

## Welcome Address

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Mr. Chairman, Participants, and Distinguished Guests,

All of us concerned with the organizing of this Symposium are so much delighted to have here assembled so many expert researchers from home and abroad. To every one of you I wish to express our sincere gratitude for your cooperation in materializing this worth-while gathering. Particularly to the participants from abroad I wish to extend our cordial greetings and welcome to Japan.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Japan began to promote research on tropical agriculture in 1966 and has since been making great efforts for activating the work to improve the agricultural techniques in tropical and subtropical areas of Asia. In order to make the work more effective the Tropical Agriculture Research Center was instituted in June of this year, and this Symposium is being held as an integral part of the activities of the Center.

Almost every country in Asia has been endeavoring to achieve its economic development of their national economy.

Every participant in this Symposium has been devoting himself to the task of attaining the goal in his own country, for which I have a sincere respect.

As you know, Japan is endowed with much less natural resources than our Asian neighbors. But we have been able to bring our agricultural production to the present level through the maximum utilization and development of the resources and through improvement of scientific techniques, as well as by modernizing our economic structure. Particularly, we were positive in introducing the advanced technology of the West. But we must tell you—and we take pride in that—that we have tried hard and managed to suit the imported techniques to our conditions.

We would be happy and feel flattered if our own experience could be of any use to our neighbors in their effort toward agricultural development. Although the scale of our tropical agriculture research is small as yet, we do hope to expand and strengthen our activities in this field so that we may contribute our own share to the development of agriculture in this part of the world.

Practically all of the Asian countries have recently been promoting mechanization as a means to improve their agricultural production because, needless to say, the benefit from mechanization is very great. It not only increases the rate of farming operation and land utilization but makes the introduction of modern, new techniques so much easier; it can do much to help improve both quantity and quality of agricultural products. However, it is only a short time since the countries introduced the mechanization, and naturally, there must be many problems yet to be tackled—such as adopting a right kind of machines and using it at a right time and at a right place. We expect to hear from the participants in this Symposium what are their research findings and what bottlenecks they have encountered in their respective realms of work.

I do hope that through fruitful discussions and talks both in and outside this Symposium all the participants will have deepened their mutual understanding and brought back home useful information and experiences which are needed by each of the countries they serve.

In conclusion, may I be permitted to join you in cordially wishing for the success of this Symposium.

I thank you.