



Japan, EU open forum on information-communication technology

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Japan and the European Union on Tuesday kicked off a two-day forum in Tokyo in search of ways to launch scientific and technological cooperation in the research of information and communication technology in both the public and private sectors.

The EU-Japan Cooperation Forum on ICT Research, jointly organized by the European Commission and Japanese ministries including the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, is intended to identify cooperation projects in areas of mutual and strategic interest.

Since 1987, Japan and the European Union have exchanged opinions at the governmental level on policies through the EU-Japan High-Level Dialogue on ICT on a total of 17 occasions, but the current forum is the first comprehensive meeting to be opened widely to ICT experts.

More than 100 representatives from European and Japanese organizations, including multinational corporations, small and mid-sized enterprises, academic institutions and public and private research institutes, are taking part in the forum to share hot research topics in the field and exchange opinions.

Fabio Colasanti, the European Commission's director general for information society and media who was here to attend the forum, stressed in a news conference the need to strengthen Japan-EU ties on ICT in the research and study field.

"While the EU and Japan have intensive economic ties, and we acknowledge the importance of strong demand for research in this field...we have a relatively low level of cooperation on research and study. This is a surprising gap."

The topics addressed through thematic sessions at the forum include ubiquitous network technology, next-generation information retrieval and analysis technologies, nanoelectronics, photonic network technologies and e-transport.

The forum will provide a good starting point for research institutions, firms and researchers in general to explore the possibilities for joint work under those themes and for application of programs and support instruments, Colasanti said.

Other Japanese ministries co-organizing the forum were the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

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