

**COMMITTEE FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE
AGREEMENTS**

**Announcement of Public Comment
Period on the Elimination of the Paper
Visa Requirement with the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Regime of the
People's Republic of China (HKSAR)**

June 26, 2001.

AGENCY: Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements
(CITA).

ACTION: Seeking public comments on the
elimination of the paper visa
requirement with the HKSAR.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lori
Mennitt, Office of Textiles and Apparel,
U.S. Department of Commerce, (202)
482-3400.

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.

The Electronic Visa Information
System (ELVIS) allows foreign
governments to electronically transfer
shipment information to the U.S.
Customs Service on textile and apparel
shipments. On November 9, 1995, a
notice was published in the **Federal
Register** (61 FR 56576) seeking public
comments on the implementation of
ELVIS. Subsequently, a document
published on December 29, 1998 (63 FR
71621) announced that, starting on
January 1, 1999, the HKSAR would
implement the ELVIS system. This
implementation did not eliminate the
requirement for a valid paper visa to
accompany each shipment for entry into
the United States.

As a result of successful use of the
dual visa system, preparations are under
way to move beyond the current dual
system to the paperless ELVIS system
with Hong Kong.

The Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements
is requesting interested parties to submit
comments on the elimination of the
paper visa requirement for Hong Kong
and utilization of the ELVIS system
exclusively. Comments must be
received on or before *insert date 60 days
from publication*. Comments may be
mailed to D. Michael Hutchinson,
Acting Chairman, Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements,
room 3001, U.S. Department of
Commerce, 14th and Constitution
Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20230.

The Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements
has determined that this action falls
within the foreign affairs exception of

the rulemaking provisions of 5
U.S.C.553(a)(1).

D. Michael Hutchinson,

*Acting Chairman, Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements.*

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**COMMITTEE FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE
AGREEMENTS**

**Cancellation of Certain Export Visa
Requirements for Certain Cotton,
Wool, Man-Made Fiber, Silk Blend and
Other Vegetable Fiber Textiles and
Textile Products Produced or
Manufactured in Lesotho**

June 26, 2001.

AGENCY: Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements
(CITA).

ACTION: Issuing a directive to the
Commissioner of Customs canceling
certain export visa requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 20, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Naomi Freeman, International Trade
Specialist, Office of Textiles and
Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce,
(202) 482-4212.

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 9, 1992, the
Governments of the United States and
the Kingdom of Lesotho agreed to
establish an export visa arrangement for
certain textiles and textile products,
produced or manufactured in Lesotho
and exported from Lesotho. CITA
directed the U.S. Customs Service to
prohibit entry of textile and textile
products covered by the arrangement for
which the Government of Lesotho had
not issued an appropriate export visa.
(See 58 FR 26121, published on April
30, 1993).

The African Growth and Opportunity
Act (AGOA) provides that eligible
textile and apparel articles enter free of
duty and free of quantitative limitation,
provided, *inter alia*, that the country has
adopted an effective visa system to
prevent unlawful transshipment of the
articles and the use of counterfeit
documents relating to importation of the
articles into the United States. Pursuant
to this requirement, the Governments of
the United States and Lesotho agreed to
a new, AGOA visa system, which
entered into effect on April 23, 2001.

(See 66 FR 21192, published on April
27, 2001)

As a result of the new, AGOA visa
system, the Governments of the United
States and Lesotho have agreed to
terminate the 1992 visa arrangement,
effective August 20, 2001. On and after
this date, textiles and textile products
will not be subject to the requirements
of the 1992 visa arrangement. However,
importers claiming preferential tariff
treatment under the AGOA for entries of
textile and apparel articles should
ensure that those entries meet the
requirements of the new, AGOA visa
system. (See 66 FR 7837, published on
January 25, 2001).

D. Michael Hutchinson,

*Acting Chairman, Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements.*

**Committee for the Implementation of Textile
Agreements**

June 26, 2001.

Commissioner of Customs,
*Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC
20229.*

Dear Commissioner: This directive cancels
and supersedes the directive issued to you on
April 23, 1993, by the Chairman, Committee
for the Implementation of Textile
Agreements. That directive directs you to
prohibit entry of certain cotton, wool, man-
made fiber, silk blend and other vegetable
fiber textiles and textile products, produced
or manufactured in Lesotho which were not
properly visaed by the Government of
Lesotho.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act
(AGOA) provides that eligible textile and
apparel articles enter free of duty and free of
quantitative limitation, provided, *inter alia*,
that the country has adopted an effective visa
system to prevent unlawful transshipment of
the articles and the use of counterfeit
documents relating to importation of the
articles into the United States. Pursuant to
this requirement, the Governments of the
United States and Lesotho agreed to a new,
AGOA visa system, which entered into effect
on April 23, 2001. (See 66 FR 21192,
published on April 27, 2001)

As a result of the new, AGOA visa system,
the Governments of the United States and
Lesotho have agreed to terminate the 1992
visa arrangement, effective August 20, 2001.
On and after this date, textiles and textile
products will not be subject to the
requirements of the 1992 visa arrangement.
However, importers claiming preferential
tariff treatment under the AGOA for entries
of textile and apparel articles should ensure
that those entries meet the requirements of
the new, AGOA visa system. (See 66 FR
7837, published on January 25, 2001).

Therefore, effective on August 20, 2001,
you are directed to terminate the textile visa
requirement set forth in the April 23, 1993
directive. Importers claiming preferential
tariff treatment under the AGOA for entries
of textile and apparel articles must continue
to meet the requirements of the new, AGOA
visa system. (See 66 FR 7837, published on
January 25, 2001)