

PRESS RELEASE

National Indian Students and Alumni Union UK welcomes Dr Shashi Tharoor as its Patron

The National Indian Students and Alumni Union UK, the apex organisation representing students, alumni and young professionals of Indian origin in the U.K, is proud to welcome Dr Shashi Tharoor, Member of Indian Parliament, as its Patron.

The ceremony was held at the University of Westminster (London), at an event coordinated by the Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Westminster in collaboration with the university's India Media Centre on Friday 3rd March 2017, and supported by NISAU's affiliate society, the Westminster Indian Society. Dr Tharoor was at the university to participate in an event organized by Professor Daya Thussu, founder and co-director of the India Media Centre.

With NISAU striving for the betterment of our society and working towards developing constructive change, the guidance and support from Dr Tharoor, who is a former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and a former minister of state for External Affairs and Human Resource Development in the Government of India, will help us build a realistic roadmap to achieve our mission.

Dr Shashi Tharoor, a respected global leader, vocal supporter of human rights, an ambassador of peace, accomplished author and world renowned speaker, was born in London and is a recipient of the *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman* award from the President of India. He is an excellent example of how the Indian diaspora can contribute to India and its development. NISAU as a body representing this diaspora in the UK is hence very privileged to have the guidance and mentorship of Dr Tharoor who took international diplomacy to new heights through his services at the United Nations and as a minister in the Indian Government.

During the ceremony Dr Tharoor spoke about the issues of Indian students in the UK and how Britain should approach India post-Brexit saying, *"For any preferential ties with India after leaving the EU, Britain should understand that what India can best offer is its people and their skills, its students, its IT and software professionals and so on...I am not saying Indians should migrate here. As an Indian politician, I want them to come back to India and to serve my country but I would like them to come here and study, if they want, to have a temporary work permit, acquire skills and training that they can use when they come back. But it is becoming more and more difficult for them to possibly do that. Britain must remove some of these obstacles and can create a new framework"*, which is in line with NISAU's proposed two-year visa scheme, the "Fair Visa Fair Chance" campaign.

With this appointment, Dr Tharoor has joined our existing patrons, the Rt Hon Virendra Sharma MP (UK), Dr Rami Ranger CBE, the Hon Ram Bilas Sharma, Education Minister of Haryana (India) as Patrons of NISAU which is the largest forum for young people of Indian origin in the UK and an umbrella organisation of Indian student societies in the UK, ultimately representing students, alumni and young professionals of Indian origin in the UK.

Miss Sanam Arora, President of NISAU commented, *"It is an absolute delight and honour to welcome Dr Tharoor, an exemplary global leader and leading authority on India support the NISAU as its Patron. Under his guidance and support we will be significantly empowered to achieve our vision of enabling Indian origin students and youth in the UK to contribute positively to India, to the UK, and to the India-UK relationship. This year we celebrate our fifth anniversary, as well as the UK India Year of Culture. There could therefore be no better time for us to welcome him on board as our Patron and we express our sincere gratitude to him for lending us his support."*

Mr Mohanish Borana, General Secretary of NISAU added, *"We are privileged to have Dr Shashi Tharoor, who is a former Minister for External Affairs and Human Resource Development of Indian Government, an exemplary politician, a champion diplomat, an astute orator and a world-renowned author, as Patron of NISAU. His thoughts on India pertaining to its history, culture, politics, economics and future have created a sense of positivity in Indian youths and has brought India's soft powers at the forefront. No wonder the future leaders of India hugely follow this 'Global Leader of Tomorrow' whose work towards the global peace and human rights is truly inspirational. Surely, his association with us as our Patron will inspire our team to work for our collective goal of a better tomorrow with a much more dedication and passion."*

The NISAU expresses gratitude to the India Media Centre at the University of Westminster and its Co-Director Professor Daya Thussu for their support in coordinating the formal announcement of the patronage.

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Notes to editors

About National Indian Students and Alumni Union UK

The National Indian Students and Alumni Union UK is an umbrella organisation representing the UK university students & alumni of Indian heritage. NISAU was created to provide a unifying voice for students with Indian heritage (whether home-grown or international) and promote, educate and celebrate Indian culture with people of all communities. NISAU aims to bring together all Indian student societies and alumni in the UK on one platform and is creating a unique, youth-led ecosystem to foster entrepreneurship, patriotism and leadership. Its ultimate vision is to enable & empower the young Indian diaspora in the UK to contribute positively to India, UK, and the UK-India relationship.

Visit www.nisu.org.uk for further information.

About Dr Shashi Tharoor

Dr Shashi Tharoor is a second-term Lok Sabha MP and Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs. He has previously served as Minister of State for Human Resource Development and Minister of State for External Affairs in the Government of India and as Under-Secretary General during Kofi Annan's leadership of the organisation. Dr Tharoor, who holds a doctorate from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, is also an award-winning author of works of both fiction as well as non-fiction. In 1998 the World Economic Forum in Davos named him a Global Leader of Tomorrow. He is also a recipient of several awards that include the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, India's highest honour for overseas nationals; the Encomienda de la Real Order Espanola de Carlos III awarded by the King of Spain; "New Age Politician of the Year" from NDTV, the Hakim Khan Sur Award for National Integration, and the Priyadarshini Award for Excellence in Diplomacy. He is the author of hundreds of articles, op-eds, and book reviews in a wide range of publications including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, *TIME*, *Newsweek*, and *The Times of India*. His work as Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and as former minister under erstwhile UPA government has received praises from various corners, recent one being his constituency topping the charts of Urban Governance in the cities of India.

Visit <http://www.shashitharoor.in> for more information.