

Opening Remarks

Ladies and gentlemen, I sincerely welcome all participants in the Second International Symposium on Antarctic Science. In particular, I welcome participants from abroad who, in many cases, must have travelled quite a long distance to come to Seoul. I thank all of you both domestic and foreign participants of this symposium, for your taking this opportunity to present your papers on Antarctic research.

Antarctica, the world of snow and ice, is one of the Earth's last frontiers. Many years ago explorers were drawn towards Antarctica with the aim of making geographical discoveries. Today, the main zeal for Antarctica is research. As public concern grows over the need to preserve global life-support systems, the role of Antarctica in global change has become seriously recognized, and this seventh continent has increasingly been used as a laboratory for conducting important scientific investigations to better understand global environments and the human impact on them. I believe that an Antarctic community like this congregation will actively carry out international antarctic programs such as IGBP in order to detect global change from Antarctica, to study critical processes linking Antarctica to the global system, to extract paleoenvironmental information, and to assess ecological effects. We have a need to foster scientific investigations that deepen human understanding of Earth systems and at the same time to protect Antarctica and the surrounding seas. I think the task ahead of Antarctic scientists for the coming years is immense and their research will surely be beneficial to the world community.

To carry out Antarctic programs effectively, our scientific endeavours must be supported through international collaboration. Here at this symposium we have participants from the countries actively engaged in Antarctic research. Therefore, possibilities for greater international collaboration in scientific research activities could be explored throughout the course of this symposium. I hope, therefore, this symposium will provide an opportunity to follow up important issues and to consider the key challenges facing Antarctic researchers. I will do my best to make the atmosphere of this symposium informal and relaxed so that all participants will have invaluable opportunities to better understand each other's concerns and to build bridges between different sectors. Implementing international collaboration will not only help us to execute programs through which we will contribute to scientific progress but also move us toward a more complete understanding of Antarctica.

Finally, I hope this symposium will be a fruitful experience to all of you. I thank all you participants for your presentations in this symposium. For the foreign participants, I wish your stay in Korea, although short, will be full of fun and fulfillment.

Thank you very much.

Dr. Byong-Kwon Park
President