Eighth International Day of Yoga

“YOGA FOR HUMANITY”

Concept Note

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented human tragedy. Beyond its immediate impact on the physical health, the pandemic also exacerbated psychological suffering and mental health problems, including depression and anxiety, as pandemic-related restrictions were introduced in various forms in many countries. It highlighted the need to address the mental health dimension of the pandemic, in addition to the physical health aspects.

A trend is being witnessed around the world during the pandemic, where people have embraced Yoga to stay healthy, rejuvenated and fight social isolation and depression. Yoga played a significant role in the psycho-social care and rehabilitation of COVID-19 patients in quarantine and isolation, especially in allaying their fears and anxiety. It served as a useful tool to the entire humanity in alleviating the suffering and promoting the holistic health of every individual.

In addition to the human suffering, the COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted several key vulnerabilities of the economic and developmental models of countries around the world. Future prosperity demands that the member states rebuild differently as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. A key element of the “Build Back Better” strategy is to explore opportunities for creating an environmentally sustainable world in which no one is left behind. Integrating the health of people and that of the planet, which cannot be separated from each other, is an essential requirement. The practice of Yoga is an integral part of this approach.
The essence of yoga is balance - not just balance within the body or that between the mind and the body, but also balance in the human relationship with the world. Yoga emphasizes the values of mindfulness, moderation, discipline and perseverance. It can contribute in creating a global community, who embrace simplicity and make conscious lifelong sustainable choices. Yoga provides everyone with a set of guidelines and a toolkit to help deal with oneself and with the world. The practice of Yoga brings joy, health, peace from within and deepens a sense of connection between an individual's inner consciousness and the external world. When applied to communities and societies, Yoga offers a path for sustainable living.

There is a growing convergence among the global community, including at the UN, that Yoga can be an important instrument in the collective quest of humanity for promoting sustainable lifestyle in harmony with planet Earth. In keeping with this spirit, the theme for this year’s Yoga day celebrations is “Yoga for Humanity”.

**