

Remarks from MAFF of Japan
by Mr. Tadaatsu Iwase, Deputy Director General, Food
Industry Affairs Bureau, MAFF Japan

Ladies and Gentleman, Good morning

I am Tadaatsu IWASE, Deputy Director General of the Food Industry Affairs Bureau in the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. It is my great honor to make a special remark, on behalf of the Japanese government, for the opening of the 7th Annual Meeting of the East Asia Plant Variety Protection (EAPVP) Forum.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Monthathip CHANPHENGXAY, Director-General of Department of Agriculture, Lao Peoples Democratic Republic, for hosting this meeting and to all the participants to the EAPVP Forum Session of this week. It is a great pleasure to see over 50 experts of PVP and relevant fields here in the City of Vientiane. We also appreciate the Japan International Cooperation Agency for the significant support, the International Union for Protection of New Variety of Plants (UPOV), and the EAPVP Forum Office for providing assistance to the preparation for this Meeting.

In the face of rapid growth of global population, environmental changes and diversification of markets, crop breeding has been and will be the most effective and efficient solution in overcoming such challenges on global food policy topics. In this regard, the role of internationally harmonized PVP system is increasingly important, and therefore East Asian countries need to mutually cooperate to strengthen the PVP system in this region.

The question is, “how”? This is a question we policy makers always face.

Last night, I was briefed from my staff that the EAPVP Forum members had intensive discussion yesterday on areas to focus our efforts on. Today, we are expecting to agree on priorities and activity plan to achieve maximum impact toward a shared goal. Today we have guest participants from UPOV and other international organizations and countries. Everyone, including guests are invited to actively participate in the discussion.

Speaking about myself, I am an economist, and during my career as a government official, I had a chance to work and research the ASEAN economies at the Institute of South East Asia (ISEAS) in Singapore, for 2 years, about 20 years ago. Therefore, I am very excited to work in cooperation among ASEAN plus 3 countries for agriculture and economic development. At the international symposium tomorrow, I would like to introduce some of our challenges to strengthen food security in Japan, Asia and the world by seamless policy along the value chain, starting from development of new varieties, to the consumers table. But today, I am eager to learn about PVP and agriculture from EAPVP Forum member countries. It is my strong belief that understanding each other is fundamental in international cooperation, and I am very grateful for the Department of Agriculture of Lao Peoples Democratic Republic for such wonderful arrangements.

Thank you very much and Khop Chai Lai Lai Daah.