

องค์การพุทธศาสนิกสัมพันธ์แห่งโลก

THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF BUDDHISTS

Congratulatory Message from  
President of The World Fellowship of Buddhists  
at the Interfaith Coalition Conference for Global Citizenship and  
Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations  
**(ICCGC-CoNGO 2024)**  
26<sup>th</sup> August B.E. 2567 (2024)  
New York, U.S.A.

Most Venerable Jeonsan, Prime Dharma Master of Won-Buddhism,  
Venerable Juksan, Head Dharma Master of Won-Buddhism U.S.A.,  
Venerable,  
Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (The WFB) and its sub-organizations – the World Fellowship of Buddhist Youth, and the World Buddhist University -, it is with great honor and pleasure that I participate in the Interfaith Coalition Conference for Global Citizenship and Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations or ICCGC-CoNGO 2024) held in New York, U.S.A. My sincere thanks to Won-Buddhism and the ICCGC-CoNGO Organizing Committee for inviting me. It is timely for all of us gathered here, regardless of beliefs, religions, and races, to mutually express and share our perspectives on the theme “Global Action on Peace, Sustainability, and Prosperity.”

The world’s development faces crises in all aspects of economics, social, and environment. The globalized economy and communication, especially the liberalization of market, have propelled consumerism stimulating the desire and competition for natural resources worldwide. Peace and security have eluded humanity throughout its development. War and conflict have demanded and consumed the greatest part of humanity’s resources throughout history. Buddhism points out that while material needs are necessary, the prime aim of human life is spiritual. Buddhism teaches that peace cannot be achieved merely through requests chanted and prayed by followers of religions, but through following the path that leads to peace.

Buddhism holds that inner or mental peace is more important than external or outside peace. The root causes of all the external wars are the mental defilements dormant in the bottom of human mind. If all defilements can be eradicated partly or completely, the world will be at peace. The Buddha taught that the first step on the path to peace is understanding the causality of peace. When we understand what causes peace, we know where to direct our efforts.

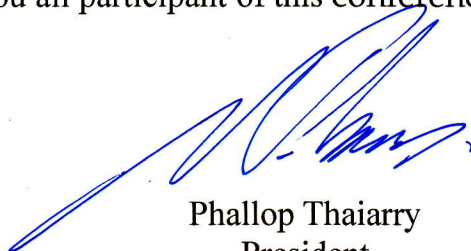
In modern times sustainable development fully depends on human consciousness and awareness. According to Buddhism, sustainability does not mean sustainable development in the modern sense. Rather, it ensures appropriate material wellbeing, the accomplishment of non-harming in economic activities, and the realization of the inner freedom from suffering. Buddhist sustainable development focuses on the idea that human beings can live happily with moderate consumption, cooperation and harmony, as well as equitable resource distribution.

Moreover, prosperity can be in the sense of materialism and spiritualism. The Buddha elaborated on how people should feel about their wealth and guided them toward gaining the proper advantages from their wealth. To achieve happiness, they must earn wealth the right way and use it effectively. Money or wealth is neither to be kept nor used solely for one's own sensory satisfaction; it is to make oneself and others happy and satisfied. While using wealth for oneself, one should be aware of the right measure of sensory satisfaction. Consumption according to Buddhism is not the final goal of a society. Wealth is judged not only by its amount but also by its usefulness in both worldly enjoyment and in advancing one's spiritual progress. Buddhism offers an economic thinking with an ethical framework: accumulate as much as you can through righteous means, share it with others, and be mindful that the world including your wealth is not everlasting but impermanent. Wealth can bring comfort and enjoyment or misery to householders in this and future lives. The role of wealth is to provide adequate basic needs for oneself and society but not to the extent that it encourages greed and indulgence, which Buddhism emphasizes "Contentment is the greatest wealth."

According to Buddhism, conflict, intolerance and disharmony arise out of desires, hatred and ignorance. To develop confidence, tolerance, and harmony, it is important to cultivate common values or universal ethics. Therefore, promoting education, dialogue, social and economic development can lead to the sustainable development of peace in the world.

This aligns with aims and objectives of the World Fellowship of Buddhists which seeks to work for securing peace and harmony among people and happiness for all beings, and to collaborate with other organizations working toward the same goal. Since its establishment in B.E. 2490 (1950), The WFB has remained committed to these ideals, promoting Buddhism and peace for humanity regardless of faiths and beliefs.

On this auspicious note, I would like to extend my best wishes to all participants for a successful conference with outcomes satisfactory to all desired objectives. Thank you all participant of this conference.



Phallop Thaiarry  
President  
The World Fellowship of Buddhists