

UNITED NATIONS ASIAN AND PACIFIC CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURAL  
ENGINEERING AND MACHINERY

**International Seminar and Exhibition on Information and Communication  
Technology Applications for Agriculture/Rural Industry, and on Agro-based  
Enterprise Development, 5-7 April 2004, Beijing, China**

Opening remarks by Dr. Tapio Juokslahti, Director of UNAPCAEM

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished Participants of the Seminar,

The United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (UNAPCAEM) is a new subsidiary body of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

UNAPCAEM's mandate is help reduce poverty across Asia and the Pacific by enhancing technical cooperation among UNESCAP member and associate member countries in the areas of agricultural technologies, including information and communication technologies.

Information is critical to the social and economic activities that comprise the development process. Information and communications technology (ICT) provides the key opportunities in the work against rural poverty; ICT offers great potential to empower people of disadvantaged communities, mainly living on agriculture, in the developing countries.

ICT service development is a complex problem, presenting both practical and policy challenges. It is also apparent that solutions that work in developed

countries cannot simply be transplanted to developing country environments; the solutions must be adapted to the local needs and conditions.

This International Seminar and Exhibition on Information and Communication Technology Applications for Agriculture and Rural Industry, and on Agro-based Enterprise Development will highlight the present status of ICT development achievement for servicing agriculture and rural enterprises in the Asian and Pacific region. The Seminar and Exhibition will also present international companies' products and applications, as well as local ICT development projects.

More than twenty international and Chinese experts, researchers, industry representatives will make presentations of this Seminar topics. This seminar aims at bringing the advantages of latest information and communication technology development to the practical use of the member countries.

Dear participants, on behalf of the UNAPCAEM, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all those, who have participated in the organization of this seminar; all the speakers, who have prepared their presentations, and are willing to share their knowledge with the other participants; and the sponsors for their valuable contribution.

I wish everyone a very interesting, and a stimulating seminar,

Welcome