

## 2021 New Year Remarks from Minister Takeda



**TAKEDA Ryota**

Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications

**H**appy New Year to all!  
I was appointed Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications in September of last year, and as such, take responsibility for various issues in the fields within its jurisdiction.

This includes many fields closely related to citizens' daily lives, and many policies underlying our new vision for society and social structures. We are working to produce results with solutions to issues, looking calmly and thoroughly at whether policies are appropriate for daily life from the perspective of citizens, with plans both to handle the COVID-19 pandemic and to revitalize regional economies, building a high-quality economy and society suitable for the post COVID-19 era.

For the "new normal," building information and communications infrastructure to support teleworking, remote learning, and telemedicine will be essential. We are working to consolidate national 5G and optical fiber networks quickly, and to promote the development and spread of Local 5G, which will contribute to solving regional issues.

Regarding fees for mobile phones, which are a life necessity for citizens, operators are announcing new, low-cost plans and the range of choices is expanding, but we continue to push hard so that citizens have a real sense that they are benefiting from lower prices, by promoting a fair competitive environment based on the Action Plan announced last year.

As all of society undergoes the current digital reformation, we must also ensure that everyone is able to benefit from it. We are providing comprehensive support to build an environment in which all citizens can handle digital devices to obtain and use the information they need.

To assure that citizens can use digital technology, it is extremely important to ensure safety, security and reliability in cyberspace. To do so, we are building an environment for integrated analysis of cybersecurity information and training for related personnel. We have a strategy to develop advanced technologies intensively, such as quantum encrypted communication.

How each and every citizen uses digital technology is also important. In particular, defamation of people on the Internet must not be allowed. We are taking comprehensive measures, including educational activities to improve information ethics and ICT literacy and developing policies to prevent online defamation.

At the same time, we are gathering the knowledge and intelligence of government and the private sector, establishing R&D infrastructure for 5G and "Beyond 5G" technologies, and strengthening the base for research and development on advanced technologies such as quantum encrypted communication and AI simultaneous translation, to improve industrial competitiveness in the post-COVID-19 world. To also encourage Japanese companies to run business in the global market, we will promote the acquisition of intellectual property and the international standardization of R&D results.

To contribute to the global digital revolution, we are also planning to bridge digital divides with 5G and submarine optical cables, and fostering international shared understandings regarding the use of AI, the free flow of data, and other issues.

We are also supporting circulation of broadcast content overseas, bringing the fascination of rural areas to the world. In fields broadly related to citizens' daily lives, such as postal service, fire prevention, government offices and statistics, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications is also mobilizing policy resources to promote international development.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications is actively working to enable all of society through ICT, to realize the services that our citizens have come to expect, and to create a society in which the benefits of digitalization can truly be felt. Based on basic policies decided at the end of last year, we will continue collaboration to establish a digital agency as planned for this year, and to promote cooperation regarding digital-related policies with all related ministers.

I would like to extend New Year's greetings to all and wish everyone good health and happiness through the coming year!

New Year's Day, 2021