Section 6
Promotion of International Strategy

1. Promotion of international policy

(1) Support for international business

With the aim of strategically supporting the international business activities of private companies in the fields of digital broadcasting, next-generation IP networks and wireless communications, in which Japan has a particular strength, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) set up the ICT Office for International Promotion under the ICT International Competitiveness Council in January 2007.

Specific activities of this office in the three fields mentioned above include (1) comprehensive support and a contact point for launching the international activities of ICT companies, (2) implementation of various dissemination and enlightenment activities and (3) collection and organization of useful information from other countries and the sharing of such information among industry, academia and government. Specific achievements have already been observed: for instance, the launch of terrestrial digital broadcasting services in Brazil, where Japan's technology systems have been adopted.

The MIC has also been making efforts to strengthen the presence of Japan internationally to gain an advantage in negotiations for technological standardization, as well as to develop a competitive environment for telecommunication markets in Asia and others in bilateral and multilateral negotiations.

(2) Promotion of international developments in Asia/Pacific region

The MIC has been making various efforts concerning the promotion of international policy in the Asia/Pacific region, which included cooperation with the member countries of APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation), the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The Third ASEAN-Japan ICT Ministers Meeting was held in Indonesia in August 2008 and the ASEAN-Japan ICT Work Plan for 2008-2009 was adopted, which includes comprehensive cooperation measures in the ICT sector between Japan and ASEAN. It was the first work plan in the ICT sector to include specific measures adopted by Japan and ASEAN countries. Currently, efforts towards the steady implementation of the plan are under way

between Japan and ASEAN.

In February 2009, the First ASEAN-Japan Information Security Policy Meeting was held in Tokyo. With the participation of high-level officials from Japan and ASEAN member countries, an agreement was made on the Framework for Japan-ASEAN Cooperation in Information Security, which is a medium- and long-term strategy showing the direction of cooperation between Japan and ASEAN in information security.

(3) Promotion of international developments among international institutions and multiple nations (except for Asia-Pacific region)
A. Enhancement of strategic activities for international standardization

As active efforts are being made by China and Korea, in addition to western countries, to standardize ICT areas of remarkable technological innovation, if Japan aspires to enhance its international competitiveness in the ICT field, it is essential to elucidate target technologies and systems for international business activities based on the needs of relevant countries and to proceed with strategic activities in cooperation with industry, academia and government, covering a range of activities, from international standardization to the production of technologies and sales of systems in international markets. Hence, in August 2007, the MIC consulted the Information and Communications Council about ICT R&D and the Standardization Strategy to Enhance Japan's International Competitiveness, and a report was released in June 2008 with the following three measures for enhancing international standardization activities: (1) ICT standardization strategy map in the prioritized technological areas where Japan should make efforts toward international standardization and a policy for formulating an ICT patent map, (2) method for developing human resources engaged in international standardization activities, and (3) establishment of a center for ICT standardization and intellectual properties that controls these standardization activities through cooperation between the government, industry and academia. The MIC intends to strengthen strategic international standardization activities, led by the ICT Standardization and Intellectual Property Promotion Center (iSIPc).

B. Participating in International Telecommunication Union (ITU) activities

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a specialized organization of the United Nations for telecommunications and comprises three sectors: (1) International Telecommunication Union-Radio-communications (ITU-R), (2) International Telecommunication Union-Telecommunication Standardization (ITU-T) and (3) International Telecommunication Union-Telecommunications Development (ITU-D), and its activities include the allocation of radio frequencies, standardization of telecommunication technologies and development support for the telecommunications of developing counties. Japan is making a positive contribution to the work of the ITU; for example, Japan has accepted the assignments of chairperson and vice-chairperson to study groups in different sections and submitted various recommendations.

Japan also actively participates in the Internet Governance Forum (IFG), whose secretariat was established by the United Nations as a forum to discuss various public policy issues concerning the Internet; as well as in the negotiations at the Doha Round of WTO talks and the negotiations at OECD.

(4) Promotion of international policy in bilateral relationship

For the purpose of facilitating sustainable growth through dialog between Japan and the United States, the Japan-US Economic Partnership for Growth was agreed at the Japan-U.S. summit meeting held in June 2001, and annual multifaceted discussions, including vice-ministerial-level economic talks, have been held.

In 2007, as a result of 6th year dialogue on the U.S.-Japan Regulatory Reform and Competition Policy Initiative, a report concerning regulatory reform and competition policy in various fields including telecommunication was summarized and announced.

Then in October 2007, petitions were exchanged during the 7th year dialogue.

Furthermore, the MIC engages in policy consultations with ministries and agencies responsible for information and communications from the EU, western countries, and China, etc. Also, the MIC is making active effort to conclude EPA (Economic Partnership Agreements).

2. Promotion of international cooperation

Recently, the international digital divide has been growing; for instance, there are about 30 developing countries with less than one telephone subscriber per 100 people, although ICT networks are a critical part of the infrastructure necessary for realizing economic growth, employment expansion and improving people's lives. Therefore, there is an increasingly recognized need to build information and communications networks on an international scale, including in developing countries.

The MIC provides various support, including ICT human resources development, support for ICT policy and system formulation through policy dialogue with the information and communications ministries of developing countries, support for the development of information and communication infrastructure by implementing international joint experiments, etc., and support for the international and regional organizations that promote international cooperation in eliminating the digital divide. The MIC also contributes to sustainable development in the information and communications field in developing countries through Official Development Assistance (ODA) in cooperation with various agencies and organizations, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), etc.