

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES - MEASURES AFFECTING BUTTER PRODUCTS

Communication from the Chairman of the Panel

The following communication, dated 2 September 1998 and addressed to the Dispute Settlement Body, is circulated in accordance with Article 12.9 of the DSU.

Article 12.8 of the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes (DSU) provides that the period in which a 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 to the dispute, shall, as a general rule, not exceed six months.

Article 12.9 of the DSU provides that when a 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 on "European Communities – Measures Affecting Butter Products" (WT/DS72) was established by the DSB on 18 November 1997 and parties agreed to its composition and terms of reference on 13 January 1998. The Panel proceedings were suspended from 19 February 1998 until 30 March 1998, pursuant to Article 12.12 of the DSU. Due to administrative constraints, the Panel is not able to issue its report within six months.

The Panel expects to submit its final report to the parties in November 1998.
