



*The Prime Minister*  
*Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka*

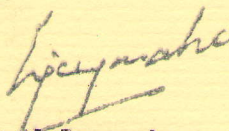
**United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations and  
Buddhist Conference - Bangkok, Thailand.  
31<sup>st</sup> May – 02 June**

It is with utmost pleasure that I send this Message of Congratulations on the occasion of celebrations of United Nations Day of Vesak held in Bangkok this year. Since 2004, Thailand had been hosting these celebrations annually except in 2008 when the event took place in Vietnam. The entire Buddhist World is grateful to Royal Thai Government, the people of Thailand and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University for undertaking this onerous task with dedication and commitment, over a decade.

It is heartening to the Buddhists that United Nations recognised the importance of this sacred day of Vesak which marks the Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away of Sakyamuni Buddha by a resolution approved overwhelmingly by General Assembly of UN in 1999. That signifies the importance the world community attaches to the message of the Buddha which advocates tolerance, compassion, nonviolence, peace and harmony among the human beings. There is no better forum than United Nations to disseminate this message of the Buddha to a world which is embroiled in wars and conflicts. Celebrating the Vesak yearly would remind the world the limitless value of the Buddha's teaching.

The Conference held in the midst of the celebrations is on the theme "The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Wellbeing of the Humanity" which is quite apt for this sacred occasion. I am certain that discussions and exchange of views at the conference would evoke great interest among Buddhist scholars attending the event.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Sri Lanka, may I extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes for the great success of the UN Vesak Day Celebrations in Bangkok.

  
**D.M. Jayaratne**  
**Prime Minister**