

Concluding Remarks

Yoshiharu TOKUNAGA
Director
Department of Soils and Fertilizers
National Institute of Agricultural
Sciences

Distinguished Guests and Participants,

At the end of the symposium, I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants for contributing so significantly to the success of the symposium.

There were country reports in which the delegates of eight countries namely Brazil, the People's Republic of China, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Japan outlined the distribution, characteristics and utilization of problem soils. In this regard, one of the achievements of the symposium is to illustrate that friendship and cooperation among the nations could serve as a link to devise means to solve the problems confronting the respective countries.

There were also introductory lectures and technical reports presented by a large number of participants from which I expected to obtain a great deal of information. However, since I am fully responsible for being more fluent in Japanese than in English, some of the points which I may not have well understood will be explained to me later by some of the Japanese participants who are more fluent in English than in Japanese, and this is certainly going to help me in my research work in future!

In Japan, as you may know, the situation of agriculture is extremely difficult as we are faced with the problem of rice over-production. It is thus necessary to try to improve the conditions of soils with low fertility in creating land where crops can be grown adequately so as to meet the requirements of the Japanese people. In this regard, the Association for the Improvement of Problem Soils in Japan is precisely celebrating the 11th anniversary of its establishment. Moreover, I believe that we should take advantage of the information gained during the symposium to make every effort to have it applied successfully in Japan.

Now, one more word. Last August, I had the opportunity to visit the University of the Philippines at Los Banos and I informed Dr. C.B. Perez, Dean of the College of Agriculture as well as Dr. A.A. Briones that we planned to organize a symposium on problem soils in Japan. During our conversation, Dr. Perez smiled and asked me whether it would not be more appropriate to hold a symposium on the problems of the soil scientists, thereby pointing out judiciously that if soil science is to contribute to the development of agriculture, actually, the way the soil scientists approach the problems requiring a solution is of paramount importance. I have been deeply impressed by what Dr. Perez said. I would like to know what you think about it.

I am certain that all the participants, in particular those who came from overseas must be tired. I do hope that during the excursion they will be able to take a rest and at the same time enjoy Japan's autumn scenery.

Thank you.