

## Congratulatory Message

To the 9th United Nations Day of Vesak International Conference and Celebrations

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I would like to offer my hearty congratulations on the 9th United Nations Day of Vesak International Conference and Celebrations.

I hear that, as it is just 2600 years since Buddha achieved Enlightenment, His Enlightenment is commemorated in this year's celebrations and it is also deeply involved with the theme of the conference. When we consider that the Vesak Day is essentially the day to commemorate Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away, this year's celebrations should naturally be very significant ones.

Buddha's enlightenment is the very origin of Buddhism. Without this great achievement, Buddhism couldn't have existed in this world. All of Buddha's teachings were born from the enlightenment, and spread through his sermons. Buddha preached the teachings to people in various places in India, which took root in their mind like the seeds sown in a field, shot up as sprouts, and have been blooming as a world religion called Buddhism for 2600 years. We cannot thank Buddha enough for the teachings he gave us.

On this occasion, we should consider the significance of His Enlightenment, the origin of Buddhism, ask what it can mean for modern people, and make every endeavor to come, if only a little, nearer to the enlightenment.

I extend my best wishes to the fruitful accomplishments and success of the 9th United Nations Day of Vesak International Conference and Celebrations.