

## Salutations

**Yoshitake Masuhara**

Member of the House of Representatives, Japan

Good afternoon. My name is Yoshitake Masuhara, of the Liberal Democratic Party. I am very delighted to see my hometown, Hiroshima, welcoming so many guests from Japan and other countries to this outstanding international symposium.

Environmental issues today cover fields as diverse as familiar issues such as waste and recycling and global issues such as global warming. Solving these problems requires the awareness and effort of the nation, and also of local authorities, industries, NGOs, and of each and every citizen.

The problem posed by chemical substances such as environmental endocrine disrupters, is an issue close to our everyday lives, which has gradually attracted publicity. However, we do not yet have an adequate scientific understanding of the problem, and it seems that many puzzling aspects remain.

Warnings on the danger that environmental endocrine disrupters may affect the heredity of our children or species must surely make many Japanese uneasy.

Ridding our people of such fears, and guarding their safety and peace of mind is one of the major role of politics.

Awareness of these issues led the Liberal Democratic Party to set up a “Subcommittee of Environmental Endocrine Disrupter” in 1998. This subcommittee has worked alongside government to further their efforts.

I will continue to do my best as a politician to evaluate the effects of harmful chemicals in a scientific manner, to draw up preventive measures based on such evaluation and to make relevant information available as appropriate.

The next three days we will see specialists from many countries gathered here for discussions based on the latest research findings. I believe that international symposiums such as this one are of enormous significance in promoting countermeasures against chemical substances for Japan. I shall continue to offer my support to the promotion of such international initiatives.

In closing these words of greeting, may I offer my best wishes for the success of this symposium.