

status of these limits, refer to the Quota Status Reports posted on the bulletin boards of each Customs port, call (202) 927-5850, or refer to the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection website at <http://www.customs.gov>. For information on embargoes and quota re-openings, refer to the Office of Textiles and Apparel website at <http://otexa.ita.doc.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

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

On December 24, 2003, as provided for under paragraph 242 of the Report of the Working Party on the Accession of China to the World Trade Organization (Accession Agreement), the United States requested consultations with the Government of the People's Republic of China with respect to imports of Chinese origin brassieres and other body supporting garments in Category 349/649. In accordance with paragraph 242 of the Accession Agreement and the procedures set forth by the Committee on May 21, 2003 (68 FR 27787), as clarified on August 18, 2003 (68 FR 49440), the United States is establishing a twelve-month limit on brassieres and other body supporting garments in Category 349/649 from China, beginning on December 24, 2003, and extending through December 23, 2004 at a level of 16,828,971 dozen.

Paragraph 2.B. of the U.S.-China Textile Visa Arrangement provides that if additional categories become subject to import quotas, those categories shall be automatically included in the coverage of the Visa Arrangement. This Visa Arrangement was notified to the World Trade Organization Textiles Monitoring Body as an agreed administrative arrangement on May 21, 2002. Consequently, the United States will require that shipments of Chinese origin brassieres and other body supporting garments in Category 349/649 be accompanied by an export visa and Electronic Visa Information System (ELVIS) transmission issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China. In order to provide a period for adjustment, the United States will allow shipments of goods in this category that are not accompanied by an export visa and an ELVIS transmission to enter the United States if exported prior to January 23, 2004. However, shipments exported from China on or after January 23, 2004 must be accompanied by an export visa and ELVIS transmission issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China, and shipments without an export visa and

ELVIS transmission will be denied entry.

Paragraph 242 of the Accession Agreement allows World Trade Organization Members that believe imports of Chinese origin textile and apparel products are, due to market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in these products to request consultations with the People's Republic of China with a view to easing or avoiding such market disruption. Upon receipt of the request, the People's Republic of China has agreed to hold its shipments to a level no greater than 7.5 percent (6 percent for wool product categories) above the amount entered during the first 12 months of the most recent 14 months preceding the request for consultations. The Member requesting consultations may implement such a limit. Consistent with paragraph 242, consultations with the People's Republic of China will be held within 30 days of receipt of the request for consultations, and every effort will be made to reach agreement on a mutually satisfactory solution within 90 days of receipt of the request for consultations. If agreement on a different limit is reached, the Committee will issue a **Federal Register** Notice containing a directive to the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection to implement the negotiated limit.

On July 24, 2003, the Committee received a request from the American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition, American Textile Manufacturers Institute and the National Textile Association alleging that imports from the People's Republic of China of brassieres and other body supporting garments (Category 349/649) are, due to market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in this product, and requesting that an Accession Agreement textile and apparel safeguard action be taken on imports of brassieres and other body supporting garments. The Committee determined that this request provided the information necessary for the Committee to consider the request, and, on August 18, 2003, the Committee solicited public comments on the request (68 FR 49448). This public comment period ended on September 17, 2003. The Committee determined that imports of Chinese origin brassieres and other body supporting garments are, due to market disruption and the threat of market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in brassieres and other body supporting garments, and that imports of brassieres and other body supporting garments from China play a significant role in the existence of and threat of

market disruption. A summary statement of the reasons and justifications for the U.S. request for consultations concerning imports of Category 349/649 from the People's Republic of China follows this notice.

A description of the textile and apparel categories in terms of Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States numbers is available in the CORRELATION: Textile and Apparel Category with the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (see **Federal Register** notice 68 FR 1599, published on January 13, 2003). Also see 67 FR 63891, published on October 16, 2002.

D. Michael Hutchinson,

Acting Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements

December 23, 2003.

Commissioner,
Bureau of Customs and Border Protection,
Washington, DC 20229.

Dear Commissioner: Pursuant to Section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); and Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended, you are directed to prohibit, effective on December 24, 2003, entry into the United States for consumption and withdrawal from warehouse for consumption of brassieres and other body supporting garments in Category 349/649, produced or manufactured in the People's Republic of China and exported during the twelve-month period beginning on December 24, 2003, and extending through December 23, 2004, in excess of 16,828,971 dozen.

Paragraph 2.B. of the U.S.-China Textile Visa Arrangement provides that if additional categories become subject to import quotas, those categories shall be automatically included in the coverage of the Visa Arrangement. This Visa Arrangement was notified to the World Trade Organization Textiles Monitoring Body as an agreed administrative arrangement on May 21, 2002. Consequently, the United States will require that shipments of Chinese origin brassieres and other body supporting garments in Category 349/649 be accompanied by an export visa and Electronic Visa Information System (ELVIS) transmission issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China. In order to provide a period for adjustment, the United States will allow shipments of goods in this category that are not accompanied by an export visa and an ELVIS transmission to enter the United States if exported prior to January 23, 2004. However, shipments exported from China on or after January 23, 2004 must be accompanied by an export visa and ELVIS transmission issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China, and shipments without an export visa and ELVIS transmission will be denied entry.

Products which have been exported to the United States prior to December 24, 2003,