

## New Year Greeting



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2019 promises to be an exciting year. We are finally entering the era of IoT, where everything is connected to the network. Not only that, we expect to see the emergence of advanced and highly accurate services based on AI technology.

Ordinary households are already starting to use smart speakers that employ AI technology for purposes such as gathering information and controlling domestic appliances. Significant advances are also being made in the technology used to control robots and operate self-driving vehicles and drones. At the end of last year, we saw the introduction of 4K/8K satellite broadcasting, and the launch of Japan's independent global positioning service based on the four *Michibiki* satellites. Alongside these remarkable developments, the ITU-AJ has been working hard to keep up with technological trends.

The ITU's most important decision-making event of the last year was the Plenipotentiary Conference in Dubai (United Arab Emirates). Japan was re-elected to the ITU Council, and Akira Hashimoto was appointed as a member of the Radio Regulations Board (RRB). In Japan, we held the International Conference for Cooperation on 5<sup>th</sup> Generation Mobile Communication Systems (ITU-R SG5 WP5D), and the ITU-AJ was able to participate in the administration of both conferences.

In South Africa, we prepared a report on the state of local telecommunications, which was delivered at ITU Telecom World 2018 in Durban. Also, on May 17 last year, we held the 50th Celebration of World Telecommunication and Information

Society Day. At this event, Yuji Inoue received an award from the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications in recognition of his work on international standardization at the ITU-T and other organizations, and Mahabir Pun received an ITU-AJ Special Achievement Award for the major contributions he has made to the construction of wireless communication technology in Nepal. Both awards were very richly deserved.

We also held an APT Training event for telecommunication engineers from developing countries around Asia, as well as our very popular "Performative Seminar", which we introduced into the curriculum of practical activities in order to improve international negotiating abilities.

This year, the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19) will take place in Egypt for the purpose of discussing amendments to the radio regulations that govern the international allocation and use of radio frequencies. In addition, ITU Telecom World 2019 will be held in Hungary.

In Japan, we plan to hold a preparatory meeting (APG) ahead of this conference, and a meeting on standardization activities in the telecommunications field within the APT area (ASTAP).

I will be giving my full support to these activities alongside the Japanese government and our supporting members.

Finally, I'd like to wish you all a very happy New Year, and the best of success in your activities in 2019.