

Welcome Address

Shiro Tohata
Chairman of the Agriculture, Forestry and
Fisheries Research Council

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests and Participants

It is with great pleasure that I extend my most sincere greetings and best wishes to all the participants in this Symposium on behalf of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Research Council of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, in particular I would like to extend a cordial welcome to the delegates from abroad.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Japan has been promoting research programmes on tropical agriculture since 1966 with an aim of contributing something to the development of agricultural technology in the tropical and sub-tropical region, in close cooperations with many countries in that region. In order to implement the tropical agriculture research programmes more effectively the Tropical Agriculture Research Center was instituted in June 1970 within the framework of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The Center holds an annual international symposium on tropical agriculture as one of the integral part of the activities of the Center.

I believe that the international symposium is one of the best means to offer a forum for exchanging information and discussion for scientists working in many countries on research problems of our common interest.

It is a well-known fact that the reliable water supply through irrigation, drainage and flood control is an essential pre-requisite for the application of modernized agricultural production technology. Moreover, it is also generally recognized that the reliable water supply can express its beneficial effects only by the use of improved field water management practices.

As you are aware, there have been held several seminars and workshops taking up the subject of water management and control for agriculture, with the initiative of international organizations and governments of various countries in Asia. However, these meetings were concerned mostly with engineering aspects of water control, but very few with agronomic aspects such as relationship between water management practices and plants and soils.

This is the reason why the Tropical Agriculture Research Center has planned to hold this Symposium with the joint contribution of both sides of irrigation engineering and irrigation agronomy.

I am sure that the successful deliberations of this Symposium will certainly contribute towards the improvement of water management practices in rice fields of tropical Asia, especially those in field levels.

It is thus a distinct privilege for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Japan to be able to host this Symposium and to be able to contribute in some way to the attainment of our common objective of agricultural development.

Finally, I am certainly hopeful that this Symposium will yield successful results and the stay in Japan of all overseas participants will be a pleasant and fruitful one.

Thank you.