

Welcome Address

By Mr. Hideaki Ishihara, Director General for Technology Policy Coordination, MPHPT,

JAPAN at the Opening Session of

the "21st International Communications Satellite Systems Conference" on

April 16, 2003 at Pacifico Yokohama Japan

Dr. Butash, TCCS Vice-Chair, AIAA, Dr. Iida, president of the Communications Research Laboratory, Distinguished experts and researchers, ladies and gentlemen.

Good morning, I am Hideaki Ishihara, Director-General for Technology Policy Coordination, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications of Japan.

Today, at the Opening Session of the "21st International Communications Satellite Systems Conference," it is my great honor for the opportunity on behalf of the government of the host country to extend a cordial welcome to you, experts and researchers involved in R&D on satellite communications technologies from around the world. Welcome to Japan.

Along with the space development efforts since the late 20th century, satellite communications technologies have been evolving at an astonishing pace. These days, people enjoy the benefits of these technologies, in a wide-variety of applications such as global TV news coverage, multimedia information services aboard aircraft, ships and motor vehicles.

In recent years, miniaturized and advanced satellite communications equipment have expanded applicable fields, for instance, in Train Traffic Management Systems and Credit
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Card Authentication Systems installed in mountain lodges. I think such state-of-the-art technologies will be widely used even by small- and medium-sized enterprises and individual consumers.

Under these circumstances, I would like to say it is highly meaningful that the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) convenes the Conference under the theme "The Impact of Communications Satellites on Information Infrastructure."

When looking into Japan's ICT policy, R&D on satellite communications technologies has become one of the significant keywords. This March, the government of Japan developed the "Asia Broadband Program," setting a goal that "by 2010, all people in the Asia are enabled access to broadband platforms."

The Asia-Pacific region features steep mountains and scattered islands over a vast continental and oceanic area. When striving to attain ICT goals in this region, in addition to terrestrial communications infrastructures such as fiber-optic networks, it is indispensable to utilize satellite communications technologies, these being nearly free of influence from terrains. Thus, we have been carrying out R&D on the "ultra high-data rate Internet satellite communications system," which will realize a broadband communications environment comparable to fiber-optic networks. This satellite will be launched in 2005 for the purposes of technology demonstration and application experiments.

In addition, we have started R&D on the "Quasi-Zenith Satellite System" that will realize high-quality communications, broadcasting and satellite navigation services through its high elevation angle satellite and avoiding shadowing effect. At this Conference, I hear that
Space Japan Review, No. 28, April / May, 2003

experts and researchers in charge of satellite communications technologies are getting together from around the world, not only from Japan, North America and Europe, but also from developing countries to discuss these and other developments.

At events such as this, we must not forget to applaud the day-to-day contribution of experts and researchers around the world to the development of satellite communications technologies. The Japanese government will plan to give opportunities for foreign experts and researchers to participate in the application experiment using the ultra high-data rate Internet communication satellite and the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System. Through these concerted and ongoing efforts with foreign experts, Japan will be able to actively contribute to the development of world's satellite communications technologies.

It is very important to us that you not only expand your interest in and knowledge of the R&D status of Japanese communication satellites but that you also have a pleasant stay in Japan.

In concluding my address, I would like to extend my thanks to those who prepared this Conference, especially [President Kresa] of AIAA and President Iida of the Communications Research Laboratory, the Organizing Committee of the Conference.

I hope that through this Conference, participants engage in active and in-depth of information and opinions exchanges, thereby allowing this Conference to catalyze the further development of satellite communications technologies.

Thank you for your kind attention.