



Masayuki Kudo, Chairman (Fiscal 2015), Japan Urethane Raw Materials Association

I would like to sincerely extend my congratulations to the Japan Urethane Raw Materials Association (JURA) on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the predecessors and association members for their great contributions toward the development of this association to date and I look forward to continued successful development in the future.

I am extremely honored to be the chairman of this association at such a watershed as the 50th anniversary of its founding that is indeed worthy of commemoration. Moving forward, I will undertake my best efforts for the association to contribute to further development of the urethane raw materials industry.

Looking back at just these past 10 years, the industrial and economic worlds surrounding us have undergone dramatic transformations. Changes in the petroleum fuel situation, the Middle Eastern situation, and insolvency in various European countries are just a few examples and these have all greatly affected the urethanes industry. In addition, we have seen rapid expansion of developing countries as evidenced by the progress made by China and countries in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, one can probably concede that Japanese demand has matured and market growth has tapered off. For this reason, we now find ourselves in an environment where all Japanese industries need to look beyond domestic markets and shift their focus to a global one. Against a backdrop of such business and management environment changes, numerous industrial sectors headed by major end users such as the automotive and appliance industries are moving ahead with relocation of production operations offshore. Simultaneously, our activities as an association have had to become more responsive and diversified as we deepen our ties with members

wherever they may be active throughout the world.

The world underwent a global recession in 2008 and our industry suffered under the dual burdens of an unprecedented appreciation of the Yen and the advance of deflation. Furthermore, Japan suffered immensely as a result of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of 2011. There are some wounds that have yet to heal but I do think that it was down to the cooperation of our members that the urethanes industry was able to overcome these difficulties. On the other hand, a market that has experiences such intense hardship has seen heightened interest in environmental and energy conservation issues, the effectiveness of urethanes has been reaffirmed, and we have been able to achieve the next level of progress.

Moving forward, there is a host of roles that our association needs to play in upcoming projects such as the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, extension of the Shinkansen network, deployment of the maglev linear motor car, and energy conservation measures, including the accompanying aspects of enhanced environmental safety. With even greater cooperation from our members, I plan to extend my utmost efforts to make rapid progress in this respect.

Lastly, I wish the association all the best for further and continued success in the years to come.

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