



Theravada Group in Minsk, Republic of Belarus

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Congratulatory message

Dear Dhamma friends,

I am honoured to represent the Theravada group in the Republic of Belarus as a delegate at the Vesak 2011 Celebration.

First, on behalf of my Dhamma friends in Belarus I express our deep sympathy for people of Japan who have suffered in the triple disaster of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear unrest. Buddhism is an integral part of Japanese culture and its impact on mentality and psychology of the nation cannot be overestimated. At this difficult time Japanese people displayed truly Buddhist spirit in their discipline and selflessness fighting the disaster, saving, and helping those who suffered most from it. Such an attitude is worthy of our admiration.

At the same time these events make us aware of interconnectedness of all phenomena. From this we see that everything around us is intertwined and subject to the law of cause-and-effect. All our interactions with nature have consequences which may not be visible at the moment but will manifest in the future. Buddha taught the end of suffering based on the development of mind, or bhavana. Yet the state of mind depends on observing the moral principles in our relations with the environment, politics, economy, interpersonal relationships, ...etc.

There is no area in our life where the law of cause-and-effect law does not operate. Therefore, this universal law of the Dhamma should be always taken into account before one undertakes any action. That is why this conference theme "Buddhist Virtues in Socio-Economic Development" is very relevant to our time considering events like recent economic crisis and natural disasters because Buddhism can offer rational solutions to many problems the world today encounters.

Each Buddhist nation has added something its own to the external or ritualistic aspects of Buddhism. However, the essence of the Dhamma is universal, that is, it not limited to a particular region, culture or time period. For this reason, the sublime Dhamma has become popular in the world because it touches upon the universal human issues of suffering and happiness. Buddhism is not known to most of the people of my country, yet but more and more are becoming interested in Dhamma. Some people get in touch with Dhamma through their interest in mental training techniques or psychology, some -through martial arts, some -through the culture of Asian countries where Buddhism is traditionally spread. There are different Buddhist groups in Belarus and interest in different aspect of the Dhamma continues to grow due to its universal appeal. Buddhist teachings are capable of making positive changes in life of individuals, group of individuals practicing Dhamma and, therefore, influence some aspects of the whole society.

May this conference contribute to this cause!

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