(e) "Harmonized System" or "HS" means the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System set out in the Annex to the International Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, and adopted and implemented by the Parties in their respective laws;

(f) "Parties" means Japan and Viet Nam, and "Party" means either Japan or Viet Nam; and

(g) "WTO Agreement" means the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, done at Marrakesh, April 15, 1994.

Article 3
Transparency

1. Each Party shall, in accordance with its laws and regulations, promptly publish, or otherwise make publicly available, its laws, regulations, administrative procedures, and administrative rulings and judicial decisions of general application as well as international agreements to which the Party is a party, with respect to any matter covered by this Agreement.

2. Each Party shall make available to the public the names and addresses of the competent authorities responsible for laws, regulations, administrative procedures, and administrative rulings, referred to in paragraph 1.

3. Each Party shall, upon request by the other Party, within a reasonable period of time, respond to specific questions from, and provide information to, the other Party with respect to matters referred to in paragraph 1.

4. When introducing or changing its laws, regulations, or administrative procedures that significantly affect the implementation and operation of this Agreement, each Party shall, in accordance with its laws and regulations, endeavor to provide, except in emergency situations, a reasonable interval between the time when such laws, regulations, or administrative procedures as introduced or changed are published or made publicly available and the time when they enter into force.

Article 4
Public Comment Procedures

The Government of each Party shall, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Party, endeavor to adopt or maintain public comment procedures, in order to:

(a) make public in advance regulations of general application that affect any matter covered by this Agreement, when the Government adopts, amends, or repeals them; and

(b) provide a reasonable opportunity for comments by the public and give consideration to those comments before adoption, amendment, or repeal of such regulations.

Article 5
Administrative Procedures

1. Where administrative decisions which pertain to or affect the implementation and operation of this Agreement are taken by the competent authorities of a Party, the competent authorities shall, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Party:

(a) inform the applicant of the decision within a reasonable period of time after the submission of the application considered complete under the laws and regulations of the Party, taking into account the established standard periods of time referred to in paragraph 3; and

(b) provide, within a reasonable period of time, information concerning the status of the application, at the request of the applicant.

2. The competent authorities of a Party shall, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Party, endeavor to establish standards for taking administrative decisions in response to submitted applications. The competent authorities shall endeavor to:

(a) make such standards as specific as possible; and

(b) make such standards publicly available except when it would extraordinarily raise administrative difficulties for the Government of the Party.

3. The competent authorities of a Party shall, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Party, endeavor to:

(a) establish standard periods of time between the receipt of applications by the competent authorities and the administrative decisions taken in response to the submitted applications; and

(b) make publicly available such periods of time, if established.

Article 6
Confidential Information