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Textile groups to seek own WTO pact

WASHINGTON – Textiles and clothing should be removed from broader world trade talks aimed at reducing tariffs and dealt with separately because of the threat posed by China to other textile producers around the world, an international coalition said on Tuesday.

“We’re not going to let any single country ... take over business from 50 or 60 countries around the globe and monopolize the textile trade,” said Ziya Sukun, executive director of ITKIB Association USA, which represents Turkey’s textile and clothing exporters in the United States. Sukan spoke by telephone from Geneva on behalf of a coalition of textile trade associations in 55 countries called the Global Alliance for Fair Textile Trade, or GAFTT. U.S. and Mexican industry representatives also were on the call. The GAFTT coalition wants textiles and clothing excluded from steep tariff cuts that could be applied to other consumer and manufactured goods because of what they said were unique circumstances facing their industry worldwide.

That includes China, which many countries fear will dominate global textile and clothing trade following the end of an international quota system on Jan. 1. Textiles include towels, sheets and a range of other fabric goods. AP



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