



Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy (SIBA)

12 May 2011

It is with great pleasure that I write this congratulatory message on the occasion of the 8th United Nations Day of Vesak Celebration and Conference to be held from 12-14 May 2011 on the theme "Buddhist Virtues in Socio-Economic Development." As this year's celebration is more auspicious for the Buddhists and the people of Thailand in particular for it coincides with the 84th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the King of Thailand, the only Buddhist monarch in the world today, on behalf of the President, Board of Directors, staff and students of Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy (SIBA), I take this opportunity to wish His Majesty the King of Thailand long life and good health.

It is very timely and also a compulsion that both Buddhist leaders and Buddhist scholars meet frequently, discuss the burning issues and problems in the modern world and make substantial contributions towards finding durable solutions to them based on Buddhist principles. For these meetings to take place there must be international platforms. Since 2001, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, the chief organizer of this Vesak Celebration, has given the Buddhist world a real platform in Thailand for the purpose. There is no debate that this platform has enabled the Buddhists all over the world to come together and find ways to work together for the betterment of the world. As we know, the Buddhist leaders representing countries, regions, cultures, traditions, organizations, societies, and institutions join this year's celebration as before and plan to mix with Buddhist scholars around the world to identify Buddhist virtues for socio-economic development under four sub-themes: Buddhist leadership and socio-economic development, Building a harmonious society, Environmental preservation and restoration, and Wisdom for awakening society. Considering the nature of the topic and the competence of the participants, I am hopeful that 2011 Bangkok Declaration will make a big impact on the decision makers worldwide. I wish this year's celebration and conference a great success.

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Rector – Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy