

# Honduras Opens Embassy in Moscow

October 14, 2013



Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov meeting with his Honduran counterpart Mireya Aguero de Corrales on Monday. **Ivan Sekretarev**

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov met with Honduran Foreign Secretary Mireya Aguero de Corrales on Monday for the opening ceremony of Honduras' embassy in Moscow.

The meeting marks the first official visit by the Honduran foreign secretary to Russia in the history of relations between the two countries and comes as Russia seeks to strengthen relations with Latin American countries.

With the opening of the Honduran Embassy, all Central American nations now have diplomatic representation in Russia.

At Monday's meeting, Lavrov and Aguero de Corrales announced plans to cancel the visa regime between their countries with the hopes of strengthening bilateral ties and increasing tourism, according to a statement on the Foreign Ministry's website.

Alexander Lukashevich, official spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, said the agreement to cancel visas was currently pending approval, RIA Novosti reported.

The two sides also announced cooperation in fighting drug trafficking with plans to sign an agreement between Russia's Federal Drug Control Service and the National Council Against Drug Trafficking of Honduras.

Russia has made cooperation with international anti-drug agencies a priority in recent months, including those in Central America.

In June, Russia's anti-drug agency worked with Nicaraguan authorities to break up a trafficking ring led by a Mexican drug lord, Federal Drug Control Service head Viktor Ivanov said at the time.

Ahead of Aguero de Corrales' visit, Lukashevich said special attention would be given to expanding trade between the two nations, which stood at more than \$51 million in 2012 and reached \$43.2 million over the first six months of 2013.

He also said Russia was "counting on [the visit] providing a major impetus to the development of all spheres of bilateral relations."

At the close of the meeting, Aguera de Corrales invited Lavrov to visit Honduras in the near future.

The Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the invitation was "accepted with gratitude. The timeline will be approved by diplomatic channels."

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