International Recognition of the Day of Vesak

The Day of Vesak marks the birth, the Enlightenment and the demise of the Buddha. His birth heralded man's deliverance from suffering. His enlightenment was the discovery of the Truth notably the Four Noble truths and the Law of Dependent Origination. His demise was wake-up for the Right Mindfulness.

The three major events in the life of the Buddha signal the birth of Buddhism, a great phenomenon in the history of mankind. For this reason many Buddhist countries such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Laos observe the day.

The commemoration of the Day of Vesak by Buddhists everywhere in the world aims to worship and honor the Compassion, the Wisdom and the Purity of the Buddha who taught humanity to be kind and tolerant towards each other, qualities which foster world peace.

In November 1998, at the International Buddhist Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, all member countries unanimously expressed the intention to gain International Recognition for the Day of Vesak, a symbol of the birth of Buddhism.

United Nations representatives of the following Buddhist countries : Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand, proposed to the UN General Assembly to adopt the resolution for the international Recognition of the Day of Vesak.

On 15 December 1999, the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly at its 54th session considered the agenda item 174 and adopted the draft resolution for the International Recognition of the Day of Vesak and for the appropriate arrangements for its observe\ance at the UN Headquaters and other offices of the UN. 34 countries sponsored the draft resolution

Since the year 2000, on that most auspicious day the full-moon in the sixth lunar month of the Day of Vesak, Buddhist countries have joined in the commemorative event at the UN Headquaters. Sri Lanka took the lead to coordinate the event in 2000 and 2001, followed by Myanmar in 2202, India in 2003. Thailand had the honor of hosting the event in 2004.