

INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST COOPERATION

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Namo Sakyamuni Buddhassa
Most Venerable Chairman!
Esteemed Representatives!
Ladies and Gentlemen!

Being a member of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha Executive Council, I would like to present some ideas about “international Buddhist cooperation” theme.

Esteemed Representatives!

We are living in a global village, in which we are closer with each passing day in some way. There are main factors for that: mass media magic and practising Dharma.

Thanks to internet and science and technology achievements, one of us has many ways to enrich ourselves via infinity information resources about people, countries and different continents; not only in the past, the presents but also in the future.

The second factor is even more important in this age. I mean when we learn everything by our hearts, when we know how understand others with a harmonious, empathetic and respectful attitude and when we know how to associate physical and spiritual aspect in daily life, we will be perfectly aware of that people from any place in the world are brethrens.

In that way, being Buddhist we understand each other by practising Dharma and sharing the infinity love for Buddha Amitabha, commitment to follow precepts and serve sentient beings for a notable purpose: for peace and happiness of sentient beings in the world.

Through the effectiveness and accessibleness results of international Buddhist cooperation activities, Buddhist Sanghas in many countries have deployed some cooperation programs in the spirit of solidarity, in which everyone respect each other for the general interest of Buddhism and human beings in many respects. To improve the result of international Buddhist cooperation effort I would like to propose some following ideas.

- In organization respect: Buddhist Sanghas and associations in the world should keep in touch together base on the support of governmental committee for religions, from the beginning. These

organizations should be active in arranging meetings, visiting and teachings. These activities could be diversified depends on particular purpose. No matter it is bipartite or multipartite, direct or indirect, between individuals or organizations ... everything should be done in spirits of solidarity and cooperation.

There are so many things could be exchange between nations such as culture, education, Dharma propagation, news in Buddhist activities... I strongly believe that these exchanges will form a world networking in providing Buddhist information as well as contributing for organizing international conferences and traditional festivals in member countries. Moreover, renew membership of some Buddhist Sanghas which ceased to exist due to some unavoidable reasons.

- In cultural respect: Buddhist Sanghas should co-publishing prayer-books and magazine in multi-languages in order to serve Buddhist followers. We should establish a world Publishing Committee for translating and publishing The Tripitaka into the native languages. Buddhist commentary literature in e-book formats should be encouraged.
- Cooperation in education: This should be the first policy of every government but also of Buddhism. Establishing an international Buddhist university Association is very necessary, in order to assure Buddhist scholarship. Moreover, we should found a world committee or organization with prestigious professors and righteous monks to enhance Dharma missionary and help practitioners follow the Path. This committee has responsibilities to report education results as well as its progress and problems in order to have timely resolutions for educational problems.
- In Dharma propagation: thanks to achievements in natural and social sciences, including history, linguistics, archeology and so on we have most effective tool in studying Dharma, in a scientific and precisely way. Thus, Buddha's teaching in each Buddhist School from both Southern School or Northern School of Buddhism would be harmonious and supporting each other. The Buddhist teachers will be given a chance to preach followers in a college hall, a pagoda or public hall, without problems, because no matter he or she belongs to a particular country or Buddhist Sangha he or she commits to serve society and sentient beings, help them to attain Nirvana.

- Festival: every year each nation hosts an international conference. For this purpose, we should have an international operation, which has responsibility for organizing these festivals or conferences. Take the UN Day of Vesak celebration as an example, after three successive years of hosting in Thailand, the celebration should be handed over to another member country in a sandwiched manner, for instance, Vietnam should be the host in 2008, Burma 2009 and South Korea 2010, etc. These international festivals based on in solidarity spirit between Buddhist organizations in the world would be a very important factor for building peaceful and sustainable developing in 21st century and so on.

We realize the need to have a World Buddhist Center, a guesthouse or international hotel, an international Buddhist library, a world Buddhist museum ... to hold Buddhist festivals and to preserve documents and valuable keepsake.

In short, nowadays the exchange relationship between Buddhist countries is more accessible and colorful than in last centuries. We are given opportunities to make Vietnam Buddhist prosper in order to follow with great stride in science and technology in globalization age. Being a Buddha's children we are striving for sentient beings so that everyone will be happier. To do that we should create causes for friendly relationship. Together we are going to build a happy and peaceful atmosphere on Earth.

Translated by Hong Van