

Welcome Address

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Chairman of the Agriculture, Forestry and
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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates and Guests,

It is with great pleasure that I extend my most sincere greetings and best wishes, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, to all the participants in this symposium, particularly the foreign delegates who have come all the way to Japan to attend the symposium. I would like to extend a cordial welcome to all the delegates from overseas and representatives of international organizations; FAO, Joint FAO/IAEA Division of IAEA, and IRRI.

This symposium is the fifth one since the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry initiated the annual international symposium under the Tropical Agriculture Research Program in 1967. The symposium for this year is far significant in that it is jointly held with the FAO/IAEA Coordination Meeting of Research Contractors on Rice Insects for 1971. I am confident that this type of joint symposium is far more beneficial for the both parties than holding their meetings separately. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the Joint FAO/IAEA Division for the approval of holding the Coordination Meeting of Research Contractors jointly with the Tropical Agriculture Research Program's international symposium, and for the close cooperation rendered to us in order to realize this joint undertaking.

I wish to be permitted to state here about the Tropical Agriculture Research Program of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The Program is directed to one single objective—to improve the technology in agriculture, forestry and livestock industry in tropical and subtropical regions by carrying out a number of cooperative research on equal standing for mutual benefit. So far 35 Japanese researchers have been sent abroad mostly to Southeast Asia on long-term basis to participate in joint or cooperative research projects on problems of mutual interest and mutual benefit. And the very center of such research activities is the Tropical Agriculture Research Center instituted in June last year. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry expects the activities of the Center be expanded from year to year.

The holding of this International Symposium is also one of the efforts by the Tropical Agriculture Research Program toward the achievement of the ultimate objective.

Over the past several years the agriculture in many countries of the tropical and subtropical Asia has been exhibiting a dramatic change, a transformation from traditional way of farming to the modernized agriculture. Development of improved varieties of crops, produced by international research institutes as well as by national variety improvement programmes in many countries, the increasing use of fertilizers by farmers, the development of water resources utilization and water control, and the ambitious attempts for crop diversification and furthermore the diversification of agriculture are, among all, the most salient features of the transition.

Reflecting the fact this rapid improvement has been supported by the research on agricultural technology, there has been a growing awareness of the important role played by the research in agricultural development, and of the need to strengthen and expand the research for the future development.

For an example, improved high yielding varieties require liberal and balanced fertilizer application for the full manifestation of their yield potential. At a high level of fertilizer application, it is essential to adopt adequate control measures against disease and insect pests. Advanced research works have to be done on many kinds of

menacing diseases and insect pests prevalent throughout the tropical and subtropical Asia, since ecology and control measures of many of them have not yet fully known.

In this connection, I am sure that the successful deliberation of this symposium will definitely contribute to the future development of research on rice insects in this region.

In conclusion, I offer to this symposium my best wishes for every success and to the participants a pleasant and meaningful stay in this country.

Thank you.