

Remarks by HC
11th Ayurveda Day at USIU-Africa, Nairobi | 23 September 2026

Dy Vice-Chancellor of USIU

Dean of School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Director General, National Museum

Faculty members of USIU-Africa

Ayurveda Experts and Speakers on the panel today

Dear students;

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning, Jambo.

I welcome you all to the 11th Ayurveda Day celebrations, being jointly organised by the High Commission of India and this esteemed University.

Let me begin by expressing my appreciation to USIU for hosting this important programme. This came out during my first meeting with the Vice-Chancellor and I am happy to see that our discussions are finally taking shape today. We look forward to greater collaboration with USIU and other like-minded Universities in Kenya on such subjects.

Friends,

Ayurveda is often described as a system of medicine, but it is also a comprehensive philosophy of healthy living. The word Ayurveda means the “science of life”. Its approach is centred not only on treating illness, but also on preserving health, preventing disease and maintaining balance between the body, mind, environment and daily habits.

This holistic approach is increasingly relevant in our fast-changing world. Modern lifestyles are often associated with stress, sedentary habits, poor nutrition and lifestyle-related health challenges. Ayurveda reminds us of the importance of prevention, moderation, nutrition, physical activity, mental wellbeing, sleep and harmony with nature. The theme reflected in

today's programme—"Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow"—captures this philosophy very well.

India's traditional systems of medicine represent a vast body of knowledge developed over thousands of years. The Government of India has taken several steps to promote research, education, standardization and the responsible global dissemination of Ayurveda and other traditional systems of medicine. A separate Ministry of Ayush was established with the objective of giving focused attention to these systems and integrating them, where appropriate, with contemporary healthcare and scientific research.

Friends,

India's approach is based on the principle that traditional knowledge and modern science can complement each other. Ayurveda must continue to be studied rigorously, documented carefully and practised responsibly. Quality, safety, evidence, professional training and informed use are essential for building public confidence and ensuring that the benefits of Ayurveda are realized appropriately.

The growing global interest in traditional medicine also underlines the importance of international cooperation. The World Health Organization's Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India reflects the wider recognition that traditional knowledge can contribute to global health, provided it is approached with scientific rigour, ethical responsibility and respect for intellectual property.

India and Kenya share many similarities in this regard. Both countries possess rich traditions of indigenous knowledge, plant-based remedies and community-based approaches to health and wellbeing. Kenya's own knowledge of medicinal plants and traditional healing practices is an important cultural and scientific resource. There is considerable scope for collaboration between our two countries in areas such as research, documentation, cultivation of medicinal plants, education, wellness, public health and the development of quality herbal products.

Such cooperation should be based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. It should support local communities, protect traditional knowledge, encourage sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure that any products or practices placed before the public meet appropriate standards of safety and quality.

I am particularly pleased that today's programme **includes discussions, practical workshops and a herbal product demonstration (TBC)**. These activities provide an opportunity not only to learn about Ayurveda, but also to understand how some of its principles can be incorporated into everyday life. The participation of students is especially important. Young people can become ambassadors of healthy living and can also contribute to the research, innovation and entrepreneurship that will shape the future of traditional medicine.

I would encourage students and researchers present here to approach Ayurveda with both openness and curiosity. It deserves neither uncritical acceptance nor premature dismissal. It should be understood, studied and evaluated through serious academic engagement and responsible practice.

The partnership between the High Commission of India and USIU reflects the importance India attaches to engaging with Kenyan institutions of learning. Universities are not only places of instruction; they are spaces where ideas meet, knowledge is tested and new possibilities emerge. I hope today's programme will lead to further interaction between Indian and Kenyan institutions, experts and students.

I hope that the discussions today will encourage greater awareness of Ayurveda and promote healthier, more balanced and more sustainable lifestyles.

Let us celebrate Ayurveda not only as a legacy of India's civilizational heritage, but also as a living and evolving knowledge tradition—one that can contribute to the wellbeing of individuals, communities and the planet.

I wish the 11th Ayurveda Day programme every success.

Thank you, Asanteni Sana.