

## **The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Day of Yoga 2016**

I speak to you on my own behalf and also on behalf and at the request of the Prime Minister on this 2<sup>nd</sup> Yearly Celebration of the International Yoga Day.

Let me congratulate you all for being here, because participating in this activity today can only be of utmost benefit to you. And I am personally very happy to be here.

Over the years, Yoga has become very popular across the world. Just one piece of statistics to make the point - in the United States of America for e.g. as many as 20 million people practice Yoga.

Yoga enthusiasts have the conviction and university researches have shown that Yogic practice helps in the prevention of disease and the promotion of health and well-being.

Yoga is an age-old practice originating from India. As you all know, on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014, the Prime Minister of India, H.E. Narendra Modi addressed the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations and urged the Assembly to help declare the 21<sup>st</sup> June as the International Yoga Day.

His proposal was approved, with 177 countries as co-sponsors.

Last year International Yoga Day was thus celebrated for the first time. It was a historic Day when the glorious practice of Yoga was given international recognition. We say thank you to H.E. Narendra Modi and all the Yoga masters across the world.

The practice of Yoga removes stress of an individual and keeps the person from stressful conditions. It calms down the mind, promotes mental peace and as a result contributes to bring peace in the world.

Yoga combines physical flexing of the body, breathing and meditation.

Life on earth is possible and sustainable thanks to cycles in nature. There is the cycle of the two life-giving gases - carbon dioxide and oxygen.

Our body requires oxygen to harness the energy from the food we eat. The body needs energy for physical activity, for allowing the heart to pump blood to all parts of the body bringing oxygen and removing  $\text{CO}_2$ . Oxygen is also required for the brain to function and the mind to think.

We get our food from plants and oxygen from the air. Food is produced by the green leaves of plants combining  $\text{CO}_2$  from air, water from the soil and energy from the sun through the process of photosynthesis – releasing  $\text{O}_2$ .

Every human being has his own personal habits of eating and breathing to digest the food and obtain energy. But YOGA is a tool, a method that helps the body to be more effective in the processing of food to obtain energy and release  $\text{CO}_2$ .

So Yoga is not just an exercise. It helps us realize our oneness with nature.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi even expresses the conviction that this realization will help mankind deal better with the existing problem of climate change.

Let me conclude by asking: “Who would’nt like to be more mentally alert, healthier and happier. Have mental peace and contribute towards peace in the world”.

The practice of Yoga is definitely the way to this wonderful life.

Let me thank and congratulate H.E. the Indian High Commissioner and the staff of the Indian Embassy for organizing the big gathering here today.

To you all I say, have a very rewarding Yoga Day.

Thank you.

**Paramasivum Pillay Vyapoory, G.O.S.K.**  
**Vice-President of the Republic**

**19 June 2016**