



Buddhist College of Singapore
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Congratulatory Message

I hereby extend my congratulations to the Royal Thai Government, the Supreme Sangha Council, His Majesty the King and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in this 8th celebration of the most sacred United Nations Day of Vesak. My sincere appreciation goes to Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, all other organizations and distinguished guests who have made this celebration possible through their efforts.

The beginning of 2011 was marked by optimism in economic recovery, tempered by the onset of natural disasters in various countries. Therefore, it is perhaps fitting that the theme for this year's Vesak celebration is titled "Buddhist Virtues in Socio-Economic Development".

It has often been said that the Buddha did not talk about economics in His teachings. Although He did not explicitly enumerate the dos and don'ts of socio-economic development, teachings such as Impermanence and the Six *Paramitas* could be generalized to this aspect. In the midst of economic recessions or natural disasters, the teachings of Impermanence help us to cultivate a positive attitude towards improving our lives. Together with the Mahayana teaching of the Six *Paramitas* of "Generosity", "Morality", "Patience", "Effort", "Concentration" and "Wisdom", we have a clear-minded approach to creating a sustainable world economy without undermining our social values. In addition, the Four All-Embracing Virtues (Giving, Affectionate Speech, Beneficial Conduct and Working Together) and the Theravada teaching of the Four Immeasurable Minds (Loving-kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy and Equanimity) are practical ways of achieving a balanced socio-economic system.

It is clear that the Buddha's teaching of the Middle Way is the way of wisdom towards a balanced socio-economic system. Hopefully, His teachings will guide us to create a more harmonious, sustainable and peaceful world.

I wish that the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations and Buddhist Conference 2011/B.E. 2554 will be a resounding success. May this momentous event continue to engage all Buddhists around the world for many more years to come!

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