

Agreement. Panel review was requested of the final antidumping duty administrative review made by the International Trade Administration, in the antidumping investigation respecting Porcelain-on-Steel Cookware from Mexico. This determination was published in the **Federal Register**, 62, 42,496 on August 7, 1997. The NAFTA Secretariat has assigned Case Number USA-97-1904-07 to this request.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James R. Holbein, United States Secretary, NAFTA Secretariat, Suite 2061, 14th and Constitution Avenue, Washington, DC 20230, (202) 482-5438.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Chapter 19 of the North American Free-Trade Agreement ("Agreement") establishes a mechanism to replace domestic judicial review of final determinations in antidumping and countervailing duty cases involving imports from a NAFTA country with review by independent binational panels. When a Request for Panel Review is filed, a panel is established to act in place of national courts to review expeditiously the final determination to determine whether it conforms with the antidumping or countervailing duty law of the country that made the determination.

Under Article 1904 of the Agreement, which came into force on January 1, 1994, the Government of the United States, the Government of Canada and the Government of Mexico established *Rules of Procedure for Article 1904 Binational Panel Reviews* ("Rules"). These Rules were published in the **Federal Register** on February 23, 1994 (59 FR 8686).

A first Request for Panel Review was filed with the United States Section of the NAFTA Secretariat, pursuant to Article 1904 of the Agreement, on September 2, 1996, requesting panel review of the final antidumping duty administrative review described above.

The Rules provide that:

(a) A Party or interested person may challenge the final determination in whole or in part by filing a Complaint in accordance with Rule 39 within 30 days after the filing of the first Request for Panel Review (the deadline for filing a Complaint is October 2, 1997);

(b) A Party, investigating authority or interested person that does not file a Complaint but that intends to appear in support of any reviewable portion of the final determination may participate in the panel review by filing a notice of appearance in accordance with Rule 40 within 45 days after the filing of the first Request for Panel Review (the deadline for filing a notice of appearance is October 17, 1997); and

(c) The panel review shall be limited to the allegations of error of fact or law, including the jurisdiction of the investigating authority, that are set out in the Complaints filed in the panel review and the procedural and substantive defenses raised in the panel review.

Dated: September 15, 1997.

James R. Holbein,
United States Secretary, NAFTA Secretariat.
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COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Extension of Temporary Amendment to the Requirements for Participating in the Special Access Program for Caribbean Basin Countries

September 15, 1997.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

ACTION: Issuing a directive to the Commissioner of Customs extending amendment of requirements for participation in the Special Access Program for a temporary period.

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 23, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lori E. Mennitt, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-3400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended; section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854).

A notice and letter to the Commissioner of Customs published in the **Federal Register** on September 20, 1996 (61 FR 49439) announced the temporary amendment to the foreign origin exception for findings and trimmings under the Special Access Program. By date of export, the foreign origin exception for findings and trimmings, including elastic strips of less than one inch in width, under the Special Access Program were temporarily amended to include non-U.S. formed, U.S. cut interlinings for the period September 23, 1996 through September 22, 1997 for men's and boys' suit jackets and suit-type jackets in Categories 433, 443, 633 and 643. In the aggregate, such interlinings, findings and trimmings must not exceed 25 percent of the cost of the components of the assembled article. This amendment is being extended for a six-month period

beginning on September 23, 1997 and extending through March 22, 1998 for men's and boys' suit jackets and suit-type jackets in Categories 433, 443, 633 and 643 entered under the Special Access Program (9802.00.8015) provided they are cut in the United States and are of a type described below:

(1) A chest type plate, "hymo" piece or "sleeve header" of woven or self-inserted warp knit construction of coarse animal hair or man-made filaments used in the manufacture of men's or boys' tailored suit jackets and suit-type jackets;

(2) A weft-inserted warp knit fabric which contains and exhibits properties of elasticity and resilience which render the fabric especially suitable for attachment by fusing with a thermo-plastic adhesive to the coat-front, side body or back of men's or boys' tailored suit jackets and suit-type jackets.

(3) A woven fabric which contains and exhibits properties of resiliency which render the fabric especially suitable for attachment by fusing with a thermo-plastic adhesive to the coat-front, side body or back of men's or boys' tailored suit jackets and suit-type jackets.

Troy H. Cribb,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements

September 15, 1997.

Commissioner of Customs,
Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20229.

Dear Commissioner: This directive amends but does not cancel the directive issued to you on September 16, 1996, by the Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements. That directive concerns the foreign origin exception for findings and trimmings under the Special Access Program.

Effective on September 23, 1997, by date of export, you are directed to extend, for the six-month period September 23, 1997 through March 22, 1998, the amendment to treat non-U.S. formed, U.S.-cut interlinings, further described below, for men's and boys' wool and man-made fiber suit jackets and suit-type jackets in Categories 433, 443, 633 and 643 as qualifying for the exception for findings and trimmings, including elastic strips less than one inch in width, created under the Special Access Program established effective September 1, 1986 (see 51 FR 21208). In the aggregate, such interlinings, findings and trimmings must not exceed 25 percent of the cost of the components of the assembled article.

The amendment implemented by this directive shall be of a temporary nature. The amendment will terminate on March 22, 1998, by date of export.

As described above, non-U.S. formed, U.S.-cut interlinings may be used in imports of men's or boys' suit jackets and suit-type

jackets entered under the Special Access Program (9802.00.8015) provided they are cut in the United States and of a type described below:

(1) A chest plate, "hymo" piece or "sleeve header" of woven or weft-inserted warp knit construction of coarse animal hair or man-made filaments used in the manufacture of men's or boys' tailored suit jackets and suit-type jackets;

(2) A weft-inserted warp knit fabric which contains and exhibits properties of elasticity and resilience which render the fabric especially suitable for attachment by fusing with a thermo-plastic adhesive to the coat-front, side body or back of men's or boys' tailored suit jackets and suit-type jackets.

(3) A woven fabric which contains and exhibits properties of resiliency which render the fabric especially suitable for attachment by fusing with a thermo-plastic adhesive to the coat-front, side body or back of men's or boys' tailored suit jackets and suit-type jackets.

The Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements has determined that this action falls within the foreign affairs exception of the rulemaking provisions of 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(1).

Sincerely,

Troy H. Cribb,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

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COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Request for Public Comments on Bilateral Consultations with the Government of Thailand

September 15, 1997.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

ACTION: Notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ross Arnold, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4212. For information on categories for which consultations have been requested, call (202) 482-3740.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended; section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Uruguay Round Agreements Act.

On August 28, 1997, under the terms of Article 6 of the Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) and the Uruguay Round Agreements Act, the Government of the United States requested consultations with the Government of Thailand with

respect to yarn, 85% or more by weight artificial staple fiber, Category 603, produced or manufactured in Thailand.

The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that, if no solution is agreed upon in consultations with the Government of Thailand, the Government of the United States reserves its right to establish a twelve-month limit of not less than 1,664,653 kilograms for the entry and withdrawal from warehouse for consumption of yarn of 85% or more artificial staple fiber in Category 603, produced or manufactured in Thailand.

A summary statement of serious damage, the actual threat of serious damage or the exacerbation of serious damage concerning Category 603 follows this notice.

Anyone wishing to comment or provide data or information regarding the treatment of Category 603 or to comment on domestic production or availability of products included in Category 603 is invited to submit 10 copies of such comments or information to Troy H. Cribb, Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230; ATTN: Helen L. LeGrande. The comments received will be considered in the context of the consultations with the Government of Thailand.

Because the exact timing of the consultations is not yet certain, comments should be submitted promptly. Comments or information submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection in the Office of Textiles and Apparel, room H3100, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC.

Further comments may be invited regarding particular comments or information received from the public which the Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements considers appropriate for further consideration.

The solicitation of comments regarding any aspect of the implementation of an agreement is not a waiver in any respect of the exemption contained in 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(1) relating to matters which constitute "a foreign affairs function of the United States."

The United States remains committed to finding a solution concerning Category 603. Should such a solution be reached in consultations with the Government of Thailand, further notice will be published in the **Federal Register**.

A description of the textile and apparel categories in terms of HTS numbers is available in the

CORRELATION: Textile and Apparel Categories with the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (see **Federal Register** notice 61 FR 66263, published on December 17, 1996).

Troy H. Cribb,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

Summary of Statement in Support of Request for Consultations Under Article 6 of the ATC—Thailand

Category 603—Yarn, 85 Percent or more by Weight Artificial Staple Fiber

August 1997

The USG has determined that the increase in imports of yarn for sale, 85 percent or more by weight artificial staple fiber, Category 603, has caused serious damage, or actual threat thereof, to the industry in the United States producing like and/or directly competitive yarn for sale.

Imports of the subject yarn from all sources increased by 15.9 percent in 1996 over 1995, a net increase of nearly 2.0 million kilograms. Domestic orders fell by 19.5 percent and domestic production declined 7.7 percent in 1996 as inventories increased by 17.4 percent. Increasing low-valued imports forced domestic spinners to cut their prices and margins to remain price competitive. Mills cut prices in 1996 and continued to lose orders to imports with unfilled orders dropping 19.5 percent in 1996 below the 1995 level. During the first quarter of 1997 domestic industry orders fell 26.3 percent, as inventories increased 22.3 percent and production fell 20 percent from the same period last year.

Capacity utilization declined as production fell, causing severe margin pressure as fixed costs had to be allocated over fewer sales, which cut gross margins. Compounded with the pressure to lower prices, mills' profitability evaporated. Seventy-eight percent of the companies reported declining profitability in 1996 on the product in question. Two mills fell victim to the margin squeeze and shut down. Production worker employment in the defined industry lost a total of 403 jobs in 1996. More jobs were lost in 1997, as another firm exited the business, resulting in a net loss of 619 jobs from 1995 to the first quarter of 1997.

The USG concluded that the increase in imports from 1995 to 1996 is the direct cause of serious damage to the industry as reflected in the industry's declining production, the substantial increase in inventories, the industry's deteriorating financial performance, and the significant fall in unfilled orders, man-hours, and employment.