



**Message from  
H.E. Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva  
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand  
On the Auspicious Occasion of the  
International Day of Vesak  
17 May B.E. 2554 (2011)**

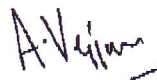
---

The Vesak Day is an extremely important day in Buddhism as it marks the birth, enlightenment and nirvana of the Lord Buddha, all of which coincidentally fell on the same day -- the full-moon day of the sixth lunar month. Throughout 45 years after the enlightenment, the Lord Buddha had travelled far and wide spreading his noble teachings to people across the Indian subcontinent. His teachings have been followed and have benefited people around the world for more than 2,500 years. In this spirit, the Vesak Day is the occasion for all Buddhists to recall three qualities associated with the Lord Buddha's teachings, namely: panya or wisdom, purity, and compassion and loving kindness to all living beings without any discrimination. Buddhists should also heed his sacred teachings and duly apply them to their lives for the everlasting happiness and prosperity, both for themselves and the society as a whole.

The United Nations has formally recognised Vesak as a significant day in Buddhism -- which is one of the oldest religions in the world -- with a unanimous adoption of the General Assembly's resolution at its 54<sup>th</sup> session in 1999 announcing the Vesak Day as an international day.

This year, Thailand has been given the honour to host the Eighth International Meeting of Buddhists to commemorate the 2011 International Day of Vesak in order to honour and to bless His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej on the occasion of his seventh cycle birthday anniversary. At this august assembly, more than 5,000 Buddhist participants from around the world, including members of the Sangha, religious leaders and academics from 84 countries, will join in the Vesak Day observance and commemoration as well as promote cooperation among Buddhists and domestic and international Buddhist organisations.

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all those involved in the organisation of the International Day of Vesak in Thailand, and I wish them every success. I also fervently hope that the public will continue their search for knowledge and understanding in the core teachings of the Lord Buddha that have served to enrich humankind, and constantly observe the dharma in order to lead them on the path of forever happiness and righteousness, as well as the stable and sustainable country.



Abhisit Vejjajiva  
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand