

## **India-Paraguay Bilateral Relations**

### **Political Relations**

The Embassy of India in Buenos Aires, Argentina, is concurrently accredited to Paraguay. Diplomatic relations between India and Paraguay were established in 1961. Relations between India and Paraguay are cordial and friendly. Mr. Rodolfo Javier Zuccolillo has been appointed as India's Honorary Consul. The Embassy of Paraguay in India was officially opened in March 2006. Apart from the Embassy in New Delhi, Paraguay has Honorary Consulates in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. The Embassy of Paraguay in India is also concurrently accredited to Sri Lanka.

2. The first round of Foreign Office Consultations between the two countries was held in October 2010 and second round in August 2015. The Paraguayan delegation to the second round of Foreign Office Consultations was led by its Vice Foreign Minister Mr. Oscar Cabello. Discussions on various issues including trade and investment, agriculture, tourism, technical cooperation, MERCOSUR and UNSC reforms were held during the consultations.

3. In April 2015, Shri R. Swaminathan, then Secretary for Americas, visited Paraguay and called upon the Foreign Minister, Presidential Chief of Protocol, Agriculture and Industry Ministers of Paraguay and discussed a wide range of issues of bilateral co-operation with a special focus on promoting bilateral agro trade.

4. The then President of Paraguay Mr. Fernando Lugo visited India in May 2012, accompanied by Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and Commerce, and senior officials. It was the first ever visit of the President of Paraguay to India and provided an opportunity to renew engagement with Paraguay and to expand the mutually beneficial relations between the two countries.

### **Visits.**

#### **Important Visits from Paraguay to India**

2002	Mr. Jose Antonio Moreno Ruffinelli, Foreign Minister
2004	Mrs. Leila Rachid, Foreign Minister
2005	Mrs. Leila Rachid, Foreign Minister
2010	Parliamentary Delegation
2012	Mr. Fernando Lugo Mendez, President
2015	Mr. Oscar Cabello, Vice Foreign Minister

#### **Important Visits from India to Paraguay**

2002	Shri Digvijay Singh, MOS, MEA
2003	Shri Satyabrata Mookherjee, MOS, Ministry of Commerce & Industry
2012	Smt Meira Kumar, Speaker, Lok Sabha
2015	Shri R. Swaminathan, Secretary (Americas)

### **Bilateral Agreements.**

5. An Agreement on Exemption of Visa for holders of Diplomatic and Official passports was signed in 1996.

#### **Technical Cooperation and Training.**

6. India extends ITEC scholarships to working professionals from Paraguay every year. Paraguayan diplomats attend the training courses in the Foreign Service Institute of India from time to time.

#### **Support in Multilateral Fora.**

7. India and Paraguay always support each other on major international issues as well as India's candidature to various UN and multilateral bodies.

#### **Commercial Relations**

##### **Bilateral Trade (US\$ in million).**

8. Bilateral trade for the last 6 years is as follows:

Year	India's Exports	Growth	India's Imports	Growth	Total Trade	Growth
2010	60	-	72	-	132	-
2011	78	30%	28	-60%	107	-19%
2012	89	14%	15	-48%	104	-3%
2013	100	12%	22	50%	122	17%
2014	113	13%	49	121%	162	33%
2015	145	29%	67	36%	212	27%
2016	142	-2%	69	3%	211	-0.5%

(Source: MERCOSURonline)

##### **India's Exports to Paraguay.**

9. Organic chemicals, vehicles, auto parts, cosmetics, machinery, pharma, plastics, sound and image devices, aluminum, rubber products etc. are the major items of export.

##### **India's Imports from Paraguay.**

10. Major imports include soya oil (94% of imports) sunflower oil, leather and wood. Indian imports of soya and sunflower oil are expected to increase in the coming years, given the growing shortage of edible oil in India. Other imports include resins for cosmetics, ferroalloys and vegetal coal.

##### **Investment, Joint Ventures and Business Delegations.**

11. A joint venture plant, CARMENTA, between a Paraguayan firm, LML India and AlokMasterbatches was set up in Paraguay in January 2013 to produce masterbatches (plastic industry). Mahindra distributes its vehicles through distributorships in Paraguay. TCS is considering opening its operations in Paraguay shortly.

A Pharmexcil delegation comprising of 40 Pharma companies (mainly producers of generic drugs and traditional / ayurvedic medicines) from India

organized B2S meetings and met various government officials in Asuncion from 26-29 August 2015.

Seminars on how to do business with India have been organised by the Mission in collaboration with the Paraguayan Ministry of External Affairs and Paraguayan National Chamber of Commerce in 2012 and 2013.

An eight member CII delegation visited Paraguay during 23-26 September 2012 to explore opportunities for Indian business and investment in Paraguay. The delegation met Paraguayan Minister for Agriculture Mr. Enzo Cardozo, Minister for Tourism Ms. Liz Cnamer, Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Manuel Maria Caceres, and Minister for Industry and Commerce Mr. Francisco Rivas in Asuncion.

The Embassy organized a business seminar in Asuncion on 8 March 2010 during the visit of an EEPC delegation. Paraguayan Minister of Industries Mr. Don Francisco Rivas was the keynote speaker. The seminar contributed to the Paraguayan understanding of the Indian market and opportunities for business between the two countries

### **Cultural Relations**

The Embassy organized a Festival of India in 2009 and 2010 in Asuncion and Ciudad del Este. The Paraguayan Tourism Minister was the Chief Guest at the Festival. The Embassy also organized a 5 day Food Festival of India in Paraguay in September 2013 and 10 days in November 2014 in collaboration with ITDC, Ministry of Tourism. The event was attended by several Paraguay Foreign Ministry officials and eminent local business persons. The Third International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Asuncion in collaboration with local yoga schools and Ministry of Sports of Paraguay on 17 June 2017.

### **Indian Community**

About 600 Indians live in Paraguay, mainly in Ciudad del Este, a city in the south-east of Paraguay on the border with Brazil and Argentina. Roughly 200 of them are NRIs and the remaining are PIOs who are in trading, wholesale and retail business. Most of them are of Gujarati and Sindhi origin.

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#### **Useful Resources:**

[Mission's Webpage](#)

[India in Argentina, Mission's Facebook Page](#)

[Mission's Youtube Channel](#)

[Mission's Twitter Page](#)

[Directory of Yoga Institutions and Schools in Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay](#)

[A Guide to Do Business with Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay](#)