

Opening Address

Shiro OKABE
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Distinguished Delegates and Participants,

On behalf of the Symposium Organizing Committee and of the Tropical Agriculture Research Center sponsoring the Symposium, I have the honor to open the International Symposium on Problems of Insect Pest Management in Developing Countries.

First of all, I should like to extend our cordial welcome to all the distinguished delegates and participants, in particular to those who have come over to Japan from abroad.

The Tropical Agriculture Research Center was established in 1970 with the objective of contributing to the development of agricultural technology in the tropical areas by undertaking research programs, including research on insect pest control, in a spirit of international collaboration. The basic principle of our research activities is to work together with overseas scientists on a partnership basis to solve technical obstacles which hamper the agricultural development of the tropical countries. The activities of the Center cover a fairly wide range of research fields: crop production, plant protection, soil science, forestry, agricultural engineering, farm mechanization and farm management in the tropics.

One of the major activities of the Center is to send research scientists from Japan to overseas research institutions located in the tropical countries to conduct cooperative research work in agricultural fields. About 40 staff members of the Center with long-term assignments are engaged each year in such cooperative activities in many parts of the world, mainly in the Asian countries and partly in the Latin American countries. When the effective cooperation requires any additional basic research work with the use of sophisticated equipment, which is presently not available in the cooperating institutions, our Center invites to Japan the research partners involved so as to enable them to carry out the necessary work.

Another important activity of the Center is to hold international symposia to offer a forum for exchanging information and views among different countries and among scientists concerned. Since 1967, the symposia have been held every year, covering such subjects as crop diseases, maize production, food legume production, optimization of fertilizer effect, animal production, water management in paddy fields, crop breeding technology, silvicultural technologies and so forth.

The present symposium, the fourteenth of this kind, has been organized in conjunction with the XVI International Congress of Entomology. It will take up problems relating to insect pest management, with special emphasis placed on its implementation for rice pests in the rural communities of Southeast Asia. We are fully aware of the difficulties confronting experts in crop protection owing to the unpredictable nature of insect outbreaks. We, therefore, realize the need for devising and combining a variety of control measures including surveillance and forecasting through the development of studies on pest ecology and population dynamics; judicious application of selected pesticides so as to reduce the development of insect tolerance and minimize adverse effects on the environment; improvement of breeding techniques and agronomic practices and promotion of community collaboration.

I believe that the discussions in the present symposium will further contribute to the enhancement of research in these fields.

I sincerely hope that this symposium will be successful and that, through our joint effort, friendship and cooperation will be strengthened.

Thank you.