



ICCR



## Ubuntu - Yoga International Conference

### **Indian Council for Cultural Relations** **Azad Bhavan, I P Estate, New Delhi –110 002**

#### PRESS RELEASE

#### UBUNTU: INTERNATIONAL YOGA CONFERENCE – 2021

(21-22 June, 2021)

To mark the 7th International Yoga Day celebrations in India and the world, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) organized **UBUNTU: International Yoga Conference** on the theme “**Yoga for Universal Well-being**”, **Finding Commonalities between Indian and African Traditions** on 21-22 June, 2021 in virtual mode. The aim of the international conference was to find the commonalities between Indian and African traditions, focusing on the multi-layered aspects of traditional health and medicinal systems of India and African countries.

2. A very first of its kind, the international conference with presence of distinguished global experts brought India and Africa together on the basis of their respective ‘traditional health systems. With more than 78,000 African Healers from Traditional Healers’ Organization in South Africa and students of IKS-Africa and Yoga throughout the world attended the conference. Academics and enthusiasts from global institutions and universities having IKS – Africa and Yoga therapies in curriculum also joined the event.

3. The inaugural session began with the meditation conducted by Dr. Sharduli Terwadkar, Yoga Promoter and Owner, Sukhayu Wellness Center. President, ICCR, Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, in his opening remarks, pressed upon the vast potential of Indian and African traditional systems. He said “Sharing of experience, expertise and know-how in traditional health area could lead to a win-win outcome in healthcare for both the Indian and African people”. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar, Founder of Art of Living expressed his thoughts on the necessity of Yoga in day-to-day life and exerted the idea of spreading Yoga as a global tool for harmony and peace around the world, especially in conflict-ridden areas globally. Representing the distinguished dignitaries from Madagascar, Ghana, Morocco and Central African Republic, Health Ministers from these countries spoke about Yoga as an original science for the universal well-being, at the world stage and in their own countries. They also highlighted that the Yoga has helped revive the mind, body and soul of the African people during these challenging times of COVID. They also vowed to take forward the traditional healing practices of Africa and work upon the research and study needed in the field of these traditional health systems in collaboration with the Government of India.

4. Hon’ble Union Minister of State for AYUSH, Youth Affairs and Sports (Independent Charge), Shri. Kiren Rijiju spoke about the need of Yoga for wellness in today’s times and its role in making a robust and prosperous country. He asserted about the deep and abiding cultural and historical connections between India and African countries, saying that “we must utilize the full potential of Yoga and other traditional health practices of India and Africa for the mental, physical and spiritual wellness of every being”. The Yoga conference



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also witnessed the book launch of “Sun Salutations”, a collection of pictures of different Yogic postures published by Ms. Smita Bharadwaj and authored by Devyani & Shivanranjani Bharadwaj.

5. The panel discussions of skilled and qualified Yoga professionals deliberated on the IKS-Africa and Yoga and how these systems contribute to a holistic approach that provides remedies for health hazards like COVID19 and lifestyle diseases. The discussions emphasized upon the need of introduction of Yoga to youth and amplification of traditional health practices with the support of evidence based research and study in the relevant fields. They also talked about the role of traditional medicinal system in making a sustainable and healthy society. Additionally, they averred that Yoga is the best way to achieve an appropriate healthy behaviour.

6. Eminent international experts in African traditional system like Mr. Yirser Ra Hotep (Elvrid Lawrence), Ms. Akosua Aset, Dr. Nceba Gqaleni, TDr Bakhombisile Maseko, TDr Gogo Sithembiso Nene, Dr. Motheo Koitsiwe, Mr. Toki Mohoto, Mr. George Bernard Munyaradzi Kandiero, while eminent international experts in Indian traditional system in the form of Yoga and Indian traditional medicine, like Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, Dr. R. Nagrathna, Dr. Raghvendra Rao, Smt. Kamlesh Barwal, Sant Naam Deo Maharaj and Dr. Pramod Patil took part in the discussions.

7. The deliberations of the conference revolved around the various aspects of Yoga and African Indigenous Knowledge Systems and their remedies, providing solutions to a multitude of modern health challenges like COVID-19 along with other lifestyle diseases. The conference has helped project an understanding between these systems in finding a holistic approach towards overall health by looking into physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions.

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(22 June 2021)