

Opening Address

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Mr. Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is my greatest pleasure and honor to say a word of welcome to the "International Conference on Clustering Aspects in Nuclear and Subnuclear Systmes" held in this historical city of Kyoto, on behalf of the Local Advisory Committee and RIKEN Institute, one of the Sponsors.

When I began physics at Nishina Laboratory of RIKEN about half a century ago, the first cyclotron in Japan was already working there and many physicists, chemists and biologists were doing various researches using it. In those days people were already trying to understand nuclei by applying every possible concept and model which were useful in other fields such as atomic, molecular or solid state physics; namely liquid drop model, alpha-particle model, single particle model, resonating group model and so on.

Needless to say, however, meaning of a physical quantity or a concept is generally polished up and applicable area of it becomes clearer through contact with wider and deeper area of phenomena, and thus any physical quantity or concept goes hand in hand with progress of science. The idea of cluster in nuclei is not an exception. When this idea appeared in very early period of nuclear physics, it was far from being clear, but it has been improved according as nuclear physics has advanced owing, say, to increase of energy, of variety of reactions and development of experimental technology etc. I expect during this Conference to witness how remarkable recent progresses of cluster concept were.

At the same time, I am very much interested to find that the title of the Conference is Clustering "Aspects", and that there is a special session "What is a Cluster?" in the program. Here, I would like to remark probably very well known fact that a concept loses its usefulness when we try to define it too rigorously and any concept becomes almost impossible to be defined if we try to deduce it too strictly from first principles. (Please try to define beauty of a painting from microscopic distribution of atoms in it.)

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the enthusiastic effort of the Organizing Committee, and sincerely hope the Conference be successful by the active collaboration of all the participants.

Thank you.