

New Year's Greetings!



Michiaki Ogasawara
President
The ITU Association of Japan

Happy New Year! It is my sincere hope that this year will be productive and rewarding for you all! Last year, the Plenipotentiary Conference, which is held every four years and is the top policy-making body of the International Telecommunications Union, was held in Busan, Republic of Korea. It was attended by approximately 2500 people from 171 countries around the world, including Japan. At the Plenipotentiary Conference, we had the opportunity to act as Japanese delegation secretariat and to support the Japanese government and all other participants from Japan.

Deliberations went through the night, and many important decisions were made regarding policy directions for the next four years. The election is another major purpose of the Plenipotentiary Conference, and we could not be more pleased that Japan continues to keep the seat in ITU Council, and that Dr. Yasuhiko Ito has been re-elected as a member of the Radio Regulations Board.

This year in May will mark the 150th Anniversary of the ITU, an international organization proud of its long history. In November, the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), which makes revisions to the Radio Regulations governing use of radio-frequency spectrum internationally, will also be held at ITU headquarters in Switzerland.

Needless to say, the principal duties of the ITU are (1) allocation of frequencies internationally, (2) standardization of telecommunications and information communication technology (telecommunications/ICT), and (3) supporting development of telecommunications/ICT in developing countries, but under the constitution and convention of the ITU, it must continue to play an important role in the peaceful coexistence of people throughout the world into the future, and sharing the global space with harmony.

In order for the ITU to fulfil these roles, forming consensus in the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) has also become very important. On a related point, Mr. Masanori Kondo, from Japan, was elected as Deputy Secretary General at the APT elections in November last year, and it is wonderful that, from now on, APT will be led by his strong leadership in which we can place our hopes, promoting cooperation and collaboration in the Asia-Pacific region.

Upon reflection, there have been some outstanding technical advances in the last year, particularly in development of technology related to wireless communications. Wireless technology development is progressing in many aspects,

such as cost and convenience, and with advancement in digital technologies and extreme miniaturization of electronic circuits, wireless communications systems overall are rapidly becoming more sophisticated. Mobile phones and smartphones, which have achieved performance increases while remaining extremely compact, are excellent representatives of these advances. Some of the many other keywords related to recent ICT include 5G, IoT, automobile communications technology, geospatial, positioning, wireless power transmission, sensor networks, cloud computing, security technology, and 4K/8K.

The role of the ICT in finding solutions to global issues such as global warming, large-scale natural disasters, infectious diseases, and energy has also grown substantially. The ITU/APT is depended upon to be deeply involved in and contribute proactively to advancing ICT and finding solutions to these types of global issues. Of course, Japan must also cooperate in and support these efforts.

With the cooperation of all supporting members, the ITU Association of Japan will continue to cooperate proactively in ITU, APT and national initiatives with a global perspective, to increase Japan's international presence in the information and telecommunications field.

In closing, I wish everyone the very best, in health and all of your undertakings, in the coming year.