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(Transcript from simultaneous interpretation)

I am Matsuda from the Research Council Secretariat of MAFF, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. For the opening of JIRCAS International Symposium I'd like to say a few words.

The global population has been increasing and the demand of agricultural products has been increasing by the development of developing countries and demand increase of bio fuels. And more over by the impact of the climate change in global scale, the food supply is restrained. These structural factors of the tight food supply and demand cause price hike of food and many problems are occurring in the world.

In such circumstances G20 Summit Meeting was held at Cannes, France, and in the communiqué it is said that increase of the agricultural production is a key to support world population and also it is said, particularly, we determine to support the research and development of agricultural productivity and it was confirmed to support agricultural research.

In our country, in the Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas, it is indicated to contribute to the World Food Security by their technological cooperation to developing countries and contribute to global scale environmental problem by positively implementing international research and technological cooperation and also in the Basic Plan for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Research, which was formed based on this, it is said that the implementation of various technological development to solve global scale environmental problem and to eradicate poverty and hunger is a very important target. To pursue nation's fundamental responsibility to secure the stable supply of the food for the future, it shows recognition that it is very important to enhance agricultural productivity through international research and technological cooperation.

As you know our country has a long history of rice farming, it has been cultivated as staple food and the technological development has been done by the predecessors. In present time, the importance has not been changed. In 2004, by the international research, led by our country, the rice genome entire basic sequence was encrypted and now technological development to effectively use gene functions are promoted.

On the other hand as a trend of international rice farming research, there is CARD, the Coalition for African Rice Development, which was proposed at the fourth TICAD held in 2008 and initiatives taken by African regional institutions and international institutions aiming to double the production of rice in 10 years in Africa.

There are also initiatives taken by CGIAR, to promote research by CGIAR Research Program aiming at reduction of poverty in rural areas, food security, nutrition and health improvement, sustainable management of natural resources. Among these, GRiSP, the Global Rice Science Partnership that copes with rice farming is the program initiated at the very beginning and has high international expectation.

As a research institution to conduct comprehensive R&D of AAF in developing countries and also as a focal point of the CGIAR, JIRCAS works as a foothold for our country's international agricultural research, collaborating with overseas research institutions and contributing to solve world food and environmental problem and is actively involved in international rice farming research as a member of GRiSP and CARD.

Today and tomorrow, this symposium will be held and we would like to unite all our research effort for the rice farming and in order to solve the issue of poverty and hunger as well as global environment and also to contribute to the rice-related technology development in the world. We will be able to talk about the future direction through this symposium. There are many movements surrounding international agricultural, forestry, and fishery research. Thus in order to promote research and development further amongst the related institutions and the researchers here, we think it is very important to have frank opinions, to have discussion around the theme and to share our understanding.

At the very end, in order to solve many global problems we have to strengthen the cooperation in and out of the country and the role of the researchers who are involved in this field is very important. So by hoping for the success of this symposium and by praying for the further development of the research, now I would like to conclude my speech.