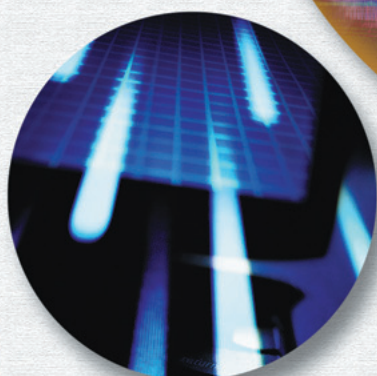


# P r e f a c e







The 21st century will be an age of wisdom in which information and knowledge create high added value. Creation of abundant intellectual property will be indispensable for revitalizing the society and economy. It is a great honor for me to assume the post of Commissioner of the JPO and formulate intellectual property policy in such a new age. I will dedicate all my strength to tackling these issues.

Intellectual property systems, especially industrial property systems, have played an important role in Japanese economic development. Since the proclamation of the Patent Monopoly Act in 1885, Japanese industrial property systems have supported the foundation of Japanese industry and made a significant contribution to its high-speed growth, once called the "Asian Miracle", by promoting smooth introduction of excellent technology from foreign countries and encouraging technical development in Japan.

Today, amidst a changing Japanese economy, industrial property systems increasing in importance. In response to changes overseas, such as development of other Asian nations, economic globalization, and dramatic innovation in information technology, the Japanese economic model is changing from a "catch-up" type to a "trail blazing" type. Considering intellectual property as a source of national wealth, Japan aims to establish a dynamic economy and society. In achieving this goal, intellectual property systems that support creation, protection and application of intellectual property will play a significant role.

In 2002, the Government of Japan clearly set a national goal of making Japan a nation built on intellectual property and declared that it would carry out IP policy as a national strategy. In the Intellectual Property Policy Outline adopted in July 2002 by the Strategic Council on Intellectual Property, established under Prime Minister Koizumi, the GOJ set the goal of reviewing existing systems in Japan in order to establish an economy and society which respects creativity, decided to enact the Intellectual Property Basic Law and establish the Intellectual Property Policy Headquarters, and clearly presented the grand design of its IP policy.

Industrial property systems including the patent system are the core of Japanese IP policy. In order to develop excellent technology into new competitive businesses, the JPO will make efforts to further improve these systems. In addition to promptly and strongly protecting technology, the JPO will take measures to improve systems and operation thereof to promote creation of advanced technology and establish an environment in which patents will be effectively used. The JPO will thereby serve as an engine driving the cycle of creation, protection and application of inventions.

In this Annual Report, the JPO makes its IP policy known to the world. Nothing would make me happier than this provision of information contributing to a worldwide discussion on IP policy.

太田 信一郎

**Shinichiro Ota**  
Commissioner