

Opening remarks in the Opening Ceremony of
the 2012 SWST/ICBR International Convention

Prof. Jiang Zehui
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Distinguished Vice Minister Zhang Jianlong of the State Forestry Administration (SFA) of China,

Respected Mr. Scott Sindelar, Agricultural Minister Counselor of U.S. Embassy in China,

Honorable Prof. Allen Cloutier of Society of Wood Science and Technology (SWST),

Dear all guests, delegates, and friends,
Ladies and gentlemen:

Good morning!

The golden autumn of Beijing witnesses the opening of the 2012 SWST/ICBR International Convention. On behalf of the co-organizer International Center for Bamboo and Rattan (ICBR), I feel very pleased and honored. This meeting has won attention and support from the leadership and relevant departments of SFA, forestry universities and the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR). On behalf of ICBR, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the guests and experts from home and abroad, and also sincere thanks to all the attendees for your long-standing care and support for the growth of wood science and ICBR!

As an international society in the field of wood and cellulose sciences of North American, SWST has a high profile and important influence. Its journal *Wood and Fiber Science* enjoys great reputation in the international arena of wood science. This international academic convention is held by SWST in China for the first time. SFA, forestry supervisor in China's government, included the convention in its 2012 grand meeting plan. Highlighted by SFA, the meeting also enjoys the presence of Vice Minister Zhang Jianlong in the opening ceremony who will deliver a keynote speech later, which shows the attention and support of the Chinese government on wood science and sustainable use of forest resources. As its co-host, ICBR would spend every effort to turn this convention into a great success in terms of organization, reception and services. This meeting also enjoys the support from other organizers such as Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing Forestry University, Northeast Forestry University, Nanjing Forestry University and INBAR. Please join me in giving a big hand for their care and support.

This convention is themed on the Sustainable Development of Wood and Biomass in our New Global Economy, which includes seven sessions covering forest products trade, bioenergy and carbon issues, sustainable resources for the future, advanced wood processing, etc. I am very pleased to see that the meeting also

intergrates a session themed on bamboo and other agri fibers, which signifies the research on bamboo is attracting more and more attention from scholars in the international academia. Therefore, I would like to take this precious opportunity to brief you on bamboo industry in China.

As a special gift bestowed by nature, bamboo boasts the characteristics of both herbaceous and arbor plants: its robust growth rate and easy access to sustainable operations enables it to become one of the most crucial non-timber forest resources that could realise economic, ecological and social benefits. The development and utilization of bamboo can reduce human's dependence on wood, which is of great significance to protect forest resources, improve ecological environment, and address global climate change. As the world's largest bamboo producer, China enjoys a leading role in bamboo germplasm resources, bamboo forest area, stock volume of bamboo and related industrial production, scientific research level on bamboo and industrial scale in the world. In 2010, China's bamboo industry registered 18.6 billion USD in total output value and 1.85 billion USD in export amount. It is forecasted that China's bamboo industry will reach 47.6 billion USD in total output value by 2020.

China's bamboo products include thousands of varieties under 10 categories: bamboo shoots, bamboo panels, bamboo floorings, bamboo papers, bamboo-based daily necessities (which covers bamboo handicrafts), bamboo furniture, bamboo charcoal, bamboo vinegar and bamboo-based beverage, which are widely used in construction, decoration, furniture, paper-making, packaging, transportation, medicine, food, textile, chemical and other fields. Europe and the United States also use some bamboo products in a number of vital engineering projects.

Today, we are honored to have the presence of so many experts on timber and forest products from over 20 countries and regions in ICBR. The International Centre for Bamboo and Rattan (ICBR) is a non-profit research institution under the State Forestry Administration (SFA), which is approved to be established in July of 2000 and starts operation in 2003. As a relatively young agency, it is one of few research institutes focused on bamboo and rattan in China, or even the world.

Its mission is to achieve the sustainable management and use of bamboo and rattan resources by launching basic and applied researches in cultivation, management and utilization of bamboo and rattan resources; in the meantime, it also shoulders responsibility of directly serving the first China-based intergovernmental international organization - the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR).

Currently, ICBR owns six researching agencies such as Research Center for New Biomass Materials of Bamboo & Rattan, Research Center for Genetic Science and Genetic Industrialization, Research Center for Bamboo & Rattan Resources and Environment, Research Center for Chemical Use of Bamboo & Rattan Resources, Research Center for Green Economy and Experiment Center on Germplasm Resources of Tropical Plants. Furthermore, it also possesses a key laboratory of SFA on the Science and Technology of Bamboo and Rattan. I am pleased to know that all the attendees get a chance to visit our key laboratory during the meeting; your advices are welcomed on the growth of the lab. ICBR also owns a National Engineering Research Center for Bamboo and Rattan in Huangshan city, Anhui province, which

offers an enabling environment for pilot and engineering of our scientific and technological achievements. Besides, we also build a Conservation and Research Base for Germplasm of Bamboo, Rattan and Flowers in Huangshan city, Anhui province and a Conservation and Research Base for Germplasm of Tropical Forest Plants in Sanya city, Hainan province, which provides important bases for the quality seed cultivation and sustainable management of bamboo and rattan resources.

Over the past five years, ICBR launched systematic study on vital fields such as bamboo genome sequencing, manufacturing of high-performance composite materials made of wood and bamboo, manufacturing of green building materials made of wood and bamboo, high yield cultivating and ecological management of bamboo and rattan resources, separation and application of some phytochemical elements in bamboo and rattan resources.

ICBR attaches great importance to the exchanges and cooperation with foreign and domestic counterparts by sending visiting scholars, jointly applying for projects and signing bilateral cooperation agreements with related research institutions and universities from the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Indonesia, Malaysia and other countries. We have also launched substantive cooperation and researches with domestic renowned forestry research institutions. Other than that, we sponsored and hosted several high-standard international academic conferences.

It's clearly known to us that only through extensive exchanges and cooperation could we find our own weaknesses by keeping up with the times of forestry science and technology in the world. We are looking forward to maintain close partnerships with counterparts at home and abroad through comprehensive, multi-field exchanges and cooperation in the field of non-timber resources that includes bamboo and rattan.

This evening, SFA has prepared a banquet for all the guests in the International Bamboo and Rattan Tower, which will be followed by performances of traditional Chinese culture. I hope you can enjoy yourself during this amazing night.

In conclusion, I wish the conference a complete success, and an enjoyable stay for all of you here in Beijing.

Thank you.