

## **Inaugural Session**

### **Cotton India: The Premier Cotton Event in the Sub-Continent**

Mr. Dhiren Sheth, President of the Cotton Association of India (CAI), welcomed delegates and thanked all participants for their attendance on short notice. He announced that Cotton India 2016-17 will be held in December 2016 in Mumbai.

Mr. Sheth announced that CAI is working to make Cotton India the premier cotton industry event in the Indian subcontinent. He reviewed the MSP operations of the Cotton Corporation of India and the impacts of such activities on the supply/demand balance in 2014/15. He noted that one-third of total world cotton area is in India. However, Indian yields are below the world average, and he noted the need to improve productivity and efficiency in order to expand production and improve returns to growers.

Mr. José Sette, executive director of the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC), congratulated the Cotton Association of India on their exciting initiative to preserve the heritage of cotton. Mr. Sette said he appreciates the interest of CAI to provide positive information about cotton and to encourage an awareness of cotton's rich history. The book, "100 Years of Indian Cotton, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition," charts a very important period stretching from before Indian independence and continuing into the beginning of the modern period. He urged everyone to read the book in its entirety.

Ms. Aparna Chawathe of the CAI announced the launch of Suvin Ratna (colour) in three new colors. Suvin is one of the best cottons in the world, and CAI will emphasize the continued growth in the production and use of Suvin. Mr. Mani Chinnaswamy, Managing Partner, Appachi Cotton Co., and Mr. Velayutham, a veteran Suvin farmer, presented samples of Suvin to Mr. Sette, Mr. Sheth and Mr. Nayan Mirani, Vice Chair of CAI.

Mr. Velayutham greeted all participants and thanked the CAI for its support of Suvin. He recounted his experiences in growing Suvin cotton and the difficulties in marketing the unknown type in the beginning. He described efforts to introduce Suvin to textile mill buyers and how the excellent quality, high yields and premium prices are resulting in improved returns to growers.