

Southeast Asian Buddhist-Muslim Coalition Strengthens Peace Efforts

Council for a Parliament of the World Religions

<http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/news/index.php/2013/07/coalition-efforts-boost-buddhist-muslim-peace/>



Meeting of Buddhist and Muslim Leaders in Bangkok to establish new action on stabilizing interreligious conflicts in the South and Southeast Asian region. (Photo: The International Network of Engaged Buddhists)

A coalition of Buddhist and Muslim leaders from South and South East Asia met in Bangkok on June 16th to endorse the 2006 Dusit Declaration, and to commit to act cooperatively with new proposals to stabilize inter-religious relations in the region. This coalition inspires the hope that conflict manifesting in violence, like the recent attacks in Bodhgaya, can be prevented.

Highlights of the 2006 Dusit Declaration include efforts to encourage media outlets to be more evenhanded towards both religions in their broadcasting, the expansion of unbiased religious perspectives taught in children's classrooms, and a new emphasis on inter-religious harmony in politicians' reforms.

The declarations made in Thailand focus on the potential benefits of tolerance: "We are also deeply aware that if Buddhist and Muslim communities can overcome the challenges that confront them, there is tremendous potential for the growth and development of ideas and values that may help to transform the region."

The coalition organized by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), and Religions for Peace (RfP) included representatives from seven countries with the allegiance of some international participants.

The Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions applauds this coalition for being a model of cooperation and tolerance in the South East Asian region.

Participants included:

Burma/Myanmar

Al Haj U Aye Lwin, Muslim, Chief Convener, Islamic Center of Myanmar and a Founder of Religions for Peace Myanmar

U Myint Swe, Buddhist, President, Ratana Metta, and President of Religions for Peace Myanmar

Sri Lanka

Harsha Navaratne, Buddhist, Sewalanka Foundation

Dr. M.A. Mohamed Saleem, Muslim, President of Mahatma Ghandi Centre in Sri Lanka

Ven. Professor. Kotapitiye Rahula, Buddhist, Department of Pali & Buddhist Studies, University of Peradeniya; Sri Lanka Council of Religions for Peace

Ven. Dr. Divulapelesse Wimalananda thero, Buddhist, University of Peradeniya

Ven. Kalayanamitta Dhammapala, Buddhist, Wat Thong Noppakul

Ven. Balangoda Manju Sri Thero, Buddhist, Senior Buddhist Sangha for Inter-faith Peace

Malaysia

Dr. Chandra Muzaffar, Muslim, President, International Movement for a Just World (JUST)

Anas Zubedy, Muslim, Secretary General, JUST

Fah Yen Yin, Program Coordinator, JUST

K V Soon Vidyanda, Buddhist, Malaysia Engaged Buddhist Network

Indonesia

Muhammad Habib Chirzin, Muslim, Islamic Forum on Peace, Human Security and Development

Abdul Mu'ti, Muslim, Central Board Muhammadiyah

Wintomo Tjandra, Buddhist, Hikmahbudhi

Thailand

Sulak Sivaraksa, Buddhist, Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation

Ven. Phra Bhanu Cittadhanto, Buddhist, Wat Phra Ram IV (Kanchanobhisek)

Parichart Suwannabuppha, Buddhist, Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University, Salaya,

Saraj Puaksumlee, Muslim, Leader of Bann Krua Community, Bangkok

Ratawit Ouaprachanon, Buddhist, Spirit in Education Movement

Somboon Chungprampree, Buddhist, International Network of Engaged Buddhists

Patcharee Conmanat, Buddhist, International Network of Engaged Buddhists

International

Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary General, Religions for Peace

Rev. Shin'ichi Noguchi, Niwano Peace Foundation

Russell Peterson, American Friends Service Committee

Prashant Varma, Deer Park Institute, India