

**Congratulatory Message to the 8th United Nations Day of Vesak  
Celebrations  
and the International Buddhist Conference**

I am greatly honored to extend my congratulatory message to the 8th United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations and the International Buddhist Conference. Especially, as this year's celebrations are held in conjunction with the auspicious occasion of the 84th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to His Majesty for his health and longevity, and wish Kingdom of Thailand further prosperity.

The day of Vesak is a very important day not only for Buddhists but also for all humanity. It is because it helps to propagate Dharma of Buddha all over the world that brings happiness to all sentient beings. Buddha told people to have compassion toward all living things, and showed the way to bring peace and happiness to individuals, to society, to the whole nation, and to the whole world.

On March 11 this year, an unprecedented threefold disasters of a massive earthquake, tsunami, and a nuclear power plant accident hit Japan. Many people in Japan are still suffering from great difficulties.

At this time of difficulty, we have received a lot of warm help and strong support from all over the world. I would like to express my deepest thanks to you all for your kindness.

I also heard that many people in the world prayed for Japan. The compassion they gave to us has greatly encouraged us. I believe that we have to carry out the restoration by working together with this compassion in our mind.

Many Buddhists from the disaster-stricken areas in Japan are attending the Day of Vesak Celebration this year as well because we appreciate the value and importance of this event where Buddhists all over the world come together, celebrate the Birth, Enlightenment and Passing away of Buddha and talk to each other.

At the conclusion of my congratulatory message, I wish this 8th United Nations Day of Vesak and International Buddhist Conference to bring forth fruit and help create the world where people join hands in peace.

Masakazu Matsumoto

Executive Vice Chairman, ICUNDV

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