

Message of President of the Republic of Union of Myanmar to the Conference of the Leaders of Five Faiths

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Nay Pyi Taw, 1 Oct

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thirithudhamma U Thein Sein sent a message to the Conference of the Leaders of Five Faiths. The full text of the message is as follows:-

I wish health and happiness and greater energy for all religious leaders present here at this conference in serving the interest of your own faith with extra impetus.

Honored Religious Leaders

Our country has a fine tradition of harmonious co-existence among all the different faiths for a very long period throughout history.

Since inauguration, my government has been in vigorous drive for political, economic and administrative changes towards ensuring State peace and stability, the rule of law and social economic progress of the country in accord with the aspirations of the entire national people.

We are now in the process of making legal reforms through amendments and additions to existing laws as well as introducing new laws and bylaws as and when necessary for the citizens to enjoy fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, freedom of belief as stipulated in the Constitution.

Unfortunately, there were instigations fueling minor crimes into conflicts between the two communities and two religions. Such instability based on religion and race harms and delays the State reforms and tarnishes the national image internationally.

Honored Religious Leaders

It is my pleasure and honor to witness that leaders of the respective faiths have been energetically and harmoniously working together for interfaith unity to prevent the recurrence of racial or religious conflicts. I assure you of the government's full cooperation for the success of your work.

In fact, the main goal of all the five religions is the peaceful co-existence of mankind. One of the fundamental teachings of all faiths is that in the face of a problem or a

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conflict it should be settled with truth, loving kindness and tolerance every. One of the principle teachings of Buddhism is to follow the middle path that is free from all extremes such as greed and anger.

Additionally, we all must overcome self-obsession, and there will be no end or answer for a problem if self-obsession takes centre role in solving it. So, we all must avoid extremes.

Individual freedom or the basic foundation of democracy is to enjoy freedom without harming others. The Constitution of Myanmar fully guarantees freedom of religion as the fundamental right of citizens.

We all should never misuse this noble idea of the freedom of religion as a springboard for any kind of extremism and fueling hatred.

Honored Religious Leaders

I believe that only the all-inclusive democracy can guarantee long-term progress and peace and stability of a country like Myanmar formed with numerous indigenous peoples, and different races, religions and cultures. We all must understand our own diversity, and more importantly, this diversity must be a united force for our own interest. We all must protect our country's image as a peacefully co-existing society while preserving the existing age old fine tradition of social harmony among the fellow citizens.

We are building a new national identity representing the entire country. While accepting the diversity, it is advised to make collective efforts for ending discrimination.

My sincere message to the entire nation including people of the religious orders is the collective efforts with equality and no racial or religious discrimination for building a harmonious society in which all the people of different religions, beliefs, languages and ethnicities have mutual understanding on the diversity, respect independently existing rights, and staying away from conflicts.

New Light of Myanmar

Wednesday, 2 October, 2013

Interfaith Academic Conference on Security, Peace and Co-existence organized

Yangon, 1 Oct—The Academic Conference on Security, Peace and Coexistence jointly organized by Institute for Global Engagement (IGE) and Sitagu World Buddhist Academy (Yangon) took place at Sitagu International Buddhist Academy, here, this morning. Leaders of five main religions prayed for peace. On the occasion, Chancellor of the academies Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikad-haja Dr Ashin Nanissara extended greetings, saying that all the religious leaders need to realize check and balance for modern education and moral education. He stressed the need for all to calm down the arrogance in holding meetings. Myanmar is home to multiculture and multi-nationals and multi-religions that are in amity and unity for many years. All are to bring about the situation of better coexistence. Archbishop Charles Bo (CBCM) and Father Saw Shwe Lin (MCC) extended greetings. Sitagu Sayadaw read the message sent by President U Thein Sein. Union Minister U Hsan Hsint read the message of peace saying that the Ministry of Religious Affairs is striving for ensuring peaceful situation upholding the freedom of religion and unity among them regardless of difference from isms. Union Minister U Aung Min supplicated on the peace message. Director-General Dr Myo Myint (Rtd) read the message sent by Chairperson of Pyithu Hluttaw Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Next, Prof Dr Khin Maung Nyunt made a speech, and US, British, Pakistani and Indian Ambassadors read the messages. The chairman of IGE and the Sitagu Sayadaw submitted the papers. The seminar continued in the afternoon.—MNA