

## **Technical Visit to El Salvador San Salvador, 4-7 December 2017**

At the invitation of the National Geographic and Cadastral Institute (*Instituto Geográfico y del Catastro Nacional* - ICGN), a technical visit to El Salvador, which was funded by the IHO Capacity Building Programme, was conducted from 4 to 7 December by IHO Assistant Director Alberto Costa Neves and Mr Jason Otero Torres from the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) of USA, the primary charting authority for El Salvador.

The visit program included internal meetings with authorities within ICGN and its parent organization, the National Registry Center (*Centro Nacional de Registros – CNR*), to communicate the benefits and importance of hydrography as part of the national infrastructure and to assess future plans. Meetings with relevant technical staff and visits to the ICGN facilities provided opportunity to assess the existing capacities for hydrographic surveys, chart production and Maritime Safety Information.

As part of the program, ICGN organized a half-day workshop with key stakeholders within the marine domain to discuss the importance of hydrography in their administrations. The workshop was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Tourism, Maritime and Port Authority, Directorate-General of Civil Protection, Navy, Autonomous Executive Port Commission and University of El Salvador.

The visiting team called on the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Carlos Alfredo Castaneda and the Vice-Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Dr Ángel María Ibarra. The team also visited the Port of Acajutla, the largest and most important port of El Salvador, the Environmental Observatory for risk monitoring, the Maritime and Port Authority and had a meeting with Capitan René Hernández, President of the Board of Directors, and Mr Mario Miranda, Executive-Director.



*From left to right, Mr Carlos Figueroa (ICGN Geodesy Division), IHO Assistant Director Alberto Costa Neves, Mrs Sonia Sánchez (ICGN Director), Mr Carlos Castañeda (Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs), Mr Jason Otero Torres (USA-NGA) and Mr Licenciado Oscar Everardo Chicas (Director-General of Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity, MFA)*

During the visit, the team engaged with the hosts to; establish a bilateral agreement with the primary charting authority, implement a national hydrographic committee, draft the terms of reference for the national coordinator for MSI, establish a plan for hydrographic development and other relevant actions. The outcome of the visit will be reported to all stakeholders, including a list of conclusions and recommendations.

Assistant Director Costa Neves was informed that El Salvador, as a coastal State in the Meso-American region, has a positive desire to join the IHO in the future and is actively considering becoming a member of the IHO.