

## **India – El Salvador Bilateral Brief**

### **Political:**

The Embassy of India in Guatemala is concurrently accredited to El Salvador. El Salvador opened its Embassy with a resident Ambassador in New Delhi in 2008.

El Salvador and India enjoy close and friendly relations. Regular Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between two countries has helped both countries to keep momentum in bilateral relations. The last FOC (fourth) was held in New Delhi on 01 May 2023, in which the Indian side was led by Shri Saurabh Kumar, Secretary(East), and the El Salvadoran side was led by Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Adriana Mira. Both sides comprehensively reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations including health, trade & investment, tourism, aquaculture, energy, transport and aviation. And also discussed areas like infrastructure, culture, consular and development partnership.

El Salvador has been consistently supporting India at the multilateral stage over the years.

El Salvador is a member of International Solar Alliance (ISA) and has signed the ISA Framework Agreement on 26/06/2018 and ratified it on 6/11/2019.

### **High-Level Visits from India:**

- (i) In July 2015, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen Dr. V K Singh visited San Salvador, El Salvador, to attend the Eight Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies.
- (ii) In January 2023, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi, visited El Salvador.

### **High-Level Visits from El Salvador:**

- (i) H.E. Ms. Alexandra Hill Tinoco, Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador visited India in February 2023.

### **Bilateral Agreements:**

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of El Salvador on cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation.
- MOU on consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of External Relations of the Republic of El Salvador.
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of El Salvador and the Government of the Republic of India on abolition of visa requirement for holders of Diplomatic and Official passports.

### **Commercial relations:**

Commercial relations are on the upswing with India exporting goods worth US\$ 126.98 million in 2022-23. Pharmaceuticals, textiles (especially cotton yarn and fibres), Chemicals, engineering products, automobiles- two and three wheelers, motor vehicles/cars, auto components and parts, iron and steel, industrial

machinery and parts, electrical machinery and equipment are the top products exported to Honduras. El Salvador is close to US and due to its strategic location; there are huge opportunities for Indian IT companies for nearshoring from where they can serve the U.S. markets. Indian automobiles, engineering products, pharmaceuticals and textiles have a decent market in this country and the scope of expansion is enormous. There is one Indian BPO company in the country which has given direct employments to around 400 Salvadorians.

**India-El Salvador Trade (in million US \$):**

Year ( April - March)	Imports from El Salvador	Exports to El Salvador	Total trade
2018-2019	4.20	78.66	82.86
2019-2020	3.2	79.34	82.55
2020-2021	3.82	84.12	87.94
2021-2022	4.11	162.06	166.17
2022-2023	2.31	126.98	129.29
2023-2024 (Apr-June)	0.99	39.67	40.66

**Developmental Assistance:**

India's development cooperation has been robust with El Salvador. Over the years, India has been supportive to El Salvador, during COVID times; India supplied essential medicines and PPE kits. Similarly, earlier, India supplied medicines during the 1998 Hurricane Mitch and in August 2005.

IT Centre: The IT Centre was established and functioned for 2 years successfully with the assistance of Government of India through NIIT. On the request of El Salvador, it was further extended by one year and after successful completion of the period, the IT Centre was handed over to Salvadoran authorities in June 2011.

India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC): So far 212 Salvadorans have been trained in various courses in India under ITEC scholarships. Five Salvadorian diplomats have been trained at SSIFS under the Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) Programme in 2005, 2012, 2016, 2017 and 2022. Similarly, as a part of 'ITEC On Site' programme, a four-member Indian Mining Expert delegation visited El Salvador from 3-7 October 2022. During their visit, they visited different abandoned mining sites for further studies across El Salvador with the accompanying delegation from the Ministry of Economy of El Salvador.

Recently, Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India organized the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Course on Public Diplomacy for 37 Diplomats of El Salvador, at the SSIFS, New Delhi from 31 July to 11 August 2023.

**Cultural relations:**

There is a growing awareness of Indian culture in El Salvador. To strengthen the

cultural relations, Mission regularly organizes different cultural programmes. As a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Embassy in association with Ministry of Culture of El Salvador organized performances by the ICCR sponsored Kathak troupe led by Ms Soniya Parchure in May 2022 in San Salvador and Santa Ana.

Similarly, to mark the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas), the Mission organized Unity Concerts by ICCR sponsored Indian Music band Purple Fusion in El Salvador cities in the first week of November 2022.

Earlier also various cultural events such as visit of dance troupes from India, like Indian Film Festival (February 2022, and August 2022), Indian Food Festival (September 2021) have been held in El Salvador.

The Embassy and Foreign Ministry of El Salvador came together and hosted the first-ever Diwali celebration in November 2022 and in March 2023, the Embassy and Salvador Culture Ministry, celebrated Festival of Holi in the picturesque Cuscatlán Park in San Salvador, in which more than 5000 Salvadorans and Indian community members participated, Both the events brought together the Indian community and Friends of India, fostering cultural exchange and unity.

Recently, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), India, sponsored 8-member Indian Classical Odissi Dance Group “Sankalp” led by Ms. Kasturi Pattanaik visited El Salvador in June 2023 and gave dance performances in three cities.

International Day of Yoga:As part of a series of yoga events to celebrate IDY2023, the Embassy in association with Ministry of Culture, Government of El Salvador, organized an incredible yoga gathering at the Plaza La Soberania, San Salvador on 30 July 2023, in the presence of Ambassador H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, and Vice Minister of Culture of El Salvador. The yoga event was attended by the Salvadoran and Indian yoga enthusiasts and practitioners.

Indian Community:The numbers of Indians are around twenty. Some of them are working in BPO, pharmaceuticals, hospitality and in a Missionaries of Charity. In November 2022, for the first time, Embassy and Foreign Ministry of El Salvador organized celebrations of Diwali at the premises of the Foreign Ministry, with the Indian community.

#### Useful Resources:

For more information and latest updates, please visit Embassy of India in

Guatemala website: <https://indemguatemala.gov.in>

Facebook:<https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInGuatemala>

Twitter:<https://twitter.com/indiainguate>

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