

Asians Join Call for Quota Extension



The end of quotas will affect apparel imports.

WASHINGTON — The coalition of apparel and textile associations calling for a three-year delay of the elimination of quotas at the end of the year has signed up 25 more international associations.

Among the new signatories are trade associations from Bangladesh and the Philippines, which mark the first Far Eastern endorsements of the so-called Istanbul Declaration. The coalition, which now has 71 apparel and textile trade association members representing 38 countries, will convene a summit in Brussels June 15-17 to show a unified front in persuading the World Trade Organization to address the elimination of quotas set for Jan. 1.

Apparel and textile trade groups around the globe are bracing for the elimination of quotas, which have long regulated trade. These organizations say that dropping quotas will give China an opportunity to monopolize global textile and apparel trade, and in turn to decimate their industries.

“The summit will demonstrate the resolve of the industries on a global basis to find a solution to this,” said Augustine Tantillo, Washington coordinator of the American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition lobbying group and a founding member of the new coalition. “Hopefully, it is a trigger for governments to begin taking an official stance on this, which will be critical from a WTO perspective.”

A unanimous vote of WTO members is required to reassess the quota elimination.

— **Kristi Ellis**