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Coded character sets

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Request to reserve the code point for square Japanese new era name

The Japan National Body (Tetsuji Orita)

December 15, 2017

Dear ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2 chair and Unicode Technical Committee chair,

The Japan National Body requests to reserve the code point for square Japanese new era name in the ISO/IEC 10646 and Unicode standard.

On December 8, 2017, the Japanese government has finally decided the schedule of the abdication of the current emperor and the enthronement of the new emperor. The date of abdication is scheduled for April 30, 2019, and the date of enthronement is May 1, 2019. Then, Japanese new era will start from May 1, 2019.
The name of new era will be decided and announced before the enthronement with some lead time for preparation, but the schedule has not been decided yet.
We will submit a formal proposal document as soon as possible after the new era name is decided. However, we expect the lead time would be very short. Therefore we request your kind consideration in reserving the code point for square Japanese new era name and publicly announcing it to facilitate advance implementation.

The ISO/IEC 10646 and Unicode Standard already standardized the square symbol for four Japanese era names in modern times, ㍾ (U+337E), ㍽ (U+337D), ㍼ (U+337C) and ㍻ (U+337B). They have been widely used in Japanese IT systems, especially relatively old fashioned, huge enterprise systems and embedded systems with small display devices. Therefore, in order to accomplish the smooth and rapid transition of Japanese current enterprise IT systems, we prefer to reserve the code point in BMP same as existing era names.
Actually, according to a survey by Microsoft Japan, there are a few but very strong requirements for standardization from its client enterprises, with the strong demand to be encoded in BMP because of the reason noted above. We noticed some legacy solutions still only support BMP.

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