Opening Address by Dr. K. Pannonhalmi:

Ladies and Gentlemen !

In our days there is an increasing demand for more available lands for agricultural utilization and urbanization (industrial investments, settlements, infrastructural projects, etc.). This process becomes more pronounced in countries — among these also in Hungary — where new lands cannot be introduced into agricultural production and which have limited material and energy resources. Concepts urging the rational exploitation of arable lands emphasize the necessity of increasing the fertility and economical utilization of soils. Of the limiting factors of soil fertility salinity and/or alkalinity are among the most serious.

The Research Institute for Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has good traditions in the many-sided study of soil salinization and/or alkalization processes. Researches related to the properties, development and reclamation of salt affected soils are of profound importance in both Hungary and India. The scientists of our countries have developed a close and fruitful cooperation. This is also proved by the second joint Seminar on Salt Affected Soils. We are honoured to have the opportunity to greet the prominent representatives of Indian scientists working in the field of salt affected soils, led by DR. YADAV.

I wish to welcome the participants of the Hungaro—Indian Seminar on Salt Affected Soils on behalf of the Department of Natural Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. I wish you successful work and hope that the scientific discussions during this Seminar will expand our knowledge of salt affected soils and reveal new possibilities of increasing their agricultural utilization.

Thank you.