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# *Decisions of the Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization*

Editor: J.H.H. Weiler

The World Trade Organization revamped considerably the old GATT dispute resolution procedures establishing, *inter alia*, a permanent Appellate Body to which appeals can be made from Panel decisions. Decisions of the Appellate Body have become the most authoritative statements on the interpretation of international economic law within the WTO system. In the post Cold War epoch of world political and international relations, economic issues are coming increasingly to the fore as a source of both transnational cooperation and conflict. Additionally, the reach of the WTO into an ever-growing number of state economic sectors is creating an altogether higher volume and intensity of disputes between domestic social policies and international regulatory regimes. Interpretation of the new WTO treaties must take place in accordance with classical international law applied, however, in a new context. The much 'harder' enforcement provisions of the WTO have created a climate conducive in certain circumstances to legal — rather than diplomatic — dispute resolution. These considerations and others have convinced us that the importance of WTO Appellate Body decisions extends beyond the community of international trade lawyers and would be of interest to international lawyers in general.

Starting with this issue, the *EJIL* will thus provide a systematic coverage of the Appellate Body decisions, giving particular emphasis to aspects of relevance to general international law. The *EJIL* web site <[www.ejil.org](http://www.ejil.org)> contains the text of the Reports of the Appellate Body and an in-depth commentary thereon.

**This first survey covers all decisions issued as of February 1998 by the Appellate Body:**  
United States—Standards for Reformulated and Conventional Gasoline, 22 April 1996  
Japan—Taxes on Alcoholic Beverages, 4 October 1996  
United States—Measure Affecting Imports of Woven Wool Shirts and Blouses, 6 January 1997

United States—Restrictions on Imports of Cotton and Man-made Fibre Underwear,  
10 February 1997

Brazil—Measures Affecting Desiccated Coconut, 21 February 1997

Canada—Certain Measures concerning Periodicals, 30 June 1997

EC—Regime for the Importation, Sale and Distribution of Bananas, 9 September 1997

India—Patent Protection for Pharmaceutical and Agricultural Chemical Products,  
19 December 1997

EC—Measures concerning Meat and Meat Products (Hormones), 16 January 1998