

Embassy of India, Guatemala City

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India-Guatemala Bilateral Relations

Political:

India and Guatemala enjoy cordial and friendly relations. The diplomatic relations were established in the late 1970s. The visit of Shri Anand Sharma, the Minister of State for External Affairs, in June 2007, was the first-ever ministerial visit from India to Guatemala. After this visit, both countries decided to open their Embassies in respective countries. The Embassy of India in Guatemala was opened in December 2009 and became fully functional in mid-2010. Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Guatemala from April 29 to May 1, 2011. He formally inaugurated the Embassy on April 29, 2011 in the presence of H.E. Mr. Alvaro Colom Caballeros, the then President of Guatemala and other invited dignitaries and guests.

Guatemala opened its Embassy in New Delhi in April 2013 and the first resident Ambassador of Guatemala to India, presented his credentials in April, 2014. Ambassador Carlos Raúl Morales Moscoso, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala visited New Delhi and formally inaugurated the Embassy of Guatemala in New Delhi in October, 2014.

Bilateral agreements:

- Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation, signed in 1981.
- Agreement for visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders signed in May, 2015.

Bilateral Visits from India:

June, 2007: Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs

May, 2011: Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs

April, 2014: Secretary (West) and Joint Secretary (LAC) for the first Foreign Office Consultations

May 2015: Shri V. K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs to participate in the India-SICA Foreign Ministers meeting.

Bilateral Visits from Guatemala:

May, 2005: Mr. Jorge Britz, Minister of External Relations

August 2007: Mr. Gert Rosenthal, Foreign Minister

June, 2008: Mr. Haroldo Rodas Melgar, Foreign Minister to attend the India-SICA meeting.

Oct. 2014: Mr. Carlos Raúl Morales, Foreign Minister, accompanied by Mr. Rodrigo Viemann, Vice Foreign Minister, Mr. Sergio De La Torre, Minister of Economy and seven Guatemalan Businessmen to attend the VI India-LAC Investment Conclave.

Oct. 2015: Vice Foreign Minister Rodrigo Viemann to participate in the India-LAC Conclave.

Central American Integration System (SICA): India-SICA Foreign Ministers' (FM) meeting is an important forum for India's interaction with Central American countries, including Guatemala. Under India-SICA FM-level forum, three meetings have been held: In February, 2004; in June, 2008; and in May, 2015. The third meeting was held during the visit of MOS(VKS), Gen. V. K. Singh, to Guatemala.

The following outcomes have been achieved through India-SICA interactions: (i) India announced enhanced Line of Credit facility to each SICA country from US \$ 10 mn. to US \$ 30 mn. in 2015. The EXIM Bank of India has also extended a US\$ 10 million commercial LOC to the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), to finance regional projects; (ii) India agreed to share its experience to meet challenges of food security and energy security with SICA member countries; (iii) India offered cooperation and assistance in priority areas such as agriculture, SMEs, pharmaceuticals, tourism, IT-related activities, renewable energy, plantation, disaster management, distant education and supply of satellite imagery for development purposes, etc.; (iv) Increasing of ITEC scholarship slots to SICA countries from 100 to 200, and allocation of ten additional ITEC slots exclusively for SICA Secretariat; (v) Signing of agreements pertaining to abolition of visa for Diplomatic and Official passport-holders between India and Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua and MOUs on Foreign Office Consultations with Costa Rica and Honduras; and (vi) Extension of e-Visa facility to SICA countries.

India has also proposed the following to SICA: (i) Setting up of an India-SICA Business Forum. The Indian side conveyed that the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) would be the coordinating Chamber of Commerce from India. SICA member countries were requested to identify their nodal agency for coordinating with CII; (ii) Meeting between Foreign Ministers of SICA and EAM once in two years either in India or in a SICA country, apart from meetings on the side lines of UNGA every year; (iii) Setting up of a Regional Barefoot Vocational Training Centre in Guatemala which would be open for all SICA member countries; and (iv) Setting up of an IT Training Centre in Belize, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

**Trade and Economic:
Indo-Guatemala Trade (in million US \$)**

Year (April - March)	Imports from Guatemala	Exports to Guatemala	Total trade	% Growth
2010-2011	40.18	112.68	152.86	64.57
2011-2012	06.71	191.29	198.00	29.52
2012-2013	08.31	224.61	232.92	17.64
2013-2014	13.12	212.36	225.48	-03.19
2014-2015	17.12	229.01	246.13	09.16
2015-2016	12.52	255.96	268.48	09.08
2016(April-September)	11.51	120.56	132.07	--

Major items of export: Articles of Iron & Steel, cotton, Machinery & Mechanical Appliances and Parts thereof, Organic chemicals, Pharmaceutical products, Rubber & articles thereof, Vehicles and its parts & accessories. Electrical Machinery and equipment and parts thereof, miscellaneous edible preparations,

Major items of import: Wood & articles thereof, wood charcoal, Sugar and Sugar confectionery, Coffee, Cardamom and Aluminium & articles thereof.

Commercial Engagements: Praj Industries Limited, noted Indian company in the field of alternative fuels, is supplying equipment for ethanol production plants. B Fouress (P) Limited a well-known Indian company in hydro-electric field has operations in Guatemala. Hero motorcycles, Mahindra vehicles, Bajaj 2 and 3 wheelers are sold in Guatemala. Many Indian pharmaceutical products are being sold in Guatemala through representatives. Textiles (Raymond) and soap products (Nirma) are being introduced into the market. Two persons from Guatemala took part in IPHEX 2016 on the invitation from Pharmexcil. Two persons were selected to participate in the 16th edition of IndiaSoft 2016 held at Mumbai in March, 2016. A Guatemala-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry was set up in 2004 but is not fully functional owing to lack of regular office-bearers;

An interactive meeting with Indian and Guatemalan businessmen dealing in Indian products and representing Indian companies was held on March 29, 2016 to exchange ideas on promoting Indian products and increasing the visibility of Brand India in Guatemala, El Salvador & Honduras. The first Virtual Business Exploratory Summit between entrepreneurs from Guatemala City and Indian companies based in Mumbai was conducted over Skype on 27th April, 2016. Ten

major companies including Aptech, Sandu, Vithal Kamats, Raymond, Jetking, Shahnaz Husain, etc. participated.

The second “Make In India” event was held in Guatemala, jointly with the Chamber of Industry of Guatemala, and in association with the Chamber of Commerce, Banco Credito Hipotecario Nacional (CHN) and the apex export promotion body, AGEXPORT on 8th September, 2016. Two representatives from EXIM Bank India (Washington D.C. / New Delhi) took part in the event. Around 90 invitees from various government and business entities attended the event. The event consisted of presentations, a panel discussion on trade and investment relations between India and Guatemala as well as an Interactive Q&A session with the audience; the event concluded with a net-working session.

Trade delegations from India:

- Oct. 2005: India participated in the INTERFER Trade Exhibition
- March, 2007: Plastics Export Promotion Council (PLEXCONCIL) delegation
- February, 2010: Coffee Board delegation to attend World Coffee Conference.
- November, 2010: Spices Board of India delegation to visit Cardamom plantations
- March, 2011: EEPC delegation
- 2012: March: PLEXCONCIL delegation
August: TEXPROCIL delegation
September: PHARMEXCIL delegation
- October, 2013: EEPC delegation
- 2014: February: CHEMEXCIL delegation
March: TEXPROCIL delegation
April: PLEXCONCIL delegation
August: PHARMEXCIL delegation
- May, 2015: TEXPROCIL delegation

ITEC: Guatemala is an ITEC partner country since 1997- 98. The number of ITEC slots for Guatemala in 2016-17 is 15. Guatemala has already utilized all the slots by September, 2016 and two additional slots were approved by Ministry before the mid-term review. Ministry has been approached to consider allotment of more slots for this year keeping in view the keen interest of Guatemala to utilize the ITEC.

IT Center: Government of India, in an effort to contribute to capacity building in Guatemala, set up an IT Training Center in San Carlos University in August 2006. Tata Communications Services (TCS) ran this IT Center till July 2008, training about 1,500 Guatemalans, before it was handed over to the Guatemalans.

Donations: India donated US\$50,000 worth of medicines following Hurricane Stan in October 2005, 36 Bajaj three-wheelers in October 2005, and responding to Guatemala Government's food insecurity declaration, provided assistance of US\$250,000 in November 2009, US\$ 100,000 for Disaster Relief in the aftermath of the earthquake that struck Guatemala in November 2012, US \$ 200,000 for Drought relief in December 2014 and installed some solar powered traffic signaling system in May, 2015.

Cultural Exchanges:

Cultural cooperation so far has been limited to Indian cultural troupes visiting from India to Guatemala. A 15-member Odissi dance troupe visited Guatemala for a performance "Shyama" on 18th October, 2011. Academic and other linkages are being encouraged and visits by Indian academicians have been well received. The Embassy organized a tourism road-show in Guatemala in association with India Tourism Office in New York in December, 2015.

There are numerous yoga schools in Guatemala with considerable followers. The second International Day of Yoga was held in Plaza Obelisco in Guatemala on 19th June, 2016 which was attended by around 500 persons. Brahma Kumaris, Hare Krishna and Sathya Sai Baba have followers in Guatemala.

Guatemala Visa:

With effect from June 6, 2011 for Indian nationals who are holders of ordinary passports, visa will not be required to enter Guatemala if they have valid visas of United States of America, Canada or Schengen. All Indian nationals not having these visas will be required to obtain prior visa to enter Guatemala. The Guatemalan Embassy in New Delhi is fully functional, and issue visas to Indians.

Air Links/Travel:

There are no direct flights between Guatemala and India. Convenient connections are available via United States, Mexico and Europe.

Indian community:

The Indian community in Guatemala is small and consist of about 100 individuals in all, working in the Indian Call Centers like '24/7 Customer-Guatemala' and 'Genpact', in cardamom export trade, in auto parts business, or in cottage industries. Most of them came to Guatemala during the last two decades.

Besides, there are around 500 people of India origin who came to this region as indentured laborers during the 19th and early 20 centuries and settled in the coastal Guatemala on Atlantic and a small township of Livingstone. They live in villages, own land, and are involved in fishing, agriculture and tourism sectors. They are mostly 4th-5th generation Indians, and by now well integrated into the local community.

Useful Resources:

For more information and latest updates, please visit Embassy of India in Guatemala website: <http://www.indemguatemala.org>
Embassy of India, Guatemala Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EmbajadaIndiaGuatemala>
Embassy of India, Guatemala Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/IndianEmbassyGT>
