

Special Online Talk with Minister Audrey Tang

【Date and Place】

January 22, 2021 (Friday) 17:00 to 18:00 (JST)

Prefectural Government Shared Meeting Room 1 – Taiwan, Minister Audrey Tang’s Office

【Participants】

Digital Minister of Taiwan

Audrey Tang

Governor of Yamaguchi Prefecture

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Yamaguchi Prefectural Assembly Member

SHIMATA Noriaki

(Chairman of Japan-Taiwan Friendship Promotion Union)

President of Retail Partners Co., Ltd

TANAKA Yasuo

CEO of Yamaguchi Financial Group Inc.,

YOSHIMURA Takeshi

【Record of Dialogue】

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

We would now like to begin. My name is MURAOKA Tsugumasa, the governor of Yamaguchi Prefecture. I would like to thank you, Minister Tang, for joining us despite of your busy schedule.

We have the pleasure of beginning the very special meeting.

First, I would like to ask for a word of greeting from Mr. TANAKA Yasuo, President of the Retail Partners Co., Ltd. who granted us this opportunity.

TANAKA Yasuo

Minister Tang, my name is TANAKA Yasuo, President of Retail Partners Co., Ltd. We have 260 super markets under our operation in the Chugoku and Kyushu area.

Minister Tang, thank you for joining us for this virtual meeting. The panelists who have joined us on this occasion are very excited to speak with you. We are happy to be able start the new year by spreading our positive topic with you from a local municipal to the whole country.

Our time today is very limited, and therefore, would not want to put even a single minute to waste. Now, we would like to hear from a very special friend of Japan, Minister Tang, with hopes that this will serve as a catalyst to start building a digital society for regional revitalization, and I hope to get started.

Finally, I would like to offer my upmost gratitude for the cooperation of the departments and bureaus throughout Taiwan to make this meeting possible. In addition, I would also like to thank the staff on our side that made this virtual meeting possible, and with these words of gratitude, I would like to conclude my opening remarks.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Thank you very much. Now I would like to introduce the participants for today, Yamaguchi prefectural assembly member, SHIMATA Noriaki.

SHIMATA Noriaki

It is a pleasure to be able to meet you. My name is SHIMATA Noriaki, I am a prefectural assembly member from Yamaguchi Prefecture. I am also the chairman of the Japan-Taiwan Friendship Promotion Union in the Yamaguchi Prefectural Assembly. In Yamaguchi Prefecture, there has been a surge in COVID-19 infections. However, last year, we have received mask donations as well as a donation of medical supplies from Taiwan. I would like to express our deepest gratitude on behalf of the prefectural assembly members. With the pandemic, international travel is difficult, but we the Japan-Taiwan Friendship Promotion Union hope to be able to move ahead with the exchanges with the people of Taiwan. Thank you for having joined us today.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

And from Yamaguchi Financial Group Inc., we have the CEO, Mr. YOSHIMURA Takeshi.

YOSHIMURA Takeshi

Good afternoon Minister Tang. I would like to thank you for having joined us today. My name is YOSHIMURA Takeshi, CEO of Yamaguchi Financial Group. I am operating financial business in Yamaguchi Prefecture. The banking business is trying to move ahead with FinTech and drive digital transformation. I am looking forward to this opportunity today to receive some insights from you. Thank you very much for having joined us today.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

The two who have just given their greetings, President TANAKA of Retail Partners Co., Ltd. and myself, MURAOKA, totaling 4 people, will be participating in today's discussion. As Mr. Yoshimura has mentioned, it was back in April and also May of last year that we received a donation of masks as well as medical supplies from Taiwan during the extremely difficult times that we were placed in. We would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Indeed, Minister Tang, you have driven ahead with digital technology to track and also to deliver masks, and Taiwan has been the most successful in the world in controlling the spread of COVID-19. I believe this is also linked to Taiwan's support to other countries. Today, we hope to discuss digital technology in resolving local socioeconomic issues, and learn from your experience in Taiwan so that we will be able to achieve a locally driven digital social innovation.

Today's theme is locally driven digital social innovation. First of all, we would like to hear from Minister Tang.

Minister Tang

I'm really happy to be here virtually to share some thoughts around local digital social innovation. In Taiwan, we have a saying 「眾人之事，眾人助之」 it's everyone's business with everyone's help and that summarizes our approach to social innovation. Now, whenever we see a tension that arises out of, for example, pushing for more economic development on one side and environmental sustainability on the other or for example between technological innovations on one side and social equity on the other, there

are many trade-off such as this one. But as Dr. Tsai Ing-wen, our president reminded us when she became the president for the first term in 2016, "Before we think of democracy as showdown between two opposing values, but now we need to think democracy as a continuous conversation between many different values." Indeed, this is my office, the Social Innovation Lab that embodies this idea of dialogue, conversation between various different values.

This soccer game field is drawn by people with Down syndrome. This instantiates the arts, the look that the world to them in a topological, a very creative way, and I personally work here and meet with social innovators all across the world, including in Taiwan, every Wednesday from early morning to the evening. Anyone can bring, for example, self-driving vehicles that they want to experiment in this sandbox, so that we can co-create the best use of emerging technologies that nevertheless fulfills the local social needs by building effective partnerships. Every year, in the Social Innovation Lab, we run the presidential hackathon that recognizes the best ideas, the soft sustainability-related issues across all the sectors. For example, detecting the water leakage using AI to increase water use efficiency by making sure that those repair people get advanced notice when a pipe just started leaking and whenever they want the presidential hackathon, they get a trophy when projected. It's a micro projector that shows Dr. Tsai Ing-wen's face saying to the team whatever they did in the past 3 months as a data collaborative, we agreed to deploy it to the entire country.

Now, what we are seeing here is a formation of data collaborative, where everyone, including governments and the citizenry and the private sector, all contribute to sense making of the common challenges around any particular locality. As a concrete example, what we are seeing here is thousands of people in Taiwan measuring their local air quality and projecting it on the gov air quality map and each of them represents may be a primary school, may be a balcony or a salon that measures and shares this air quality as part of their basic education curriculum, not literacy but competence. Literacy is when you're viewing or reading something and competence is when you're creating or producing something, and by participating in climate science through citizen science, the young people like very young primary school people all participate in the climate sciences, and together, they can work with the Environmental Protection Agency by demanding essentially those sports gaps because they are industrial parks or something, and it turns out, government owns the land in those industrial parks, and so we work with the civil society to make sure there is education curriculum for a sustainable development and global citizenship.

So each of those ideas solved one particular issue for, for example, this one is about water resource management in the places that are for organic farming and so on, so that people can measure if there is any pollution coming in from upstream, but every time, it's not just assistive intelligence or AI, but also collective intelligence in the sense of citizen participation and so to uncover those potential themes, so for presidential hackathon, I tour around Taiwan. In si.taiwan.gov.tw, you can see the youth initiated as well as the government's ministry-initiated tours so that I go to, for example, I

think this is Hualien, the eastern part of Taiwan and facilitated a conversation sometime with indigenous cultural translators back to the Social Innovation Lab. So, the central government's 12 ministries can see with their own eyes what's actually working in a vicinity and whenever there is any question from the local people, instead of the Ministry of Interior copying the Ministry of Health and Welfare or the Ministry of Economy copying the Ministry of Science and Technology, they are all in the same room in a very inspired place with pretty good food and atmosphere and brainstorm, listen in the here and the now to the citizens that ensures responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making.

I understand in Japan there is this idea of strategic zones that a local rule can try emerging configurations and technologies that are not yet regulated at the national level. In Taiwan, we have sandbox.org.tw instead of just limiting our fintech sandbox or self-driving vehicles or 5G or medical industry or whatever, we have a general-purpose sandbox. Anything that's not money laundering or funding terrorism, these two are forbidden. Anything that's not these two are open for experimentation in any locality as long as they are willing to openly share whether it has worked or not with the society and let the society determine after half a year or one year whether this is a good idea. If it's a good idea, then of course we thank all the contributors and make it law, and on the other hand, if it's not a good idea, we still thank the investors for paying the tuition for everyone, so we all learn something not to do.

But what do I mean something that works for the society? Well, we use the AI power conversation tool called Polis that showed this is the real map when UberX first came to Taiwan. Here are my friends and families on social media, and they feel very differently. You see, we shared a crowdsourcing as well as the open data from the sectors and asked a simple question, what do you feel about people who don't have professional driver licenses driving strangers along their way to work and charging them for it. Maybe you feel happy and excited. Maybe I feel anxious and it's all okay. There is no right or wrong about feelings. But the interesting thing is because the AI power conversation is a public digital infrastructure, it actually made sure that people's feelings resonate with one another so we can find common values, not just the divisive polarized ideologies, and the best ideas are then the one that take care of most people's feelings.

You see here, for example, one of the contributions – I said, I think the passenger liability insurance should be mandatory, regardless of whether the UberX is classified as a taxi or not. You see everyone pretty much agree with this. There is very few oppositions. If you agree, you move closer towards me. If you disagree, you move farther away from me, but there is no reply button, so there is no way for personal attack or trolls to grow. So, any time we run this conversation at the end of the 3 or 4 weeks, we always see the same shape. The divisive statements, the polarized ideas are there, that's true, but we don't spend much energy on it. Rather, we see most people agreeing with most of their neighbors on most of the principles most of the time and so for the registration, for the insurance, for the fair and equitable fee not undercutting existing taxi companies and so on but also surge pricing and more innovations from Uber, these are all consensus

statements that we then took to settle into our new regulation for multipurpose taxi. So today, Uber is a local company with the Q Taxi fleet and many other taxi fleets like LINE Taxi and so on as well as cooperatives and so on are all taking advantage of the multipurpose taxi regulation cocreated by this new measure of progress by all the different sectors in the society.

So, in conclusion, I would say that my work as digital minister for any locality is not to dictate in a top-down fashion how to transform digitally. Rather, my work is in the middle to connect people with different positions on economy, environment and society to discover common values, and based on those common values, we can innovate, share the innovation, encouraging effective partnerships, enhance reliable data and so in conclusion, I will read my job description that translates these three SDG targets into plain language. It goes like this.

When we say the Internet of Things, let's make it an Internet of Beings. When we see virtual reality, let's make it a shared reality. When we see machine learning, let's make it collaborative learning. When we see user experience, let's make it about human experience, and whenever we hear that the singularity is near, let us always remember the plurality is here. This is my sharing for now and thank you for listening.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Thank you very much, Minister Tang, for sharing your valuable story. We would now like to move onto the discussions. In reference to the presentation that we just received; we would like to pose a number of questions. Minister Tang, would you please kindly share with us the current situation in Taiwan as well as your advice.

I would like to pose the first question. In Japan, we are facing a significant depopulation. Especially in the regional parts of Japan, we are seeing decline in the birth rate and also an aging society leading to the deterioration of the vitality of the regional communities. We would like to use civilian power and open innovation that utilizes civic technology and digital technology to overcome these challenges. These are essential to drive the innovation, and we believe it will lead to solving our issues. Minister Tang, given your experience, would you mind giving us your input as to how we can progress in this direction.

Minister Tang

Definitely. In Taiwan, when we say science and technology, we mean not only natural science like physics and industrial technology like semiconductors, but we also mean social science and social technology. A cooperative is a social technology because it's a new way for people to organize together what it used to be many centuries ago, but nowadays we can make it into platform cooperativism like the distributed ledgers such as Ethereum and so on. The quadratic voting, a new voting system we deployed in presidential hackathon, that's a social technology as well. Actually, democracy is a social technology. It's not just about uploading three bits every person every 4 years, which is called voting by the way, but also about continuous participation in making the society better.

In Taiwan, we have learned from the Japanese RESAS system to build our own TESAS system, and based on the TESAS system, anyone can identify the gaps in that locality and work toward making it better in the open. We have focused specifically on young people. We've discovered that when young people are willing to return to where they came from or their vicinity as part of university course as a capstone course or even as early as middle school and senior high school, then they tend to learn about the social science and technologies that make their community better, and so our new curriculum, new as of a year and a half ago, made sure that anyone, regardless of whether they are in primary, middle, senior high or university is aligned on the same SDGs, the same sustainable goals across different ages, across different locality and across different disciplines, and so civic technology for us specifically means listening to what community's current pain points are and through design thinking and computational thinking revealed new possibilities for the local people to thrive and also to be seen more clearly in the world.

Now, of course, the dwindling population is a problem, so a lot of work has been put on, for example, using self-driving vehicles like using drones to help the farming, to help the maintenance of local infrastructure. There is also a lot of self-repairing infrastructure work that goes into it. There is also a collaborative platform for people to plant together to plan for taking care of the local trees and gardening and so on, almost like a tree is speaking to you through augmented reality like in the movie Avatar or I guess Lord of the Rings and things like that. And so all this opens up the imagination for even someone who doesn't spend all their time on the locality. Their mind is still in that locality, and they will be much more willing to spend maybe one day or three days per week to contribute there and to make sure that if they have young children, these young children have a good integration with the local education community and also connect to the overall global community through like Teach For Taiwan and many other endeavors, and when the elderly get access of telehealth and the young people get an education from e-learning that makes the young people much more likely to stay for more time and work with the international committee as well to revitalize their locality.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Thank you very much. In resolving social issues, you have presented an example with of the mask problem that was solved by using civic technology as well as other successful cases. However, Yamaguchi does not have such a track record and we hope to change that. When I think about it, we may succeed and we may fail at the task, but either way there may be various dividing opinions among the citizens. What is the key for success when faced with these challenges?

Minister Tang

The key for success is to fail early and fail often and fail in the open and the reason why I say this is that even the mask rationing map you just mentioned was a total failure on the first day it launched. It was last February 6th when it was launched by the civic tech community. When we started rationing out masks in the pharmacies, the pharmacists also innovated and invented take-a-number system that people go to the

pharmacy at 7 to 8 am swapping their national health card to a simple number plate and a number card that they take, they can redeem the card and the mask on the evening. So instead of handing the mask to everyone queueing in line, basically it's a way to absorb the queue very quickly by the pharmacist and selling them to return in the evening while they process the health card during the lunch break. Now that is a time saver.

The mask rationing map, of course, is also a time saver because you wouldn't queue in places that has run out of mask, but those two together is like Mentos and Coca-Cola, it explodes because for any pharmacy handing out those number cards, the mask availability map will show it sells nothing in the morning and during lunch break, it sells everything and then it runs out of mask and that's not accurate, so a nearby pharmacy even said very clearly on the front door, "Don't trust the app!" and so to fail often and fail quickly and fail in the open means to apologize. So, we apologized to the pharmacist community and to the civic tech community saying we didn't anticipate this. We are sorry but you are not wrong. We are going to take all the sizes and resolve this by next Thursday and so by next Thursday, we started pushing two different time slots, one for collecting the numbers and one for collecting the masks, but even then the pharmacists didn't take the protest down because they said okay the 7 to 8 am is our collecting number time, but it runs out of numbers on 7:30 maybe, so for half an hour, people still call them angrily saying there is a mismatch and so we then changed at the very next Thursday, saying that you can push a button and disappear from the map and then we institutionalized that button so soon as they run out of mask, they are encouraged to push that button and disappear from the map.

All in all, it took three weeks, three different Thursday iterations for the two social innovations to work together, but if we punish one side in favor of the other side, then there is no solidarity, there is no trustworthiness anymore, and so to fail in the open also means to show competence and to take all the sides to cocreate novel solutions. So, don't be afraid of failure because there is a crack in everything and that's how the light gets in.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Thank you very much. That was very encouraging. We'd like to do our best. Now, I would like to call upon Mr. Shimata Noriaki, Yamaguchi prefectural assembly member.

SHIMATA Noriaki

Thank you very much for this opportunity. Like our governor said, your advice on the importance to fail early and fail a lot and also in the open, is great insight even looking back upon my life and career as well.

Now, there is a question that I have prepared regarding digitalization from regional communities. The regional community is weighed down by numerous challenges like the shrinking population and aging society, and is precisely why I believe there is a demand for regional communities like Yamaguchi to digitalize. It is to allow us to enhance the residents' lives and boost economic activity, boost cultural activities, and to ultimately bridge the gap between urban and regional communities.

I have learned by reading your publication that in Taiwan, you have begun the rollout of 5G not from the city center but from the regional communities contrary to what we think of as general practice beginning with the city centers. I was moved. That's a great challenge for those of us in Japan because everything begins in Tokyo and then the regional communities are left behind. That's what we have been constantly seeing, but with 5G digitalization, we hope to be able to turn things around.

Here is my question. I wish to hear the reasons that prompted you to shift away from the conventional practice of starting from the city center. What is the philosophy or reasons behind that? I would also like to hear about the current situation with the maintenance and utilization in regional communities.

Minister Tang

Certainly, our call to action for 5G is the more remote, the more advanced that is to say in places where 4G utilization is low. They are paradoxically the first ones to get 5G. Now, this is very counterintuitive, but this is also necessary because 5G technology, many deployments do not yet have a clear business model of convincing what people call a killer application to migrate from 4G to 5G. On the other hand, in the most rural places where the face-to-face communication to for example visit a pharmacy, visit a psychological counselor and so on for learning and for health, these are not nice to have. These are a must haves because if you are doing telehealth, a little bit of latency that is a little bit of waiting can actually create a lot of trouble. When you're doing psychological counseling, the micro-expressions that is to say to see very clearly the facial expressions of each other that is essential and so on and so in places that do not yet have fiberoptic connection, even when 4G utilization is quite low, rolling out 5G is literally a lifesaver for a lot of people there because it also enables for example, self-driving vehicles for drug dispensing like sending out needed pharmacy, things and goods like that and so because of this, we worked on the necessity of deployment, not just on the good to have of deployments and the state has plenty of money because our 5G auction was very competitive. We redistributed the auction of the spectrum money back into the remote places that needed the most, so that those startups can work on the issues that really need solving without worrying about over-competition in large system integrators in large municipalities, which the startups don't even have a chance, right, to replace in their existing service and so on, so they can innovate without restriction. They are essentially subsidized by those 5G auction money, and the local people will feel that they have experienced something truly new that's even more new like self-driving cars and so on than the metropolis like Taipei area, and it also works very well for the people coming into Taiwan who didn't live in Taiwan. Just last year alone, we have more than a quarter million people who didn't live in Taiwan to return to Taiwan or even get a Taiwan Gold Card to basically work on their original job. They just prefer to stay in a more healthy place, I guess, and many of them like hiking, many of them like surfing, many of them like nature and so on. By making sure they can do their work using 5G technology connecting to whichever cloud office they are connecting to, we make sure they understand that the most rural and remote places in Taiwan are actually the most habitable.

SHIMATA Noriaki

Thank you very much. Indeed, in Japan, while we are weighed down by a multitude of issues, what you have mentioned will serve as reference for us, and we do hope that those of us in Yamaguchi will really persevere.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

And now we have a question from Yamaguchi Financial Group's, Mr. Yoshimura.

YOSHIMURA Takeshi

Thank you very much for the opportunity. Indeed, our financial group and also the private sector are trying to enhance productivity and we are also trying to drive innovation, and we are doing what we can to achieve digital transformation for companies to promote digital transition. In order to assure that this materializes, and doesn't end as just a mere slogan; Can you kindly offer some pointers on how to efficiently proceed this? And also what is concerning for us is that, as we try to promote the digital transformation, it is very difficult to lure the talent to the region and it's also very difficult to develop such human resources that will engage in digital transformation, and therefore, in order to promote digital transformation, in order to lure or attract such talent and also to develop some talent within the prefecture, if you could kindly offer some pointers. These are two questions, but your thoughts would be very helpful.

Minister Tang

Certainly. In Taiwan when we say digital transformation, first we mean something very mundane. I call this assistive intelligence. So, when many people are saying AI is great or something, for me, AI is just assistant that saves some time. So, it's a very practical, realistic view of AI. It must be aligned to human values, like my eyeglass helps me see better instead of displaying some popup advertisements, right? So, it's aligned to me and it's accountable. In a sense, if it's broken, I can fix this myself or any glass shop nearby can fix it. So instead of paying for a huge license fee for a proprietary software, the all-in-one solution for smart cities, what I am more interested in smart citizens, that is to say anyone having the chance of coding up the mask rationing map which by the way started from those air pollution map, right? And the same map after reconfiguring some parameters are now displaying the local shops that sells the local pork, for example. This is a very simple open-source innovation principle that anyone can just even if they are middle school students just change some parameters and save their community some time. So, saving time, nothing to be ashamed of. This is actually the primary use of AI in digital transformation. Once time is saved, then we can improve quality and then we think about new use cases. If you do this the reverse way, saying hey let's deploy, I don't know, big data, blockchain or whatever new things without thinking about how to improve quality and save time, people will end up wasting some time and therefore lose the appetite of digital transformation. So quick and easy wins. Quick and open failures. These are the most important for digital transformation within a large organization such as the government.

Now, to lure digital talent, I found that the most reliable way is through excellent food. There is no coincidence that a mask rationing maps are created by people in Tainan, widely considered the capital of food in Taiwan, so none of the mask map makers however **[Unclear]** needed to travel to Taipei to speak with me or with the head of the cabinet in order to deploy their service to the entire island, to the entire country because we have set pretty good telecommunication and Slack channels and things like that for real-time collaboration. So, they get to stay in Tainan, enjoying much better food, frankly speaking, and create things that benefit the whole society, and so once people learn about how good the local food and also music and culture is, then they become an attractor for civic tech talents.

Last year, the g0v summit is in Chang Gung University in Taoyuan because through the mask rationing map, people understood they can enjoy the same agenda setting power. They don't have to be in Taipei to talk to central government ministers and then by making this agenda-setting power, essentially universally accessible, at the end of the day the place with the best broadband connection and the best food and maybe drinks and music wins.

YOSHIMURA Takeshi

Thank you very much. Yamaguchi has excellent food as well as culture, so we hope to lure talent to our prefecture using those points. As far as businesses are concerned, we'd like to start small and we would like to disseminate to the rest of the community. Thank you very much for your input.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Thank you very much. Now, I would like to call upon Mr. Tanaka from Retail Partners.

TANAKA Yasuo

Listening to Minister Tang's presentation, initially I was fairly concerned about singularity as in the 2045. There is a concern that AI and robots may actually exceed the human wisdom, so what exactly is the role that we humans have to play, and Minister Tang, you mentioned, singularity is merely a countdown. That had really given me a sense of comfort.

From my end, I would like to pose a question related to the local community. We are a profit-oriented organization as a company, but we are organically linked with NPOs to address some of the local issues. For instance, contribution to the local community. That is why we have this model of contributing marketing or contributing business. We operate our business but at the same time, we contribute to the local community. That is our vision.

One important point is environmental issues and the other issue is the poverty and inequality amongst especially in the younger generation resulting in the loss of educational opportunities. We wish that we could be of help in addressing these issues.

Also, there is a term called shopping refugees, so those who are elderly or those parents who are engaged and busy with child rearing, quite often they cannot go physically to the real stores, so as part of the pillar of our

management policy, we try to address these within our operation. My question is, on one end, we have the profit-oriented organization such as us and also, we have the NPOs on the other end. So perhaps through the use of technology, is there a way to form that linkage to make that linkage more efficient, make it more visible so we can be of help to those who are in need. This has been our wish for some time. In terms of the leadership, we need an organization to bring us together, and we do need the network. The question is, do you think the government should actually take the lead in forging such linkage or should it be us, the actual business who handle food to play a central role in creating visualization maps, or do you think the NPOs should take the lead. Minister Tang, given your experience if you can share with us your input, that would be highly appreciated.

Minister Tang

When I was really young, like when I was 6 years old, my mother cofounded with many of her friends 'the homemakers' union'. It started as a nonprofit purpose-driven organization for environmental sustainability and advocacy, but very quickly they became a with-profit community and it's called a Homemakers' Union Consumers Cooperative. It's still around actually after all these years, more than 30 years. I gave them an award actually just a couple of months ago for they have established a way for people to recycle the plastic containers because the consumer co-op shop in those shopping points through the neighborhood communities forming a co-shop cohort and so just one person goes to shopping, but they do the shopping for the entire neighborhood and distribute it to their neighbors and also brings all the plastic bottles and so on back to the redistribution center, and the center takes care of shredding it and making it into a new package material into a zero-waste configuration. And so, they are of course still doing the environmental protection as a purpose, but it's not non-profit. It's with profit, so I don't think there is this so clear-cut division between for-profit and for-purpose. Two sides.

I think anyone and everyone should work with profit and with purpose and so these two when joined in the middle, forms the social sector that combines the business that has a purpose, like CSR, social responsibility and so on as well as social sector organizations like charities that nevertheless have some way to interact with the market and so by the social sector forming from the previously disconnected for-profit and non-profit sectors, the social sector should always take the lead and the government should support but not control. Otherwise, it becomes state-owned enterprises. So social entrepreneurship is also part of my mandate and I've seen many, like the food banks, the co-shopping arrangements, the time bank, the collaborative caretaking of each other's, elders making sure that even the elderly, they can contribute to community organization through telepresence and things like that. There are many, many social innovations being done by those social sector organizations by partnering from the business sector with purpose to the social sector, the charities with profits, and these two together, I think, should take the lead in what we call the people-public private partnerships.

TANAKA Yasuo

Minister Tang, we would like to thank you for your valuable advice. We will work on creating space for children and also preventing abuse of children. These are initiatives that must be taken. We need to build an environment in which we will be able to nurture the young so that they will be able to play a role. Thank you very much.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

We still have a little bit of time and I would like to ask some additional questions. Mr. Yoshimura, the CEO of the financial group, talked about developing human resources. Of course, we need to attract human resources, but in the mid to long term, the question arises as to what kind of talent do we need to develop as we head into digitalization or digital transformation. In a single word, of course, we can't put everything together under the word "digital talent" because there are various levels of skills. In a local community, what kind of digital skills do you think are necessary and also in order to develop such human resources within the locality, what method is possible. We would like to hear your thoughts, Minister Tang.

Minister Tang

In my own experience, the most effective social innovators are the people who specialize in listening. Listening, I don't just mean to hear what people have to say, but to deeply listen so that one can empathize with actually what's happening in the other person's lives with the capacity to take all the sites. Whenever there is a tension in the locality, one needs to hold this space of empathy so that each and every potential change maker can feel safe and free to speak about their possible solutions and their feelings and so on.

Now of course with the AI systems such as Polis, this could be done online as well, that's true, and AI is infinitely patient. On the other hand, whenever there is a common value being discovered, you actually need to go to the place of the people closest to the pain, like for example, when the pharmacist and a mask map clash into one another, I actually walked into the pharmacies to listen, to hear what the pharmacists had to say, their frustrations, their upsetness and things like that and that requires a very soft attitude. I'm not there to dictate what to do but rather there to listen to what they have to offer. Even negative emotions, I'm here to listen until those turn into positive suggestions as a people who have this quality of quality listening I think is the most important. Now, how to make sure that such talent can grow? I think one of the most important things is to make sure they are not alone in this. Everyone has their different preferences in terms of their preferred food, their preferred music, their taste and so on but when sufficient amount of people who serve as facilitators or mediators band together, then for each party that needs to be listened to, we can know who should be the main facilitator to mediate that listening and other people can afford to tackle alone, but they would not be overly pressured into communicating across the disciplines or the localities or the generation that they are not familiar of, so having a cross-functional team of many different disciplines, many different origins of locality, many different generations that composition makes everyone feel safe when we listen at scale and that will also foster intergenerational solidarity, which is key in

regional revitalization because it's not about old people telling the young what to do, but also not about the young people telling the old what to do. It's about listening across generations.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Thank you very much. When resolving issues using digitalization, of course as you've mentioned, what's important is to be able to listen and to be able to emphasize. Having the opportunity to hear you speak and listen to the mask example has been a source of great inspiration and also reference. Thank you so much.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Any last comments? We will have one last word from Mr. Yoshimura.

YOSHIMURA Takashi

Thank you very much for the valuable comments made. As I have been listening to the discussion, it's really hit me that promoting digital transformation in a top-down manner would not be the best way forward but rather what will be most suited for this cause is to embrace diversity and also the views from across generation and I felt that that was a crucial point. Would that be correct understanding?

Minister Tang

Yes, definitely. In Taiwan, we call this 「青銀共創」 or the young and the silver haired creating together, so black and silver hair together. That's the most important.

YOSHIMURA Takeshi

Thank you very much.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Minister Tang, thank you very much for having joined us. With the COVID-19 pandemic, it has really highlighted how delayed Japan is when it comes to embracing digitalization, and this has really propelled the movement to embrace digitalization from the center of the nation and also from the local communities. It has been a pleasure to hear from you, Minister Tang, who has played a central role in the digitalization of Taiwan, about the initiatives taken as well as your thoughts behind them. We thank you very much.

We have been joined by the members of the local government, from the private sector, and financial sector; and had the pleasure of presenting questions as well. From what we have heard from Minister Tang today, we would like to work in our capacity from the regional community to move ahead with digitalization. There are many citizens of the prefecture, but I would like to create a community that has leveled up, one where everyone can benefit in, from the digitization brought by the pandemic.

We hope that this will serve as an opportunity to continue the collaboration between Taiwan and Yamaguchi Prefecture. To make digitalization in Yamaguchi even better, I would like to count on your advice in the days ahead.

Thank you very much, Minister Tang, for having joined us today. If you have some closing comments, they are most welcome.

Minister Tang

As I often quote, Ring the bells that still can ring and forget your perfect offering because there is a crack in everything and that's how the light gets in. The imperfectness fails fast early and in the open. That's actually how magic happens. I am really happy to participate in these magical moments and live long and prosper.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Thank you very much. With this, we would like to conclude this very special discussion. Thank you very much, Minister Tang, for having joined us, and since this is a great opportunity, even while this is virtual, would you care to join us in a photo op?

Minister Tang

I'll just stay here, right, and be very still.

MURAOKA Tsugumasa

Minister Tang, we would like to thank you for the valuable opportunity that has been granted to us in spite of your extremely busy schedule. We do hope that we will be able to speak to you once again.

Minister Tang

Yeah. *Arigatou gozaimashita* and thank you specifically for the interpreters. It was very smooth and very fluid. Thank you.

END
