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Dear Chairman, Most honored leaders and guests of the world:

Knowing that Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU) is holding the 8th International Celebration on the Occasion of United Nations Day of Vesak & Buddhist Conference from 12-14 May, 2011 to celebrate United Nations Day of Vesak and the 84th Birthday Anniversary of His Majesty the King, it is a great honor and joy for myself, Venerable Guo Hui, representing the Abbot and monastics of Dharma Drum Mountain, to participate in this distinguished gathering today.

Today, in the 21st century, while the Vesak celebration commemorating the Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and nirvana has been recognized internationally, it has also become a communication platform for world Buddhism to synthesize the wisdom of all people to develop world peace and harmony. This year's theme for discussion is "Buddhist Virtues in Socio-Economic Development." People seek happiness in life, yet most people devote their efforts to reaping material and economic rewards. A highly developed economy, however, also presents problems such as the depletion and waste of global resources. But does rampant growth bring real happiness to humankind? And is economic growth the foundation of human happiness?

Buddhism speaks of causes and conditions, and cause and effect. Humanity depends on the overall state of the natural environment, and environmental destruction is a crisis for human existence. Real human happiness comes not from material prosperity, but from peace of mind. What we can do is pacify the mind that is forever in pursuit of externals. In terms of the material world, our wants are many, while our needs are few. If we can go even further to become aware of and pacify our own minds, then our vexations, fears, and desires will naturally decrease, and we can savor the flavor of happiness. When we reduce our desires, know contentment, and live simply, we can treasure whatever resources are available, reduce harm to the environment, and resolve issues created by the competition between various groups for resources. Dharma Drum Mountain advocates Protecting the Spiritual Environment, hoping that everyone, by first developing peace of mind, will act ethically in their economic and family lives, and go on to establish a harmonious society that allows everyone to live happily.

In closing, we sincerely wish the Conference every success, and hope that it will spread the light and warmth of Buddhist compassion and wisdom throughout the world, filling it with peace and happiness.

**Venerable Vice-Abbot Guo-huei
Dharma Drum Mountain (DDM)**