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Research Study Group List of meetings

**“Study Group for the Development of Digitization and Broadcasting Policy”  
(20th Meeting) Summary of Minutes**

1. Date and Time:  
Friday, February 24, 2006 10:00-11:50
2. Location:  
Meeting Room 1101, MIC (11th floor, Central Joint Government Building No. 2)
3. Attendees:
  - (1) Study Group Members (Honorifics omitted; in the order of the Japanese syllabary)  
Susumu Ito, Norio Kumabe, Hiroshi Shiono, Toshiyuki Shinohara, Kazuhiro Takei, Ikufumi Niimi, Atsuko Nomura, Mitsutoshi Hatori, Masayuki Funada, Jun Murai, Haruko Yamashita (A total of 11 members)
  - (2) MIC  
Shimizu, Director-General for Policy Planning; Kono, Deputy Director-General; Fukuoka, Director, General Affairs Division, Information and Communications Policy Bureau; Okubo, Director, Broadcasting Technology Division; Imabayashi, Director, Satellite and International Broadcasting Division; Minami, Director, Broadcasting Policy Division; Nagashio, Senior Planning Officer, Broadcasting Policy Division; Yamamoto, Senior Advisor, Satellite and International Broadcasting Division
4. Proceedings:
  - (1) Opening

- (2) Agenda
  - 1) The Principle of Excluding Multiple Ownership of the Media
  - 2) Other
- (3) Closing

5. Proceedings Outline:

- (1) The Principle of Excluding Multiple Ownership of the Media  
Opinions were exchanged on the principle of excluding multiple ownership of the media. Key opinions were as follows:

- If broadcasters converge, the broadcasters may become less constrained by competition for viewer acquisition.
- The principle of excluding multiple ownership of the media is a concept that attempts to prevent one entity from dominating the market to broadcast opinions favored by that entity and focuses on securing pluralism rather than securing diversity.
- The implication of the expression, “competition for press quality that is less constrained by competition for viewer acquisition” seems to be different from that of “securing diversity by securing pluralism.”
- One-third seems to be quite large as a ratio that acts as a benchmark for control, since an owner of a 20% share of a listed company is regarded as a majority shareholder.
- The business operators related to satellite broadcasting seem to consider a close company.
- It seems that the issues are the relationship between development of digitization and local characteristics/media, the relationship between program quality and the principle of competition, the relationship between local characteristics and digital TV/digital radio, and the relationship between the definition of players and competition/restrictions.

- Another issue seems to be that a national newspaper controls TV stations and AM radio stations simultaneously, even if its share is less than 50% at the national level. It may also be required to clarify the criteria.
- It seems difficult to figure out how to adopt an effective benchmark for control.
- If platform operators can be broadcasters at the same time, they would contribute to improving competitiveness and development of the overall CS broadcasting
- Allowing a satellite broadcaster to own a platform operator as well in the satellite broadcasting business, where facility-supplying broadcasters and program-supplying broadcasters are separated, may lead to too much power for the broadcaster.
- We may need to pay attention to the issue of how the position of program suppliers would change.
- In the United States, there are two major satellite broadcasters, DirecTV and EchoStar. Each of them seems to be involved in launching the satellites, although a separate company conducts operation of the satellites.
- The viewer benefit of securing diversity and securing pluralism must be the ultimate aim of the policy.
- Some measures may be needed for small program suppliers.
- Our discussion may need to be based on the assumptions that multiple platforms can exist and that they are not monopolized completely.
- One of the trends seems to be that platforms have actually been decreasing, although they can be created freely.
- The disciplines were initially uniform but they have changed, as a kind of deregulation, to restrictions in accordance with the restrictions on media. Some may question whether there are big differences between media.
- Regarding terrestrial broadcasting and BS broadcasting, there

may be argument as to whether there is any difference between the case of dual operation and the case where both are subsidiaries of a pure holding company.

(2) Other

The secretariat explained the future direction.