

**Inaugural Remarks at the  
Asian Food and Agribusiness Conference 2013:  
Biotechnology and Global Competitiveness**

by  
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15 July 2013

Director Joselito Bernardo, Dr. Muhammad Saeed, Dr. J. L. Karihaloo, Director Dr. Yu-Tsai Huang, Secretary General Dr. Chih-Wen Wang, Distinguished Speakers and Participants, and Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good morning. On behalf of the host country and Minister of Agriculture Dr. Bao-ji Chen, I have the great pleasure of joining you all at the opening ceremony. I would like to express my sincere welcome to all speakers and delegates from APO member countries.

Two days ago, Taiwan experienced a major typhoon. It damaged crops and many people were injured. Typhoons are very common in Taiwan, but it seems that damage from natural disasters becomes heavier each year. We could assume that this is caused by climate change. As you are all aware, Taiwan and Asian countries face not only climate change but also population growth, aging farmers, small-scale farming, increasing cost of agricultural inputs, competition for limited resources, food safety and security, trade liberalization and globalization, and cross-border spread of animal diseases and plant pests.

Even though problems and troubles surround us, we cannot give up. We need to gather experience, use science and technology to cope with the challenges, and contribute to the sustainable development of agriculture. In this regard, it is very useful and timely for the APO and the Council, in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions, CorpLifeAsia, International Service for the Acquisition of Agribiotech Applications Philippines, and Food and Fertilizer Technology Center (FFTC), to organize the Asian Food and Agribusiness Conference 2013: Biotechnology and Global Competitiveness. All the participants from 13 APO member countries will certainly learn a lot from each other in the conference.

In this connection, the participants will have a field trip to visit the BioTaiwan 2013

exhibition on 18 July. This tour will allow you to gain a better understanding of agricultural biotechnology in Taiwan. I hope that after the visit, you give us your suggestions so that we can improve it in the future.

I am very pleased that the Council of Agriculture has the honor to work together with the APO and FFTC in holding this conference. Finally, I wish the conference great success and hope that the guests from abroad have an enjoyable stay in Taiwan.

Thank you.