New Administrative Framework for Consumer Protection in Japan: Consumer Affairs Agency and Consumer Commission

4th Consumer Law Roundtable, December 4, 2009
Tsuneo Matsumoto
Professor of Law, Hitotsubashi University
Chair, Consumer Commission of Japan

Background
- Leadership of former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda (Sep. 07 – Sep. 08)
  - Policy speeches in October and in February
- Poisoning cases caused by frozen dumpling manufactured in China from Dec. 07 through Feb. 08.

Centralization of Administrative Framework: Three Dimensions
- Centralization of policy planning and law enforcement
- Centralization of information relating to accidents and illegal/unfair practices
- Centralization (or universalization) of consumer advisory service
- Enhanced accessibility for consumers to counseling / consultation through local consumer centers

Three Bills Submitted
- Submission of bills in Sep. 08
  - Consumer Affairs Agency Establishment Act
  - Adjustment Act for Improvement of Consumer Related Measures
  - Consumer Safety Act
- Revision of Bills unanimously by Lower House in April 09
- Enactment of bills in May 09
- General Election in Aug. 30, 09
- Opening of Consumer Affairs Agency and Consumer Commission in Sep. 1, 09
Roles of Two Organizations

- Consumer Affairs Agency
  - Planning
  - Regulation
  - Coordination
  - Assisting local government
- Consumer Commission
  - Consultation
  - Watchdog
  - Pipe connecting consumer-related government ministries/agencies and consumers/consumer organizations

Asian Countries
- Korea
- China
- Vietnam
- ERIA WG2 and ATA