IN THE NAME OF GOD

THE SPIRIT OF NOWROUZ

Nowruz World Ceremony Iranian National Commission for UNESCO

International Convention Center, Milad Tower
28 February 2019
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Introduction

Nowruz celebration has been held as an official ceremony in Iran for over 3000 years. The geography of Nowruz is very vast and includes many countries. Coincidence of Nowruz with spring in Northern hemisphere, its ancient history and its emphasis on altruism and compassion in the world drew the attention of the United Nations and other countries to this tradition. Thus, on 10 May 2010, the UN General Assembly passed the Nowruz resolution and recognized the International Day of Nowruz in more than 11 countries.

Nowruz was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, at the joint initiative of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The celebrations are common to all cultures. Nowruz is a national celebration, which is accepted by all the minorities in Iran. Nowruz has contributed to the promotion of cultural and social solidarity among the 12 countries of the joint initiative of Nowruz.
The role of the UNESCO Iranian National Commission for UNESCO in Nowruz World Ceremony

With relation to its cultural and educational goals, the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO commemorated the tenth anniversary of the registration of Nowruz on the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO, by organizing the glorious ceremony of Nowruz World, attended by representatives of other countries.
It should be noted that the ceremony of the world of Nowruz is the name of the conference in which the representatives of the countries celebrating Nowruz gather at Saadabad Palace and celebrate Nowruz. The first International Nowruz world conference was held on 27 March 2010 at cultural complex of Saadabad, in Tehran. The ceremony was attended by the presidents of Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Iraq, Turkish Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In addition, the ambassadors of the countries celebrating Nowruz also attended the conference.

Organizers
- Iranian National Commission for UNESCO
- Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- Ministry of Science, Research and Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- Tehran Milad Tower
- Iran’s Center for Intangible Heritage
- Tehran municipality

The purpose of the ceremony
The main goals of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO:
- Participation and interaction of all the Nowruz countries, development of cultural interactions of these countries while respecting the national and cultural values of each country
- To show the rituals, ceremonies and cultural events of the Nowruz countries, and to show their cry for peace and harmony
Nowruz World Ceremony
This time, the International Nowruz World ceremony was held by the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, in cooperation with the above-mentioned organizations on 28 February 2019, from 9:30 to 12:30 at International Convention Center of Milad Tower. The ceremony was attended by 50 ambassadors and representatives from the countries that celebrate Nowruz and countries such as Britain, Germany, Switzerland, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Malaysia, Austria, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Romania, Greece, China, Ethiopia, Russia, South Korea, Ghana, Indonesia, Hungary as well as some representatives of international organizations, such as UN and ECO, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Science, Research and Technology, Vice President, Head of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, Hojatollah Ayoubi, Secretary-General of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO and a group of artists from Nowruz countries.

Before the opening ceremony, Nowruz rituals and photo exhibition-showcasing photos from Nowruz countries, were held in the waiting hall of the International Convention Center of Milad Tower, and beautiful Haft-sins (an arrangement of seven symbolic items whose names start with the letter seen in the Persian alphabet) were set up by Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The ceremony officially began with a musical performance by a group of Ashik and Takamgardani _ Takamgardani is one of the celebrations and rituals to welcome Nowruz and renewal in nature, which is implemented by Takamgardans in Ardabil.
Speakers

- Secretary General of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO: Dr. Hojatollah Ayoubi
- Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif
- Vice President and Head of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Dr. Ali Asghar Mounesan
- Managing Director of Tehran Milad Tower: Dr. Ali Darvishpour
Main themes

The main themes addressed by the speaker of the event are as follows:

- The aim of Nowruz celebration is promotion of peace and solidarity, both at national and international levels. Nowruz is a tradition that contains a vast geographic scope and carries the message of freshness, vitality and life.

- Nowruz is celebration of virtue. It is a festival of colors which promotes peace and friendship among the peoples and nations.

- Various National commissions for UNESCO decided to work together to organize the Nowruz World Ceremony annually.

- Nowruz calls for sympathy, interaction and friendship among the nations. Nowruz is not affected by race, prejudice and violence. Nowruz does not only belong to a particular ethnic group, rather it celebrates ethical and human values, and there is no ethnic group in the world that does not embrace human values.

- Nowruz also fosters economic and commercial prosperity in transportation, clothing industry, handicrafts, confectionery, hotel industry, restaurant and flower farming. i.e., Nowruz fosters tourism among the countries that celebrate Nowruz. Nowruz creates a common bond that leads to the interaction of nations. It can provide a platform to foster regional integration through promoting political dialogue and cultural diplomacy.

- This ancestral festivity has great capacities to attract tourists from all over the world and to develop the tourism industry in the Nowruz countries.

- Nowruz provides an opportunity for recovering the political identity of the people and improving the political thinking of the governments of the region. Nowruz helps the government in achieving equality, friendship and unity.
Sideline activities

- Unveiling the Nowruz World Stamp
- Unveiling the Kamal-ol-molk painter robot
- Nowruz Medal was awarded to Dr. Mohammad Mirshokrayi (Nowrouz researcher)
- Nowruz-khani (singing on new year) by a group of Iranian artists from the North of Iran
Musical performance

• Nowruz musical performance by Iranian group led by Alireza Ghorbani
• Nowruz musical performance by Azerbaijani group led by Mansum Ibrahimov
• Nowruz musical performance by Afghani group led by Aref Jafari
Achievement of goals

• Bringing together ambassadors and representatives of countries such as England, Germany, Switzerland, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Malaysia and Bulgaria to promote cultural diplomacy and international interaction with regard to the upstream documents and national interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran
• Showing the economic and commercial aspects of Nowruz as well as its tourism industry by setting up Haft-sins and Nowruz rituals
• Introducing Nowruz through extensive media coverage