



STATSMINISTER GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND

Opening of Borregaard pesticide plant

Shanghai, 9 November 1995

In the middle of the next century, China's population is expected to reach 1.7 billion. The grainland per capita in China today is about half that of France and it is considerably less fertile. China must feed its people, now and in the future.

The environmental movement in Europe and North America regard the book by Rachel Carson, "Silent Spring" from the early 1960s as a seminal work. The book gave us all a rude awakening, describing the side-effects of the use of DDT as a pesticide.

Luckily, we have made progress since then. China and the world must produce food for people, not for bugs or bacteria. Chinese history is replete with tragic famines, droughts and floods that have taken the lives of millions of men, women and children. But modern China has rid itself from the scourge of hunger. That must remain so. We must do our utmost to prevent such catastrophes from ever - ever, haunting the people of China again.

For that we will need sound and safe pesticides. I am proud that Borregaard and this plant will be making a significant contribution to this effect.

I am pleased, too, that this plant represents the best available technology in pesticide production. But there is more to this success story than just a plant. The company is engaging in long-term cooperation with Chinese authorities and the users of its products, to provide training and knowledge transfer to ensure safe and sound handling and use of carbofuran.

This pesticide cannot properly be used in Norway due to our cold climate. But under warmer climatic condition such as here in China, as in our neighbouring country to the south, Denmark, this pesticide degrades biologically.

Increasing agricultural productivity in China will require a combination of methods, such as more effective irrigation, proper use of fertilizers and sound use of pesticides. This inauguration represents progress, for China, its people and their health and nutrition. We are proud that a Norwegian company can make a significant contribution so that China can feed its people.