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Agriculture and Food Supply – challenges and perspectives
Introduction

Dear guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, food supply has taken a centre stage on the global agenda. Economic, social, environmental aspects highlight the challenges related with today's food supply and the further development of agriculture.

2015 will be an important milestone to evaluate the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals, which were one of the main outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference organized by the United Nations in 2012. In the Rio+20 outcome document, member States agreed among several sustainable development goals to significantly increase food production by more than 50% and to reduce hunger in the world.

What has been achieved so far and what can we expect?

We expect around 9 to 10 billion humans on the planet by 2050. In 1989 this figure was only 5,2 billion. Today it is 7,2 billion people. Still almost 900 million people are suffering from Hunger. This illustrates the tremendous task all nations have still to solve.

Combating hunger in the world is one of the most important issues. Undoubtedly, great responsibility falls on the shoulders of developed and wealthy countries like Japan and Germany to make agriculture sustainable and keep its productivity at the necessary level to supply enough and affordable food, to develop further their agriculture, and to help developing countries to improve their own food production.

At the first glance it seems they have no problems to satisfy their domestic food demand. Beside their local production they import food and agricultural goods if necessary. But there are preoccupations rising about the future of the food security, the way of our food is produced and about the future of agriculture and the expectations of the civil society about agriculture.

In this context it is a very important signal that JSPS and the German JSPS Club have chosen Agriculture and Food Supply for its 20Th Japanese-German Symposium to discuss trends, developments in Japan and Germany.

Food supply, food production and corresponding numbers do not mean everything. When discussing today's agriculture and food supply, we recognize also questions, how the society accepts today's farming and food production practices, conventional and organic farming, fertilizers and chemistry in the field, and how food safety and quality are guaranteed.

Japan and Germany are perfect examples to analyse modern agriculture and rural developments in the context the national economy and the international trade, as well.

Our symposium and the discussion of challenges and perspectives of agriculture and food supply will be not set for only a discussion about technologies and production, but will also include the view of science, society and people on agriculture in our countries Japan and Germany.

Therefore, we are very much pleased that we gained important speakers to analyse and to highlight our topics.

Thank you very much!

In our first section we will focus on overall situation of the agriculture and food supply in our two countries.

The second section we will dedicate Agriculture and Food Trade.

The international trade agreements of the European Union and of Japan with USA are currently negotiated and catch high political and public attention.

And in the third section again, Japan and Germany are perfect examples to see which trends determine the food quality. Also, there are important changes in the kind of food people prefer. Changes in the dietary styles are important factors and driving new food demand.

And finally, there are important research and technologies developed in the agricultural sector which have impact on the overall economy of both countries, Japan and Germany.

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