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Broad Outlines of FY 2006 ICT Policy Principles

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications announced on August 30, 2005, the FY 2006 ICT Policy Principles. These are the mid-and-long-term directions for the information and communications field and the principal measures for each fiscal year (budget, tax system, amendments in systems and the like), that are compiled each year at the time when rough budget requests are produced.

Mid-Term Vision

The MIC announced its u-Japan Policy in December 2004 as its mid-term ICT policy vision through 2010 following the e-Japan Strategy, with the aim of leading the way as the world's most advanced IT nation, having achieved the e-Japan goal of successfully catching with to the advanced IT nations.

The goals per main area are as shown below.

- Development of ubiquitous networks: To make it possible for 100% of the population to connect to high-speed or ultrahigh-speed internet access.
- Enhancement of ICT applications: To create a society in which 80% of the population can appreciate the role of ICT in resolving issues.
- Preparation of usage environment : To create a society in which 80% of the population feel comfortable with ICT.

Conditions at the Starting Point

The conditions with regard to achieving the 2010 goals are as follows:

- Development of ubiquitous networks: There are currently zero broadband towns and villages (207 localities accounting for 6.6% of the total) and zero broadband regions (3.45 million households, accounting for 7% of the total), so the geographical divide continues to exist.
- Enhancement of ICT applications: Looking at the good evaluation by users of ICT in resolving issues by application, figures are high for certain things such as gathering information by looking through websites at 90%, or shopping at 41%, but they are low for the likes of administration at 7.5%, medical care at 4.7%, and education at 5.5%, leaving considerable room for promoting the usefulness of ICT in these fields.
- Preparation of usage environment : Whereas 10% of users feel secure in using the Internet (55% of users feel somewhat secure), a third of users do not feel secure as there have been increases in leakage of personal information and incidents of illegal usage, so countermeasures are necessary.

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Priority Policies for FY 2006

In order to resolve the issues discussed above and achieve the goals set for 2010, the policy for the coming fiscal year will be implemented with emphasis on the following:

Eliminating the digital divide in geographical terms

- To put in place a broadband infrastructure that will eliminate zero-broadband towns and cities by 2008, eliminate zero-broadband regions by 2010, and offer more than 90% coverage for next-generation interactive broadband networks by 2010.
- To provide funds for the installation of ICT frameworks that meet local needs and offer overall support for usefulness based on regional resources and effort, so as to implement a regional Intranet infrastructure construction

Promoting the digitization of broadcasting

- To promote the speeding up of the penetration of terrestrial digital broadcasting following reception of the second interim report from the Information and Communications Council
- To engage in wide-ranging publicity towards the population and viewers, and promote the smooth penetration of receivers and analog-analog exchanges

Supporting infrastructure installation through system amendments

- Amendment of Provisional Measures Law for Telecommunications Infrastructure Improvement: To make amendments such as extending the time-limit for repealing the Provisional Measures Law for Telecommunications Infrastructure Improvement, in order to promote putting in place high-level high-speed installations, installations that will improve reliability, and high-level cable television broadcasting installations.
- Tax system for the promotion of IT investment: To request the necessary amendments such as the prolongation of the IT Investment Promotion Tax Incentive so as to promote ICT investment and further promote R&D.

Strengthening security countermeasures

In addition to strengthening countermeasures against cyber attacks and maintaining security by building a ubiquitous environment over IPv6, promoting countermeasures against unauthorized usage of telecommunications services.

Promoting R&D

Based on the UNS Strategy Program report from the Information and Communications Council on July 29, 2005, promoting R&D and international standardization in looking to put in place new-generation network infrastructures (next-generation IP networks, wireless broadband etc.), advanced usage (technology for effective use of RFID tags, sensor network technology, universal communications technology), and put in place a secure and safe usage environment (shaping security infrastructure technology).

MIC announces results of Japan-India Ministerial Meeting and Japan-India ICT Forum

ASO Taro, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications, visited India on August 24, 2005, along with about 100 representatives from industry including top executives of Japan's major telecommunications carriers, manufacturers and research institutes in the ICT field.

During his visit, as outlined below, Minister ASO held a meeting with Mr. Dayanidhi MARAN, Indian Minister for Communications and Information Technology, and the subsequently participated in the first Japan-India ICT Forum which was attended by industry, government and academia. Through these opportunities both Japanese and Indian sides exchanged views on topics such as promoting bilateral exchanges in the ICT business and strengthening their approach through cooperation between industry, government and academia. These meetings were implemented based on the agreements in the Japan-India Joint Statement of April 2005 signed by Japanese Prime Minister KOIZUMI Junichiro and Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan SINGH.

In addition, Minister ASO paid a courtesy visit to Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan SINGH, and reported to him on the result of Japan-India ICT Forum as well as outlining his expectations of future ICT cooperation between Japan and India. Prime Minister SINGH expressed his special thanks for the visit which took place immediately before the snap election in Japan, and was very complimentary on the results of these meetings (i.e. joint statement, memorandum on cooperation in research and development, and establishment of working groups).

Japan-India Ministerial Meeting

The two ministers exchanged opinions on the state of ICT policies in their respective countries, and signed an ICT joint statement calling for the establishment of working groups in specific fields under the Japan-India ICT Forum. Memoranda were also signed for cooperation in research between Japan's NICT (National Institute of Information and Communications Technology) and India's CDAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing), CDOT (Centre for Development of Telematics), and the Guwahati school of IIT (India Institute of Technology).

Minister ASO stated that building the ubiquitous network society that Japan is promoting is the equivalent of the industrial revolution of the past, and that by cooperating in bringing out the best in their own areas of strength, Japan and India could together become the driving force of the global ICT industry.

The First Japan-India ICT Forum

The forum was attended by approximately 250 top-level representatives from Japan and India's major telecommunications carriers, equipment manufacturers and software developers in the ICT field, as well as research institutes, and opinions were exchanged about various companies' approaches and the outlook for the future.

In his opening address, Minister ASO introduced the "u-Japan Policy" as well as spoke on the importance of ICT in the development of economy and society. He emphasized that the forum should be used as an opportunity for Japan and India to fulfill a leading role in the global ICT field.

As a result of the meeting, it was agreed that the following working groups should be set up, and that both sides would work on encouraging cooperation and promotion of the IT business through the collaboration of industry, government and academia. 1) Broadband, 2) Mobile communications, 3) e-government, 4) R&D, 5) Information security and 6) ubiquitous networks

IPv6 Transition Field Trial — towards a ubiquitous network society

In order to realize a ubiquitous network society where everything and everyone will be interconnected by enabling a smooth transition of the entire Internet infrastructures from IPv4 to IPv6, MIC will carry out model verification experiments including verification of effectiveness of IPv6 in various application environments and reliability of the IPv4 - IPv6 transition models.

Background

IPv6, which is the next-generation specification, is a set of key technologies for realizing a ubiquitous network society where everything and everyone will be interconnected.

When comparing IPv6 with the current IPv4, the number of addresses will dramatically increase (IPv6 is 128bits and IPv4 is 32bits), and strengthened security (e.g. the encrypted telecommunication called IP Sec as standard equipments), and the simplification of various settings (e.g. automatic address settings by connecting devices with networks) will be realized. In more concrete terms, through the use of IPv6, advanced and diversified services will become available in the fields of home security, education, nursing care, transport, etc.

As realization of a smooth transition of the current Internet infrastructures from IPv4 to IPv6 is an imminent issue, "e-Japan Strategy," set "the transition to IPv6 compliant Internet platforms" as a concrete policy target.

MIC Efforts

Since FY2003, MIC has been implementing three-year-periods verification experiments by linking a model network for enabling the environment which allows users such as local public entities, corporate users and residential users to use IPv6 easily.

In addition, in order to encourage the transition to IPv6, MIC has been

widely releasing the results of verification experiments domestically and internationally. For further information on verification results by FY2004, please refer to the following URL:
http://www.v6trans.jp/jp/ (Japanese)
http://www.v6trans.jp/en/ (English)

Outline of Field Trials in FY2005

With respect to field trials to be carried out in FY2005, MIC will accelerate penetration of IPv6 through experimenting with the models for building various IPv6 ubiquitous network systems in local communities in addition to the implementation of technical verifications on network operations related to IPv6. Field trials be carried out in FY2005 include verification experiments on the following applications:

- Consultation services for residents (Taito, Tokyo)
  Making the best of FY2004 verification experiments, the field trial will improve efficiency of administrative services for residents through construction of consultation services for residents, which i) reduce further burdens on city workers, ii) reduce costs for operations and iii) are conducive to practical systems.

- Taito City Assembly streaming live video relay services (Taito, Tokyo)
  Through the use of multicast distribution functions unique to IPv6, the field trial will i) realize a high-definition City Assembly video relay distribution system at Taito City Hall and ii) implement verifications on preferential control and quality stabilization technologies upon implementation of realtime applications.

- Health care at home support services (Asahikawa, Hokkaido)
  The field trial will realize health-care-at-home support services, which will be enabled to remotely control terminals for health care, by means of IPv6-ready mobile terminals, through the use of the “push functions” unique to IPv6.

- Push-type information provision services for residents (Osaka)
  The field trial will construct information provision services through making the best of the information push function of IPv6.

- IPv6 multi-services in Security-Town (Kawasaki, Kanagawa)
  The field trial will implement “security town” services, which enable secure video information distribution for security, through i) development of distribution functions for each address to which information is sent and ii) the use of various IPv6 automatic setting functions.

- Music Town services (Okinawa)
  The field trial will realize video multicasting via multiple ISPs through the use of IPv6.

- IPv6 multi-service in school security solutions (Tokyo)
  The field trial will implement security services for schools through the adequate private information protection by using the functions that control the multiple connections of IPv6 at the same time.

- Office building automation services (Tokyo)
  The field trial will monitor elevator control and its energy saving and operation cost reductions through implementation of total building management by utilizing abundant IPv6 addresses in some cultural facilities.

  Other services through the use of IPv6 will be implemented, including the following:

  i) information gathering service for disaster prevention,
  ii) local digital museum,
  iii) hospital tele-diagnosis collaboration service,
  iv) video distribution service between education facilitiesuniversities and junior high schools,
  v) nature regeneration project monitoring service,
  vi) LP gas tele-metering, and
  vii) environment monitoring.

These implementations are put together to formulate a guideline describing means for the concrete transition to IPv6 and effective IPv6 utilization, and will be released publicly.

MIC will pursue the development of IP infrastructure for realizing the ubiquitous network society where everything and everyone will become interconnected.