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Welcome Speech

Discours de bienvenue

Willkommensansprache

YOSHIHIRO INAYAMA

Chairman

Japanese Organizing Committee

Japan

Mr. President Cosandey, Mr. Takeshita, Minister of Construction of Japan,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Japanese Organizing Committee of the 10th Congress of the International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering, I wish to extend a most cordial welcome to you. As chairman of the committee, it gives me great pleasure to note the presence at this inaugural session of the large number of those who have come from many different parts of the world.

We started preparations for this congress three years ago, in August. A few months later, the world entered a period of profound changes caused by the oil crisis. This gave rise to serious difficulties for the association's headquarters in Zurich as well as for all those connected with the plans for this congress, including our organizing committee.

However, I wish to join you all in rejoicing that thanks to the efforts and firm determination of all concerned we are able today to hold this grand opening session.

I wish to express my profound thanks to Professor Maurice Cosandey, president of our association, and to Mr. Takeo Atsumi, chairman of the Japanese Fund Raising Committee and others, who through their efforts have made this possible.

Needless to say, the prosperity of the modern society depends upon many developments of science and technology. As we look back on the past, history of mankind of some two thousand years can be called as the history of wars. It is true that wars brought about great technological development, sometimes drastically and markedly, and sometimes step by step. However, it was with many sacrifices and destructions. The world now is greatly changing of late because of global efforts to attain peace. Of course peace has not yet been attained throughout our global society but it cannot be denied that we all are making best efforts toward building a peaceful world. And I believe it is not a mere dream.

This peaceful world, attained after two thousand years, will depend on the co-existence and common prosperity of all humanity. It will call for cooperation, not for

war, fighting, or desperate competition in which people hurt one another. Cooperation and coordination is the key here. So we are now standing in front of the world which is trying to obtain the peaceful coexistence and cooperation.

I believe that in the field of structural engineering, as in all other fields, there will continue to be increasing demands that progress in science and technology must further human prosperity and happiness. Such demands call for increased mutual understanding and cooperation, as I have already mentioned, among all members of our association.

Colleagues, is it not true that there is no other way than for all to join hands for the advancement of human prosperity, with each country benefitting from the strong points of others and helping make good the shortcomings of others?

It is thus that I look forward with great expectations to the fruitful results of this congress.

In addition to the technical sessions, our committee has included various other events in the congress program. I hope that all of you who have come all the way here from many parts of the world, will enjoy your stay in Japan and have an unhurried opportunity to observe the varied aspects of our country--so old and yet so new.

This oriental nation has, within the framework of world history, a quite distinctive feature. Our culture, of which we are so proud, may appear strange to you. But this culture has been nurtured by our forebears over a period of a thousand and more years, and I am convinced that you will find it of a distinctive flavor capable of deep appreciation upon close and unhurried observation.

And at the same time we also have the "modern" aspect of Japan you see today which was built up by introducing no-legend culture from many other parts of the world in the past one hundred years since this country launched itself on the path of rapid modernization. It is my wish that, without fail, you will see different aspects of our country.

In conclusion, I wish to express my profound thanks to our distinguished guests, the president and members of our association and to the participants from various countries for their cooperation in making this congress possible.

Thank you.