

Welcome Remarks - Francoise Barre-Sinoussi

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, commonly known as AIDS, is a disease of the human immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). AIDS is now the pandemic in about a century. It has killed more than 25 million people since its discovery in 1981 to 2006. In 2007, it was estimated that 33 million people lived with the disease worldwide, and that AIDS killed an estimated 2.1 million people, including 330,000 children. AIDS was first recognized by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 1981. After learning the medical reports of this new disease, Professor Barre-Sinoussi and Dr. Montagnier were the first, as early as 1983, to identify the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) to be the culprit that leads to AIDS.

According to the Nobel Assembly:

“Never before have science and medicine been so quick to discover, identify the origin and provide treatment for a new disease entity.”

Because of their groundbreaking work in uncovering the virus responsible for AIDS, Prof. Barre-Sinoussi and Dr. Montagnier, together with Dr. Zur Hausen for his work on HPV, won the Nobel prize for medicine in 2008.

Prof. Barre-Sinoussi is not only an eminent scientist but also a great humanist. Throughout the years, she has been extensively involved in AIDS control programs worldwide, especially in the emerging nations, saving countless lives of women and children. She has promoted a combined approach of lab-based research and locally based education and treatment centers for the control of the disease.

With her brilliant insights on HIV/AIDS and compassion for humanity, Prof. Barre-Sinoussi' lecture at our university today will certainly inspire the young students and faculty members alike to challenge important biomedical problems. With

the university's commitment to promote innovative biomedical research, I hope we could someday produce a Nobel laureate of our own, that could follow the footsteps of Prof. Barre-Sinoussi for a better understanding and treatment of critical human diseases, and to provide hope for welfare of all human beings.

On behalf of National Tsing Hua University, I welcome our guest of honor and maestro speaker of today, Prof. Françoise Barre-Sinoussi.