

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2000

Contact: Mindy Kotler, (202) 822-6040

Japan Information Access Project, Washington, DC

Response Statement on:

JAPAN BACKSLIDING ON TELECOM DISPUTE RESOLUTION AT CLINTON-MORI SUMMIT

At Issue: On May 5, the new Prime Minister of Japan Yoshiro Mori will meet with President Clinton. This meeting comes less than one week after the Foreign Ministry announcement that Japan will not try to resolve the contentious telecommunications interconnection charges dispute with the United States at the summit.

Japan's decision to cancel pre-summit bilateral telecommunications talks this week suggests the United States should take a new approach to opening up Japan's \$130 billion telecommunications market, according to award-winning author Dr. Steven K. Vogel, associate professor of Political Science at University of California, Berkeley.

“The U.S. must reach out to Japanese opinion leaders, industry, and telecommunications users as well as policymakers,” Vogel says. “As we have seen here in the United States, more competition in telecommunications benefits consumers; in Japan it would also benefit American business and the Japanese economy as a whole. To do this, the U.S. must appeal to the Japanese public, target specific Japanese allies, strengthen the American voice within the Japanese policy process, and advocate telecommunications liberalization measures in the short run that will pave the way for further reform in the long run.”

In April 2000, Dr. Vogel presented a working paper; *Creating Competition in Japan's Telecommunications Market*, to the U.S. Trade Representative's Office, the Commerce Department, the State Department, congressional staff, and other officials in Washington. His presentation was supported by the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission, a federal agency supporting the rigorous study of contemporary Japan. Dr. Vogel is a member of the Board of Directors of the Japan Information Access Project, an American nonprofit, nonadvocacy policy research center studying Japan and Northeast Asia that works closely with the Friendship Commission.

Dr. Vogel specializes in the political economy of the advanced industrialized nations, especially Japan. Dr. Vogel's prize-winning book, *Freer Markets, More Rules: Regulatory Reform in Advanced Industrial Countries* (Cornell University Press, 1996) discusses telecommunications reform in Japan. Dr. Vogel can be contacted at the University of California, Berkeley, (510) 642-4658, fax: (510) 642-9515, or svogel@socrates.berkeley.edu His revised working paper on the U.S.-Japan telecommunications dispute can soon be accessed through the Japan Information Access Project website: <http://www.jiaponline.org/> or by calling (202) 822-6040.

###