



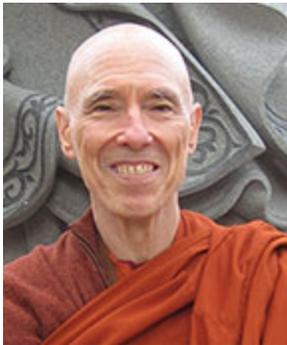
buddhist global relief



helping hands newsletter

Vol 4 No 2: Summer 2012

## Quenching the Flames



**By Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi** - The Fire Sermon (Samyutta Nikaya 35:28) is one of the most powerful expressions of spiritual truth ever uttered. It was one of the first discourses in the Buddha's ministry, addressed to a thousand monks who had formerly been fire-worshipping ascetics. Though spoken long before the rise of corporate capitalism and modern technologies of war, this discourse is prescient in its diagnosis of the human condition.

The Buddha begins with the blunt declaration that everything is burning. And without wincing he takes us straight to the heart of the matter: the world is burning with the fires of greed, hatred, and delusion. From the dawn of history, these primal drives of the mind have been at the root of all human misery, but today they have swelled up in a conflagration. In our present-day global community they exist not only as motives in individual minds but as forces that shape and empower colossal social systems spread out across the earth. They encroach on all aspects of our lives, and hardly anyone can escape being singed by their flames.

In my view, the manifestation of greed that should trouble us most is not the raw desire for sensual pleasures but the lust for power and domination. This is the greed that underlies financial fraud and corporate imperialism. This is the greed that propels a gargantuan economy that devours ever diminishing stocks of fossil fuels, minerals, water, and forests. This is the greed that blinds us to the future, so that, in our quest for profits and quick gratification, we're ready to leave later generations the task of restoring a damaged planet.

Hatred today still erupts in wars and violence, in racial and ethnic conflict, but its most egregious manifestation is indifference, a disposition to close our hearts to those we do not know and reduce them to bare statistics. It thrives under the cover of fear and suspicion, the labels of "alien" and "outsider." Delusion means not only ignorance and wrong views, but also distraction, which is constantly foisted on us by a commercial culture that thrives on novelty and rapid change. Under the impact of this culture, we restlessly seek what is new and different. Often, rather than probe into the facts, we find it more convenient to let ourselves be deceived. For instance, while climate scientists tell us that global warming is real and we have to change our ways, radio demagogues and political hacks mock their warnings, leading the gullible into an illusory rose garden. Yet the consequences of this neglect are already starting to blow back on us and include, not only freakish weather events and the loss of biodiversity, but a shrinking food supply that puts millions of lives at risk.

In the Fire Sermon, the Buddha says that the way to win release from the fires consuming our world is by extinguishing them at their point of origin. This means extinguishing them in the mind, through a regimen of mindfulness, clear comprehension, and meditative insight. Given, however, the global spread of greed,

hatred, and delusion, given too their proportions and systemic embodiments, the task of quenching the flames calls for a broader effort than that expressed in texts intended for a community of monastic renunciants.

Human life today might be seen as moving along two interwoven trajectories. One is the moral trajectory, the other the trajectory of sustainability. The moral trajectory is currently being driven by lust for profit and power, which is sucking up the finite resources of the earth and filling its sinks with toxic waste. The trajectory of sustainability is being propelled by an expanding population expected to reach nine billion by mid-century. Moreover, rising living standards in developing countries increase the pressure on the planet to provide resources to satisfy the expectations of their newly affluent middle classes. If these two trajectories continue along their present arcs, in the not-too-distant future they are likely to converge, straining the sustaining capacity of our planet to a breaking point.

In my understanding, human flourishing requires that we bend both of these trajectories, a task that calls for more than merely personal effort. The moral trajectory must be bent in the direction of greater social and economic justice. The trajectory of sustainability must be bent away from unbridled growth toward a principle of sufficiency. While rooted in the same essential insights enunciated in the Fire Sermon, the actions we take must match the magnitude of our global crisis. To emerge intact, we all have to become firemen, a global fire department working together to mitigate the national and trans-national fires of greed, hatred, and delusion.

Such a project requires that we revisit the assumptions that underlie the prevailing economic model, which is geared toward the impossible ideal of perpetual growth. Instead, we must make our social institutions more equitable, so that we can provide everyone with the means to a dignified life. Our concept of the good life should emphasize contentment, generosity, and compassion rather than limitless production and consumption. We must learn to see the natural world as our home, our life-support system, and not merely as a source of raw materials for energy and industrial production.

The work of Buddhist Global Relief is a small step in this direction. Starting from the premise that "hunger is the worst illness" and "the gift of food is the gift of life," we try to ensure that people everywhere can obtain access to sufficient quantities of healthy and nutritious food. Through education and training, we aim to give women and girls a chance at a better life. We seek to help the poor emerge from poverty, and to give those with means the opportunity to put compassion and generosity into action. Inspired by the Buddhist ideals of loving-kindness and compassion, we seek to fashion a social order that embodies justice and equity for all and a code of ethics that expresses concern for the most needy in our midst.

*This essay is partly adapted from the author's "Reflections on the Fire Sermon," published in Parabola (Spring 2012). The full version can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/7zwt dyo>.*

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## Spring 2012 Project Briefs

**By Chot Elliot & Carla Prater** - BGR supports projects around the world that support better nutrition and increased educational opportunities. We are happy to showcase fourteen projects in this newsletter

### Cambodia, Lotus Outreach, Non-Formal Education for Sex Workers and Their Children



BGR funding supports Lotus Outreach's Non-Formal Education program for women and girls who had been working in the sex trade. The program this year offers basic literacy, health education, life skills, and vocational training to thirty women in Phnom Penh. The women are taught to read and write and learn skills that will help them obtain jobs in manufacturing and the service industry. With funds for uniforms, supplies, and bicycles, their children can attend public schools and join NFE classes if they need to catch up to their grade level. Since Lotus Outreach began this program in 2005, less than 4% of the program's graduates have returned to sex work.

### Cambodia, Lotus Outreach, Rice Support for GATE Scholarship Recipients

Since 2009, BGR has been supporting Lotus Outreach's Girls' Access to Education (GATE) program, implemented in collaboration with the Cambodian Women's Crisis Center. The latest phase in this project not only provides rice support for the families of fifty girls in Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey so they can keep their daughters in school, but also extends the aid to fifty-eight girls studying in universities in Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Battambang, and Phnom Penh. These girls, who completed high school thanks to the help they received from the GATE program, are now pursuing university degrees in medicine, accounting, science, and other subjects. Without GATE they might have been working at menial jobs if not in the sex industry, but now they have prospects for a fruitful life and a bright future.



### Cambodia, Rachana, Socio-Economic Well-Being for Poor Communities



BGR elected to support, for a second time, the Cambodian development organization Rachana, which will be training 753 men and women farmers in five villages of Cambodia's Treang district in the System of Rice Intensification . The training will be provided to small groups, ensuring trainees maintain close contact with the instructors and gain the opportunity to exchange experiences. This intensive training process will build farmers' capacity and confidence in their ability to use these new

techniques, which increase average yields from 1.9 to 4.5 tons per hectare. At least 483 families will apply SRI in the target villages during the current rice growing season. The families adopting SRI will have increased food security, and because they will spend less on agricultural inputs, they will also have more money for other household needs.

### Côte d'Ivoire, Helen Keller International, Child Feeding

Building on its past partnerships with Helen Keller International, one of the oldest international relief organizations devoted to reducing malnutrition, this year BGR is funding a program to support improved infant and young child feeding practices in Côte d'Ivoire. This country is one of the poorest in the world, ranking 149 out of 169 countries on the U.N. Human Development Index. Over 40% of the population lives in poverty, and more than a quarter of its population are children under the age of five. Poor infant and young child feeding practices is one of the leading causes of chronic malnutrition among children under two, and malnutrition during this critical developmental window can condemn these children to a lifetime of poor health. BGR's program funds will be used to educate and train women-led community based volunteer care groups about optimal feeding practices, including the importance of breastfeeding children under 6 months and providing micronutrient-rich complementary foods to children under the age of 2. Education and training will be provided to more than 100 volunteers, who will then help hundreds of households with young children.



### Haiti, What If? Foundation, Lamanjay Community Food Program

BGR will continue to support the What If? Foundation's food program, Lamanjay, with funds for 12,000 hot nutritious meals for hungry children still living in makeshift tent camps erected after the earthquake of January 2010. This time BGR's grant to the Foundation provides partial scholarships for ten children to attend elementary school; for some, this will be their first opportunity to attend school. The scholarships cover tuition, transportation, uniforms, books, and fees. With food for their bodies and minds, the children will have a fighting chance to move out of the debilitating poverty trap.

### India, Bodhicitta Foundation, Children's Tuition Center

Bodhicitta Foundation is a relief organization run by the dynamic Australian Buddhist nun Sister Yeshe, who lives and works among the Dalits, the former "Untouchable" community, in the slums of Nagpur in central India. BGR has been supporting Bodhicitta since 2010. This past April we approved funding for a new program designed to reduce malnutrition, enhance educational opportunities, and provide training to poor women in work skills, human rights, and spiritual values. The project sponsors ten children to attend school; establishes a tuition center for thirty children, with weekly classes on anger management and personality development, computer education and English; and provides weekly food supplements for twenty-five malnourished children. For adult women, the tuition center will offer classes on meditation, confidence and personality development, computer education, and English, as well as health and sanitation training and stress management counseling. The project will also organize quarterly health camps, train women as health and social workers, and create a basic medical clinic in the slum.



### India, Oxfam India, Enhanced Food Security for Women Farmers



The hill state of Uttarakhand is one of the poorest in India, where most of the population depends on small farming to make a living. Up to 90% of the agricultural labor force is female. Land holdings are small and the soil is eroded and has lost much of its fertility. After three years of low rainfall, the productivity of the ecosystem is seriously threatened. BGR is supporting an Oxfam India program that will build local capacity and thereby improve the livelihoods of over 6,500 people in the Tehri Gharwal district. The program, conducted in partnership with the Mountain Valley

Development Association, will help women farmers to organize to improve their access to available resources. The program will train them in innovative agricultural techniques, such as the System of Rice Intensification, and improve local planning to better adapt to climate change. Agricultural and water conservation pilot projects will be run in thirteen villages and can then be applied elsewhere in the state and beyond.

### Sri Lanka, Karuna Trust, Grow Jackfruit in Every Home Garden

The jackfruit is a wonderful tree that grows throughout southern Asia. When established, the trees are hardy and drought resistant, providing food for people and forage for cattle. The fruits are large and starchy, with numerous nutritional and medicinal benefits. The fruit and seeds can be prepared in a variety of delicious ways or preserved for later use. BGR is partnering with Karuna Trust in Sri Lanka on a project that will distribute 25,000 jackfruit saplings to 12,500 poor rural families—two saplings per family—in the arid



North Central Province. The trees will serve as a sustainable source of food and income, provide welcome shade, and improve the microclimate of household gardens for years to come.

### Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya, Kelwatte Water Supply



This year, BGR is supporting its long-time partner, Sarvodaya ("Welfare of All") USA with a life-saving project to provide reliable clean water supplies in the Kelwatte district of Sri Lanka. Currently, these residents obtain untreated water from an open and polluted stream. An assessment of the needs of these villagers showed a high rate of childhood disease from drinking unsafe water. Dry seasons threaten water shortages every year, putting crops, livelihoods and health at risk. BGR funds will help provide safe and clean water to hundreds of residents with a new gravity water supply system. The local community participates in

the construction by providing direct labor through shramadana: "sharing work, knowledge, talents and time." This project will empower the community, raise individual and self-esteem, and serve as a model for neighboring communities. Thus, the project will provide a foundation for personal and social awakening and offer the gifts of water and health.

### United States, City Harvest, Healthy Neighborhoods

One of BGR's newest partners, City Harvest, Inc. of New York City, responds to the urgent needs of thousands of hungry NYC residents. It meets the challenges of urban poverty with a remarkably creative range of services, such as the rescuing of 29 million pounds of food this past year that would otherwise have been discarded at restaurants and grocery stores, and delivering it free of charge to food pantries and soup kitchens. This year, BGR funds will support City Harvest's Healthy Neighborhoods, an integrated series of interventions in some of the most food-insecure areas in the United States, including neighborhoods in the South Bronx and Bedford-Stuyvesant. We'll support mobile "farmer's markets" that will provide some 800,000 pounds of fresh, free produce directly to neighborhoods with more than 2,000 low-income households. Addressing the links between poor health and poor nutrition, these "mobile markets" are also used as hubs to provide additional services such as food stamp screenings and health education.



### United States, Glide, Sustainable Nutrition Program



Located in the heart of San Francisco's poverty-stricken Tenderloin district, the community group Glide has been helping the homeless and hungry since 1969, when a dedicated group of community members gathered to offer a free potluck dinner to anyone in need of a meal. Since then, Glide has skillfully developed its Sustainable Nutrition Program, which provides food and education in nutrition and wellness to the poor. BGR is partnering with Glide this year to support this multi-pronged program. Our program funds will help provide three healthy meals each day to anyone in need, healthy meals and snacks for

children in the local childcare center, workshops on family nutrition cooking, information on healthy food sources, youth classes in gardening, ecology and health, and visits to local farmers' markets.

### Vietnam, International Cooperation Center-Thai Nguyen University, System of Rice Intensification and New Rural Program

In rural Vietnam, the backbone of the economy is rice cultivation but most farmers are poor and have had little exposure to advanced farming techniques. The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) is an exciting program that teaches rice farmers how to increase their crop yields and improve the quality of the soil while using fewer inputs of labor, seed, water, and chemicals than conventional cultivation. A grant from BGR to the International Cooperation Center of Thai Nguyen University will expand the reach of SRI by training farmers in 35 communes in these methods. A final workshop will share the lessons learned from the pilot communes with 145 other communes in the province. This project should raise living standards, provide more food, and preserve fertile soil throughout the province.



### Vietnam, Tam Binh Red Cross, Hospital Feeding



For the fourth consecutive year, BGR continues to support the Red Cross' hospital feeding program in the Tam Binh district in the Mekong Delta region. A single hospital serves more than half a million people in this district. The price of a hospital stay does not include food, and poverty-stricken families who must carry the heavy weight of medical and hospital costs are further burdened by the need to buy food for their ill family members. BGR's funding will allow the Red Cross to purchase in-season vegetables, tofu, and charcoal for cooking for these patients. These funds are

leveraged with the volunteer labor of more than 80 volunteers, who prepare the meals and serve lunch and dinner to the most vulnerable ill and poor people.

## Vietnam, Tam Binh Red Cross, Scholarships

BGR continues to support the scholarship program of the Tam Binh Red Cross with a third year of funding. Entrenched rural poverty in Vietnam has forced many families to make the difficult decision to keep their children at home to work in the fields rather than send them to schools where they cannot afford the basic fees. BGR funds will provide the annual enrollment fee, educational materials, and basic health care for 150 students, enabling them to overcome the barriers of poverty and to continue their studies. 100% of BGR's funds will be used for these scholarships, without any deduction for administrative costs. To qualify for these scholarships, each student must meet criteria for low income, high teacher recommendations, and good conduct. By providing educational opportunities to these promising students, BGR hopes to break the cycle of poverty in their families.



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## Critical Rice Support in Cambodia



**By Sherry Horowitz** - In Cambodia, only 11 percent of girls continue their education beyond primary school. For families living below the sustenance level, sending children to school is simply a luxury they cannot afford. Instead, all family members are needed to work to provide the bare necessities of life.

For the third consecutive year, Buddhist Global Relief has given a grant to Lotus Outreach International to provide critical rice support each month to impoverished families, so that their daughters can remain in school.

Hut Som Luet is a rice recipient. Hut was orphaned at age six when both of her parents died of tuberculosis. Now twelve years old, and living with her 67-year-old grandmother, Hut is in seventh grade at the Taben Secondary School in Oveng village. Before she qualified for the monthly rice stipend, Hut's grandmother used to beg her neighbors for food. Now, there is plentiful and nutritious food for both of them, and Hut is looking forward to graduating from high school. Ultimately, she would like to go on to study nursing. Hut and her grandmother thank BGR for its continued support, which has greatly improved their dignity, their health, and their future prospects!

Sngourn Ton is another rice recipient. To supplement her family's income, she was removed from school to work on a cassava farm for \$2.50 a day. Two years ago, when members of her village's Local Education Working Group noticed her absence from school, she was given rice support. Now, at seventeen, Sngourn is in grade ten at Svaychek High School, and hopes to become a teacher in her home community. She is very grateful to BGR for their support and the radical difference it has made in her life!

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## 2012 Walk Events Planning



**By Carla Prater** - Planning for the 2012 Walk to Feed the Hungry is now in full swing. We have walks planned for the month of October in Ann Arbor, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco, and another in the Southern San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle, and Sherwood Forest in England. We have a wonderful group of coordinators heading up these events, which are all run by local committees. Please check our website over the summer as we post more information about these events and look for information on how you can participate!

### Walk Guides

As part of our planning for the October walks, we have compiled a Local Coordinator's Guide and an Administrative Guide. The Coordinator's Guide is a resource for local committees that are holding the walks, with information and tips we have learned over the last two years. The Administrative Guide will focus on what the BGR staff and volunteers can do to make the process smoother for the local committees. We hope these Guides together will make our 2012 Walks the best ever!

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## BGR Walk Events Coordinator Guide

Dear Walk Coordinators, Board, Advisors and BGR Team members,

With the 2011 Walks, the Walk Team provided information about the tasks involved in planning these major events. The material was collected, edited and expanded upon to create this Local Coordinators Guide. We thank Carla Prater, Editor of the Guide, and all the members of the 2011 CA, MI and NY Walk Team who participated in making this Guide possible.

We hope that this Guide will be useful to the new Walk Coordinators, and look forward to a productive 2012 Walk season to help people in need around the world transform their lives for the better.

With thanks and gratitude for your contributions!

Metta,  
Kim

[READ GUIDE](#)

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## Vesak Celebration at Chuang Yen Monastery



**By Marcie Barth** - On Sunday, May 13th, New York area BGR members and volunteers participated in the Vesak Celebration at Chuang Yen Monastery, which also commemorated Mother's Day. A beautiful garden party offered bounties of food made by volunteers. A lovely fruit tea served by BGR was quite a hit on the hot day. BGR volunteers also served delicious egg rolls, noodles, veggie buns, and desserts, generating proceeds to go to BGR for its programs. We thank Chuang Yen Monastery for their continuing generosity and support of BGR's efforts.

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## BGR Holds Meetings at Chuang Yen Monastery

**By Carla Prater** - People came from as far away as California, Colorado, Texas, Illinois, Michigan, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, as well as from nearby New Jersey and New York, to attend BGR's Spring Team Meeting on Saturday April 28th in the Woo Ru Memorial Library at Chuang Yen Monastery in Carmel, NY.



Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi opened the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation on "Where We Have Been and Where We are Heading." This was followed by Executive Director Kim Behan's overview on BGR's growth in terms of donations and projects. In the afternoon, which was largely devoted to strategic planning sessions, small breakout groups discussed ways BGR can grow in the future while preserving its sense of mission and distinctive identity. When the breakout groups met to pool their insights, they brought forth a rich collection of ideas indicating lines of future development for BGR.

The highlight of the meeting was a morning visit from Erika Keaveney of Lotus Outreach, an organization that BGR has partnered with for the past three years. Erika gave a moving slide-show presentation about the Lotus Outreach programs in Cambodia that BGR sponsors. One program helps women and girls escape from the sex trade through non-formal education. Another provides food scholarships that enable poor girls to attend school. It was deeply moving to see so clearly how these projects have changed these women's lives, enabling them to live with dignity and hope for the future.

At Sunday's board meeting the board approved funding for a whole slate of projects, some new and some renewals of existing projects. Brief descriptions can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Everyone came away from the meetings with renewed enthusiasm and an appreciation for the impact BGR has been having all around the world. By working together we have certainly been able to accomplish a great deal in our relatively short life of four years!

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## Interfaith Meeting at Duke University



**By Sumi Kim** - BGR board member Michael Roehm joined a panel on "Faith Responses to Hunger" at Duke University on March 29th in Durham, North Carolina. The panel was moderated by Duke freshman Lucas Metropolis, founder of Fishing for Families in Need, which teaches kids how to fish for sport and provides soup kitchens with the catch. Rapper-musician David "Agape" Scherer of the Lutheran tradition spoke about avoiding subtly colonialist approaches to hunger relief by partnering with those in need rather than imposing on them. Jenna Weinberg of MAZON, a Jewish hunger relief organization, discussed the importance of paying attention to legislation such as the Farm Bill. For example, when the U.S. sends food aid to countries, that sometimes undercuts the ability of local farmers to sell their harvest. BGR was beautifully represented by Michael, and all were pleased to see that the Buddhist community in the West is beginning to join the effort to end hunger.

*Sumi Loundon Kim is the Buddhist chaplain at Duke University*

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## BGR Participates in Historic White House Conference

**By Kim Behan** - Over the past forty years, as the U.S. population has become much more ethnically diverse, large numbers of Americans now follow religions whose roots go back, not to the deserts of Judea and Arabia, but to the plains, mountains, and villages of ancient India. For convenience, these are grouped under the designation "Dharmic faiths" and include Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and the Sikh faith. Not all the followers of these religions are immigrants. At least one whole generation of people of Asian descent has been born and raised in the U.S. and think of themselves principally as Americans following an Asian religion. In addition, large numbers of indigenous Americans have embraced Buddhism and other Dharmic creeds.



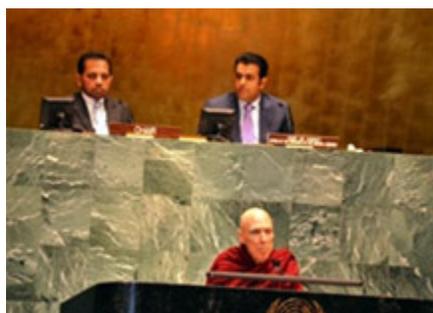
Eager to translate their faith into programs of social justice and humanitarian service, adherents of these Dharmic religions have sought pathways along which they can contribute more effectively to their communities, their nation, and the world. To facilitate this process, on April 20, 2012, the White House convened a historic conference under the title "Community Building in the 21st Century with Strengthened Dharmic Faith-Based Institutions." Buddhist Global Relief was honored to be one of the organizations invited to attend. Many Hindu, Jain, and Sikh organizations, as well as other Buddhist organizations, also participated.

The conference was co-hosted by the White House Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, the White House Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Agencies, and Hindu American Seva Charities (HASC). Our chairperson, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, attended as the BGR representative. Also present from the Buddhist community were Bill Aiken, Director of Public Affairs for Soka Gakkai International, one of the co-organizers; Ven. Katugastota Uparatana of the Maryland Buddhist Vihara; Koshin Paley Ellison and Robert Chodo Campbell of the New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care; Buddhist blogger and chaplain Danny Fisher; and Tricycle journalist Clark Strand.

Anju Bhargava of HASC, lead organizer of the event, expressed the hope that “this will be the first step in the Dharmic community coming together to explore and identify common ground and building a coalition that will strengthen each other and our nation.” Bill Aiken of Soka Gakkai summed up the consensus among the Buddhist delegates with his comment: "I thought this conference marked an expansion and deepening of the dialogue between the Obama Administration and the Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain communities, as well as a growing recognition of the contributions these faiths are making in American society. I think it got a number of the faith representatives thinking about how they can expand on and deepen those contributions."

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## BGR Chairperson Gives Keynote Address at UN Vesak Celebration



**By Kim Behan** - Vesak is the most sacred day in the Buddhist calendar, commemorating the birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana of the Buddha. According to the Theravada Buddhist tradition, all three events in the Buddha's life took place on the full-moon day of the Indian month Vaisakha, which corresponds to April-May in the Western calendar. In the year 2000 the United Nations officially recognized Vesak as one of its international holy days. Since then, the United Nations has been hosting Vesak celebrations annually at its headquarters in New York as well as at its branches around the world.

Each year the celebration in New York is organized by the permanent mission of a different country. This year the task fell to the Sri Lankan mission under the able leadership of its Permanent Representative, Dr. Palitha T.B. Kohona, who was assisted by delegates from other Buddhist countries. The ceremony was held on the evening of May 7th at the General Assembly Hall, the very same hall where during normal working hours the General Assembly discusses the pressing issues of the day.



BGR chairperson Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi was honored to have been selected to give the keynote address. The text version of his address can be found [here](#). In addition to a large audience of people affiliated with the UN missions of different nations, the event was attended by monks and nuns from many countries and traditions, wearing robes ranging in color from saffron and burgundy through various shades of orange, brown, gray, and

black. Video presentations were given on Buddhist practices and monuments in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Cambodia, and other countries. Representatives from fourteen countries, as well as the Vatican, gave short talks highlighting the significance of the Buddha's teachings in today's troubled world.

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## How You Can Help

Volunteering for BGR is a wonderful way to put compassion into action and help create a better world! Right now we are posting some very important [volunteer opportunities](#) on the BGR website. We especially need people who can help writing Appeals and other promotional materials. To volunteer your services please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Michael Roehmto, at [miroehm@buddhistglobalrelief.org](mailto:miroehm@buddhistglobalrelief.org).

We will also need help with the 2012 Walk to Feed the Hungry events that will be held around the country in October. Please contact us at [info@buddhistglobalrelief.org](mailto:info@buddhistglobalrelief.org) about planned events and ways to get involved.

As always, donations to BGR are welcome. You can donate by PayPal or credit card on the [website](#), on our [FirstGiving](#) page, our Facebook page, or by check to:

Buddhist Global Relief  
PO Box 1611  
Sparta, New Jersey 07871 USA

Thank you for your help!