

## Welcoming a New Year



**Tetsuo Yamakawa**  
President  
The ITU Association of Japan

Sincere wishes for a Happy New Year! I assumed the position of President in December of last year, and I hope you will all continue to support me as you did the previous President, Toshiyuki Minami.

In 2020, the global spread of the new coronavirus pandemic had a great effect on social and economic activity, and it is still not subsiding around the world. The contagion has also spread in Japan, through urban and rural areas alike, and although measures to prevent the spread continue, businesses have had to adjust to the corona era, with remote work, staggered work hours and online meetings in wide use. We hope that the New Year will be a good one, full of vitality.

Reflecting back on the year, meetings and events with the ITU and APT that we were involved in last year were also affected. The ITU-T SG9 assembly (Japan) planned for April was suspended, ITU Telecom World (Vietnam) in September and WTSA (India) in November were postponed, and the APT General Assembly/Management Committee (Japan) in December were held virtually. Under these circumstances, Katsunori Kondo was elected the secretary general of APT at the General Assembly in December. May I offer my congratulations, and best wishes for these activities in the future.

On October 6, we held the “Celebration of World Telecommunication and Information Day.” This is normally held in May each year, but was postponed to October and scaled down due to the pandemic. In the ceremony, Yushi Naito, who has been involved in international standardization activities with ITU-T for many years, received the MIC Minister’s Award, and Kazuko Ito, who has contributed to building an inclusive society through para-sports using ICT technology, received a Special Achievement Award. Accomplishment Awards were also given to 18 other people and two organizations, and Encouragement Awards were given to 18 people and one organization. Congratulations to all who received awards. In November and December, the first online APT training course was also held.

This year, we are anticipating expansion of the next-generation 5G commercial services, which were launched last year in Japan. With the corona plague, we have strong hopes that we will solve societal issues and leap toward Society 5.0, through

5G and other ICT technologies. There are also plans to hold the Olympics and Paralympics this summer, postponed from last year. We hope that, with enough preparation, this event anticipated the world over, will be held, putting the spotlight on all of Japan.

In ITU events, the postponed World Telecom (Vietnam) is scheduled for October, and WTDC (Ethiopia) is scheduled for November. It is expected that real events will be difficult, but based on previous experience, we are being flexible with preparations and cooperating with everyone involved in ITU and APT meetings and events.

This year, we will reach 50 years since our association was founded. I would like to thank all of you for your support, and for the future, it is my desire to work even harder, to mediate among all of our members, the Japanese Government, and the ITU.

I wish you all a Happy New Year, and for your health and vitality for the coming year.

### ■ Celebration of World Telecommunication and Information Day (October 6, 2020)

