

**Message from H.E. Mr. Koichi Haraguchi, Permanent Representative
Japan to the United Nations on behalf of the Asian Group
on the Observance of World Food Day**

Agriculture remains a most basic industry for all countries, but particularly for developing countries. It is fundamental not just to the elimination of hunger but also has much to do with the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. The maintenance and utilization of biodiversity hold a vital key to the future of agricultural industry. Biodiversity is indispensable for increasing food production and for protecting the environment, which is of utmost importance to humanity.

Asian countries are keenly aware of the importance of preserving the bounty of nature. A continent of great contrasts in climate and landscape, Asia encompasses the largest and most varied collection of biomes in the world. From its towering mountains to its lush rainforests, from its rolling plains to its teeming oceans, Asia is home to a wealth of species of both plant and animal life. As home also to a great proportion of the world's population, the necessity of maintaining harmony between agriculture and local environments is a challenge Asians face on a daily basis. It is our hope that we can maintain our treasure of biodiversity for the entire world. We therefore welcome this year's World Food Day theme, "Biodiversity for Food Security."

World Food Day is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on how much we rely on biological diversity and how we can best act to preserve it for future generations.