

Creative multilateralism: Stronger collaboration for all

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The international system stands at a critical juncture, facing slow global economic growth, rising inequalities and challenges to the rules-based global order that has underpinned decades of peace and prosperity. Many governments are working to recalibrate their global engagement and do what they can to safeguard an open, progressive world.*

Spearheading this are five quite diverse countries—Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia—which have come together to form an innovative

partnership, called MIKTA. Though an informal grouping, MIKTA could prove to be a model for the type of dynamic modern diplomacy and international co-operation currently needed to bridge divides and strengthen a multilateral system.

The MIKTA grouping is unique: our five partners represent the diversity of the international community, drawing ideas and perspectives from our different regional, cultural, religious and historical traditions. And yet, the strength of our shared interests—a commitment to a rules-based global order and international institutions that work for all—transcends our diversity. What matters is what unites us.

This is more important today than at any point in living memory. The benefits of the global trading system and other multilateral fora and initiatives are being questioned, with a strong backlash coming from its founding champions. The global economy is experiencing significant and long-term change, bringing opportunities for many, but difficulty for others. Moreover, a new scepticism has emerged. There are many who feel that globalisation simply does not correspond to them or answer to their needs. The international organisations that nurtured the framework of rules-based order that underpinned our peace and prosperity, including the OECD, now face accusations from some quarters that they are part of the problem rather than the solution. In this uncertain climate, the multilateral system as a whole needs constructive partnerships to bring countries together, and find common approaches to complex and challenging issues. This is the mission that MIKTA countries are crafting for our partnership. As a bridge-builder and consensus-maker, we are working to facilitate dialogue and constructively contribute to debate in a range of forums. Through this, we can make the multilateral system work for many. Take our MIKTA Workshop on Trade and Investment at the World Trade Organisation, for example. There, our dialogue led to concrete ideas on where the WTO can add value, particularly on trade and investment policy coherence and investment facilitation. The initiative was a testament to what can be accomplished when developing and developed economies work together. In this forum, and many others, the MIKTA group's diversity was a source of strength. In working for the multilateral system, we also support efforts to improve the functioning and governance of international organisations. This includes bringing international energy governance up to date by making it more inclusive of the needs of emerging and developing economies. This thinking is reflected in the ambitious two-year modernisation agenda of the International Energy Agency. Diverse, yet like-minded: this is what underpins MIKTA, and can serve as a model for other countries seeking to work together to uphold global peace and prosperity. What makes us different makes what we share all the more worth defending: the rules-based global order that we all depend on.

*By the ambassadors of Mexico, Korea, Turkey and Australia to the OECD: Ms Monica Aspe, Mexico; Mr Jong-Won Yoon, Korea; Mr Erdem Başçı, Turkey; Mr Brian Pontifex, Australia; and Indonesia's Ambassador to France, Mr Hotmangaradja Pandjaitan.

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