

**Welcoming Address**  
**by**  
**H.E. Mr. Pal Buy Bonnang**  
**Chairman of APRACA**  
**at Regional Symposium on Marketing and Finance of Organic Supply Chain**  
**on September 24, 2012 in Seoul, Korea**

Mr. Jong-Il Yoon, President of National Agricultural Cooperative Federation;

Mr. Ralph Houtman, Regional Marketing and Rural Finance Officer of Food and Agriculture Organization of UN;

Mr. Andre Leu, President of International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM);

Ms. Juejan Tangtermthong, Executive Director of Agricultural and Food marketing Association of Asia (AFMA);

Mr. Won-Sik Noh, Secretary General of Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA);

Distinguished speakers and participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my great privilege and honor to attend this meeting and deliver a welcoming speech on behalf of the member institutions of APRACA. I welcome all the participants to this Symposium which is held in this beautiful city of Seoul in the best season of autumn in Korea.

Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association, now representing 55 member rural and agricultural credit institutions in Asia and the Pacific, has aspired to work for rural and agricultural growth and development in the region, with priority emphasis on the uplift of the rural poor, since its inauguration in 1977. It has pursued the promotion of efficient and effective rural finance systems, broadened access to rural financial services, and established a mechanism for systematic interchange of information on sustainable rural and agricultural finance services.

Increase of agricultural production becomes more and more important in the world where human food security is seriously threatened by the frequent occurrences of natural disasters resulted from global climate change. Continuous rises of agricultural produce prices are also a great concern of people in these days.

On the other hand, better and safer food is gaining attention by the people who are more interested in their health and quality of lives. With the increase of income level of the people, the pattern of agri-product consumption changes from quantity to quality. And with

the increased request for environmental quality improvement, there is a significantly increasing demand for organic agricultural products.

In this context, it is very timely and desirable that FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific provides agricultural and financing organizations with an opportunity to present and discuss the current situation and issues of the marketing and finance of organic supply chain in the region.

I think the collaboration of APRACA, AFMA and IFOAM with FAO for the organization and conduct of this symposium is a well harmonized joint work between an UN organization and Non-Governmental Organizations.

At this moment, I'd like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Korea for hosting the Symposium. As the leading agricultural marketing and finance organization holding all two million farmers in Korea as its members through its 1200 member agricultural cooperatives, NACF has played a pivotal role in developing agriculture as well as enhancing income of farmers in the country. It has also contributed to the improvement of agricultural marketing and finance in the region through the active participation in the activities of APRACA and AFMA.

Last but not least, I would like to thank again the participants in the meeting from the Governments, academic circle, research Institutions, the concerned industries and member institutions of APRACA, AFMA and IFOAM.

I wish you very success for your deliberations in this symposium as well as a pleasant and comfortable stay in Korea.

Thank you very much and Kam-sa-hap-ni-da.