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# COMMUNICATIONS NEWS

Biweekly Newsletter of the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, Japan

## “International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy” and “Study Group for the Asia Broadband Program” Held

With regard to the “Asia Broadband Program” directed under the “e-Japan 2002 Program” and the “Basic Policies for Economic and Fiscal Policy Management and Structural Reform 2002,” MPHPT held the “International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy” (Chair: Mr. USHIO Jiro, Chairman of Ushio, Inc.) as a forum for proposing basic guidelines in developing the “Asia Broadband Program.” On July 22, 2002, MPHPT held the “Study Group for the Asia Broadband Program” (Chair: Prof. GOTO Shigeki, Waseda University) at Mita Kaigisho (Conference Hall) hosted by Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination TSUKIO Yoshio, Ph.D., as a forum for deliberating an Action Plan in order to develop specific content of the Plan and to achieve the goals of the Plan, based upon proposals of the “International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy.”

The outline of the “International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy” is as follows:

### I. “International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy”

#### 1) Purpose

The purpose of the “International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy” is to develop common understanding on the basic concept, etc. of the “Asia Broadband Program” in order to contrib-

ute to the development of the “Asia Broadband Program.” The Minister for Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications hosts the International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy consisting of opinion leaders from Japan and the Asian economies.

#### 2) Themes

The International Conference for Asia

Broadband Strategy deliberates on the following themes, to be contained in the “Asia Broadband Program” that is a target in transforming all of Asia into a world information hub.

- (1) Basic concept in developing the “Asia Broadband Program”
- (2) Matters to be contained in the Program

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MPHPT Minister KATAYAMA Toranosuke (center) and Chair USHIO Jiro (Ushio, Inc.) (second from left), at the “International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy”

(3) Desirable form of collaboration among economies for achieving the Program  
**3) Members**  
 Industry representatives and opinion leaders from Japan and the Asian econo-

mies (Chair: Mr. USHIO Jiro, Chairman of Ushio, Inc.)  
**4) Schedule**  
 The first meeting of the International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy was held on July 22, 2002 at Mita

Kaigisho (Conference Hall). The International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy will hold one more meeting within CY2002.

[Outline of Keynote Address by MPHPT Minister KATAYAMA]

Title: Formulation of the “Asia Broadband Program”

IT as a driving force of the 21st century will play a vital role. The advent of a broadband age will greatly empower IT in its influence. We shall collaborate on the sharing of various benefits brought about by IT, the promotion of socioeconomic and cultural development, and the realization of prosperous coexistence of countries/economies within the Asian region.

Thus, based upon such recognition, I propose developing the “Asia Broadband Program” containing goals and an Action Plan for the creation of a broadband environment in the Asian region.

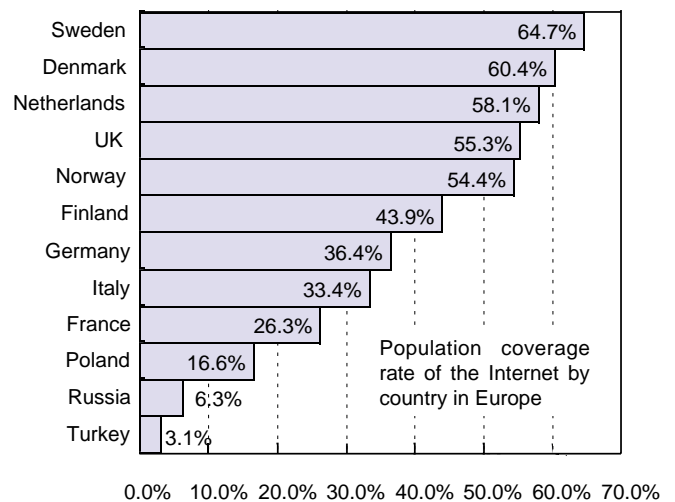
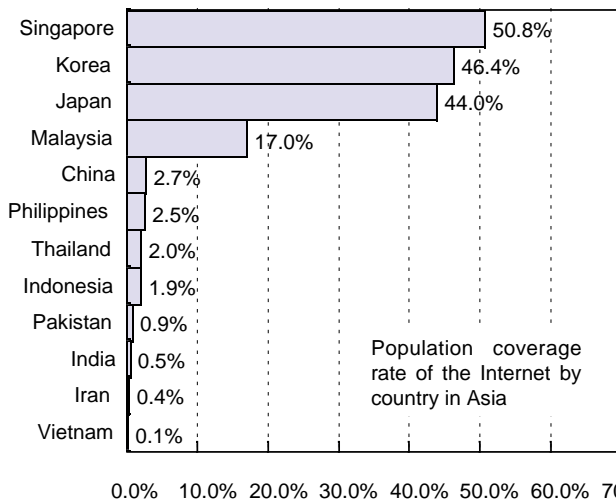
Today, It is my great honor and privilege to welcome you distinguished opinion leaders and industry representatives from Japan and many countries/economies in Asia at this Conference and to have a chance to host this Conference with the purpose of fostering common recognition on the basic concept, etc. upon development of the “Asia Broadband Program” and a desirable form of collaboration among economies for achieving the Plan.

If I can receive a proposal from this Conference, I will present the proposal to the Asian economies in order to obtain responses and opinions thereon. Then, I would like to introduce the proposal as a voice of Asia to the world at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2003.

Potentials of Asia

The Asian region possesses high potentials, as exemplified by Korean broadband platform, China’s world’s biggest number of subscribers to mobile telephones, Singaporean advanced e-government, Malaysian Super Corridor and Thailand’s complex of international organizations.

Considering those high potentials of the Asian region, our goal, the Asia broadband platform, can be realized, I am sure. This figure illustrates the comparison of population coverage of the Internet in Asia and Europe. As you see, the Asian countries/economies have country-by-country disparities. In order to activate the information distribution within the Asian region, how to tackle such country-by-country disparities becomes our tasks.



(Source: White Paper 2002 “Information and Communications in Japan”)

Toward Developing the “Asia Broadband Program”

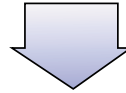
The essential points upon development of the “Asia Broadband Program” are as follows:

Firstly, it is vital for government officials, service providers and users to recognize that IT forms basic infrastructures for the future socioeconomic and cultural development in Asia and the advent of the broadband age will empower IT in its influence. Then, in order to maximize benefits brought about by IT, there will be a need to close the differences/disparities within the region. To this end, it is required to set far more elaborate goals.

Secondly, we should understand features specific to Asia ourselves, then picture an information society to come. There are cultural and socioeconomic diversity in Asia without parallel in the rest of the world. In addition, there are geographically

unique characteristics as well. Such diversity may sometimes become weakness, however, and at the same time, strength. We should mutually understand country-by-country differences/disparities in the Asian region, thus realize our future by respecting such diversity.

1. Bridge the digital divide and set common goals within the Asian region
2. Respect economic and cultural diversity
3. Ensure closer collaboration among public/private sectors, NPOs, international organizations and support the efforts of these parties



To make the entire Asian region a global information transmission hub through increasing information distribution within the region.

Finally, the most important thing is that diversified stakeholders shall actively commit themselves to this endeavor. Namely, under the closer collaboration among the public and private sectors, academia, NPOs and international organizations, it is required that ownerships of all parties shall be encouraged.

At the Conference meeting, base upon the proposal from Minister KATAYAMA and the deliberations of the meeting, the report "Basic policies on the formulation of the Asia Broadband Program" was compiled and released as Chairman's Summary of the "International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy."

## The "International Conference for Asia Broadband Strategy"

### Chairman's Summary

[Unofficial Translation]

#### -- Basic Policies on the Formulation of the Asia Broadband Program --

1. The common objectives shall be the stimulation of information distribution within the Asian region along with establishing the entire Asian region as a global information base.
2. Respect shall be given to the economic, social and cultural diversity in the Asian region.
3. Participation by all related countries in the Asian region and close cooperation between a wide range of entities such as governments, the private sector and NPOs shall be ensured.
4. Exhibiting ownership by all related parties including governments, the private sector and NPOs is essential.
5. Consideration shall be paid to the elimination of the digital divide in the Asian region.

In addition, from now on, taking into consideration the deliberations at this Conference and the Chairman's summary, the "Study Group for the Asia Broadband Program" hosted by Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination TSUKIO Yoshio, Ph.D., will deliberate an Action Plan in order to develop specific content of the Asia Broadband Program and to achieve the goals of the Asia Broadband Program, and compile its outcomes as a conclusive report around December 2002.

# Survey Results of Study on Telework and SOHO Announced

In FY2001, MPHPT conducted a “survey on the telework population and the progress of telework implementation at corporate offices” in order to assess the current status of telework. In addition, it has also implemented a “study on future concepts on communications systems pertaining to SOHO (Small Office Home Office)” and a “study on advancement of the levels of SOHO Directory (an electronic ledger of SOHOs)” in order to deliberate on support measures for SOHOs. The outline of results of these studies is as follows:

For details, refer to the Japanese web site:

[http://www.soumu.go.jp/s-news/2002/020705\\_4.html](http://www.soumu.go.jp/s-news/2002/020705_4.html)

## 1. Outline of survey

- Methods of survey (conducted by Japan Telework Association: JTA)
- 1) Questionnaire survey of subject businesses

Subjects: about 5,000 businesses in the cities of Sapporo, Sendai, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima and Fukuoka as well as Tokyo’s 23 cities

Effective replies: 639 (ratio of effective replies: 12.9%)

2) Corporate worker survey  
Subjects: 9,307 workers in the cities listed above  
Effective replies: 969 (ratio of effective replies: 10.4%)

## 2. Estimate of telework population

The number of teleworkers increased by about 16% in the past two years. It is forecast that the number of teleworkers will double five years after.

### 1) Telework population at present

The number of employee-type teleworkers in Japan for CY2002 is 2,857,000.

(As of CY2000, 2,464,000: the previous survey conducted by JTA)

### 2) Estimate of telework population five years after

As of CY2007, the number of employee-type teleworkers in Japan will be 5,631,000.

### \* Methods of estimation

#### 1) Telework population at present

The data were estimated by the “Establishment and Enterprise Census” (MPHPT) and the “Employment Structure Basic Census” (MPHPT) using figures obtained by the “questionnaire survey of subject businesses.”

### 2) Estimate of telework population five years after

Using the “ratio of estimated teleworking employees five years after” of the businesses replying “planning to introduce telework” or “considering introducing telework” in the replies of the “questionnaire survey of subject businesses,” estimations were calculated in the same manner as 1), then the results were added to 1).

In fact, taking a look at the effects of telework on businesses introducing telework, replies of “very effective” in many questions increased in comparison with the previous survey. In particular, increases in replies of “improved efficiency/productivity in creative work” and “improved customer satisfaction” are remarkable.

On the other hand, with regard to merits for teleworkers, replies of “time for childrearing and household chores is increased” and “exhaustion caused by commuting is reduced” are significantly increased in comparison with the previous survey.

## 3) Effects of telework at businesses

Reduction/improved efficiency of travel time	Improved customer satisfaction	Improved efficiency/productivity of creative work	Reduced office cost	Improved efficiency/productivity of routine work	Job security of excellent personnel
52.0% (47.1%)	33.3% (20.0%)	31.3% (0.0%)	29.4% (33.3%)	27.3% (16.7%)	21.4% (12.5%)

(Ratio of businesses replying “very effective” to each question: figures in parentheses indicate the results of the previous survey.)

## 4) Merits for teleworkers (multiple replies)

Exhaustion caused by commuting is reduced.	Productivity of job is improved.	Pleasures with family members are increased.	Time for childrearing and household chores is increased.	Exchanges with a local community are increased.	Others
57.4% (31.4%)	44.4% (62.9%)	27.8% (28.6%)	25.9% (10.0%)	7.4% (8.6%)	18.5% (10.0%)

- However, businesses introducing telework and businesses planning/considering telework in some way account for a mere figure of about 10%, respectively.
- About 80% of teleworkers use their homes.

5) Implementation status of telework at businesses

Telework is recognized under working regulations.	There is no rule on telework, however, implemented at the discretion of the business.	There is a plan to allow introduction or implementation of telework.	There is a plan to introduce or implement telework.	There is no plan to allow telework.	No answer	Total
2.2%	8.1%	1.7%	8.3%	78.4%	1.3%	100%

6) Facilities for teleworkers (top six answers: multiple replies)

Teleworkers' homes	Other offices	In traveling car/train/bus	Clients' offices	Hotels	Drop-in offices
79.6%	25.9%	14.8%	9.3%	7.4%	5.6%

- In order to find obstacles to introduce telework in businesses, reasons for not introducing telework indicate many problems related to personnel management.
- On the other hand, with regard to demerits from the worker side, problems involving communication are mainly found.

7) Reasons for not introducing telework at businesses (top six answers: multiple replies)

There is no suitable job type.	It is difficult to manage.	Performance review is difficult.	Communication tends to become insufficient.	It is impossible due to small company scale.	Workers don't require/propose telework.
61.8%	43.0%	28.7%	22.5%	21.4%	20.5%

8) Demerits of telework from the worker side (multiple replies)

Communication tends to become insufficient.	Feeling of loneliness/sense of being isolated	Performance review is not satisfactory.	It bothers family members.	Productivity will worsen.	Others
38.9%	20.4%	16.7%	11.1%	7.4%	22.2%

# MPHPT and Moroccan Secretary of State in Charge of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technologies, Nasr Hajji Sign MoU

In response to invitation from Rep. KATAYAMA Toranosuke, Minister for Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, Mr. Nasr Hajji, Secretary of State in charge of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technologies, Morocco, visited Japan from June 29 through July 4, 2002. During the visit, Secretary Nasr Hajji exchanged opinions with MPHPT officials and industrial leaders.

At a meeting with Minister KATAYAMA held on July 1, the two ministers confirmed mutual cooperation to

support the sixteenth ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, being held in Marrakech from September 23 to October 18, 2002. Secretary Nasr Hajji expressed expectations for further investment of Japanese firms in Morocco and made a proposal to conclude a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for strengthening cooperative ties between the two countries in the IT field.

With regard to the MoU for cooperation, both sides signed and exchanged the MoU at the MPHPT Headquarters on July 3, after deliberations on details.

This MoU contains promotion of closer cooperation and information exchanges between the two countries, to be more precise, information exchanges concerning policies on the Internet and e-commerce, personnel exchanges including experts in that field, cosponsorship for holding seminars or symposia, among other issues.

Thanks to this MoU, it is anticipated that cooperative ties between Japan and Morocco will be further promoted in the IT field.



Rep. KATAYAMA Toranosuke, Minister for Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (left) and Mr. Nasr Hajji, Secretary of State in charge of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technologies, Morocco (right) at MPHPT Headquarters