

JAPAN - MEASURES AFFECTING
CONSUMER PHOTOGRAPHIC FILM AND PAPER

Communication from the Chairman of the Panel

The following communication, dated 5 June 1997, addressed to the Dispute Settlement Body, is circulated in accordance with Article 12.9 of the DSU.

Article 12.8 of the DSU stipulates that the period in which the panel shall conduct its examination, from the date that the composition and terms of reference of the panel have been agreed upon until the date the final report is issued to the parties, shall, as a general rule, not exceed six months.

Article 12.9 of the DSU states that when the panel considers that it cannot issue its report within six months, it shall inform the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) in writing of the reasons for the delay together with an estimate of the period within which it will issue its report.

The Panel "Japan - Measures Affecting Consumer Photographic Film and Paper" was established by the DSB on 16 October 1996 and, at the request of the United States, the Director-General, by virtue of Article 8.7 of the DSU, announced the composition of the Panel on 17 December 1996.

In light of a number of factors including (i) the wish of the parties to use the maximum time periods prescribed in the DSU for the preparation of their submissions; (ii) the number and complexity of the measures complained against; (iii) the unprecedented volume of the evidence submitted in English and Japanese which is approaching 20,000 pages, the Panel is not able to issue its report within six months.

The Panel expects to complete its work before the end of the year 1997.