

TPM5 – Session 1
Opening Remarks

Dr. KO Yunhwa
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President OHTSUKA Ryutaro of NIES
President MENG Wei of CRAES
Distinguished guests,

I am very pleased to join the 5th Tripartite Presidents Meeting in Sapporo, Japan, to discuss various environmental issues and how to promote cooperation on environmental research in Northeast Asia. My special thanks go to President OHTSUKA Ryutaro and members of NIES, Japan, who made this gathering possible.

It is the first time for me to join the TPM meeting. However, I have heard many times from the former president, YUN Sung Guy about the achievements of TPM and excellent collaboration with Presidents, OHTSUKA Ryutaro and MENG Wei.

This year, NIER marks the 30th anniversary from its foundation. To memorize this, we have many guests from home and abroad in our workshop in June this year. In particular, we were able to contain congratulatory remarks from President OHTSUKA Ryutaro and President MENG Wei in the book specially published for the 30th anniversary. Many thanks for your contribution.

As agreed in the 3rd TPM meeting, NIER hosted short-term training programs for Chinese experts in October 2007 and September 2008. Fortunately, we were able to have several lecturers from NIES. I also would like to thank to NIES. The successful results of the programs prove that our cooperation will bear more fruitful in the future.

As you are well aware, climate change and environmental risk issues are all around the world. Against this backdrop, the 9th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM9) identified that Dust and Sandstorm, climate change and toxic waste materials are the most pressing environment concerns in three countries. It reaffirms that cooperation among Korea, China and Japan is a prerequisite to tackle environmental problems in Northeast Asia.

At this point, it is very meaningful that we mark the 5th anniversary of launch of Tripartite Presidents Meeting which started in 2004. I believe that the TPM meeting has provided a solid foundation to improve environment quality of the region by promoting joint research programs and exchanging of experts and information.

Through the TPM meetings and international workshop we are going to have here today and tomorrow, we will try to reach a consensus about pressing environment

issues and share information on research activities and valuable experiences. In particular, I hope this gathering will thoroughly discuss the joint research project on solid waste materials suggested as a new project to be collaborated. And also exchanging researchers in various fields will be helpful to share the experiences in the most effective way. If possible, I want our discussions not to be constrained to the above in order to broaden our collaboration.

As I mentioned before 30 years have passed since the establishment of NIER. We have done a lot of things to improve our environment during past 30 years. Recently, NIER tries to set up a new vision for the next 30 years. At the same time, we will make a research plan for the next 30 years to make the new vision visible. And also we are trying to restructure our institute to be able to achieve our goals. In this regard, we are welcoming your indispensable advice from both of your institutions.

We often say "two hands are better than one," highlighting importance of cooperation. This is also true for addressing environmental problems we are confronting.

In closing, I would like to all the staff of Japan, China and Korea who organized this meaningful gathering. I believe that this event will lay a firm foundation for improving our environment.

Thank you very much.