



**TURKISH INDUSTRY Joins Western Hemisphere
and African Textile and Apparel Groups in Warning
that Unrestricted LDC Duty-Free/Quota-Free Textile
Access Would Harm Turkish Exports**

Urges Caution Regarding LDCs with Already Developed Sectors-

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HONG KONG, CHINA -- Suleyman Orakcioglu, Chairman of the Turkish textile and apparel trade group, ITKIB, warned WTO negotiators to move carefully in giving blanket LDC zero duty, zero quota access to countries that already have large and export competitive textile and apparel sectors:

Orakcioglu said, "The proposals to grant special access for certain countries that already have large developed textile sectors could backfire by harming the economies of key developing countries such as Turkey. It is critical that the WTO not adopt policies which favor one group of countries over another without understanding the ramifications that this could have on important sectors in developing countries.

Orakcioglu noted, "The LDC quota-free, duty-free initiative, unless carefully constructed, could cause substantial loss of Turkish jobs and exports to both the US and EU markets. This would also represent a back-door gift to China because China would export subsidized fabrics to countries like Bangladesh which would use them to displace large amounts of Turkish clothing exports."

Turkey is one of the world's largest apparel exporters with over two million workers employed in its textile and apparel sector. Exports of Turkish garments to the United States were nearly one billion dollars last year but have fallen by 16% so far this year. Exports of apparel from Bangladesh to the U.S. have increased 22 percent during the past year.

Cass Johnson, President of NCTO, commented: "ITKIB joins textile and apparel trade associations from Western Hemisphere and the African continent in urging that countries such as Bangladesh and Cambodia with already thriving textile export sectors not be given new benefits that could harm vulnerable textile sectors around the world. If negotiators are not careful, this LDC initiative will reward the winners and bury those already struggling to compete against an onslaught from China."

Johnson also noted that African textile and apparel sectors would be particularly vulnerable from a Bangladesh "textile super-state" which zero duty, zero quota access would create.

Auggie Tantillo, Executive Director of the American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition (AMTAC) also warned that an LDC solution that was damaging to the US textile sector would make any WTO agreement difficult to pass Congress. Tantillo said, “The US already has an \$80 billion trade deficit in textiles and apparel and any new agreements that cause further pain and suffering in the textile sector will not be looked favorably by many members of Congress. “

Tantillo noted that Bangladesh’s exports to the United States of textiles and apparel are already surging, up more than \$400 million so far this year, while the US textile industry has closed 31 plants. “Giving new non-reciprocal benefits to a country that is already a big winner in the post-quota world will strike many members of Congress as exactly the wrong way to conduct trade policy.”

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