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## The 6th International Conference on “Nutrition and Aging” OPENING REMARKS

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This will be the sixth International Conference on “Nutrition and Aging” sponsored by ILSI Japan. The first meeting was held in 1991 in celebration of the tenth anniversary of ILSI Japan, at the suggestion of Tetsujiro Obara, ILSI Japan’s first president. I fondly remember as though it were yesterday the ailing president Obara addressing his opening remarks from a wheelchair. Twenty years have passed since then. At that time, I did not think about hosting a second conference in Japan, however, with the strong request from the ILSI headquarters, the second conference was held again in Japan, the country with the world’s longest life span. As the third, the fourth, and the fifth conferences were held in Japan in four year intervals, this has become customary. In each of the past meetings, we discussed the nutritional issues of the time and chose appropriate nutritional topics related to aging for researchers from home and abroad. Last time, we focused on several nutritional problems related to life stages, and planned three sessions with the subtitle, “Healthy Aging”. The first one is “Risk of Life-style Related Diseases and Characteristics of Nutrition by Life Stages,” the second one, “Fetal Nutrition and Risk of Life-style Related Diseases,” and the third, “the Role of Exercise and Nutrition for the Maintenance of QOL in People of Advanced Age”.

This conference’s subtitle is “Advanced Aging and Wellness-From Food Supply to Dietary Habits”. Our society is aging more rapidly now, and we need to know appropriate nutrition and appropriate physical activities for the elderly so that they can remain healthy. From this viewpoint, five sessions have been organized: (1) Problems of Aging Societies, (2) Food Selection - What to Choose and When to Eat, (3) Food Culture and Disease Structure, (4) The Role of Physical Activities and Nutrition, (5) Nutrition and the Aging of the Brain.

On March 11th this year, Eastern Japan suffered from an enormous earthquake, the likes of which occur once in a thousand years. What is remarkable, the damage caused by the earthquake drew attention not only in Japan but from abroad as well. There have been numerous accounts of the piteous health situation of the aging population living there. The deterioration of the surrounding conditions has pushed the health of the aging population to extremes. I strongly feel that the wellness of the aging population [superannuated population] is an extremely important topic. It is of particular significance, I feel, that this conference will occur in a place with such a social background. I sincerely hope that many will attend and take part in the debates.