

2543 (2000)
The Twenty-First General Conference
Bangkok, Thailand

The World Fellowship of Buddhists held its 21st General Conference, of which the Royal Thai Government had generously granted the budget for organizing the conference and celebration, at the Main Hall of the Thailand Cultural Centre in Bangkok, Thailand from 5-9 December B.E. 2543 (2000). The conference was held in conjunction with Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the WFB (B.E.2493-2543 / 1950-2000) and the inauguration of the World Buddhist University (WBU) was also held as part of the Celebration.

There were Dharma show and exhibition on the Golden Jubilee of the WFB were presented at the Opening Ceremony at the Thailand Cultural Center on 6 December as a hallmark of the WFB. Various heads of States and Sanghas had sent visions and congratulatory messages in this regard.

The World Buddhist University (WBU) established by the 20th General Conference of the WFB will play an important role in coordinating among all other Buddhist Universities, educational institutes, and the WFB Regional Centres where Buddhism is taught and disseminated through the context of the globalization.

In the span of 50 years, the WFB Regional Centres had prospered and covered five continents in 37 countries. The WFB Golden Jubilee Declaration was concluded with detail as follows.

- 1) We express our veneration and gratitude to the Mahasangha of all participating countries for their spiritual guidance;
- 2) We thank in all sincerity and gratitude His Majesty the King of Thailand for his patronage to the Fellowship and the gracious leadership in the promotion of Buddha Dharma in the world;
- 3) We rededicate ourselves on this auspicious occasion to continue to serve the cause of Buddha Dharma by achieving the aims and objectives of the Fellowship;
- 4) We welcome, and pledge our fullest support to the World Buddhist University whose nerve centre in Thailand was established to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Fellowship;
- 5) We note with admiration the steps taken by the United Nations to recognize the Buddhist holiday of Vesak and endorse the proposal to declare and implement the International Buddhist Year programme, where each year will be dedicated to a theme, event, personage;
- 6) We agree to observe the year Buddha Day (Vesak) 2001 to Buddha Day (Vesak) 2002 as the International Year of Metta (loving kindness); and
- 7) We continue to make every effort through the Regional Centres to work towards world peace through the pursuit of preventing of alleviating environmental deterioration, poverty, armed conflict and violence;