

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

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UNITED STATES - RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS OF COTTON AND MAN-MADE FIBRE UNDERWEAR

Communication from the Chairman of the Panel

The following communication, dated 25 June 1996, is circulated in accordance with Article 12.9 of the DSU.

Article 12.8 of the DSU stipulates 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 shall, as a general rule, not exceed six months.

Article 12.9 of the DSU states 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 "United States - Restrictions on Imports of Cotton and Man-made Fibre Underwear" was established by the DSB on 5 March 1996 and the parties agreed on its composition and terms of reference on 4 April 1996. Since the parties wished to use the maximum time periods prescribed in Annex 4 of the DSU and it was necessary to provide translations of first submissions, the earliest that the Panel could meet was the end of June 1996. This consequently will lead to some delay in further proceedings.

The Panel, in agreement with the parties, expects to complete its work by the end of October 1996, which is three weeks behind schedule.