

New Year's Message



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Best wishes to all in this New Year! Russia's invasion of Ukraine which began in 2022 has continued to expand in 2023 and with the outbreak of the Palestinian conflict, the concepts of peace and harmony are being questioned deeply. With continuing economic uncertainty and regional disputes, it will be critical to focus our wisdom and cooperative abilities to face these difficult conditions in order to restore stability in the world.

Last year, the ITU-AJ participated in meetings of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), including the APT General Assembly (GA-16) and the APT Management Committee Meeting (MC-47), held in Bangkok Thailand from November 6 to 11. There, Masanori Kondo was re-elected to the position of APT Secretary General, a position he has held for three years. We celebrate this achievement and hope for the best in his efforts in the coming three years. The ITU Radiocommunication Assembly 2023 (RA-23) and the ITU World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 (WRC-23) were also held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from November 13 to December 15, and three vice-chair candidates from Japan were selected at the RA. The ITU-AJ also provided administrative support in Dubai for these meetings.

The Mobile World Congress (MWC) was an ICT event held in Barcelona Spain from February 27 to March 2, including a Japan Pavilion presented by 11 Japanese companies. The ITU-AJ supported international expansion of Japanese ICT enterprises through exhibits in the pavilion. Another notable event was CEATEC, which was held at Makuhari Messe from October 17 to 20, where Ukraine exhibited and presented lectures for the first time.

Within the ITU-AJ, we held our annual "World Telecommunication and Information Society" Ceremony on May 17 at the Keio Plaza Hotel, which was also streamed online. At the ceremony, Yoshio MIYADERA (Japan Radio Co. Ltd.), who drove and supported standardization of marine radio communication technologies at international organizations including ITU and IMO, received a MIC Minister's Award. The Starlink team from SpaceX also received a Special Achievement Award, with a keynote speech given by Lauren Dreyer, who came to Japan to receive the award representing SpaceX. A further 14 individuals and one organization received Accomplishment Awards, and 15 individuals and one organization received Encouragement Awards. We offer our heartfelt congratulations to all of these recipients.

For training, the APT training office held a network planning course aimed at eliminating the digital divide from October 11 to 20, inviting nine participants from nine countries. This was the first face-to-face training course in four years since COVID-19 began.

Themes of diversity and inclusion have also gained prominence recently. As ICT technologies continue to advance, I hope Japan will also expand "Diversity and Inclusion" by developing and expanding services related to 5G, beyond 5G (6G), Local 5G and AI.

With the ITU this year, the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2024 (WTSA-24) will be held from October 15 to 24 in New Delhi, India. While we hope to invite the assembly back to Japan soon, the ITU-AJ will continue to collaborate with relevant parties on ITU and APT assemblies and events, adapting to requirements with flexibility based on our past experience.

Within the ITU-AJ, we will continue operation of our Japan Platform for Driving Digital Development (JPD3), which began in 2020. In February, we plan to hold a new type of course for human resource development at British Hills in Fukushima, to improve skills in international negotiation. By also publishing the online monthly, "ITU Journal," and the English quarterly, "New Breeze," inviting experts to speak at research conferences, and holding informational meetings that gather a cross-section of people involved in ITU-related businesses, the ITU-AJ will continue collaboration so that it can be a platform for interaction among the ITU, the Japanese government, and each of the supporting members.

I wish you all a sincere Happy New Year and good health in the coming year.

■ APT General Assembly, Election of Masanori Kondo as Secretary General

