

Closing Remarks

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests and Participants,

At the end of the Symposium on "Virus Diseases of Rice and Leguminous Crops in the Tropics", I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants, in particular to those who came from overseas, for contributing so significantly to the success of the symposium.

The importance of virus diseases of crops in the tropics was already recognized during the former "Symposium on Virus Diseases of Tropical Crops" which was organized by the Tropical Agriculture Research Center 10 years ago in 1976.

In the present symposium, all the participants again reiterated that the damage caused by virus diseases was still one of the most serious constraints on crop production, in particular, on rice and legumes in the tropics.

During the past 10 years research on virus diseases has advanced remarkably. In this symposium, the progress made and the trend of research activities in several tropical countries in relation to virus diseases of rice and leguminous crops were described in detail. It may be said that the symposium was particularly timely and significant for the encouragement of virus research activities in the tropics. In addition new technology for virus research including serological identification of viruses was presented and discussed.

We believe that these advanced techniques have contributed to the identification of virus diseases, and are useful for further improvement of the methods of identification. Indeed, in this symposium, a large number of presentations dealt with the identification of several kinds of viruses affecting rice and legumes in the tropics. The final objective of virus research is to control virus diseases. Of course, the precise identification of virus diseases is important as the first step of the control of the diseases. However, the establishment of practical methods of control by integrated control of the vectors, chiefly insects, and the use of crop varieties resistant to both the vectors and virus itself are particularly important.

In this regard, the results of the investigations carried out in each country which were reported during the symposium should contribute significantly to the development of practical control measures in the respective countries. Through the presentations and discussions during these three days, we were able to realize that virus research in a large number of tropical countries has advanced remarkably, compared with the situation of ten years ago. We believe that such progress could only be achieved by the promotion of collaborative research conducted in the institutes of the respective countries, the international agriculture research institutes and TARC.

However, the establishment of methods to control virus diseases affecting rice and legumes as well as other crops requires a great deal of effort along with the strengthening of international cooperation to contribute to a stable production of food.

Once more, I should like to thank all the participants for their interesting presentations and for their active role in the discussions which took place during the symposium.

Thank you