

Closing Remarks

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I would first like to thank Dr. Maeno and the organizing committee for what I think was an excellent symposium. Anyone who has organized an international symposium knows that the logistics is a nightmare. Thank you very much.

I thought the presentations were excellent. They provided a rich overview of the types of activities that an international organization like JIRCAS is faced with. I want to congratulate whoever had the idea involving the posters. That generated a great level of discussion and was an excellent addition to this symposium.

I do not want to repeat the issues discussed, but there are several themes about past, current and future issues that arose. There is no doubt when talking about the past in Asia, that you must talk about the Green Revolution. There is no doubt about the success of food security and production in Asia. What an exciting time that must have been. It was an opportunity to highlight what science can bring to agriculture. It also brought a level of investment for agriculture that we have not ever witnessed nor probably will ever witness again in a long time. Looking at the current situation with population growth and the current problems, we have tremendous challenges in the future. All the speakers looking at the future addressed the issue of the intractable poverty that still remains. There is no doubt that there is a changing paradigm in terms of research and I think that it coincided well with the conclusion that there is no alternative but to have participatory research, as it pertains to the heterogeneous marginal environment where poverty resides. For an organization like JIRCAS, and Dr. Maeno knows this better than anyone, it is easy to decide what needs to be done, but the difficult thing is to decide what you cannot do. I think that JIRCAS has a real challenge.

Talking about the future, people seem to have a degree of optimism as to what can be done. There are no doubts that challenges are great, but everyone seemed very optimistic.

In closing, I would like to congratulate JIRCAS on its thirtieth anniversary. In my mind, I have no doubt that JIRCAS and its predecessor organization have clearly established themselves as a major player in the international scene of agricultural research. I would like to ask all of you in joining me to congratulate JIRCAS on thirty very successful years and best wishes for the future.