

**Summary of the Science and Technology Ministers’
Roundtable in Kyoto
(Draft)**

15 November, 2004

On 15 November, 2004, ministers in charge of science and technology policy from 13 nations (see attachment) met at the Kyoto International Conference Hall. The meeting was held concurrently with the Science and Technology in Society Forum (STS Forum), and the ministers participating in the STS Forum also took part in this meeting.

The main theme of the meeting was “deepening public understanding of science and technology and fostering participation of the public in the policy-making process.” The meeting was chaired by Yasufumi Tanahashi, Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy of Japan. Participating ministers exchanged opinions and information as follows.

- a) The participating ministers shared the concern that the number of people interested in science and technology related topics has been declining. In particular, they acknowledged that the recent tendency of young students to be less interested in math and science is a serious concern.
- b) Certain measures already being implemented to increase the public’s interest in and understanding of science and technology attracted the attention of the participating ministers as unique and effective. For example, programs to support schools conducting enriched math and science teaching in close cooperation with universities and research institutions, cooperation with mass media to actively disseminate science and technology information to the public, efforts to develop and utilize the functions of science museums and science camps are being pursued to improve math and science education.
- c) As issues which require better public understanding, the importance of the protection of IPRs, commercial secrets and their sound enforcement, and the importance of providing sufficient incentives for scientific achievements was also pointed out.
- d) The participating ministers confirmed the importance of increasing the

transparency of information related to science and technology policy as well as research activities, and of increasing opportunities for the public to participate in the related policy-making process. The interactions between policy makers and the public can be facilitated by utilizing effective measures such as active dialog between stakeholders, well designed websites and symposiums. Government accountability to the public on science and technology policy could be enhanced through these efforts. With regard to providing information to the public, there was an advice that contents and means for promoting public relations have to be carefully designed depending on the nature of the matter and type of the audience so that the message can effectively reach to the targeted audience.

- e) The participating ministers saw the value of dialog between developing and developed countries in order to better assess its potential impact on the society from different perspectives, and the importance of technology transfer. At the same time, however, they expressed concerns about the increasing gap in the development of science and technology between the developed and developing world and agreed on the need to seriously address this issue.
- f) Like the STS Forum, opportunities for leading figures from not only academia but also industry, politics, and public institutions to come together to discuss the greater contribution that science and technology could make to the economic and social wellbeing of society and find possible solutions to the “shadows” of science and technology could produce valuable suggestions for formulating policies on science and technology, so the participating ministers agreed that active support should be given to such forums

Finally, the participating ministers agreed to hold a similar meeting for another frank exchange of opinions and information on issues relating to science and technology policy at the time of the next STS Forum in September 2005.

(attachment)

Science and Technology Ministers' Roundtable in Kyoto Participant List

Nationality	Name	Title in Organization
People's Republic of China	H.E. Mr. Jinpei Cheng	Vice Minister of Science and Technology
Arab Republic of Egypt	H.E. Dr. Amr Ezzat Salama	Minister of State for Scientific Research
French Republic	H.E. Mr. François D'Aubert	Minister Delegate for Research and New Technologies
Republie of Hungary	H.E. Dr. Miklós Boda	President of National Office of Research and Technology
Republic of Italy	H.E. Mrs. Letizia Moratti	Minister of Education, University and Research
Japan	H.E. Mr. Yasufumi Tanahashi	Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy
Malaysia	H.E. Y.B. Kong Cho Ha	Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation
Republic of Poland	H.E. Mr. Michał Kleiber	Minister of Science Chairman of the State Committee for Scientific Research
Russian Federation	H.E. Dr. Andrey A. Fursenko	Minister of Education and Science
Republic of Singapore	H.E. Mr. Philip Yeo	Chairman of Agency for Science, Technology and Research
Slovak Republic	H.E. Dr. Martin Fronc	Minister of Education
The Republic of Sudan	H.E. Prof. El-Zubier Bashir Taha	Minister of Science and Technology
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Lord David Sainsbury of Turville	Minister for Science and Innovation