

## PREFACE

The history of mankind records how the Buddha got enlightenment and showed a path which not only leads but also guides the world till date. That is solely to emanate wisdom and offer insights which help us overcome numerous challenges and achieve the welfare of humanity.

Recognizing his pragmatic approach, values and contribution of Buddhism, the United Nations in a resolution in 1999 decided to celebrate the Triply Blessed Day of Vesak (Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away of Gautama), falling mostly in a lunar calendar in the month of May. The first celebrations were held way back in the year 2000 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and subsequently the day has been celebrated hugely in different countries.

Today our planet is confronted with a number of crises and unprecedented natural disasters. The imminent threat of terrorism and ethnic violence, tackling poverty, providing education and sustainable development leads us to strive for social justice. There is an urgent need for concerted and constant planning and right effort at an international level to foster permanent peace in the societies and in the lives of individuals.

Against the backdrop of such widespread misery and strife leading to complex issues and crises, Buddhism with its rich heritage of tolerance and non-violence can contribute immensely and inspire us with His message of loving-kindness, peace and harmony in today's world. The United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) 2019 is a testimony to this fact.

Vietnam got the chance and responsibility of hosting this international Buddhist event UNDV in 2008 and 2014 respectively. The event proved an amazing spectacle of religious and spiritual festivity, with thousands of Buddhists from around the world converging

in Vietnam, to spread the Buddha's message of peace, love and harmony.

This is the third time that Vietnam is hosting this important international event which is viewed by Buddhists as an opportunity to spread the Buddha's message and values of love, peace, non-violence, tolerance and compassion across the world.

It is a great honor for Vietnam, the Vietnamese people, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and Buddhists all around the world to participate in the UNDV celebrations and spread the rich Buddhist heritage, especially its teachings of equality, social justice, respect and understanding for the benefit of all humanity. World Buddhists and particularly the Vietnamese people are excited about their country hosting this auspicious and important event for the third time. This international religious, cultural and academic event would also certainly promote interaction and exchange of Buddhist cultural and intellectual values among diverse countries.

The International Buddhist conference with the main theme of "Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies" during the celebrations could not have been more relevant and timely. The present book is the outcome of one workshop representing one perspective of the conference. Other perspectives of the conference include: (i) Mindful Leadership for Sustainable Peace, (ii) Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare and Sustainable Societies, (iii) Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics, (iv) Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and (v) Buddhist Approach to Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Development. This international conference aims to foster co-operation among Buddhist communities and institutions, and to develop Buddhist solutions to the global crisis.

Papers selected for this volume are those that combine thematic relevance, familiarity with the main theme or sub-themes, significant research in primary resources, innovative theoretical perspectives, clarity of organization and accessible prose style. Acceptable articles in this volume are determined by the Academic Peer-Review Committee.

UNDV 2019 certainly is an opportunity for the world Buddhists, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and all the members of the international community to benefit from the rich traditions, values and spiritual ideals of Buddhism. The pragmatic path shown by Buddha can make the world a better, safer, more peaceful and harmonious place to be cherished and enjoyed by all sentient beings.

On behalf of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and myself, I would like to warmly welcome President of Myanmar, H.E. Mr. U Win Myint, Prime Minister of Nepal, Right Hon. Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Vice President of India, H.E. Mr. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. Tashi Dorji, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations/ Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific, H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Ms. Audrey Azoulay, Ambassadors, and many other dignitaries.

It is my honor to warmly welcome National Assembly Chairwoman H.E. Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Prime Minister of Vietnam, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee H.E. Mr. Tran Thanh Man, Permanent Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Truong Hoa Binh, Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of External Affairs H.E. Mr. Pham Binh Minh, other dignitaries including former Political leaders of the Government of Vietnam.

I extend my warmest welcome to all respected Sangharajas, Sangha Leaders, Buddhist Leaders, Sangha members and 1600 Buddhist Scholars and practitioners from 115 countries and territories, participating in this international celebration and conference. Let me thank all of you for your contributions to this celebration and Conference.

My heartfelt thanks are extended to respected members of the Supreme Patriarch Council and Executive members of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, especially 25 sub-committees for UNDV 2019 in Vietnam for their devotion and contribution.

I take this opportunity to express here my profound gratitude

to Most Ven. Prof. Brahmapundit for his continuous supporting Vietnam to host this international event. I also thank profusely all members of the International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV), Conference Committee and Editorial Board for their devotion.

I am grateful to Mr. Xuan Truong for his generosity and other donors, sponsors, volunteers and agencies from the public sector and the private sector for their excellent contribution.

This publication and other 29 books printed for Vesak could not have been possible without the persistence, hard work, and dedication of Editorial Committee for their devotion including Most Ven. Dr. Thich Duc Thien, Prof. Le Manh That, and especially Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu serving as the international conference coordinator.

I extend my warmest and best wishes to all the delegates and participating countries on this special occasion which strengthens our resolve to improve the world by walking on the path shown by the Lord Buddha.

Whatever merit there is in publishing this book may be transferred over to the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings. May all sentient beings be happy and released from suffering.

We wish the celebration of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam every success.

**Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon**

President of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha  
Chairman of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam