

Foreword

The Asia-Pacific region represents close to 30% of the global population, trade and economy, with economies based on the creation and development of technology, thus giving it great importance in various fields. Mexico, taking advantage of its geographical position, has been building a stronger trade and cooperation relationship (mainly scientific and technological) with different countries in the area in recent decades, through the promotion of bilateral instruments, such as the Agreement between Mexico and Japan for the Strengthening of the Economic Partnership (AAEMJ), and the incorporation of the country into various multilateral forums, such as the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), the Asia-Pacific Cooperation Forum (APEC) and the Pacific Alliance.

The PECC is a regional organization whose objective is to serve as a space for cooperation and coordination of policies in different areas—trade, investment and finance—that promote economic development in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as to provide practical solutions based on rigorous analysis. It was created in 1980 and is currently made up of 25 committees of member countries and two institutional members. Mexico has been a member of the Council since May 1991, represented through the Mexican Chapter of the PECC. In its *State of the Region 2022-2023*, the PECC mentions inflation, the slowdown in the Chinese economy, the fragmentation of the global economy, climate change, the conflict

in Ukraine and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as risks to growth, while also proposing a series of measures to combat them.

The APEC multilateral forum was created in 1989, and since then its member economies have held meetings in different countries on trade, economic and cooperation issues to address areas of opportunity while contributing to the solution of global challenges. For example, APEC has a Health Working Group (HWG) whose mandate is to improve the health and well-being of the population and protect trade and inclusive growth in the APEC region. Mexico has been a member of this forum since 1993, and at its 2002 meeting in Los Cabos, Mexico adopted an action plan to facilitate trade and a declaration to implement APEC policies on digital trade and the digital economy.

PECC works closely with APEC, serving as the only non-governmental observer to APEC and facilitating private sector communication and participation in the forum. PECC also provides reports and analysis to APEC ministerial meetings and working groups.

On the other hand, Mexico's relationship with its strategic partners in Asia-Pacific has considerable untapped potential, especially with regard to scientific and technological cooperation, given the specialization of countries in this region in innovation and technology creation. As for the relationship between Mexico and Japan, thanks to the AAEMJ, it has been possible to observe an increase in the competitiveness of Mexican companies, due to the training that the Japan International Cooperation Agency has provided to small and medium-sized companies allowing them to participate in the production chains of Japanese automotive companies established in Mexico.

The possibility of a bilateral free trade agreement with the Republic of Korea has been raised, although it has not materialized. In addition to facilitating trade and investment, it is important to boost science and high technology cooperation, which would favor the integration of Mexican industry into the production processes of various sectors of the Korean economy. The trade relationship with India has been growing, and the intention is to continue strengthening bilateral ties and create synergies in areas such as the production and distribution of the pharmaceutical industry, a key sector in that Asian country. China is currently our second largest trading partner in the world, the third largest export destination

and the second largest supplier of Mexican imports. In short, Mexico's trade relationship with the Asia-Pacific region offers enormous and multiple opportunities.

The articles in this issue of the *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior*, prepared in collaboration with the Mexican Chapter of PECC, constitute a relevant contribution to identify, analyze and enhance the possibilities for greater collaboration and integration.

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