

**Opening Address**  
**of**  
**Somdet Phra Buddhacharya**  
**Acting Supreme Patriarch of Thailand**  
**Buddhamonthon Main Hall, Nakhon Pathom**  
**July 16, BE. 2547/CE. 2004**

It is with much pleasure that I have been granted the opportunity of presiding over the Opening Ceremony of this International Conference on Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. I extend a very sincere and warm welcome to all of the delegates and participants attending this meeting here at Buddhamonthon Main Hall, Nakhon Pathom.

The world today finds itself challenged by many problems. I therefore invite you all, as Buddhist leaders, scholars and academics to meet today. I am heartened to see that the theme of the present meeting is that of “Working As One : Buddhist Unity and Cooperation”, since this will surely further enhance the existing good relationships between Buddhists of different traditions and heritages, and allow a fruitful exchange of ideas that will strengthen understanding among Buddhists and thus bring about lasting peace and happiness in the world at large. As the Lord Buddha said *Sukhā Sanghassa Sāmaggi*: unity is a vehicle of happiness.

The success of this conference will, however, be determined by the extent to which you are later able to follow up and act upon the various recommendations to be made here over the coming days. May I therefore ask and urge all of you, once this meeting has concluded, to return to your own countries and implement with all possible vigour what has been discussed at this distinguished conference.

May the Triple Gems bless you all.