

SPAIN INDIA 2020

A joint reflection on the past,
present and future of our
bilateral relations

Final Reflection



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King Felipe VI receives the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, at La Zarzuela Palace, during the official visit made in May 2017.

I.

By way of conclusion: Spain and India face the challenge of building a strategic alliance in the decade 2021-2030

A relationship without irritants, with shared values, governmental harmony and social affinity

A series of historical events, beginning with the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, have made it difficult for Spain and India to meet and get to know each other. Although the areas of geographical interest still do not coincide today, the global agenda and multilateralism have brought these two countries to the same table. This late construction of their bilateral relationship lacks, however, historical and political irritants. There are no basic frictions

in the Indo-Spanish agenda, although in many areas the bilateral relationship has yet to be built. In the bilateral governmental dialogue, the harmony of our political leaders has stood out, recently highlighted by the unblocking of the export of hydroxychloroquine to Spain after a telephone conversation between Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Spain and India in 1956, official visits have played a key role in building our bilateral framework, especially the travels of the Spanish Royal Family, which has close family ties with India. Unlike what has happened with other Asian countries, where there has been a bilateral civil society that has maintained the momentum for the promotion of mutual knowledge and bilateral exchanges, in the case of Indo-Spanish



Spain's ambassador to India, Miguel Teus López, presents his credentials to India's President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in Delhi in June 1966.

relations, the work of both governments and the respective bilateral embassies has been key to their multidisciplinary development in the absence of a consolidated and structured bilateral civil society. Spanish and Indian societies, although in many areas unknown, share a friendly and positive mutual vision. This affinity can be perceived in those areas where there is continuous collaboration and exchange, such as science, business, culture or sport, where solid personal ties have been established that have helped to build a relationship of trust that transcends the professional sphere.

Spain and India, although distant from a geopolitical perspective, share the same

multilateral values and complementary sectoral interests. With the Partnership for Peace, Growth and Innovation (APCI by its Spanish acronym) in 2017, priorities were identified for the first time in our bilateral cooperation in various fields in which there is mutual interest. The joint commitment to multilateralism and the 2030 Agenda, the common challenges regarding sustainability and climate change, and the overcoming of the mutual vision as trade competitors and of their economies as mere markets, have been key to generate an alliance that is structured around shared interests and mutual benefit. Spain and India are currently aligned under the same values and have identified joint interests that are the necessary pillars to deepen a strategic

partnership that seeks mutual growth from a shared vision.

The main assets that position and project Spain in India

One of the areas in which Spain and India have already demonstrated that the bilateral alliance is successful, by building on shared interests and seeking mutual complementarities, is in science, technology and innovation. Spain and India have launched 15 calls under the India & Spain Innovating Programme (ISIP) through which more than 40 joint projects have been funded. Thanks to the fruits of this alliance, Spain has positioned itself as a leader in science and technology calls for India among the Member States of the European Union, as is evident in the call for water technology or in the attraction of Indian postdoctoral students to Europe. In those sectors of the Indian economy that are undergoing a major technological transformation—such as automotive components, food processing or defence industries—Spain has become an essential partner for the growth and modernisation of its industrial fabric. The contribution of Spanish technology has also proven to be decisive in India's sustainable growth, being key in the value chain of sectors such as wind energy or urban mobility. Madrid and Barcelona, the main gateways for India's entry into Spain both for their own urban attractions and for the international congresses and trade fairs they organize, are privileged showcases for the promotion of this Spanish technology and innovation, which continues to be the great link for cooperation between the two economies.

Despite the fact that the supposed business triangulation of India with Latin America through Spain has not prospered, the Spanish language has become an extraordinary triangular asset in recent years. The success of the Instituto Cervantes in New Delhi—leader of the world

network—or of the private academies promoted by Spaniards in India, together with the growing number of Indian students that Spanish universities receive to study Spanish—including Indian diplomats in training—, demonstrates the primordial role of Spain in the learning of Spanish in India and the value of the Spanish language as an instrument of public diplomacy. Similarly, the existence of bi-continental positions among Indian companies in Spain, such as those of operations managers or business development managers for Europe and Latin America, is increasingly observed. In the internationalization of Indian companies, Spain has positioned itself as a unique platform that facilitates access to both markets, offering a large network of companies to support operations in the European Union and Latin America, as well as a high quality of life for its expatriates.

When India has gotten to know Spain, it has been captivated by its traditions and culture. This attraction has been manifested for years with the success of flamenco in India, far above the cultural shows of other countries, and has been definitively endorsed with the film *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* in 2011, which led to a geometric progression of Indian tourism in Spain. Since then, a number of films from the Indian film industry—mainly Telugu language films—started to be partially shot in Spain, which have put Spain on the radar of Indian society. Spanish fashion and food—as representatives of its design and gastronomy—have found in India a market with a great reception and potential, as shown by the great expansion of the Spanish textile monobrand trade throughout India, or the success of Spanish olive oil, with a market share of over 70%, although in many cases without being associated with the Spanish country brand. Spain also has a unique asset in its sport with a great projection in India, as tennis and badminton have shown. Similarly, Spanish football is achieving a great penetration in India, positioning LaLiga as the second most

followed after the English Premier League, and its players and clubs as references for the Indian Super League.

The main assets that position and project India in Spain

Although the business, social and cultural positioning of India in Spain is more limited than in other European countries with greater historical and social ties, India has assets in Spain that represent a huge potential for its better image and projection. Indian companies in sectors such as automotive components or tourism have discovered in Spain an optimum market for their international expansion. Similarly, leaders of the Indian pharmaceutical industry have found in their alliance with the Spanish industry both a successful way for their entry into the European Union and a key partner for the development of biotechnology projects. Indian professionals have also decided to settle in Spain to train in Spanish universities and business schools, to do research in the main Spanish scientific centres or to form part of the management teams of companies with a high technological and innovation component. This link with Spain of Indian companies and of this new generation of Indian professionals has a multiplier effect on the increase of relations with India of the institutions, centers and companies for which they work, as well as in the undertaking of initiatives and projects in the field of technology and innovation, and in the consolidation of a fabric of professionalized Indo-Spanish civil society that promotes bilateral initiatives.

In a 21st century where *Big Data* is the great economic asset, India is excellently positioned to become the world's leading data management and analytics hub. The construction of this digital ecosystem is being essential for the conversion of India into a powerhouse in data capacity and of its companies into world leaders in services related

to artificial intelligence, the internet of things (IoT), software services and digital technology. On the one hand, India offers Spain the opportunity to forge a strategic alliance in priority sectors in this digital transformation, such as the IoT, digital health and agri-food technologies. This partnership in joint projects allows Indo-Spanish initiatives to be developed in areas as important as cybersecurity or smart cities, promoting interaction between the innovative fabric of both countries and laying the foundations for Spain to become a strategic technology partner for India. On the other hand, an important group of Indian companies specialized in digital technology and software are already established in Spain. These companies, which offer digital services to the Spanish market, are potential partners for the entry of the Spanish business fabric into the Indian digital economy.

In a world where personal wellness in balance with nature has acquired unparalleled importance, India offers Spain a series of alternative and complementary values to the Spaniards in the search for healthier, more sustainable and balanced lifestyles. India maintains a strong image in Spain associated with these traditional practices that connect body, mind and nature, and offer a holistic approach to health and wellness. The great exponents of these values are meditation, Ayurveda and yoga, the latter being present in almost all the Spanish geography through specialized centers or courses in gyms. In the same way, the expansion of Indian festivals in Spain, such as the celebration of *Holi*, or its cultural manifestations, such as Bollywood choreographies, are exponents of the fact that in Spain there is interest, and even fascination, for Indian culture and traditions. All that generation of Spaniards who see increased their well-being thanks to the practice of yoga or that are imbued in the Indian cultural traditions are potentially interested in knowing the culture, society and the millennial Indian thought.



Spanish champion Carolina Marín during the semifinals of the Premier Badminton League in New Delhi in January 2017.

Indo-Spanish actors who become vectors for the capillarity of mutual knowledge

In Spain there is a community with origins or links to India of approximately 70 thousand inhabitants distributed mainly in the Mediterranean arc, together with the Canary Islands and Madrid. It is a very rich community in its diversity, as it is made up of a first generation of traders from the Sindhi community, a second generation of workers from the Punjabi community and a third generation of highly qualified professionals from all parts of India. These communities, which have formed their own associations and created their own temples, and which celebrate their main festivals annually, are in a privileged position to make their own culture known and, through interaction with their surroundings, are the best vectors for increasing the knowledge of a diverse and plural India. From India, the three generations of Indian Hispanists have served as a bridge to bring Spanish culture

to the Indian subcontinent through Spanish and to train the next experts. They have been joined in recent years by Indian professionals who have studied in Spain, Indian entrepreneurs linked to the Spanish economy or Indian artists who find in Spanish culture a source of inspiration. Together they have become extraordinary ambassadors of Spain and its culture in India.

The Spanish community in India, small in size, stands out for its professionals, both in the private and third sector, who participate in the growth of India along with the companies and NGOs for which they work. In recent years, a number of Spanish coaches and footballers have also settled in India, making up the majority foreign nationality in the Indian Super League. This network is joined by other Spaniards such as readers, cultural managers or freelancers who have become stable bridges for the promotion of knowledge and exchange between both civil

societies, even beyond their professional field. From Spain, Spanish Indologists, not only in the field of philosophy or linguistics but also in other areas such as art or dance, have been continuous vectors for the promotion of Indian culture in Spain, with a special impact on the university and publishing world. Spanish sportsmen, such as the admired and influential Rafael Nadal and Carolina Marín, are the ones who continue to arouse greater attraction in Indian society and increase interest in learning about Spain and its culture.

The new entities with a bilateral vocation created in the last few years have been a revulsive for Indo-Spanish relations. The Institute of Indology has been joined in the cultural sphere by *Casa de la India*, in the academic sphere by the Spanish Association of Interdisciplinary India Studies, in the business sphere by the Indo-Spanish Chamber of Commerce, and in the multidisciplinary sphere by the Spain-India Council Foundation. This network of bilateral entities will need to be joined in the coming years by an association of researchers and scientists, although the critical mass necessary for its creation does not yet exist. All these entities with a bilateral vocation complement, from the civil society, the governmental impulse to our bilateral relations with a capillary effect in different sectors. In the governmental and institutional spheres there are also a series of entities that, although not Indo-Spanish, have a bilateral impact, such as the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Instituto Cervantes, Casa Asia, ICEX Spain Export and Investment or the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI in Spanish), weaving an increasingly dense Indo-Spanish institutional network.

The new challenges of the post-COVID scenario and their conversion into bilateral opportunities

India's geopolitical impact has grown significantly in recent decades and has accelerated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the fact that Indian and Spanish interests do not coincide on certain occasions, as in the proposed enlargement of the UN Security Council, joint commitment to multilateralism has been a constant in Indo-Spanish relations. This alliance between Spain and India has been strengthened by Spain's support for India's entry into various multilateral fora and agreements in the field of security and defence. Spain and India, interdependent and connected countries in terms of security, have a mutual commitment against international terrorism, which is one of the main pillars of bilateral cooperation. This alliance at the multilateral level is an ideal basis for building a permanent understanding in the field of security and defence. Spain could explore its participation in geopolitical scenarios such as the Indian Ocean, following in the footsteps of other European countries, where India has asserted its leadership in security, claiming its role as *net security provider* through its SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) policy. Guided by its traditional strategic autonomy and the quest to overcome the China-US bipolarity, India is willing to establish new alliances in a *minilateral* framework in which Spain could show interest in participating, thus facilitating collaboration between the defence industries of India and Spain, which were the second largest importer and sixth largest exporter of armaments globally in 2019, respectively.

India is a priority partner for Spain in South Asia, as it has demonstrated in the last decade. This partnership, which has not been able to meet all expectations, finds in the current international context a new opportunity for its strengthening.



Inauguration of the exhibition 'The universe of Ravi Shankar. The Beatles in India' in December 2020, at the Fernán Gómez Cultural Center in Madrid.

The economic disagreements with China have created new challenges for India in the supply chain and in the technological development of the value chain. To this economic situation will be added a need for new alliances and investments for a rapid recovery in the post-COVID era, in which Indian and Spanish priorities could be aligned. Spain and India, without being strategic partners, offer each other a series of complementarities to face their challenges and a series of alternatives to strengthen their sectoral alliances that in the current context are clearly promising. Spanish companies, which have demonstrated corporate synergies with Indian companies and technological complementarities with their value chain, can be essential in the supply and modernization of the Indian economy. Similarly, Spain and its business

fabric can become an ideal platform for the internationalization of Indian companies in the post-COVID and post-Brexit era in sectors such as pharmaceuticals and information technology.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown, both in India and Spain, that the recovery will have in sustainability one of its pillars of growth and in the commitment to the 2030 Agenda a guide for the development of its policies and investments. Climate change has placed India and Spain on a common front in the face of global problems such as the scarcity of water resources. Both countries share common challenges, albeit with different dimensions, in mobility, sustainability and environment that demand collaborative and ambitious solutions. Spain and India have already demonstrated the success of their technological

cooperation for sustainability, with Spanish technology companies playing a key role in sectors such as wind energy and the water cycle in India. The strengthening of bilateral programs with joint funding is an extraordinary opportunity for Spain and India to collaborate in the development of technology for sustainable growth and for the synergies between the two business fabrics to be converted into ambitious joint projects.

New frontiers for bilateral cooperation and joint growth

The COVID-19 pandemic has rediscovered a virtual world and digital tools that can be essential to bridge the gap between the two countries. Digital matchmaking platforms are proving that they can play an essential role in facilitating the still pending meeting and identification of opportunities between our unknown civil societies and business fabrics, facilitating exchange and collaboration in an efficient manner. Both the major technology hubs in India and the Indian diaspora abroad have demonstrated an unparalleled capacity and propensity for digital entrepreneurship. Barcelona and Madrid are, equally, world capitals for start-ups, cities of choice for growing digital expatriates, and venues for major international gatherings such as the Mobile World Congress. The connection between both entrepreneurial fabrics and the implementation of joint digital projects are a new frontier to explore in order to facilitate the digital conversion of our economies.

The new investment programs for economic growth after the end of the pandemic are an essential opportunity for the internationalization of Spanish companies in India. The European Union's commitment to India, which may be strengthened during the first half of 2021 in the planned meeting of Narendra Modi with European leaders under the Portuguese presidency, will

mean a new scenario for investment in projects within the framework of research and innovation programmes, the European Investment Bank or the Erasmus+ programme. This participation of the European Union in the sustainable and innovative growth of India, together with the programmes of the multilateral financial institutions, represent an opportunity for Spanish companies to participate in projects for India's growth and thus manage to establish themselves with certain guarantees in the local market. The participation of large Spanish companies in these projects would also have a beneficial knock-on effect for Spanish SMEs supplying their value chain, as is already happening in sectors such as wind energy or automotive components.

The exponential growth of the Indian education system and its openness to international investment, the internationalization of the Spanish university system and the development of collaborations in joint international programs, the mobility and European collaboration programs, the expansion of Spanish in India and the new opportunities in digital education make up an optimal scenario for the still pending priority collaboration between educational entities of both countries. From this educational cooperation, projects that increase the necessary mobility could be born, promoting the essential exchanges between civil societies, the connection between the new generations and joint research projects. Only two civil societies interconnected in such depth could boost mutual knowledge from the bottom up.

Spain and India face the decade 2021-2030 with solid pillars in their bilateral cooperation such as multilateral engagement, partnership in security and defence, and collaboration in science, technology and innovation. The current international juncture is an ideal time to upgrade our bilateral relations from the current Partnership for Peace, Growth and Innovation to a

multi-sectoral strategic alliance. A new strategic cooperation framework would make it possible to maintain the continuity of governmental contacts; to establish collaboration agreements in those pending priority sectors, such as education or urban development; and to generate joint projects and calls for proposals based on mutual interest in areas such as scientific innovation or digital entrepreneurship. A visit to India by Spain at the highest level could lay the foundations for this strategic alliance, just as the celebration of the promised Spain Year in India would be the appropriate political and financial mandate to boost this strategic relationship, promoting exchanges between our civil societies and fostering mutual knowledge.

II.

The role of the Spain-India Council Foundation in energizing our bilateral relations

Privileged observer of Spain-India relations

The Spain-India Council Foundation (hereinafter Council Foundation) was founded in 2009, within the framework of the network of Council Foundations promoted and coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain with the mission of **promoting mutual multi-sectoral knowledge** between Spain and India. The Council Foundation was created under the impulse of Antonio Escámez, President of the Santander Foundation, Joan Rosàs, Director of International Relations of CaixaBank, Mohan Chainani, President of Chaincorp, and José Eugenio Salarich, at that time Director General for Asia and the Pacific of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain.

It is currently **chaired by Juan Ignacio Entrecanales**, Vice-President of Acciona, with Iñigo de Palacio, Global Director for Institutional Relations at INDRA, and Antonio Montes, Chief Relationship Officer at IE Business School, as Vice-Presidents. The diplomat José Leandro Consarnau is the Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Council Foundations, whose board of trustees is made up of representatives from different ministries, city councils, universities and public institutions, as well as private entities and companies from different fields and sectors with an interest in the promotion of Indo-Spanish relations.

Due to its **public-private composition**, the Council Foundation serves as a meeting point between governmental and private organizations, favouring a vision close to the reality of those working on the ground in our bilateral relations and bringing together the efforts of all entities interested in promoting Spain-India relations. As a **civil society platform**, the Council Foundation cooperates with different Indo-Spanish entities and actors, favouring the coordination and promotion of joint initiatives and activities. Finally, the **multi-sectoral nature** of its board of trustees enables its action to have a capillarity in all strategic areas of Spain-India relations. Thanks to these unique characteristics as a public-private entity that acts as a civil society platform for the development of activities with multi-sectoral impact, the Council Foundation has been occupying its place as a privileged observer of Spain-India relations, a role that has been endorsed in the development of this project.

Platform for bilateral civil society meetings and collaboration

The multi-sectoral nature of the Spain-India Council Foundation has allowed it to consolidate in its first decade of activity a series of flagship programs whose main mission has been to bring

together the civil societies of both countries in those priority sectors where there are shared interests. These programmes are configured as a platform for the meeting of the main actors of both countries with the aim of favouring mutual knowledge and joint collaboration. Numerous institutions, entities and actors have collaborated in their development and execution, reaffirming the value of the Council Foundation as a space for the meeting and collaboration of bilateral civil society.

The **Indian Leaders Program (ILP)** –with seven editions in areas such as media, university education, parliamentarism, urban development, water management or entrepreneurship– is a sectorial visitor program designed on an annual basis and aimed at prominent Indian professionals, leaders in their fields of activity. The ILP is articulated in a work agenda, with a duration of five days, in which the invited professionals get to know an updated version of the Spanish reality, through institutional meetings, bilateral dialogues and technical visits, thus facilitating the exchange with Spanish entities and leaders in their sector. The ultimate goal of the ILP is not only to create a professional and emotional bond between the participants and Spain, but also to provide them with a network of contacts with professionals in their sector from which exchange opportunities may arise.

With the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain, the Spain-India Council Foundation organizes the **Spain-India Forum**, held so far on two occasions in the areas of transport infrastructure and renewable energy. The Spain-India Forum is structured in a two-day programme that includes an agenda of sessions with participants from both countries to promote knowledge of sectoral strengths, a series of technical visits to complement the bilateral dialogue on the ground and networking activities to enhance collaboration between entities and

actors from both countries. The ultimate goal of the Spain-India Forum is to identify opportunities and synergies between the two countries.

Space for bilateral dialogue and tool for public diplomacy

The Spain-India Council Foundation, placed at the centre of bilateral relations thanks to its public-private composition, has proved to be a useful tool for making the most of opportunities for bilateral exchange and collaboration. Among the examples that illustrate this privileged position are the meetings that the Council Foundation organises within the **framework of official visits or trips to Spain by Indian experts**, as has recently happened with the Indian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, a delegation from the Ahmedabad City Council or the prestigious expert Mukul Kesavan. The Council Foundation has proven to be a useful and flexible instrument of public diplomacy to promote public-private exchanges, taking advantage of the presence of Indian leaders in Spain.

As a non-profit foundation with the mission of promoting bilateral mutual understanding, the Council Foundation has become a **space for cooperation for all those bilateral entities or those with bilateral impact**. The Council Foundation not only collaborates with its patron entities in the development of its bilateral activities, but also with other entities interested in promoting Spain-India relations, such as the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) or the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), which participated in the first and second Spain-India Forum respectively. During the complex year 2020, the Council Foundation has initiated a new stage of collaboration with the Indo-Spanish Chamber of Commerce, as reflected in this project. An example of this open cooperation



Participants in the 2018 Indian Leaders Program during their visit to the Canal de Isabel II facilities in Madrid.

model of the Council Foundation was the webinar "Accelerating Digital Transformation: Synergies between Spain and India" held in November 2020 in collaboration with the Indo-Spanish Chamber of Commerce, in which the Ambassador of India in Spain, Sanjay Verma, participated along with representatives of different trustees of the Council Foundation such as Viswanathan & Co, IE Business School, the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) or Indra, among other experts.

In its efforts to promote mutual understanding, the Council Foundation **brings its activities to different parts of Spain**. Both the Spain-India dialogues, organized by the Council Foundation between women, *think-tanks* or Spanish and Indian SMEs, and the different editions of the

ILP have been held in different Spanish cities such as Barcelona, Zaragoza, Bilbao, Santander, Valladolid, Murcia or Valencia. In this way, the Council Foundation has managed to show a diverse vision of Spain, bringing Indian visitors closer to the main innovative centers of each of the priority sectors and allowing the network of exchanges to reach a large number of Spanish autonomous communities.



The chairman of the Spain-India Council Foundation, Juan Ignacio Entrecanales, during the meeting of the Board of Trustees held in Valladolid in December 2018.

Promoter of mutual knowledge and repository of bilateral memory

The Spain-India Council Foundation has managed to position its website as the main source of information on Indo-Spanish bilateral relations. The website of the Council Foundation not only contains all the programmes and activities of the Council Foundation but also the main news of interest on India-Spain exchanges, as well as the main documents of bilateral relevance. In this way, the Council Foundation's website has become a **unique repository of the bilateral memory** to which both entities and interested persons turn to keep themselves informed. An illustrative example of the importance of this search and compilation of bilateral information on the Council Foundation's website is the importance it has had in the documentation of this project, as

is reflected in the bibliography section of each of the sectoral working documents.

Along with this static work of collecting bilateral information, the Council Foundation carries out a dynamic work of **dissemination and promotion of mutual knowledge through its social networks**. Between its profiles and channels on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube, the Council Foundation has more than 4,400 followers who are constantly kept informed of the main news and activities with a bilateral impact. The Council Foundation also uses its digital tools as a loudspeaker for other bilateral entities that see how the dissemination of their activities reaches a greater number of people thanks to the echo they find in the Council Foundation's social networks.

The Council Foundation has also promoted the recognition of the work of those persons or entities that have stood out for their contribution to the mutual knowledge between Spain and India in their various fields of action or in the development of initiatives that promote bilateral exchanges. Through the **Spain-India Council Foundation Award**, key figures in our bilateral relations, such as Zubin Mehta, Viswanathan Anand, Zoya Akhtar or Carlos Saura, have been recognized for their efforts in bringing the two countries closer together. This recognition by the Council Foundation through its Award is a unique tool to show bilateral appreciation for the efforts of those key players in our bilateral relations without whom Spain and India would remain more distant and less in touch.

Ideas and proposals for the growth of the Spain-India Council Foundation in the decade 2021-2030

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After this decade of bilateral work, the Spain-India Council Foundation has consolidated its position as a privileged observer of bilateral relations and has demonstrated its value as a platform for bilateral civil society, as a space for Indo-Spanish dialogue, as a tool for public diplomacy, as a repository of bilateral memory and as a promoter of mutual knowledge. The Council Foundation is ready to face new challenges in the next decade. Among the ideas and proposals that could help the Spain-India Council Foundation move up a notch in its work to promote Indo-Spanish relations, if budgetary resources permit, are:

1. The Spain-India Council Foundation has once again demonstrated, through the implementation of this project, that it can bring together all entities and individuals interested in Indo-Spanish relations, from public institutions and policymakers to private entities and bilateral experts working in the field, promoting initiatives that integrate the majority of the bilateral civil society. The Council Foundation is poised to expand its role as a privileged observer of Spain-India relations and an instrument of public diplomacy, becoming **a leader of Indo-Spanish initiatives and positioning itself at the centre of the bilateral debate**. In the main bilateral activities and milestones of the next decade, such as the celebration of Spain's year in India, the Council Foundation could play an essential role of coordination and active participation.
2. Although the Council Foundation has a diverse base of trustees, both public-private and multisectoral, many entities with great bilateral relevance are not yet

- part of its board of trustees. **Promoting and supporting the Council Foundation so that it can broaden this base of trustees with new incorporations** would be essential to increase its multisectoral profile, fostering a greater impact and capillarity of its initiatives, and increase its budget in accordance with the role it is called upon to play in bilateral relations.
3. Having demonstrated its drive to develop bilateral activities in Spain and its capacity to collaborate with bilateral entities based in India, such as the Indo-Spanish Chamber of Commerce, the Council Foundation is prepared to expand the scope of its activities and develop part of them in India. The **identification and alliance with one or several counterparts in India would facilitate its better implantation in India** and an optimal design of bilateral activities to be implemented in India.
 4. The Indian Leaders Programme (ILP) is the longest-running and most recognised programme of the Council Foundation. The success of its seven editions and the high valuation it receives from those Spanish entities and Indian leaders who participate in it demonstrate its value as an instrument of encounter and bilateral knowledge. In order to achieve greater continuity in the contacts established and for these exchanges to give rise to joint collaborations, it would be advisable to select in future editions **participating leaders with younger and more enterprising profiles, with an interest in creating an international network of contacts and with the initiative to develop joint projects.**
 5. The work of connecting the institutional and private fabrics of Spain and India is still a pending task in various strategic sectors of Indo-Spanish relations. The **Spain-India Forum could become an essential tool for the matchmaking of sectoral actors from both countries.** Holding forums in areas such as urban governance, university education, the water cycle or digital entrepreneurship would be essential to bring together entities from both countries, expose the strengths of both systems and identify opportunities for collaboration. To ensure the effectiveness of these editions, the use of virtual tools could be used to facilitate both prior knowledge and the continuity of contacts.
 6. The Council Foundation has proven to be a useful tool for providing an up-to-date view of Spain and making the most of high-level visits. Among the new initiatives that could be promoted in the next decade are **individualised programmes for Indian experts in Spain**, such as parliamentarians, businessmen, journalists or scientists, including institutional and private meetings, bilateral dialogues open to the public and visits to leading centres and entities in their professional field.
 7. In these years of bilateral action, the Spain-India Council Foundation has created a multisectoral network of contacts that has become one of its main assets. Those who have participated in the activities of the Council Foundation have become ambassadors of Spain in their respective fields of action. The **creation of a group of alumni or ambassadors with those experts who have participated in the Council Foundation programmes** would allow these people to maintain their link with Spain, offer them a direct channel of communication with the Council Foundation and generate an active network of contacts from which new initiatives and collaborations can emerge.



This network could have a virtual platform with restricted access to leaders that would maintain interaction and exchange among them.

8. The website of the Council Foundation is the largest repository of bilateral news and is the main memory space on Indo-Spanish relations of the last decade. It is essential for the Council Foundation to continue its commitment to the **bilingualism of the website** so that it can position itself in India as a bilateral entity of reference, facilitating access to all bilateral information in English and increasing the scope of its dissemination and impact among interested persons and entities.
9. The social networks of the Council Foundation are a key element in the dissemination of bilateral knowledge, providing the virtual

world with continuous information on the main bilateral news and being a loudspeaker of the main Indo-Spanish activities. The **creation of its own content on social networks** would be essential to continue promoting mutual knowledge in those areas where there is a lower incidence of bilateral news. Similarly, the commitment to bilingualism in the dissemination of news and activities through social networks, which could start with a Twitter account in English, would allow access to a greater number of followers and achieve a greater virtual impact.

10. As a result of this exercise of joint reflection, the **creation of a Spain-India Observatory** would make it possible to maintain this momentum for the dissemination and promotion of mutual knowledge from an open window in the digital world to Indo-Spanish

relations. This virtual space, which could be created on the basis of the knowledge maps generated in this exercise, would serve as an updated repository of bilateral information and data, and as a space for bilateral dialogue for the exchange of ideas between the two countries. This process of joint reflection has generated the first bilateral publication of the Spain-India Council Foundation, following previous collaborations with the Elcano Royal Institute. Given the lack of a critical mass of bilateral publications that promote Indo-Spanish knowledge and dialogue, the Council Foundation could **promote the generation of a series of reports and articles**, within the framework of the Spain-India Observatory, which would be grouped in a collection of digital documents called Spain-India Dialogues.