

**CLOSING CEREMONY**  
**OF THE UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK 2025**  
Vietnam Buddhist University, May 8, 2025



**VIETNAM BUDDHIST SANGHA  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**CLOSING CEREMONY  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
DAY OF VESAK 2025**

**Vietnam Buddhist University, May 8, 2025**

**Compiled by  
Most Ven. Thích Đức Thiện  
Most Ven. Thích Nhật Từ**



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## CLOSING REMARKS

### UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK 2025

- Homage to the Śākyamuni Buddha!
- Your Holinesses, Excellencies, Eminencé, Venerable Sangha leaders from Vietnam and around the world,
- His Excellency Nguyễn Hòa Bình, Politburo Member and Standing Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam,
- Distinguished current and former leaders of the Party, the State, and the Vietnam Fatherland Front,
- Esteemed representatives of central ministries and national agencies, leaders of Ho Chi Minh City and provinces across the country,
- Respected delegates representing governments, the United Nations, diplomatic missions, and international organizations in Vietnam,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 20th United Nations Day of Vesak has been solemnly held in Ho Chi Minh City amid the vibrant celebrations of the 50th anniversary of national reunification. The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (VBS) is deeply honored to have welcomed the presence of distinguished Sangharājas, Supreme Patriarchs, Presidents, and leaders of Buddhist

Sanghas and organizations; the International Council for the Day of Vesak (ICDV); global Buddhist organizations; and monastic representatives from 85 countries and territories to the fourth UN Day of Vesak hosted in Vietnam.

We are privileged to have received H.E. Lương Cường, Politburo Member and President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, who graced the Opening Ceremony with a deeply meaningful and insightful keynote address. Today, we are also delighted by the presence of H.E. Nguyễn Hòa Bình, Politburo Member and Standing Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam, who delivers his remarks at this Closing Ceremony. We extend our sincere appreciation to all distinguished guests—senior government officials, international dignitaries, representatives of the Sri Lankan government including the President himself, ambassadors, consuls general, and members of the international diplomatic corps in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City—for their esteemed participation.

Venerable Elders, Distinguished Guests,

This year's Vesak has received more than 1,000 academic papers centered on the theme: "Unity and Inclusion for Human Dignity: Buddhist Insights for World Peace and Sustainable Development." The discussions and scholarly contributions have once again affirmed that, within Buddhist teachings, the principles of unity and inclusion are core expressions of compassion and wisdom—serving the common happiness of humanity and the sustainable development of every nation and people. Unity and inclusion are not only Buddhist ethical ideals; they serve as a guiding compass for our thoughts, speech, and actions in cultivating a society of peace,



minimal conflict, and abundant love. In his keynote address, President Lương Cường issued a powerful message: “We must transform compassion into public policy, turn wisdom into a path for development, and make the spirit of selflessness and altruism the guiding force for collective action”—a message especially vital in today’s volatile world.

Venerable Sangha, Esteemed Guests,

Vietnamese Buddhism has always intertwined with the nation’s cultural evolution and has stood shoulder to shoulder with the people through all chapters of history. The Buddhist philosophy of unity and inclusion has become integral to Vietnam’s cultural identity and the spiritual strength of national solidarity. It has deepened our collective sense of patriotism, compassion, generosity, and the cherished values of mutual care, such as the tradition of “the whole leaves covering the torn ones.” Unity is a priceless heritage and a time-honored tradition of the Vietnamese people—it is the power that has enabled Vietnam to rise as a resilient and heroic nation, overcoming adversities, defeating aggressors, and achieving glorious triumphs throughout its history.

As the President of Sri Lanka expressed in his opening remarks: “Vietnam is a remarkable nation that has courageously carved a path of resurgence despite centuries of suffering. We are proud of the extraordinary achievements your country has made—emerging from a painful history of chemical warfare and grave injustice. I respectfully refer to your land as a realm of resilience.”

On behalf of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, I once again express our heartfelt gratitude to all of you for traveling to Vietnam, to Ho Chi Minh City, to partake in

this sacred celebration with your most heartfelt goodwill.

The 20th United Nations Day of Vesak, held at the Vietnam Buddhist Academy in Ho Chi Minh City, has concluded in splendid success. May all venerable Sangha members, distinguished guests, and devoted Buddhists around the world welcome this Buddha's Birthday season with immeasurable blessings and accomplish all wholesome aspirations under the radiant light of our Compassionate Father, the Buddha Śākyamuni.

Namo Bodhisattva of Joyful Acceptance, Mahāsattva.

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**REMARKS BY MOST VEN. PROF. DR. BRAHMAPUNDIT,  
PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL  
FOR THE DAY OF VESAK (ICDV)**

2025 United Nations Vesak Celebration

Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic of Vietnam

May 8, 2025

Most Venerable Patriarch,

Dear Esteemed Leaders,

Most Venerable Thích Thiện Nhơn,

Dear Venerable Monks, Esteemed Delegates, and  
Knowledgeable Friends,

As we officially conclude the 20th United Nations Vesak Celebration, successfully held in Ho Chi Minh City, my heart is filled with deep gratitude for the presence, wisdom, and invaluable contributions of all those who made this historic event a success.

Over the past three days, we have gathered under the theme “Unity and Inclusion for Human Dignity: Buddhist Wisdom for World Peace and Sustainable Development.” Our discussions, rooted in the Dharma, have once again affirmed the timeless value of the Buddha’s teachings in addressing the urgent challenges of our time.

Today, we stand united with delegates from 85 countries and regions, representing various Buddhist traditions, communities of monks, scholars, and organizations for peace. Together, we have adopted the Ho Chi Minh City Declaration—proof of our collective commitment to human dignity, ethical leadership, social justice, and lasting peace.

In this Declaration, we vow to uphold the values of unity and inclusion, placing compassion and wisdom at the heart of sustainable development. We affirm the importance of intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and the integration of Buddhist ethical principles into policymaking at all levels.

We recognize that inner peace is the foundation of world peace. Therefore, we promote the application of Buddhist mindfulness in conflict resolution and good governance. We support the establishment of Buddhist centers focused on ethical leadership and peacebuilding, and encourage the incorporation of mindfulness into decision-making processes for the long-term benefit of all sentient beings.

This year's Vesak celebration marks a special moment for our host country. Together, we honor 50 years of national reunification and 80 years of the founding of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. We express our deep gratitude to the Government of Vietnam, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, and especially the Vesak 2025 Vietnam Organizing Committee for their hospitality and vision in hosting this global event.

Vietnam once again affirms its role as a dynamic center for socially engaged Buddhism, beautifully symbolized by the lotus flower—Vietnam's national flower. The lotus

rises from the mud, emerging above the water, untouched by the impurities below, reaching for the sun with pure beauty. This image reminds us of the Buddha's words:

“Just as the lotus rises from the mud and is not sullied, the Buddha lives in the world but is not polluted by worldly affairs.”

Similarly, the Buddhist practitioner does not turn away from life. With a pure heart full of compassion, they engage with the world—helping those in suffering, uplifting those in need, and embodying the spirit of wisdom in action.

Now, let us bring the spirit of this conference into our daily lives. Let us bring the principles of the Ho Chi Minh City Declaration to life, using the light of the Dharma to nurture peace, justice, and sustainable development for the benefit of all beings.

May the 2025 United Nations Vesak Celebration be remembered as a moment of awakened hope and strengthened collective resolve. May the light of the Three Jewels always shine upon you. We look forward to seeing you again next year in China.

Thank you sincerely.



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**VIDEO MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS  
ON THE SUCCESS OF THE UN DAY OF VESAK 2025  
BY UNESCO DIRECTOR-GENERAL AUDREY AZOULAY**

Dear friends,

I am very pleased to address you on the occasion of the International Day of Vesak, whose 20th edition is being celebrated this year in Vietnam. This celebration is a meaningful moment for millions of people around the world—from Thailand to Sri Lanka, through Cambodia, India, Japan, Laos, and many other places.

Vesak is a special time for reflection, a moment to return to the teachings of the Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama—the Enlightened One—who called for peace, compassion, and generosity. These are values with universal resonance, carrying particular strength in a world marked by numerous crises, ongoing conflicts, and the rise of hate speech.

That is why UNESCO fully supports this celebration. It also reminds us of the essential role Buddhist communities have played for centuries: building bridges between cultures, fostering listening, and encouraging dialogue.

Your presence in Ho Chi Minh City, coming from nearly 80 countries, is yet another illustration of this

message.

This message of peace, exchange, and the circulation of ideas was embedded early on in the history of Buddhism. Since the days of the Silk Roads, Buddhist communities have welcomed travelers, merchants, and scholars, helping to spread knowledge and techniques across Asia.

UNESCO continues to promote this heritage through its Silk Roads program, established over 40 years ago, which highlights these foundational exchanges of knowledge and shared heritage.

This spirit will also be honored here in Paris at UNESCO Headquarters through an exhibition organized at the initiative of Sri Lanka.

Through this initiative, as with this celebration, UNESCO works to cultivate the seeds of peace.

Today, I express the wish that this festival—celebrated in the peaceful light of the full moon—continues to enlighten us, helping each and every one of us to feel, more deeply each day, the truth of this teaching of the Buddha:

“All happiness in this world comes from opening ourselves to others.”

Thank you.



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**SPEECH AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE UNDV 2025  
BY PERMANENT DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
NGUYEN HOA BINH**

(Ho Chi Minh City, May 8, 2025)

Dear esteemed leaders of the Party and State of Vietnam!

Dear heads of state, government leaders, and representatives of international organizations!

Dear venerable monks representing Buddhism from various countries and Buddhist sects worldwide, along with the esteemed clergy of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha!

Dear distinguished guests representing the United Nations, UN agencies, foreign diplomatic missions, international organizations in Vietnam, and honored guests from abroad!

Dear delegates and all Buddhist followers, both within Vietnam and abroad!

Today, in a solemn and warm atmosphere, we gather here in Ho Chi Minh City to bring the unforgettable and meaningful days of the United Nations Vesak Day 2025 to a close, filled with solidarity, sharing, and joy.

Over 2,700 delegates participated from both domestic and international locations, including numerous heads

of state, government leaders, UN representatives, over 1,350 international delegates from 85 countries and territories, along with thousands of monks, nuns, Buddhists, and those who practice Buddhist beliefs from around the world. This year's Vesak celebration has been organized with utmost respect and solemnity, marking an international religious and cultural event of great scale and significance, which was a great success.

The event also occurred at a very special time. The Vietnamese people have just solemnly commemorated 50 years since the liberation of the South and the reunification of the country (April 30, 1975 – April 30, 2025); are joyfully looking forward to the 80th anniversary of the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (September 2, 1945 – September 2, 2025), and are actively preparing for a new era – the era of a prosperous, happy nation.

In this atmosphere of pride and celebration, the Vesak flag, symbolizing noble humanistic ideals, peace, friendship, and international cooperation, once again rises high in the sky over the peaceful, loving nation of Vietnam.

The Vesak Day is also an occasion for Buddhists worldwide to connect spiritually, nurture solidarity, and promote the noble values of Buddhism. Over the past days, the wisdom and compassion of Buddhism have spread widely, forming a bridge between nations, religions, and cultures, all sharing the same noble aspiration: to promote tolerance, harmony, and compassion to build a peaceful, cooperative, and lasting happiness for humanity.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres once said, “The timeless teachings of the Buddha on peace, compassion, and serving others are the way to a better,

more understanding, and harmonious world for all people.” This has been clearly demonstrated through the United Nations Vesak Day celebration this year.

The success of the Vesak 2025 celebration, with the theme “Unity and Inclusion for Human Dignity: Buddhist Insights for World Peace and Sustainable Development,” reaffirms Buddhism’s high responsibility in addressing global issues. The event is a great source of inspiration, awakening faith and fostering the energy of goodwill in each individual. It affirms core Buddhist values such as compassion, mindfulness, and ethics, offering an effective and sustainable path to solving current global challenges, from human development, environmental protection, to building lasting peace. It is a powerful call to encourage international cooperation in building a peaceful, just, and sustainable world for the benefit of all humanity.

President Ho Chi Minh, beloved by all, affirmed, “Vietnamese Buddhism has shared both joys and hardships with our nation throughout thousands of years of history.” This noble tradition has not only been preserved but also continues to be strongly promoted. The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha consistently upholds the spirit of compassion and wisdom, nurtures patriotism, and fosters solidarity, creating a strong foundation for the great unity of the entire Vietnamese people, contributing significantly to building a peaceful society and further enhancing the role of Buddhism in the country’s development.

Hosting and successfully organizing the United Nations Vesak Day 2025 in Ho Chi Minh City is a clear testament to the rising role of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in the global Buddhist community and in strengthening dialogues on global issues, preventing conflicts, promoting

social justice, and sustainable development. It also serves as vivid proof of Vietnam's commitment to spreading the teachings of the Buddha.

After 40 years of renewal, Vietnam has achieved significant and historic milestones, including considerable progress in meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The material and spiritual lives of our people have continually improved, with the poverty rate significantly reduced. Vietnam is recognized by the United Nations as a beacon for poverty reduction, a symbol of peace, stability, hospitality, and an attractive destination for investors and international tourists. I would like to share with you that in 2025, Vietnam will complete the removal of 100% of temporary and dilapidated houses for the poor.

In religious life, Vietnam consistently implements a policy of respect and protection for the freedom of belief and religion, ensuring equality and non-discrimination on the basis of religion. Under the leadership of the Party and the Vietnamese State, people from various religions have always been united, closely bonded, and actively participated in the cause of building and developing the country, significantly contributing to economic and social development, ensuring welfare, and supporting those in need, ensuring that no one is left behind. Vietnam will continue to strive to provide a prosperous, happy life for its people, with the goal of a rich, strong, just, democratic, and civilized society.

The success of the United Nations Vesak Day 2025 in Vietnam is a powerful testament to the humanistic values and the remarkable achievements of the Vietnamese nation and its people.

It affirms:

(1) The peaceful, compassionate, and harmonious cultural tradition of the Vietnamese people.

(2) The correct policy on religious freedom and the effective implementation of this policy by the Party.

(3) Clear results in improving the material and spiritual lives of the people, as demonstrated during the event, with millions of participants expressing joy, trust, solemnity, and order.

(4) Vietnam's international standing and responsibility in addressing global issues.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Vietnam, as the host country, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the representatives of the United Nations, international guests, and all the delegates and Buddhist followers for their enthusiastic participation and contributions, which helped make this event a success. The success of this year's event shows that Vesak is an important festival for the global Buddhist community and should be maintained annually.

I sincerely thank and highly appreciate the efforts of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, congratulating them on the success of the event, and thank all the committees, ministries, and agencies at the central and local levels, international and Vietnamese news agencies, as well as everyone who contributed to making the Vesak 2025 event a great success.

Thank you for the precious friendship and good wishes extended to the nation and people of Vietnam. I wish you good health and happiness, and we hope that you will carry the message of Vesak 2025 in Vietnam to countries,

regions, and the global community, and look forward to seeing you at future Vesak celebrations.

We respectfully salute you and wish you good health!

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**SPEECH BY DR. INLAVANH KEOBOUNPHANH  
MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PARTY,  
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE LAO FRONT FOR NATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

On the Occasion of the 20th United Nations Day of Vesak  
6–8 May 2025 | Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic of  
Vietnam

Most Venerable Supreme Patriarch,

Venerable Sangha members,

Esteemed members of the Presiding and Organizing  
Committees,

Distinguished Leaders and Honoured Guests,

It is my profound honour to represent H.E. Mr. Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Lao Front for National Development, and the multi-ethnic people of Laos—as well as in my personal capacity—to join you at this auspicious 20th United Nations Day of Vesak, held in the beautiful and historically significant Ho Chi Minh City. I extend my warmest greetings, heartfelt congratulations, and deep admiration to the Most Venerable Sangha, the Organising Committee, and all participants for your dedication to this sacred gathering. I also wish to express

my sincere gratitude to the organisers for the gracious invitation extended to our delegation from Laos.

This celebration, recognised by the United Nations since 1999, is a noble occasion for global Buddhists and peace-loving communities to come together, reflect upon the timeless wisdom of the Buddha, and share meaningful exchanges of ideas, spiritual insights, and practical experiences. Under the inspiring theme “Unity and Collective Effort for Human Dignity,” I am confident that this year’s Vesak will generate constructive dialogue and collective wisdom to address the complex challenges of our time, ultimately improving the quality of life for all beings.

This forum serves not only as a space for spiritual enrichment but also as a bridge of mutual understanding and cooperation among governments, faith communities, and peoples. It deepens our respect for cultural diversity and strengthens the bonds of friendship and solidarity across nations.

The Lao Front for National Development, established on 13 March 1950 and enshrined in the Constitution and laws of the Lao PDR, plays a vital role in unifying our ethnic communities, promoting national solidarity, safeguarding cultural heritage, and fostering people-to-people diplomacy. We actively cultivate harmonious interfaith relations within Laos, where religions coexist peacefully and contribute jointly to national development.

The Lao government deeply values the ethical teachings of all faiths. We recognise that spiritual values—such as compassion, morality, and mindfulness—are essential to moral education, good governance, and social harmony. In this spirit, we reaffirm our commitment to upholding interreligious harmony and integrating spiritual principles



into everyday life for the benefit of our people.

As the world advances rapidly in science, technology, and global interconnectivity, it is vital that we anchor these developments in ethical and spiritual foundations. Vesak provides a timely reminder that true peace and development are rooted not merely in material progress, but in the cultivation of inner peace, compassion, and right understanding.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt wishes for good health and success to the Most Venerable Chairpersons, the Organising Committee, and all distinguished participants. May this 20th United Nations Day of Vesak flourish in its noble aspirations, continue to inspire peace, and contribute to a more compassionate and inclusive world.

Thank you very much.



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**CAMBODIAN SPEECH**  
**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 20TH UNITED NATIONS DAY**  
**OF VESAK**

6–8 May 2025 | Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic  
of Vietnam

- My highest respect to the Great Buddhist Supreme Patriarch.
- My highest respect to senior and junior venerable monks.
- My respect to Your Excellencies, Royal Ambassadors, Ambassadors, and diplomatic corps representatives.
- My respect to Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, and the esteemed audience members.

Today, with the permission of His Excellency Dr. Chay Borin, Minister of Cult and Religion of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I am greatly honoured to participate in the 20th United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) Celebration in Vietnam 2025 under the theme “Unity and Inclusion for Human Dignity: Buddhist Insights for World Peace and Human Development,” aimed at further strengthening the bonds of solidarity, friendship, and good cooperation between state institutions and Buddhist leaders of Cambodia and Vietnam. The ceremony is being

held on the beautiful grounds of the Vietnam Buddhist University in Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

On behalf of His Excellency Dr. Chay Borin, Minister of Cult and Religion, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the warm hospitality extended to our Cambodian delegation. I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes for the full success and fruitful outcome of the 20th United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) Celebration in Vietnam 2025.

The theme of this year's UNDV is highly significant and timely. It not only reflects the growth of respect for and practice of Buddhism but also addresses the urgent need for Buddhists to unite as one in building a peaceful and harmonious world. It invites us to learn from each other through shared actions and aspirations, drawing from the essence of the Dhamma: understanding, tolerance, and compassion.

This 20th United Nations Day of Vesak 2025 offers a valuable opportunity for the exchange of ideas, experiences, and initiatives among Buddhists. It is a platform for proposing new measures that promote the harmonious development of Buddhism, both regionally and globally. Furthermore, it will inspire unity within the Buddhist community and generate collective energy to preserve the sacred heritage, foster Buddhist values, and advance Buddhism through mutual cooperation.

Since 15 December 1999, Vesak Day has been officially recognised by the United Nations as an international day, a global acknowledgement of Buddhism's contributions over 2,600 years to uplifting the spiritual consciousness of humanity through generosity, morality, meditation, and

other virtues. Vesak Day commemorates the threefold events in the life of the Buddha: His Birth, Enlightenment, and Parinibbāna. Buddhists interpret this day as a guide for daily living, as follows:

1. Birth: To be born as a human being is to be determined to accomplish something meaningful and to create new value in life through study, training, and self-cultivation along the Seven Steps of Awakening, the Middle Way, and the Four Noble Truths—following the path that the Buddha walked and fulfilled.

2. Enlightenment: Once one has achieved a goal, it should serve both personal benefit and the good of humanity. The means and wisdom leading to this accomplishment should be shared openly with all people.

3. Parinibbāna (Death): Death is a natural condition for all beings. Before passing, one should leave behind a legacy of value—something that future generations can build upon to develop themselves, society, and the environment.

Great Buddhist Supreme Patriarch, Venerable Monks, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

Buddhism is a religion founded on the teachings of the Buddha, the Enlightened One, who revealed the truth of all Dhammas through wisdom, logic, and nature. These teachings represent fundamental principles—the Dhamma, truth, integrity, and moral discipline—which forbid wrongdoing and encourage good deeds and the purification of the mind. These are guiding principles for life, enabling self-understanding and improvement.

Buddhism has played a vital role in the social development of nations. Monasteries serve as moral

education centres, places of peace and reconciliation, symbols of democratic respect, sites of general education, custodians of national heritage, tourist destinations, sanctuaries for environmental preservation, and providers of mental and material support for the people.

In the Kingdom of Cambodia, freedom of religion, tradition, custom, and cultural expression is widely respected. Buddhism has flourished through the leadership of the Royal Government of Cambodia, formerly under the guidance of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, now President of the Senate, and continued under the leadership of Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia during the 7th Legislature of the National Assembly. The government remains committed to safeguarding and advancing the legacy built by previous generations, transforming the nation's infrastructure with great pride.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia designates Buddhism as the State religion and affirms the national motto: Nation, Religion, King. With the majority of citizens devoted to Buddhism, it stands as a central pillar of national identity. The government continues to invest in the religious sector—building temples, spiritual centres, schools, monasteries, monk healthcare facilities, libraries, and Buddhist universities across the nation—to strengthen unity, promote tolerance, and foster mutual understanding among all religious communities in Cambodian society.

The 20th United Nations Day of Vesak 2025 in Vietnam is taking place in a moment of particular significance, coinciding with the celebration of the 58th anniversary of Cambodia–Vietnam diplomatic relations (24 June

1967 – 24 June 2025). I firmly believe that the activities organised during this event will significantly contribute to deepening the friendship, solidarity, and cooperation between the peoples of Cambodia and Vietnam—especially in the fields of public diplomacy and Buddhist collaboration. These efforts are aligned with the enduring principles of good neighbourliness, traditional friendship, comprehensive cooperation, and long-term stability.

The Royal Government of Cambodia, under the wise leadership of Prime Minister Hun Manet, has steadfastly maintained peace, political stability, security, public order, and social safety—creating favourable conditions for normalcy across all sectors of Cambodian life. Citizens throughout the Kingdom enjoy peace, freedom, prosperity, and pride.

On this occasion, I wish to express my profound gratitude to our good friend Vietnam for graciously hosting this important event. Finally, on behalf of His Excellency Dr. Chay Borin, Minister of Cult and Religion of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I extend my heartfelt blessings to the Great Buddhist Supreme Patriarch, venerable monks, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. May you be endowed with the Four Blessings of the Buddha: Longevity, Nobility, Happiness, and Strength. I wish the 20th United Nations Vesak Day in Vietnam 2025 every success.

Thank you!





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**CLOSING REPORT  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK 2025  
BY MOST VEN.DR. THICH NHAT TU**

Namo Buddhāya – Homage to the Blessed One, the Exalted, the Fully Enlightened One!

- His Holiness Thích Trí Quảng, Supreme Patriarch of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha

- His Eminence Thích Thiện Nhơn, President of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha,

- Most Ven Prof.Dr. Brahmapundit, President of International Council for the Day of Vesak

- Holinesses, Excellencies, Eminences, Venerable Sangha Members, Ladies and Gentlemen

- His Excellency Nguyễn Hòa Bình, Politburo Member and Standing Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam,

- Distinguished current and former leaders of the Party, the State, and the Vietnam Fatherland Front,

- Esteemed representatives of central ministries and national agencies, leaders of Ho Chi Minh City and provinces across the country,

With profound joy and a deep sense of gratitude, I am honoured, on behalf of the International Council for the

Day of Vesak (ICDV) and Vietnam Buddhist Sangha to present the Closing Report of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2025, held on the momentous occasion of the 20th anniversary of Vesak's recognition as an international day of observance by the United Nations, and the fourth time the celebration has been solemnly hosted in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, at the Vietnam Buddhist University in Ho Chi Minh City.

This year's Vesak takes place in a historically significant context as the entire Party and people of Vietnam commemorate 80 years of National Independence and 50 years since national reunification. Thus, this Vesak celebration is not only a global Buddhist event but also a reaffirmation of the noble values of the Vietnamese nation in its path of integration and comprehensive development.

The entire program unfolded in an atmosphere of sacred reverence, unity, and cultural richness, harmoniously blending patriotism, national tradition, and the timeless values of Buddhist compassion, wisdom, and peace. With the dedicated support of Party and State leadership, the close coordination of government ministries and agencies, and the tireless efforts of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and the international community, Vesak 2025 has been successfully conducted across four key dimensions:

### **1. Spiritual Dimension: Veneration of the Buddha's Relics**

The most spiritually profound highlight was the reception and enshrinement of the Buddha Relics, a National Treasure of India, generously permitted for temporary transfer by the Government of India from the National Museum—home to relics excavated from the

ancient site of Nagarjunakonda. The enshrinement began on May 2, launching a sacred journey of reverence through 4 major cities in Vietnam until May 21, with millions of devotees coming to pay homage.

Alongside this, the Indestructible Heart Relic of Bodhisattva Thích Quảng Đức, a National Treasure of Vietnam and a living symbol of selfless compassion, was respectfully welcomed on May 5, and formally opened for public veneration from May 6. These two relics form the sacred spiritual core of this year's Vesak, deeply touching hearts across generations.

## **2. Cultural Dimension**

The cultural activities of Vesak 2025 highlighted the dynamic interplay between Buddhist rituals, traditional arts, and contemporary expressions, offering a vibrant platform to inspire faith and spiritual connection:

- The ceremony of raising a 500m<sup>2</sup> Buddhist flag alongside 108 national flags, and the lighting of 37,000 lotus lanterns, created a solemn and emotional setting for prayers for world peace and memorial offerings for the millions of Vietnamese who perished in war, in defense of national independence, freedom, and unity.

- A large-scale exhibition featuring 87 national treasures and Buddhist architectural masterpieces underscored the role of Buddhist culture in community building and the nurturing of national identity.

- Three nights of Buddhist cultural performances at Láng Le Cultural Park (May 3–5) offered audiences spiritual reflection and emotional resonance. The performances included the cải lương opera *The Life of the Buddha* (May 3), the *Vesak Radiance* (May 4), and the *International Cultural Performance Sacred Vesak* (May 5).

– The International Cultural show at Thisky Hall on May 7 left a lasting impression, effectively showcasing Vietnamese cultural identity to global audiences.

### **3. Academic Dimension**

The International Vesak Conference 2025 brought together over 3,500 delegates including 1,200 delegates, Buddhist scholars, and intellectuals from 85 countries and territories, under the theme:

“Harmony and Inclusivity for Human Dignity: Buddhist Insights for World Peace and Sustainable Development.”

Academic sessions were conducted in both English and Vietnamese across five sub-themes, addressing urgent global concerns: sustainable peace, global ethics, compassionate education, mindful healing, gender equity, interfaith collaboration, and socially engaged Buddhism. The wealth of insights from hundreds of international and domestic papers reflected the growing stature of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha on the world stage and highlighted Buddhism’s vital role in shaping collective responses to contemporary global challenges.

We highly value the intellectual contributions of Sangharājas, heads of Buddhist traditions, venerable masters, and esteemed scholars from around the world, whose wisdom, vision, and scholarly efforts have illuminated the path to a more compassionate and sustainable future for all humankind.

### **4. Peace-Prayer Ceremonies for the World**

Two deeply moving World Peace Prayer Ceremonies were held:

– The first, on the evening of May 6, at Vietnam Buddhist

University, was attended by over 1,300 international delegates, 1,000 Vietnamese monastics, 4,000 university students, and 10,000 domestic devotees. The ceremony offered a profound convergence of spiritual aspiration and human solidarity, lighting the lamp of wisdom amid a turbulent world.

– The second, on May 8 at the summit of Bà Đen Mountain, Tây Ninh Province, conveyed our heartfelt aspiration for a peaceful, harmonious, and inclusive world, where no one is left behind.

The Vietnam War, one of the most devastating conflicts of the 20th century, left an indelible scar on the soul of a nation. Over 3 million Vietnamese lives were lost, 58,220 American soldiers perished, and 7.5 million tons of bombs—more than the total dropped in World War II—were unleashed upon Vietnamese soil. It was a time of profound suffering, destruction, and division.

Yet, history has since borne witness to an extraordinary transformation. Through a process of national healing, grounded in the Buddhist spirit of compassion and non-retaliation, Vietnam chose the path of reconciliation over resentment, understanding over vengeance. Forty years after the war ended, in 1995, Vietnam and the United States normalized diplomatic relations—a landmark in post-war diplomacy.

Today, the two former adversaries stand as comprehensive strategic partners, jointly committed to peace, mutual prosperity, and the resolution of global challenges. This remarkable journey from enmity to partnership is not only a testament to political courage and visionary leadership—it is a timeless lesson in the power of forgiveness, the maturity of a nation that transcends

suffering, and the strength that lies in bridging divides through dialogue.

The arc of Vietnam–U.S. relations proves that even the deepest wounds can give rise to renewed friendship—if we are willing to let go of the past and walk together toward the future.

## **Conclusion**

The United Nations Day of Vesak 2025 is more than a grand Buddhist celebration—it is a global message of peace from Buddhism to the world. It affirms that true peace does not stem from military power, but from the transformation of the human heart, through ethical living, compassion, and wisdom.

The success of Vesak 2025 stands as a testament to the effective collaboration between the International Council for the Day of Vesak (ICDV) and the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, with the special support of the Party and Government of Vietnam—a nation committed to peace, cultural diversity, and international cooperation.

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## HO CHI MINH CITY DECLARATION ON THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK

May 6–8, 2025, Vietnam Buddhist University,  
Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic of Vietnam

### Preamble

Whereas, we, the participants in the United Nations Day of Vesak 2025, representing Buddhist traditions, monastic councils, Buddhist organizations, scholars, researchers, and representatives of Peace Organizations from 85 countries and territories, having assembled at the Vietnam Buddhist University in Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, from 6 to 8 May 2025, to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> United Nations Day of Vesak and to participate in the International Conference under the theme: ***‘Unity and Inclusivity for Human Dignity: Buddhist Insights for World Peace and Sustainable Development’***, hereby declare as follows:

Whereas, recalling United Nations General Assembly Resolution 54/115 adopted on December 15, 1999, which formally recognized the Day of Vesak as an international observance of cultural and religious significance, to be commemorated annually at the United Nations

Headquarters and its Regional Offices from the year 2000 onwards;

Whereas, recognizing that the 2025 celebration of the United Nations Day of Vesak in Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, holds profound spiritual and cultural meaning for the Sangha, lay Buddhists, and the Vietnamese people, and that it constitutes an auspicious opportunity for the international Buddhist community in celebrating two historic national milestones: the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Reunification (April 30, 1975 – April 30, 2025) and the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (September 2, 1945 – September 2, 2025);

Whereas, commending the outstanding socioeconomic, cultural development achievements of Ho Chi Minh City since national reunification, and acknowledging the growing international stature of Vietnam as a constructive and responsible member of the regional and global community;

Whereas, we join together in congratulating the people of Vietnam as we witness the remarkable transformation of the country, particularly its tremendous achievements across all aspects of life—economic, cultural, and social development—especially as exemplified by Ho Chi Minh City after fifty years of national reunification. Vietnam’s international standing continues to rise, and the country plays an increasingly important role both regionally and globally;

Whereas, the fact that the United Nations Day of Vesak is being held in Vietnam for the fourth time clearly reflects the rich, diverse, and free religious life enjoyed in Vietnam. We can clearly see the strong commitments and



practical implementation by the Party and the State of Vietnam in respecting and ensuring the right to freedom of belief and religion for all citizens.

Whereas, affirming that the United Nations Day of Vesak 2025 underscores the indispensable role of Buddhism in promoting solidarity, peace, tolerance, and sustainable development across the world;

Whereas, recognizing that this year's observance of Vesak expresses our collective aspiration to apply Buddhist wisdom and ethical responsibility in addressing urgent global issues, including conflict resolution, social justice, environmental sustainability, and international cooperation, in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

Whereas, celebrating the resounding success of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2025 in Ho Chi Minh City, which has inspired renewed confidence and optimism in a peaceful and compassionate future for humanity. We express our sincere appreciation to the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, and in particular, the leadership of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, for their warm hospitality, tireless dedication, and visionary support in hosting this historic celebration of global significance. We reaffirm Vietnam's role as a vital center of socially engaged Buddhism and a hub of Buddhist cultural diplomacy that fosters solidarity and harmony for the peace and well-being of all peoples;

Now, therefore, upon the conclusion of our deliberations, we, the undersigned delegates, having deliberated in a spirit of compassion, wisdom, and harmony, do hereby adopt and proclaim the **Ho Chi**

**Minh City Declaration**, offering a Buddhist response to the world's urgent challenges, grounded in the principles of non-violence, tolerance, and the promotion of human dignity.

### **Article 1: Unity and Inclusivity for Human Dignity**

1.1. We pledge to promote unity and inclusivity for the dignity of all human beings, placing humanity at the center of sustainable development—where dignity is upheld, and no one is left behind. At the same time, we affirm the importance of strengthening the Buddhist response to global challenges and the urgent issues of our time, including social inequality, discrimination, and political polarization, which continue to undermine peace and international cooperation.

1.2. We call for enhanced intercultural and interfaith dialogue as a means to bridge divides, build trust, and strengthen Buddhist participation in international diplomacy and conflict-resolution efforts aimed at fostering sustainable global harmony.

1.3. We affirm that human dignity is inextricably linked to peace, justice, non-violence, and equality, urging world leaders to uphold these principles in alignment with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.4. We advocate for the integration of Buddhist ethical values in policy-making and governance, ensuring that compassion, wisdom, and ethical leadership shape decision-making processes at local, national, and international levels.

1.5. We support the principles of Engaged Buddhism as a transformative force in addressing the crises of

poverty and in advancing efforts to eradicate hunger and deprivation. We further affirm the relevance of these principles in promoting gender equality and ecological sustainability. In this spirit, we call upon the Buddhist world to take a more proactive role in initiatives for social justice and inclusive development.

## **Article 2: Cultivating Inner Peace for World Peace**

2.1. We affirm that inner peace is a fundamental prerequisite for global peace, requiring a universal commitment to mindfulness, ethical discipline, and wisdom as the foundations for sustainable harmony within individuals and societies.

2.2. We advocate for the integration of Buddhist contemplative practices into mediation, diplomacy, and post-conflict reconciliation initiatives, recognizing their effectiveness in fostering emotional resilience, non-violent communication, and collective healing.

2.3. We call upon governments and global institutions to adopt mindfulness and ethical leadership training, equipping a greater emotional mastering, moral clarity, and compassionate governance skills.

2.4. We support the establishment of Buddhist Centers for Peace, ethical leadership, and conflict resolution methods grounded in Buddhist philosophy.

2.5. We urge the incorporation of Buddhist principles of non-attachment and non-reactivity into policymaking and governance structures, ensuring that decisions are made with clarity, balance, and long-term well-being in mind.

## **Article 3: Forgiveness, Mindful Healing, and Reconciliation**

3.1. We affirm that forgiveness and mindful healing

are fundamental to achieving lasting post-conflict justice, ensuring that reconciliation efforts foster healing, collective restoration, and sustainable peace.

3.2. We call for Buddhist principles of loving-kindness, compassion, equanimity to be encouraged in conflict resolution, fostering dialogue, understanding, and ethical diplomacy.

3.3. We advocate for the establishment of healing initiatives grounded in Buddhist psychological therapy, integrating meditation practices and mindfulness-based interventions to support post-conflict communities in overcoming psychological trauma, loss, and social divisions.

3.4. We call for the establishment of reconciliation commissions informed by Buddhist ethical principles, ensuring that justice processes prioritize deep social harmony, inclusive participation, and moral accountability in divided societies.

#### **Article 4: Buddhist Compassion in Action: Shared Responsibility for Human Development**

4.1. We emphasize the urgent need for building equitable, need-based economies, structured upon Buddhist principles of non-excess, ethical wealth distribution, and the moral imperative to prioritize human dignity over profit-driven exploitation.

4.2. We call upon governments to implement models of green economy, digital economy, circular economy, and sustainable development inspired by Buddhist ecological ethics, ensuring that regenerative economic policies are consistently aligned with ecological balance, inter-generational justice, and long-term social stability.

4.3. We encourage the forms of Buddhist-principles-driven social enterprises, promoting ethical labor practices, fair trade economies, and compassionate economic models that empower marginalized populations and enhance human security.

4.4. We urge policymakers to incorporate Buddhist teachings on contentment, generosity, and right livelihood into economic justice policies, wealth redistribution mechanisms, and sustainable business regulations.

4.5. We call for increased investment in Buddhist humanitarian initiatives, addressing the urgent crises of poverty, hunger, forced displacement, and socio-economic disparities through guided philanthropic efforts.

### **Article 5: Mindfulness in Education for a Compassionate and Sustainable Future**

5.1. We advocate for the integration of Buddhist ethical training and mindfulness education into global school curricula, teacher development programs, and lifelong learning frameworks to cultivate wisdom, ethical leadership, and social responsibility.

5.2. We urge educational institutions to embrace compassion-based learning models, emphasizing moral reasoning, non-violent communication, and contemplative pedagogy as essential tools for building harmonious and ethical society.

5.3. We call for the adoption of mindfulness-based interventions in education systems, addressing youth mental health crises, ethical dilemmas, and the rising stress induced by modern social and technological pressures.

### **Article 6: Fostering Unity: Collaborative Efforts for Global Harmony**

6.1. We urge Buddhist leadership to take an active role in the United Nations peace missions, and interfaith forums, contributing to conflict resolution, peace-building, and reconciliation.

6.2. We affirm that Buddhist values of non-violence and collective responsibility should shape climate policies and disaster response strategies, ensuring that ecological preservation remains a fundamental pillar of global governance.

6.3. We support dedication to humanitarian aid, post-conflict rehabilitation, and ecological protection, mobilizing global Buddhist resources in response to crises and social challenges.

6.4. We place our utmost reverence upon the Sacred Relics of Śākyamuni Buddha, the National Treasure of India, and the Sacred Heart Relic of Bodhisattva Thích Quảng Đức of Vietnam, as sacred heritages of humanity for world peace, enshrined during the United Nations Day of Vesak 2025 in Ho Chi Minh City.

### **Article 7: Host of United Nations Day of Vesak 2026**

Finally, the International Council for the Day of Vesak is pleased to announce its approval and support for the Buddhist Association of China to host the 21<sup>st</sup> United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations in the People's Republic of China, in 2026. We extend a warm invitation to all Buddhist leaders, scholars, and peace-loving people to join us in the People's Republic of China for this momentous occasion.

### **Conclusion**

In the spirit of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2025, we, the assembled delegates, reaffirm our unwavering

commitment to applying Buddhist wisdom, ethical responsibility, and collective action for global peace, human dignity, and planetary well-being. We urge:

All nations to prioritize policies of peace, environmental sustainability, and economic justice over militarization and natural resource exploitation.

Global institutions to adopt Buddhist ethical principles in governance, diplomacy, and sustainable development.

The global organizations to recognize Buddhist wisdom as an essential resource for conflict resolution and ethics.

The international Buddhist community to participate in collaborative efforts in shaping ethical leadership, economic fairness, and environmental healing.

Let this HO CHI MINH CITY DECLARATION serve as a moral compass, a strategic framework, and an urgent call to action for all leaders, policymakers, and citizens striving for a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

May all beings be free from suffering. May wisdom and compassion guide our actions. May Vesak 2025 mark a new era of global unity.

Signed on May 8, 2025, at Vietnam Buddhist University,  
Ho Chi Minh City, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

**Most Ven. Prof. Dr. Phra Brahmapundit**      **His Eminence Thich Thien Nhon**

- President of the International Council for the Day of Vesak  
- President of International Association of Buddhist Universities

- President of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha  
- Chairman of the National Organizing Committee for UNDV 2025

**Global Buddhist Leaders & Representatives**





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**MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE  
FROM THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF UNDV 2025**

Homage to the Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha  
Most Venerable Leaders of Buddhist Sanghas from  
Vietnam and around the world,

His Excellency Nguyễn Hòa Bình, Politburo Member  
and Standing Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist  
Republic of Vietnam,

Distinguished current and former leaders of the Party,  
State, and the Vietnam Fatherland Front,

Esteemed representatives of Central Ministries and  
Agencies,

Leaders of Ho Chi Minh City and other provinces and  
cities,

Distinguished guests representing the United Nations,  
diplomatic missions, and international organizations in  
Vietnam,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 20th United Nations Day of Vesak, held in Ho Chi  
Minh City, has concluded with resounding success. With  
the utmost reverence and profound gratitude, the Vietnam  
Buddhist Sangha (VBS) sincerely thanks the leaders  
and former leaders of the Party, State, Government, and

the Vietnam Fatherland Front; central ministries and departments; the leadership of Ho Chi Minh City and various provinces; international organizations; Buddhist Sanghas and traditions from around the world; as well as the Vietnamese Buddhist faithful and compatriots at home and abroad for their support and participation, which together ensured the distinctive success of this fourth UN Vesak Celebration hosted in Vietnam.

We respectfully express our gratitude to H.E. President Lương Cường of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for attending the Opening Ceremony and delivering a profound congratulatory address on the occasion of Vesak 2025. We are equally grateful to Standing Deputy Prime Minister Nguyễn Hòa Bình for his gracious presence at today's ceremony and his heartfelt message to the monastic community and the global Buddhist faithful on the occasion of Buddha's Birthday, Buddhist Era 2569.

The VBS expresses sincere appreciation to Secretary of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee Nguyễn Văn Nên and to the leadership of the City Party Committee, People's Council, People's Committee, and the Vietnam Fatherland Front of Ho Chi Minh City for their full participation in all Vesak events. Their insightful guidance throughout the preparatory stages has been an extraordinary source of encouragement, enabling the VBS to successfully host this special Vesak Celebration in the city—coinciding with the 50th anniversary of Vietnam's reunification (April 30, 1975 – April 30, 2025).

The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and the International Council for the Day of Vesak (ICDV) respectfully acknowledge and thank the President of Sri Lanka for accepting our invitation and delivering a keynote address

at the Opening Ceremony of Vesak on May 6, 2025. We also extend our deep appreciation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India for granting permission and facilitating the enshrinement of the sacred Buddha's relics—recognized as a National Treasure of India—at this year's UN Day of Vesak in Ho Chi Minh City and other regions across Vietnam.

We offer heartfelt thanks to the Deputy Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Buryatia, Ministers from India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Azerbaijan; the Vice President of the Lao Front for National Construction; and the many Ambassadors, Consuls General, and international diplomats attending this occasion.

The VBS expresses profound gratitude for the wholehearted support and coordination provided by the Most Venerable Professor Dr. Brahmapundit, Chairman of the ICDV; the Venerable Dr. Dhammaratana; and all members of the ICDV. Without their enthusiastic and sincere collaboration, the splendid success of the UN Day of Vesak 2025 would not have been possible.

The Organizing Committee respectfully acknowledges the spiritual merit and leadership of the Most Venerable Elders of the Supreme Patriarchal Council, the Executive Council, Senior Monastics, Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, distinguished lay Buddhists from central departments and provincial chapters of the VBS, monastic education institutions, and devoted Vietnamese Buddhists at home and abroad. Your harmony and solidarity have greatly contributed to the success of this Vesak Celebration.

We sincerely thank all domestic and international agencies, religious communities, organizations,

individuals, outstanding businesses, and the thousands of volunteers and service-minded Buddhist communities who have actively supported the organization of this year's special Vesak Celebration.

We also express our deepest appreciation to the press and media, including national and international news agencies, radio, and television broadcasters—especially Vietnam Television (VTV) and BTV9's BChannel—for their comprehensive and timely coverage of Vesak activities, which contributed to the success and wide reach of this international celebration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the process of organizing such a large-scale event, shortcomings or oversights may have occurred. We sincerely ask for your understanding and forgiveness, with hearts full of joy and compassion.

Namo Bodhisattva of Joyful Acceptance, Mahāsattva.

With deepest respect and gratitude.

**Most Ven. Thich Thanh Phong**

Vice President of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha

Vice President of National Organizing Committee for UNDV 2025