

Brief on India-Ecuador Relations

Political Relations

India-Ecuador established diplomatic relations in 1969. The Embassy of India in Bogota is concurrently accredited to Ecuador. Initially, Ecuador opened its Embassy in New Delhi in 1973, which functioned till 1977. The Ecuadorian Embassy re-opened in February 2005 and a Consulate General in Mumbai was established in 2013. India and Ecuador signed MoU on Foreign Office Consultations in 2000. So far, four rounds of Foreign Office Consultations have been held between the two countries in 2005, 2008, 2011 and 2014. India has appointed Mr. Eduardo Dousdebes as Honorary Consul in Quito.

2. In April 2018, then EAM met the then Foreign Minister of Ecuador, Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa in Baku on the sidelines of the Mid-term Ministerial Conference of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM). In September 2018, then EAM met the Ecuadorean Foreign Minister, Mr. Jose Samuel Valencia Amoreson the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

Bilateral Visits

3. In August 2014, Ecuadorean Vice Foreign Minister, Mr. Leonardo Arizaga visited India for the tenth round of Foreign Office Consultations. From India, the last high level visit to Ecuador was by former Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen.(Retd.) V.K. Singh in May 2015. In May 2017, then Commerce Secretary visited Ecuador to participate in the first Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) meeting in Guayaquil. From Ecuador, the Ecuadorean Minister of Hydrocarbons, Mr. Carlos E. Pérez attended the 16th Ministerial Meeting organized by the International Energy Forum in New Delhi in April 2018. A list of other important bilateral visits is placed at **Annexure I**.

Agreements signed

4. Several Agreements/ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) have been signed between India and Ecuador for cooperation in the fields of defence, economic and commercial links, technical cooperation and culture.

5. A number of MOUs/Agreements are under consideration of both sides including the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP); Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA); MOU on cooperation in AYUSH; Technical cooperation; Information Technology and Information and Communication Technology (ICT); etc.

Multilateral Cooperation

6. Ecuador has been appreciative of India's role in the UN and has supported UN reforms including reforms of the UN Security Council. Ecuador has expressed support for the permanent membership of India in the UNSC. At the IAEA, Ecuador supported India's Safeguard Agreement in August 2008. Ecuador belongs to the G20 group with India in WTO.

Economic and Commercial relations

9. Under the MOU on Economic Cooperation (2013), a Protocol to establish a Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) was concluded in 2015. In May 2017, at the first meeting of the JETCO, the two countries decided to conclude a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). The Joint Feasibility Studies for the PTA were concluded in July 2019 and a protocol was signed to commence formal negotiations on the PTA in October 2019.

10. From 2018, bilateral trade with Ecuador has started to pick up after experiencing a slump from 2015 due to global fall in oil prices, which adversely affected Ecuador's economy. In 2018, India's exports to Ecuador were US\$ 305.95 million while India's imports from Ecuador were US\$ 221.72 million. The total volume of trade in calendar year 2018 was US\$ 527.67 million. India's main export items to Ecuador: Vehicles, Iron and steel, plastics and related articles, pharmaceutical products, Aluminum and articles thereof, etc. India's main import items from Ecuador: Mineral fuels/oils, wood and articles of wood, cocoa and cocoa preparations, natural pearls & semiprecious stones, coffee etc. In recent years, several Indian Export Promotion Councils have expressed interest in expanding business ties with Ecuador. There is growing demand for Indian pharmaceutical products and automobiles in Ecuador. Mining and oil and gas sector present opportunities.

11. Several Indian companies are operating in Ecuador in the IT sector (Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, etc); pharmaceutical sector (MSN Laboratories, CIPLA, etc); agrochemicals (UPL, Sharda Cropchem Limited, etc); automobiles and tractors (Hero MotoCorp, Bajaj, Mahindra, TVS, Sonalika, etc.). India's investment in Ecuador is estimated to be US\$ 2.3 million, mainly in the construction, agriculture and trade sectors. Ecuadorian investment in India is insignificant.

12. On 9 December 2013, an MoU was signed between OVL and Ministry of Strategic Sectors (MICSE) of Ecuador. The MoU lapsed in 2015 and currently, OVL has no project in Ecuador.

Technical Cooperation

13. Ecuador values the ITEC slots allotted to them since 2002 and the utilization of these slots have been satisfactory. In 2007-08, at the request of Ecuador, a special IT course was conducted exclusively for 56 Ecuadorian nationals. In the current Financial Year viz., 2019-20, 40 ITEC slots have been allocated to Ecuador. In 2018-19, utilization of ITEC slots exceeded the allocation (32 out of 30 slots allocated) and two additional slots were added. At the request of Ecuador to conduct a special training programme in Science and Innovation at the Indian Institute of Science for Vice Chancellors of 25 universities of the country is being organised in February 2020.

14. In June 2007, a Line of Credit (LOC) of US\$ 50 million to Ecuador was announced by then MOS, Shri Anand Sharma.

15. In August 2009, a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a Center of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) was signed in Quito with the Institute of High National

Studies (*Instituto de Altos Estudios Nacionales*; IAEN). The CEIT was established in the North Technical University [*Universidad de Norte* (UTN)], in the city of Ibarra. The CEIT-UTN became operational in May 2015. With the help of three C-DAC experts sent from India to train Ecuadorean nationals, the CEIT remained operational till April 2017 and trained 775 people.

16. On the request of Ecuador, India donated medicines, worth US \$ 1 million through two separate donations in 2008 and 2010, respectively. Government of India donated 15 tonnes of medicines/equipment worth Rs. 1,61,29,957 to Ecuador in the wake of 16 April 2016 earthquake.

Culture

17. Indian culture, yoga and philosophy is very popular in Ecuador. Several Centres/schools impart training in yoga and Indian culture. India and Ecuador have a Cultural Cooperation Agreement in 2006. A group of 3 Indian artisans is imparted training and exchanged handicrafts making experiences in August 2019 in Cuenca, Ecuador and on the local hospitality by CIDAP (Centro Interamericano de Artesanías y Artes Populares). Divine Value School of Yoga of Ecuador has signed an MoU for Cooperation in Yoga with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) in January 2020.

18. Over the last few years, the Embassy of India in Bogota, which is concurrently accredited to Ecuador, has been receiving Grant-in-Aid from Ministry of Culture, which is being utilized for yoga, Gandhi@150 related events, etc. through groups and Association of Friends of India who are involved in the promotion of promoting Indian culture and heritage.

19. The Embassy of India in Bogota, concurrently accredited to Ecuador has been organizing International Day of Yoga in Ecuador in several cities (Quito, Guayaquil, Cuenca, Manta etc.). Some of these events were organized by the Mission and also in association with yoga institutes and municipalities. Over 10,000 yoga enthusiasts participate in these events. International Yoga Days (IDY) have been celebrated with wide participation of local people. In 2019, 15 events were organized to mark the International Day of Yoga across various cities of Ecuador, including in Guayaquil, Manta, Quito and Cuenca. There is scope for cooperation in traditional medicine in Ecuador and interest in this regard has also been evinced by Ecuador. A draft MOU for cooperation in AYUSH is under consideration of Ecuador.

20. On 25 June 2017, 'India Day' was organized in Quito by Indian spiritual and yoga associations in collaboration with the Mission. To celebrate the 70th anniversary of India's Independence, in December 2017, cultural shows by "DivyaParivar", a troupe sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, GOI, Delhi, were organized in Quito and Guayaquil. In November 2017, India participated in the International Week organized by the Municipality of Cuenca where India was the Guest Country.

21. On the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary celebration of Mahatma Gandhi, Prof. Ravindra Kumar, a Gandhian scholar visited Guayaquil on 30 January 2018 and delivered a lecture on contemporary relevance of Gandhian teachings. A bust of Mahatma Gandhi is installed at '*Plaza de Republica de la India*' in Quito. On 20 March 2018, a bust of Mahatma

Gandhi provided by ICCR was inaugurated at the famous Malecon area in Guayaquil. As part of Gandhi@150 celebrations, an event on the theme of “Incredible India-The Land of Gandhi” was organized at Manta in December 2018. To mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Nanak Jayanti function was organized at Quito, on 30 November 2018 in collaboration with the local Indian community.

Indian community

22. Ecuador has a growing Indian community numbering around 355 (300 NRIs and 55 PIOs). Most of the community members are working in the services sector. In the capital city Quito, TCS, has a sizeable number of Indians on its roll. Several Indian nationals are engaged in the teak wood business. The Indian community gets together to organize cultural festivals such as Diwali. The Embassy organizes consular camps periodically to provide consular services in Quito, Guayaquil and Cuenca cities.

23. On 12 August 2019, Ecuador instituted the requirement of obtaining an Ecuadorian visa for nationals of eleven countries including India. Earlier, Indian nationals were granted visa on arrival by Ecuador.

24. The number of Ecuadorian visitors to India is steadily on the increase. In 2019, more than 1,300 Ecuadorians visited India. Nearly 90 per cent of them availed the e-visa facility. Most Ecuadoreans visit India for spiritual tourism.

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31 January 2020

Important visits from India

Sl no.	Date	Visit by
i.	April 2013	Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Smt. D. Purandeswari visited Ecuador
ii.	May 2011	Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri. E. Ahamed visited Ecuador for Foreign Office Consultations. During his visit, he met Vice President Lenin Moreno
iii.	June 2007	Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Anand Sharma, visited Ecuador and met President Rafael Correa and Foreign Minister, Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa
iv.	June 2005	Smt. Shashi U. Tripathi, Secretary (West) visited Quito to undertake first round of Foreign office consultations
v.	January 2003	Secretary (EAA) Shri Shashank attended the inauguration of ex-President Lucio Gutiérrez in Quito

Important visits from Ecuador

Sl no.	Date	Visit by
i.	December 2013	Vice President Jorge Glas visited India along with Vice Minister of Foreign Trade and Integration, Mr. Francisco Rivadeneira, Minister of Strategic sector Mr. Rafael Poveda, Minister of Industry Ramiro Gonzalez, Coordinating Minister of Production, Employment and Competitiveness Mr. Richard Espinosa. The visit coincided with CII India-LAC Conclave.
ii.	April 2012	Vice Minister of Foreign Trade and Integration, Mr. Francisco Rivadeneira visited India
iii.	September 2009	Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Integration, Ms. Maria Isabel Salvador Crespo visited India for the Doha Round meeting at the invitation of Minister of Commerce
iv.	November 2008	Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Integration, Ms. Maria Isabel Salvador Crespo visited India

v.	July 2008	Vice Foreign Minister visited Delhi for Foreign Office Consultations
vi.	April 2008	Vice Minister of Agriculture, Mr.XavierCevallos visited India
vii.	July 2006	Foreign Minister, Mr. Francisco Carrion Mena, visited India
viii.	January 2005	Minister of Energy and Mines of Ecuador, Mr. Eduardo Lopez, visited India and delivered the key-note speech at the PetroTech events organized by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

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February 2020