

## Welcome Address

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Good afternoon distinguished guests, dear professors and colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. It is my great pleasure, on behalf of our Institute of Tropical Medicine, Nagasaki University, to extend my warmest welcome to you all to this International Symposium, which is entitled as “Present Situation and Future Prospect of Tropical Medicine in Developing World”. Special welcome should be directed to those overseas guest speakers who have taken such a long time for international flights over the ocean. This symposium is sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture of Japanese Government, or MONBUSHO in Japanese, in this fiscal year 1998, under the special budget to organize international symposium for the Centers of Excellence, to which our Institute was also designated 3 years ago. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere acknowledgment to MONBUSHO for its support.

Our Institute of Tropical Medicine is affiliated to Nagasaki University, which is one of the National Universities in Japan, and therefore is a unique government-sponsored institution in Japan for the research on tropical medicine, both in its basic and applied fields.

Although our country of Japan is located in temperate climate region, research on tropical medicine is required for our country Japan in order to accomplish its due role as a member of international community.

It is mentioned in the World Health Constitution that health is one of the fundamental rights of every human beings without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition. The target of the WHO slogan “Health for All” is by the year 2000. However, we have to recognize large discrepancy existing between the forefront of modern medical science in advanced countries and the real situation of health conditions present in developing tropical countries, while we have less than 2 years left by the next century. I would like to point out that such a discrepancy cannot be accepted from the humanitarian stand point of view, and should be corrected in order to achieve and maintain sustained growth of all human beings in harmony with others on this invaluable planet, sharing its limited space and natural resources towards the coming 21st century.

Globalization is one of the international key words in recent years, and medical science is without exception from it. For example, the recent issue of “Emerging and Re-emerging Diseases” has clearly shown that any single remote area on this planet of the earth is not existing isolated from other parts of the world, or free from the threat of newly emerging and re-emerging diseases. We have to work out efficient surveillance system for such diseases, infectious disease in particular, in order to employ early detection and effective containment measures before they are going to spread in world-wide scale.

For our Institute of Tropical Medicine, Nagasaki University, overseas international collaborative research constitutes a fundamental base of our activities. Such international research should more effectively planned and implemented if we better understand the presently existing situation and future prospect of tropical medicine in developing countries. The major objective of this symposium is, therefore, for us to obtain such information from the presentations of relevant researchers in tropical developing countries. As counterparts, presentations will be given by the US and Japanese speakers, including representatives of our Institute, in order to provide information on our present research activities in tropical medicine. Through discussions on the presentations from both sides, we would like to expect certain fruitful outcome which would hopefully help to improve planning and implementation of our future research activities.

Besides scientific research activities, our institute has been accepting a number of participants in the group as well as individual training courses from developing countries, and also has been dispatching several experts for the overseas technical cooperation projects mainly in tropical areas. Both these activities have been sponsored by Japan International Cooperation Agency, or JICA in its abbreviation. The participants of on-going training courses and other programs are invited to this symposium, and some of them are going to give their presentations.

It is my greatest pleasure and honour to announce you that our Institute was officially commended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan in this fiscal year 1998. The reason of commendation was the contribution to the international friendship through such activities of JICA as well as our activities as one of the WHO Collaborating Centers for Research and Reference on Tropical Viral Diseases since 1993. Therefore, this honorable commendation is the fruitful accumulation of those precious efforts of many past and present staffs of our Institute, as well as those who have kindly provided their support and understanding to our Institute. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to all of them, and requesting continuous support and help in the future. We have also been organizing a group training course for tropical medicine during the past 21 years by the special budget from MONBUSHO. The participants are mainly such Japanese who would be expecting to carry out research on tropical medicine or its practical application in tropical areas in the future. This symposium is scheduled as a part of the curriculum for this training course this year, and many participants of this course have been playing their important roles in the operation of this symposium. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the administrative staffs of our Institute for their precious efforts in the preparation and bureaucratic procedures of this symposium.

It is my expectation, ladies and gentlemen, that the presentations and discussions in these 3 days' symposium will be fruitful and contribute for the improvement of health situation in tropical areas, leading eventually to contribute to the better world in the future.

Thank you for your attention.