and influencers amplifies our messages, counters disinformation and promotes Spain as a globally minded country, an economic, cultural and tourism powerhouse and a partner for innovation. These tasks are performed taking into account local conditions, and the platforms and languages preferred by Asian societies and different age groups.

Think tanks

Our knowledge in Spain about the Asia-Pacific region is enriched by the

contributions of think tanks and by the development of Asian studies as an academic field. The Elcano Royal Institute, the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) and the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies (IEEE) develop specific lines of research on Asian geopolitics and geo-economics and maintain collaborative relationships with their counterparts in Europe and Asia-Pacific.

Asian diasporas and cultures in Spain

As a host society for Asian communities, Spain has enormous opportunities to generate positive cross-perceptions, and these should be leveraged at all levels. The work of regional and local governments, and that of Asian embassies and consulates, is a central part of this effort, in which *Casa Asia* plays a prominent role in promoting Asian languages and cultures, which have always been popular, and in recognizing the contributions of communities of Asian origin to Spanish society. Communities of Asian origin are increasingly visible in our cities, in the form of economic initiatives and entrepreneurship, as well as in forms of cultural expression, such as the Chinese New Year, the Sakura festival (in Alfarnate (Malaga), Gavà (Barcelona), and the Indian festival of Holi.

These and other manifestations reinforce the cultural influence of the Asia-Pacific region in Spain, which continues to offer exciting opportunities for dialogue and co-production in areas such as film, television series, music, video games and popular culture. Cultural exports from Korea, China, India and Japan now exceed \$25 billion annually, and the region accounts for 55% of global video game revenue, an area in which Indonesia and the Philippines are experiencing rapid growth.



Concert by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, in collaboration with Spanish pianist Javier Perianes, at the Victoria Concert Hall in Singapore (December 2024). Photo: © Spanish MFA.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

Considered a distinct region by the United Nations and its own constituent countries, Central Asia comprises Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and is closely connected to the South Caucasus via the Caspian Sea, while relations between Azerbaijan and this geopolitical region are becoming increasingly closer. Its geostrategic and economic importance is growing, prompting Spain to support the strengthening of relations with the EU and the deepening of bilateral ties, particularly with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

EU relations with the Central Asian countries received a major boost with the first EU-Central Asia Summit held on 4 April 2025 in Samarkand, where it was decided to elevate EU-Central Asia relations to the level of a Strategic Partnership, and a €12 billion investment package was announced to finance projects in transport, critical raw materials, water, energy, climate and connectivity, which will be channelled through the Global Gateway initiative.

From a **bilateral standpoint**, the level of development of our relations with these five Central Asian republics is diverse.

Relations with **Kazakhstan** are excellent. Spain has maintained a resident embassy in the country since 1999. In recent years, annual political consultations have been held, and the Joint Intergovernmental Commission for Economic and Industrial Cooperation has met. Kazakhstan is five times larger than Spain, but has only 19 million inhabitants. The country possesses significant energy reserves, with over 30 billion proven barrels of oil, more than 2.4 trillion cubic metres of gas and 43% of the world's uranium production. The oil and gas sector accounts for 15% of GDP, between 65% and 70% of exports, and around 40% of the public budget. In this respect, Kazakhstan is the most important country in Central Asia; it has a promising economic outlook and is striving to attract foreign investment by implementing a series of reforms. Parliamentary and inter-institutional relations with Spain are intensifying, with visits by a Senate delegation to Astana in June 2025 and by the President of the Constitutional Court of Kazakhstan to Madrid in October 2025.

Further consolidation of our relationship involves leveraging Spain's positive image to implement a high-level visit agenda, maintaining regular political consultations at the Secretary of State level, and launching the Spain-Kazakhstan Forums co-organized by *Casa Asia* and KazInvest.

In the cultural and educational spheres, Spain already has an academic presence in Kazakh universities, which could be strengthened by the introduction of our business schools. Opening a branch of the Cervantes Institute at a Kazakh university and expanding the AECID lectureship programme could address the growing interest in Spanish language learning.

Cooperation in sports activities, whether institutional or with sports agents, is another national priority that Spain is in a position to help fulfil.

The creation of a Spain-Kazakhstan Council Foundation, modelled on those already existing with other countries, is also under study, as is a possible future Foundation for the entire Central Asian region.

Over the past three years, Spain has made a significant effort to revitalize its relations with **Uzbekistan**, an effort that should be strengthened and consolidated in the next four years. The opening of a diplomatic mission, accompanied by a trade office and the establishment of a Spanish language lectureship in Tashkent, has generated a renewed Spanish presence in the country. Spain presents itself as a cultural powerhouse and a leader in connectivity infrastructure (for example, the Spanish firm Talgo supplies the trains that connect Tashkent with the historic cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva), making it well positioned to capitalize on the opportunities presented by a country eager to improve its infrastructure and which is open to international collaboration. The meeting of the Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation in March 2023 marked a milestone in these relations, one that was followed by a bilateral business forum. Moreover, tourism has developed significantly, with the establishment of a

seasonal direct flight between Madrid and Tashkent, an initiative that shows great potential now the post-COVID slump in tourism has largely been overcome. Regular political consultations are held with Spain. Among the topics considered, that of security is of particular interest, given the situation in neighbouring Afghanistan.

For the coming years, Spain has the following objectives for this relationship: to generate high-level contacts that strengthen mutual trust; to develop the regulatory framework, with cooperation instruments in tourism development and cultural and scientific cooperation, among others; to facilitate business contacts and information for our companies so that they can present themselves as partners of Uzbekistan in connectivity, agriculture, water, renewable energy and the defence industry; and to commit to sports cooperation and the extension of Spanish language teaching.

Relations with **Turkmenistan** are cordial, but with ample room for development. The visit to Spain in March 2024 by the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, accompanied by a business delegation, provided an opportunity to explore new avenues for economic cooperation. In April 2025, political consultations were held in Madrid at the level of Secretary of State, with the aim of strengthening bilateral relations and establishing a common agenda in strategic areas, including improving the bilateral regulatory framework for investment protection and avoiding double taxation.

With respect to **Kyrgyzstan**, our main priority is to move towards establishing a mechanism for political consultations, stimulating economic exchanges and fostering cooperation in areas such as security and defence. The same applies to **Tajikistan**, a country facing greater economic and humanitarian challenges due to its extensive border with Afghanistan. Both countries are diplomatically covered by the Spanish Embassy in Astana.

The five countries are beneficiaries of the Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP), an international cooperation initiative to reduce drug demand, financed by the EU and implemented by Spain through its Foundation for the Internationalization of Public Administrations (FIAP).

Lines of action: Expand knowledge and forge new connections in science, innovation, culture and society

- 64. Commit to holding annual bilateral forums with China, Korea, the Philippines, India, Japan and Thailand, and launch new forums with Kazakhstan, Indonesia and Vietnam.**
- 65. Create a network of local influencers to contribute to a greater presence of Spain in the Asia-Pacific region.**
- 66. Reach agreements to introduce Spanish language instruction in secondary education institution in Asia-Pacific, strengthen bilingual programmes and foster visiting faculty initiatives.**
- 67. Expand the network of Spanish language assistants in Asia-Pacific universities.**
- 68. Improve direct air connectivity with Asia-Pacific, especially with India, Japan and Southeast Asia.**

- 69. Promote city diplomacy in areas such as sustainability, urban planning, housing and inclusivity.
- 70. Facilitate knowledge networks between Spanish and Asian universities to increase the availability of Asian studies in Spain, particularly those focused on South and Southeast Asia.
- 71. Promote the internationalization of Spanish universities and educational institutions in the Asia-Pacific region through participation in trade fairs, by facilitating collaboration agreements, and by launching joint programmes and education centres.
- 72. Reactivate joint science and technology commissions to ensure the effective follow-up of existing agreements and memoranda, and propose their updating to include new areas such as AI, clean technologies, electric mobility, renewable hydrogen and the circular economy.
- 73. Promote industrial cooperation in innovation, especially through joint funding programmes with Asia-Pacific agencies, focused on disruptive technologies (such as AI, semiconductors, mobility, biotechnology, carbon-neutral technologies and aerospace).
- 74. Strengthen knowledge transfer between research institutes and companies through the Spanish Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) and its network of partnerships with organizations in Asia-Pacific.
- 75. Launch talent attraction and mobility programmes with India and other countries in the region.
- 76. Launch an operational coordination mechanism with Japan for scientific and technological initiatives and institutions.
- 77. Promote working holiday and study abroad programmes and expand them to new countries.
- 78. Monitor progress of the Australian, Chinese, Indian and Japanese leadership programmes, with activities dedicated to participants in their home countries, and expand them to other age groups to leverage Asian talent and experience.
- 79. Strengthen collaboration with Asia on outstanding scientific and technical infrastructures and other strategic projects such as the IMFIF-DONES (Demo Oriented Neutron Source) in Granada and the Thirty Metre Telescope.
- 80. Support existing Spanish research associations in the region.
- 81. Provide Spanish-language training for ASEAN officials.
- 82. Heighten the presence of the Cervantes Institute in Asia-Pacific through collaborative initiatives.
- 83. Support the sports cooperation initiatives undertaken by Spanish federations and clubs and their foundations in Asia-Pacific.
- 84. Expand the network of tourism offices to Korea and Hong Kong.
- 85. Develop a broad base of support for the launch of new Council Foundations for Korea and Central Asia.
- 86. Foster networks between think tanks in Spain and Asia-Pacific, with a special focus on India and Indonesia.



4

Monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of this Strategy will be monitored in accordance with the coordination approach outlined in the guiding Principles described above. In Spain, an Interministerial Commission for Asia-Pacific Affairs will be established, and existing instruments (the boards of trustees of the Asia-Pacific Council Foundations, and the governing and advisory council of Casa Asia) will be tasked with aligning the actions of the respective institutions with the objectives and guidelines of this Strategy.

Spain's embassies in Asia-Pacific will ensure local coordination under the direction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation and other relevant ministries and agencies, and will develop implementation proposals for their respective countries and accreditation organizations.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy's implementation will be performed by means of an interim exercise in 2028 and a final one in 2030, for which contributions will be gathered from all involved in its implementation.

The implementation measures of this Strategy will be carried out according to **the budgetary resources available in each fiscal year**.

Lines of action: Monitoring and evaluation

87. Create an Interministerial Commission for Asia-Pacific Affairs.

88. Spanish Embassies will prepare implementation proposals for their respective countries and accreditation organizations.

- 89.** *Create an advisory mechanism for the implementation of this Strategy, liaising between the State Secretariat for Foreign and Global Affairs and the companies and institutions represented on the boards of trustees of the Spain-Australia, Spain-China, Spain-India and Spain-Japan Foundations.*
- 90.** *Prepare an interim progress report in 2028 and a final one in 2030, with proposals to respond and adapt to new circumstances that may arise.*



SPAIN'S
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FOR 
**ASIA
PACIFIC**
2026-2029

