

and purchase of services to provide information.

Dated: June 8, 1998.

Karen Solomon,

Director, Legislative & Regulatory Activities Division.

[FR Doc. 98-15801 Filed 6-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-33-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Country of Origin Marking Rules for Textiles and Textile Products Advanced in Value, Improved in Condition, or Assembled Abroad

AGENCY: U.S. Customs Service, Department of the Treasury.

ACTION: Proposed interpretation; solicitation of comments.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that Customs is proposing a new interpretation concerning the country of origin rules for certain imported textiles and textile products. It is Customs' proposed position that 19 CFR 12.130(c) should not control for purposes of country of origin marking of textiles and textile products, and that Chapter 98, Subchapter II, U.S. Note 2(a), Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS), does not apply for country of origin marking purposes.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before August 14, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments (preferably in triplicate) may be addressed to the Regulations Branch, Office of Regulations and Rulings, U.S. Customs Service, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20229. Comments submitted may be inspected at the Regulations Branch, Office of Regulations and Rulings, U.S. Customs Service, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Monika Brenner, Special Classification and Marking Branch, Office of Regulations and Rulings (202-927-1675).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On May 9, 1984, the President issued Executive Order 12475 to address a number of problems that had arisen in the context of the U.S. textile import program. These problems included (1) the absence of specific regulatory standards for determining the origin of imported textiles and textile products for purposes of textile agreements and (2) an ever increasing number and

variety of instances in which attempts were made to circumvent and frustrate the objectives of the United States textile import program and the bilateral and multilateral textile agreements negotiated thereunder. Section 1(a) of that Executive Order instructed the Secretary of the Treasury, in accordance with policy guidance provided by the Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA) to issue regulations governing the entry of textiles and textile products subject to section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854).

By T.D. 85-38, published in the **Federal Register** on March 5, 1985 (50 FR 8710), Customs adopted as a final rule interim amendments to part 12 of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR part 12), which involved the addition of a new § 12.130 that established criteria to be used in determining the country of origin of imported textiles and textile products for purposes of multilateral or bilateral textile agreements entered into by the United States pursuant to section 204, Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended. In that final rule document, Customs stated that the principles of origin contained in § 12.130 are applicable to merchandise for all purposes, including duty and marking. In T.D. 90-17 (55 FR 7303, March 1, 1990), which involved a change of practice to conform several previously published Customs positions to certain provisions within 19 CFR 12.130, Customs again stated that the criteria set forth in 19 CFR 12.130 should be used in making country of origin determinations for all Customs purposes, including determinations for purposes of country of origin marking and for assessing duty on imported articles.

Paragraph (c) of § 12.130 operates as an exception to the basic country of origin rule set forth in paragraph (b) of § 12.130. Paragraph (c)(1) of § 12.130 specifically provides, in part, that in order to have:

a single country of origin for a textile or textile product, notwithstanding paragraph (b), merchandise which falls within the purview of Chapter 98, Subchapter II, Note 2, Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States, may not, upon its return to the U.S., be considered a product of the U.S.

Furthermore, 19 CFR 12.130(c)(1) provides that:

Chapter 98, Subchapter II, Note 2, Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States, provides that any product of the U.S. which is returned after having been advanced in value or improved in condition abroad, or assembled abroad, shall be a foreign article for the purposes of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended.

Paragraph (c)(2) of section 12.130, added by T.D. 93-27 (58 FR 19347, April 14, 1993), accords essentially the same treatment to products of insular possessions.

In T.D. 95-69, published at 60 FR 46188 (September 5, 1995), Customs issued final amendments to the Customs Regulations (set forth principally at 19 CFR 102.21) to implement the provisions of section 334 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA) regarding the country of origin of textile and apparel products, that are to be used for purposes of the Customs laws (including the marking statute, section 304, Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1304)) and the administration of quantitative restrictions and except as otherwise provided for by statute. T.D. 95-69 also amended 19 CFR 12.130(b), (d), and (e)(1) to clarify that the origin of textile and apparel products covered by 19 CFR 102.21 are determined pursuant to that regulatory provision. Since T.D. 95-69 did not amend 19 CFR 12.130(c)(1) or (2), and since T.D. 85-38 and T.D. 90-17 reflected the Customs position that 19 CFR 12.130 should be used in making country of origin determinations for all Customs purposes, including determinations for purposes of country of origin marking, 19 CFR 12.130(c) still applies to products of the United States or insular possessions advanced in value, improved in condition, or assembled abroad for purposes of country of origin marking.

In connection with the development of the final NAFTA Marking Rules (T.D. 96-48, published at 61 FR 28932, June 6, 1996), Customs stated in a notice of proposed rulemaking, published at 60 FR 22312, 22318 (May 5, 1995), that it had reconsidered the position originally set forth in the interim NAFTA Marking Rules (T.D. 94-4, published at 59 FR 110, January 3, 1994) that Chapter 98, Subchapter II, U.S. Note 2(a), HTSUS, has application for general country of origin purposes, including marking. (Chapter 98, Subchapter II, U.S. Note 2(a), HTSUS, is identical to the U.S. Note 2 referred to in 19 CFR 12.130(c); subsequent to the promulgation of 19 CFR 12.130(c), U.S. Note 2 was divided into two paragraphs, U.S. Note 2(a) and (b). U.S. Note 2(b) provides a special preferential tariff treatment only for goods imported from countries listed in General Note 7, HTSUS, that are made wholly from U.S. materials and ingredients. U.S. Note 2(b) is not applicable and totally unrelated to this proposal. See H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 650, 101st Cong., 2d Sess. 133, reprinted in 1990 U.S. Code & Admin. News 928, 1023; and subheading 9802.00.8040,

HTSUS). Accordingly, in order to reflect the reconsidered position of Customs reflected in the May 5, 1995 notice of proposed rulemaking, the final NAFTA Marking Rules document included the removal of 19 CFR 102.14 and 19 CFR 10.22. Section 102.14 provided that no good last advanced in value or improved in condition outside the United States has United States origin, and § 10.22 provided that the country of origin of assembled goods entitled to a duty allowance under subheading 9802.00.80, HTSUS, was the country of assembly for marking purposes.

Accordingly, since Customs has already stated that Chapter 98, Subchapter II, U.S. Note 2(a), HTSUS, no longer applies for country of origin marking purposes, Customs proposes to adopt a new position that 19 CFR 12.130(c) does not apply for purposes of country of origin marking. However, 19 CFR 12.130(c) will still be applicable for all other purposes specified in T.D. 85-38 and T.D. 90-17, since T.D. 95-69 as stated above did not repeal 19 CFR 12.130(c).

It should be noted that this change does not exempt textile and apparel products imported into the United States from the labeling requirements of the Textile Fiber Products Identification Act, 15 U.S.C. 70, enforced by the Federal Trade Commission. For example, the Rules and Regulations under the Textile Fiber Products Identification Act, 16 CFR 303.33(a)(1), provides that unless exempt under section 12 of that Act, each imported textile fiber product shall be labeled with the name of the country where such imported product was processed or manufactured. Therefore, once it is determined under the proposed new position set forth herein that an imported textile or apparel product is not required to be marked in accordance with 19 U.S.C. 1304, as implemented by 19 CFR 102.21, the imported textile or apparel product would still be required to be labeled in accordance with the Textile Fiber Products Identification Act.

Authority

This notice is published in accordance with § 177.9, Customs Regulations (19 CFR 177.9).

Comments

Before adopting this proposed change in position, consideration will be given to any written comments timely submitted to Customs. Comments submitted will be available for public inspection in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), § 1.4, Treasury Department Regulations (31 CFR 1.4), and § 103.11(b), Customs Regulations (19 CFR 103.11(b)), on regular business days between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the Regulations Branch, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC.

Samuel H. Banks,

Acting Commissioner of Customs.

Approved: May 26, 1998.

John P. Simpson,

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

[FR Doc. 98-15809 Filed 6-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

UNITED STATES ENRICHMENT CORPORATION

Meetings; Sunshine Act

AGENCY: United States Enrichment Corporation.

SUBJECT: Board of Directors.

TIME AND DATE: 5:00 p.m., Thursday, June 11, 1998.

PLACE: USEC Corporate Headquarters, 6903 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, Maryland 20817.

STATUS: The Board meeting will be closed to the public.

MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED: Privatization of the Corporation.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Elizabeth Stuckle at 301/564-3399.

Dated: June 10, 1998.

William H. Timbers, Jr.,

President and Chief Executive Officer.

[FR Doc. 98-15931 Filed 6-11-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8720-01-M

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Culturally Significant Objects Imported for Exhibition; Determinations

Notice is hereby given of the following determinations: Pursuant to

the authority vested in me by the Act of October 19, 1965 (79 Stat. 985, 22 U.S.C. 2459), Executive Order 12047 of March 27, 1978 (43 FR 13359, March 29, 1978), and Delegation Order No. 85-5 of June 27, 1985 (50 FR 27393, July 2, 1985), I hereby determine that the objects to be included in the exhibit "TONY SMITH: Architect, Painter, Sculptor" (see list),¹ imported from various foreign lenders for the temporary exhibition without profit within the United States, are of cultural significance. These objects are imported pursuant to loan agreements with the foreign lenders. I also determine that the exhibition or display of the listed exhibit objects at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, N.Y. from on or about July 2, 1998, to on or about September 22, 1998, is in the national interest. Public Notice of these determinations is ordered to be published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: June 9, 1998.

Les Jin,

General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 98-15829 Filed 6-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Advisory Committee on Structural Safety of Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities, Notice of Charter Renewal

This gives notice under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463) of October 6, 1972, that the Advisory Committee on Structural Safety of Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities has been renewed for a 2-year period beginning May 1, 1998, through May 1, 2000.

Dated: June 5, 1998.

By direction of the Secretary.

Heyward Bannister,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 98-15796 Filed 6-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-M

¹ A copy of this list may be obtained by contacting Ms. Neila Sheahan, Assistant General Counsel, at 202/619-5030, and the address is Room 700, U.S. Information Agency, 301 Fourth Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547-0001.