

**EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES – MEASURES AFFECTING ASBESTOS
AND PRODUCTS CONTAINING ASBESTOS**

Communication from the Chairman of the Panel

The following communication, dated 3 March 2000 and addressed to the Dispute Settlement Body, is circulated in accordance with Article 12.9 of the DSU.

On behalf of the aforementioned Panel, I would like to address the following communication to the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB).

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. Pursuant to Article 12.9 of the DSU, when a panel considers that it cannot issue its report within six months, it shall inform the 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 Asbestos and Products Containing Asbestos" was established by the DSB on 25 November 1998, and its composition and terms of reference were determined on 29 March 1999. In a letter dated 22 September 1999, the Panel informed the DSB that it was not able to complete its work within the six months provided for in the DSU and expected to finalize its report by March 2000 (see document WT/DS135/5). The Panel wishes now to inform the DSB that it will need more time to complete its report.

The Panel intends to issue its final report to the parties in June 2000.
