

## Opening Remarks by Chairman Shukuri International High-Speed Rail Association

Good morning everyone. I would like to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to everyone here today at the IHRA Forum 2018 “Overcoming Challenges in a Complex World: Past, Present and Future” from Japan and all around the world.

The universal issue demonstrated in the first and second IHRA Forum was the need to take up the constant challenge for transformation over the long-term; issues such as realizing safe and reliable high-speed transport as well as personnel training, implementation of urban transport network and urban development with smooth connection to HSR, and the development of railroad-alongside area, in order to transform economies, societies, and people’s lifestyles with high-speed rail and to carry out major transformation of a country or region.

Together with government officials, legislators, experts in the fields of economics and transportation, media editors and leaders in every sector of society who have gathered here from around the world, this IHRA Forum will discuss and examine how we can continue to take up the challenge for transformation in an increasingly complex world.

First, we will consider politics, economics, diplomacy and security in the Indo-Pacific region and look at growth strategies in this important region as well as major nations within the region.

Next, we will view examples of the initiatives that Japan implemented over a period of 150 years from the second half of the 19th century up until the present, and trace the path that the country

took in building up its own railway human resources and technology clusters while learning about the experiences and technology that advanced nations offered as Japan strived to take on the challenge of high-speed rail.

Then, we will turn our focus to India which is currently moving forward with the development of the country's first high-speed railway. We will discuss the strategy and efforts that the nation is making with strong government leadership to develop a quality infrastructure that will not only promote sustainable development and growth but also create a foundation for industrial and technological innovation with the aim of achieving a dynamic social transformation.

Lastly, we will look at the distinctive features of high-speed rail around the world, and examine the diversity and universality of perpetual challenges faced in the introduction of high-speed rail as well as its expansion and evolution.

It is my sincere hope that today's IHRA Forum to be held in Kyushu, which has from the ancient time developed as the hub of communication and trade between Japan and other countries, will contribute to the further development of high-speed rail worldwide.

Now, I would like to conclude my opening remarks. Thank you.