

## Global Buddhist Congregation Hears Speech by Master Cheng Yen

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation

Saturday, 17 December 2011 17:14

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One of the largest meetings of Buddhists this year heard a speech by Dharma Master Cheng Yen, in which she explained the work and philosophy of the Tzu Chi Foundation.

Opening on November 27, the Global Buddhist Congregation 2011 was held at the Ashok Hotel in New Delhi; it was attended by more than 900 religious leaders, scholars and government officials from 46 countries. There were Buddhist representatives from Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the United States, Australia and other countries. The speech at the closing ceremony was given by His Holiness, the Dalai Lama; the event was organized by an Indian Buddhist organization, the Asoka Mission.

On October 20, its president, the Venerable Lama Lobzang, went to the Tzu Chi Culture and Communication Foundation in Taipei to invite Dharma Master Cheng Yen to attend the meeting. He was accompanied by Her Rey-sheng, spokesperson of the Tzu Chi Foundation, and Her Jian-ming, deputy director of Da Ai Television. Lama Lobzang said that, if Dharma Master Cheng Yen could not attend in person, he wished to play a video of her speech at the opening ceremony. He also invited Tzu Chi to send a representative to the event.



At the opening ceremony on November 27, Her Rey-sheng spoke on behalf of Dharma Master Cheng Yen and introduced her and the foundation to the participants. Then he played a ten-minute video of Master Cheng Yen: she explained that the Tzu Chi volunteers in Indonesia, South Africa and other countries helped others, regardless of their religion and culture, and gave without seeking anything in return. "Religion is really about guiding us to a correct direction in life and teaching us how to lead a good and proper life. Although religions have different names, they all share the same purpose, which is love, selfless love. Therefore, religion can save the world. Buddha's teaching is broad, selfless and tolerant. Different religious must be in harmony, to purify people's mind. These are the values which Tzu Chi volunteers are practicing," she said.

From the video, the participants learnt of the principles of Tzu Chi and its 'great love'; this is also the contribution of Buddhism to the world. Mr. Her talked about the principles and values of contemporary religion and shared with everyone Master Cheng Yen's three New Year wishes: May all minds be purified, may society be peaceful, and may there be no disasters in this world.

After the opening ceremony, many participants came to greet Mr. Her. One Indian military officer said that he was deeply moved by Master Cheng Yen's speech and the global contribution of Tzu Chi volunteers. He said he hoped to obtain a copy of the video and share Master Cheng Yen's philosophy of great love with others.

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This year, 2011, is the 2600th year of Sambodhiprapti, the Enlightenment of Buddha. At the closing ceremony, every country's representative received a Bodhi tree sapling, as a symbol of how Buddhism has spread across the world from its birthplace in India. It encouraged everyone to make an effort to bring harmony on earth.