

# Opening Remarks 1

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Manabu Abe \*

I am Abe Manabu, an Executive Vice President for Research of Hiroshima University.

I am pleased to deliver this opening address on behalf of the University on the occasion of the “the RIHE’s 50th Anniversary International Symposium” hosted by the Research Institute for Higher Education (RIHE).

In order to respond to the challenges surrounding Japanese society, such as globalization, aging society with low birthrate, economic stagnation, and the new COVID-19 pandemic, Japanese universities are expected to reconsider and fulfill their functions of education, research, and social service.

Japanese higher education exists within the global university system, and it should not focus only on domestic issues. Unfortunately, Japanese universities also face the problem of their poor standing in some major world university rankings. I have heard that the RIHE has planned a variety of events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its establishment, including this international symposium. I hope that you will consider and disseminate information on the state of higher education and its research not only in Japan but around the world.

Today’s symposium will discuss the issues facing higher education research and its prospects, particularly from a global and comparative perspective. I hope that today’s symposium will be fruitful and that the advancement of higher education research will revitalize higher education in Japan.

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\* Vice president of Hiroshima University

Finally, I would like to thank the speakers and commentator of this symposium, Richard James, Interim Director and Professor in Higher Education at the University of Melbourne, Australia; Fenqiao Yan, Professor and Dean, Graduate School of Education, Peking University, China; Niancai Liu, Dean of School of Education, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China; Ulrich Teichler, Professor at the University of Kassel, Germany; Simon Marginson, Professor at the University of Oxford, the UK; Philip Altbach, Professor at Boston College, the USA; and Motohisa Kaneko, Professor of Tsukuba University, Japan for taking time out of their busy schedules to make speeches and comments.

I thank you, all participants, most warmly for your participation and wish you all success with this Symposium. Thank you for your attention.