

PRESS RELEASE

3rd Joint Steering Committee Meeting of the India-UAE Cultural Council

The Director-General of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Smt. K. Nandini Singla, co-chaired the 3rd Joint Steering Committee (JSC) Meeting of the India-UAE Cultural Council alongside H.E. Noura bint Mohammed Al Kaabi, Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, in New Delhi on September 30, 2026.

2. Recalling the discussions held during previous JSC meetings in New Delhi (March 2025) and Abu Dhabi (October 2025), the co-chairs reviewed the implementation of decisions taken to date and expressed satisfaction with the advancement of various projects initiated by the Council.

3. Both sides also reviewed progress made with regard to the Council's two flagship initiatives: the establishment of a 'House of India' in Abu Dhabi and the setting up of a Gandhi-Zayed Centre for Peace, Tolerance & Sustainability Studies in India and UAE. The co-chairs mapped out action to be taken to expedite the implementation of these initiatives.

4. The two co-chairs welcomed the substantial progress in heritage and archival cooperation, especially the loan of UAE artifacts to the National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal and the upcoming joint archival exhibition at the Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival in the UAE. They also welcomed India's participation as the partner country at the UAE Tolerance Festival in November 2026.

5. Reaffirming that cultural and people-to-people ties constitute a vital pillar of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and the UAE, both sides agreed to further expand collaboration across areas such as youth engagement, sports, arts, heritage, archives, literature, education, media, entertainment, and tourism.

6. Director General (ICCR) expressed appreciation for UAE's valuable participation in BRICS meetings and the BRICS Symphony organised under India's Chairship this year.

7. The JSC meeting was preceded by meetings of the Council's three Sub-Committees on September 29, 2026, covering Youth & Sports, Culture & Heritage, and Tourism, with the participation of relevant authorities of both countries. The Sub-Committees reviewed ongoing projects and proposed new initiatives, which were presented to the two co-chairs during the JSC Meeting.

8. The co-chairs reiterated their commitment to realising the strategic vision of their leadership and contributing to the strengthening of the India-UAE partnership through the work of the India-UAE Cultural Council.

New Delhi

September 30, 2026