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TOPICS

MIC Minister SUGA Yoshihide Visits Vietnam, Indonesia and India

Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications, Rep. SUGA Yoshihide, visited Vietnam, Indonesia and India during the period from January 7 through 15, 2007. The purpose of his visits was to exchange opinions with governments of those countries, which are expected to develop and grow greatly in the Asian region, from the viewpoint of strengthening Japan's international activities in the ICT field.

In addition, Minister SUGA requested ministers of those countries to support Mr. YAMADA Toshiaki, Deputy Executive Director of the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT), who will run for the post of Executive Director of APT Secretariat in the coming election (the General Assembly), to be held during the latter half of 2007.

As in the past, MIC will henceforth strengthen collaborative ties between Asian countries/economies in the ICT field.

Schedule

January 7 to 15, 2007

Outline

(1) Visit to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Minister SUGA held meetings with Prime Minister, H.E. Nguyen Tan DUNG; Minister of Posts and Telematics, H.E. Dr. Do Trung TA; and Minister of Culture and Information, H.E. Mr. Le Doan HOP. At those meetings, the two parties

reached an agreement that Japan and Vietnam should strengthen collaboration between the two countries in the ICT field, including cooperation on the next-generation IP-based networks.

(2) Visit to the Republic of Indonesia

Minister SUGA held meetings with President, H.E. Dr. H. Susilo Bambang YUDHOYONO and Minister for Communication and Information Technology, H.E. Dr. Sofyan A. DJALIL. At those meetings, the two parties reached an agreement that Japan and Indonesia should strengthen collaboration between the two countries in the ICT field, including cooperation on facilitation of introduction of the third-generation (3G) mobile communications systems.

Minister SUGA and Minister Sofyan signed a joint statement that the two countries should collaborate anew on such fields as broadcasting.

CONTENTS



TOPICS

- MIC Minister SUGA Yoshihide Visits Vietnam, Indonesia and India 1

- International Standardization of "Guidelines for Telecommunications Accessibility" 2



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(3) Visit to India

Minister SUGA held meetings with Union Minister for Communications and Information Technology, H.E. Mr. Dayanidhi MARAN; and

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, H.E. Mr. Priya Ranjan DASMUNSI. At those meetings, the two parties reached an agreement that Japan and India should

strengthen collaboration between the two countries in the ICT field, including further promotion of cooperation through the Japan-India ICT Forum.

TOPICS

International Standardization of "Guidelines for Telecommunications Accessibility"

The "Guidelines for Telecommunications Accessibility" were adopted as a Recommendation of the Telecommunication Standardization Sector of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-T) as of January 13, 2007. The original proposal had been submitted by Japan in November 2004.

Background

MIC has been promoting international standardization of telecommunications accessibility (NB-1) guidelines for older persons and persons with disabilities at ITU-T, in conjunction with the Info-Communication Access Council (chaired by emeritus professor SAITO Tadao of the University of Tokyo). The ITU-T recommendation for telecommunications accessibility guidelines was adopted on January 13, 2007, and the recommendation was made public on January 16, 2007.

Japan submitted its original proposal to this recommendation for telecommunications accessibility guidelines in November 2004. Agreement was reached at the ITU-T SG16 (NB-2) meeting in November 2006 to

approve the recommendation at ITU-T.

Outline of Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to provide topics for consideration when planning, developing, designing and distributing all forms of telecommunications equipment and services, so that older persons and persons with disabilities may easily make use of telecommunications equipment and services such as fixed or mobile telephones or faxes, regardless of their disabilities or circumstances.

Future Approach

MIC will continue to work together with the Info-Communication Access Council which originally drew up these guidelines to

promote actively the advancement of accessibility to telecommunications services by older persons and persons with disabilities through activities to inform and increase awareness across the country.

(NB-1)

Telecommunications accessibility refers to the ability and ease of use for everyone, including the elderly and disabled, to use telecommunications equipment and services easily and unaided.

(NB-2)

ITU-T SG16 refers to ITU-T's Study Group 16 which is in charge of standardization of multimedia terminals, systems and applications.

Outline of Guidelines for Telecommunications Accessibility

Recommendation Title

Telecommunications accessibility guidelines for older persons and persons with disabilities

Goal

Since there are more and more opportunities for older persons and persons with disabilities to use ICT due to the rapid development of the field, these guidelines provide topics for consideration when planning, developing, designing and distributing all forms of telecommunications equipment and services, so that older persons and persons with disabilities may easily make use of telecommunications equipment and services, regardless of their disabilities or circumstances.

Points of Guidelines

o General principles

- To make telecommunications equipment and services usable for older persons and persons with disabilities at the planning, developing, designing and distributing stages, within the range of possibilities.

o Requirements for planning, development and design

- To consider in the process of developing telecommunications equipment and services conditions of use and requirements by older persons and persons with disabilities as part of targeted user

o Common requirements for operation and usage of telecommunications equipment and services

- The basic activities required to operate the equipment or use the service should be as simple as possible
- To consider how to ensure that users do not make operation mistakes, and users can cancel erroneous operations and revert to the previous setting or status

o Requirements for terminal equipment

- That the operating layout, switches, displays, alert tones, and voice guidance system should be easy to understand and easy to operate

o Requirements for telecommunications services

- To ensure real-time transmission and compatibility, and provide an approach for media conversion such as voice to text

o Requirements for user support

- To provide information in as varied a format as possible to mesh with user needs in user manuals, customer support centers and the like
- To disclose to the public information on telecommunications accessibility for as many products as possible