**Message by Hon’ble External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj**

**on 2nd International Day of Yoga**

It is a matter of immense happiness that at India’s initiative the United Nations declared 21 June as the International Day of Yoga. This is the second year when we celebrate the International Day of Yoga with great fervor both in India and abroad. Last year also this event was celebrated on a grand scale and it is our expectation that this time the celebrations will be on twice the scale and will see twice the participation.

I would like to emphasize that Yoga is not mere exercise. Yoga is a combination of exercise for the body as well as the soul. For this reason, while a person feels exhausted after exercising, after Yoga the person is not exhausted, rather feels a sense of inner peace. If you start Yoga by doing Pranayam and end it with Yog Nidra or Shavasan you will achieve release from stress and you will feel new energy and vitality flow through your body. On the one hand Yoga is a medium to fight chronic ailments, on the other it is also a means to attain spiritual energy.

Given the grand scale at which we are celebrating the International Day of Yoga, I invite each and every one of you to join hands with us. I would also like to convey my best wishes to those who are unable to participate this time but who would be inspired by you to take up Yoga afresh and participate next time.

All our Missions and Posts abroad have made intense preparations to celebrate the International Day of Yoga. Extensive arrangements have also been made to celebrate this event in India. My warmest wishes to all of you for the success of the 2nd International Day of Yoga.

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