seeks to accommodate foreign as well as domestic interests, providing a balance of interests compatible with foreign source capital and management as well as national needs for infrastructure and services delivery. UNCITRAL will consider, at its upcoming Plenary session in June at the United Nations in New York, a draft of six of the approximately twelve chapters currently planned for the Legislative Guide.

The proposed Legislative Guide will include evolving methods by which private and public financing and private sector development and management are employed for long-term infrastructure projects, including build-and-operate (BOT and BOO) and other models. Legislative options to facilitate project design, development and operation, as well as project country regulation and off-shore payment facilities will be considered for inclusion in the Guide.

The Guide will seek to take into account current developments in legal issues involved in overseas project finance, including those at the world Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other international financial institutions, as well as domestic systems. New methods of obtaining longer-term assurances not dependent on recourse to governmental agencies will be considered, including, for example, long-term receivables financing and special purpose corporations. These mechanisms will need to be balanced with appropriate methods for project countries to ensure delivery of services, utilities, construction, etc. It is tentatively proposed that the Guide be organized into sections on general legislative provisions; sector structure and regulation; concessionaire selection; project agreement terms and conclusion; government support; construction phase; operational phase; delays, defects and failures to perform; duration, extension or early termination; governing laws; and settlement of disputes. Additional sections may be added or the present structure modified after review. Initial drafts of the first six chapters are now available for comment.

Comments on these drafts are solicited from any member of the public or any association or other entity that would like the opportunity to do so. Copies of the UNCITRAL draft documents will be provided without charge upon request to the office indicated below. While preliminary comments are welcome prior to June 1, a summary of recommendations made by various participating countries at the Plenary session will be available from the office indicated below after June 20, 1998 upon request, and comments made after that date should take those recommendations into account.

Please contact the Office of the Assistant Legal Adviser for Private International Law (L/PIL) for copies of the relevant UNCITRAL documents at 2430 ''E'' Street, N.W., Suite 357 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20037–2800, or by fax to (202) 776–8482, or e-mail at pildb@his.com, attention Jeffrey D. Kovar. Documents can be provided by e-mail if requested. For additional information please call (202) 776–8420. Any member of the public who wishes to receive notice of any meetings of the Advisory Committee on this topic should so indicate; meetings of the Advisory Committee are open to the public.

Harold S. Burman,

Executive Director, Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on Private International Law.

[FR Doc. 98–12938 Filed 5–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–08–M

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice #2818]

Shipping Coordinating Committee Subcommittee on Safety of Life at Sea and Associated Bodies Working Group on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels Safety; Notice of Meeting

The Working Group on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels Safety of the Subcommittee on Safety of Life at Sea will conduct an open meeting at 9 a.m. on Monday, June 15, 1998, in room 6103, at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593–0001. This meeting will discuss the upcoming 42nd Session of the Subcommittee on stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF) and associated bodies of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) which will be held on February 8–12, 1999, at the IMO Headquarters in London, England.

Items of discussion will include the following:

a. Review of results from SLF 41,
b. Harmonization of damage stability provisions in the IMO instruments,
c. Safety aspects of ships engaged in a ballast water exchange,
d. Revision of the High Speed Craft Code,
e. Development of the damage consequence diagrams for inclusion in damage control plan guidelines, and
f. Upcoming requirements and future actions with respect to Bulk Carrier Safety—results of SOLAS Conference and MSC 69.

Members of the public may attend this meeting up to the seating capacity of the room. Interested persons may seek information by writing: Mr. Paul Cojeen, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, Commandant (G–MSE–2), Room 1308, 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593–0001 or by calling (202) 267–2988.

Dated: May 11, 1998.

Stephen M. Miller,

Executive Secretary, Shipping Coordinating Committee.

[FR Doc. 98–12946 Filed 5–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–24–M

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Negotiation of Sectoral Market Opening Agreements

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice of negotiation of sectoral market opening agreements, and of goods and services that might be affected by such negotiations.

SUMMARY: The United States is participating in discussions with member economies of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and negotiations with Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to enhance market opening in fifteen sectors, including possible elimination, modification or continuance of U.S. tariffs and non-tariff measures, opening of certain service sectors; and certain other sectoral and structural issues. Public comment is being sought on issues associated with these discussions and negotiations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jane C. Earley, Director, APEC Affairs, Office of Asia Pacific and APEC, USTR (202–395–6813).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In their 1996 Subic Bay Declaration, APEC Leaders directed trade ministers to identify sectors where ''early voluntary liberalization would have a positive impact on trade, investment and economic growth in the individual APEC economies as well as the region.'' In May 1997, APEC trade ministers affirmed that APEC should continue to act as a catalyst to promote the global opening of markets, as it had with the Information Technology Agreement. They therefore directed officials to conduct an intensive process for selecting such sectors, for review and final action by the time of the APEC

ministers and leaders meetings in November 1977. In selecting such sectors, ministers instructed officials to have regard for three factors: the possibility of encompassing both tariff and non-tariff issues, as well as elements of facilitation and economic and technical cooperation; ensuring the fullest possible private sector input and support; and consideration of ''critical mass'' by developing initiatives supported by significant groups of APEC members, and where appropriate for incorporation in the WTO.

In November 1997, APEC ministers received information on over 40 potential sectors that had been proposed and reviewed by officials. From this list, ministers recommended 15 sectors to APEC leaders for a program of early liberalization. The proposals for liberalization in these sectors are described in detail in the Annex to this notice.

Of the 15 selected sectors, ministers identified nine for early action in 1998: Environmental goods and services, chemicals, energy, medical equipment, forest products, fish and fish products, toys, gems and jewelry, and conclusion of a mutual recognition agreement on telecommunications. In these nine sectors, it was agreed that detailed proposals defining parameters, such as scope of product coverage, phasing of liberalization, and measures covered (i.e., tariffs and/or other measures) would be completed by the date of the APEC trade ministerial meeting in June 1998, with a view toward beginning implementation, in the WTO context where appropriate, in 1999. In addition, ministers directed that work to develop proposals proceed in six additional sectors: oilseeds and oilseed products, food, automotive, civil aircraft, fertilizer, and natural and synthetic rubber. In these sectors, officials were directed to further develop proposals for review and assessment by ministers at the June trade ministers meeting, for possible recommendation to leaders in November 1998.

In accordance with this guidance, APEC officials will work intensively in 1998 to complete plans for early liberalization in the identified sectors. APEC officials meetings are currently scheduled for June, September and November 1998 in Malaysia.

Advice From the U.S. International Trade Commission

On March 18, 1998, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) requested, pursuant to section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1332(g), that the U.S., International Trade Commission (USITC) provide advice concerning trade liberalization among APEC countries in the nine sectors listed above. On March 25, the USITC initiated an investigation, Inv. No. 332–392, pursuant to section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930 and published a notice requesting public comment and providing notice of a public hearing in connection with the investigation. (63 FR 15861, April 1, 1998). The notice included a list of harmonized tariff system (HTS) numbers that comprise goods under consideration in the nine sectors. The USITC's report will include (1) profiles of the industry sectors (including a description of U.S. and foreign sectors and their competitive positions); (2) an assessment of patterns of U.S. sector imports and exports to APEC trading partners and other trading partners; (3) summaries of U.S. and foreign tariff rates and reported non-tariff barriers affecting the sectors; and (4) information about increased market access opportunities resulting from liberalization. The USITC plans to transmit its report to USTR by June 16, 1998.

Public Comments

In conformity with the regulations of the Trade Policy Staff Committee (''TPSC'') (15 CFR Part 2003), the Chairman of the TPSC invites written comments from interested persons on the desirability, the scope, and the economic effects of these proposals for sectoral liberalization. Comments in particular are invited on: (a) Economic costs and benefits to U.S. producers and consumers of the removal of tariff barriers to trade between and among APEC economies in the above-listed product and service sectors; (b) economic effects and benefits to U.S. producers and consumers of removal of non-tariff barriers to trade between and among APEC economies, and of other aspects of the above-described proposals, including their provisions for economic and technical cooperation, (c) existing barriers to trade in services between and among APEC economies, and economic costs and benefits to removing such barriers; and (d) any other measures of practice within these sectors among APEC economies that should be addressed in sectoral market opening negotiations. In addition, comments are invited on other aspects of these sectoral market opening initiatives, including the possible labor and environmental effects.

Interested persons may submit written comments, in five (5) typed copies or less, no later than noon, June 15, 1998, to Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, TPSC, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Room 503, 600 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20508. Comments should state clearly the position taken and should describe with particularity the information supporting that position. Any business confidential material must be clearly marked as such on the cover page (or letter) and succeeding pages. Such submissions must be accompanied by a non-confidential summary thereof.

Non-confidential submissions will be available for public inspection at the USTR Reading Room, Room 101, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. An appointment to review the file may be made by calling Brenda Webb at 202–395–6186. The Reading Room is open to the public by appointment only from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Frederick L. Montgomery,

Chairman, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

Annex—Description of Sectoral Market Opening Initiatives

Environmental Goods and Services: Elimination of tariffs on environmental goods and liberalization of trade in environmental Services based on the General Agreement on Trade in Services, to be agreed by consensus by June 1998, and to be bound in the WTO. Implementation of commitments would begin six months after the date on which the agreement is concluded. A proposal for addressing non-tariff measures in APEC economies that impede trade will be included. On economic and technical cooperation, economies are encouraged to develop proposals for projects such as seminars to achieve the objective of liberalizing trade.

Medical Equipment. Tariffs would be eliminated in a short period, e.g., 3 years. Proposed schedule and method of implementation would be based on the approach of the Information Technology Agreement. Specific non-tariff measures would be identified and addressed. Economies would be prepared to explore a program of technical assistance in cooperation with the private sector.

Forest Products. Includes pulp and paper products (HS Chapters 47 and 48), wood products (HS Chapter 44), printed materials (HS Chapter 49); wood furniture and pre-fabricated housing (parts of HS Chapter 94), certain vegetable and rattan mats and baskets (parts of HS Chapter 46), and certain rosin products (parts of HS Chapter 38). The proposal has four components: elimination of tariffs on theses products in the 2000–2004 timeframe; a study of

non-tariff barriers and other trade distorting policies which may impeded market access in these products; development and adoption of performance-based building standards; and, development of economic and technical assistance measures designed to enable members to develop their industries and to achieve early trade liberation in these industries.

Fish and Fish Products. The objective of the proposal would be to eliminate tariffs no later than December 31, 2005. Tariffs currently applied at 20% or less would be phased out more quickly. There would also be flexibility for economies to phase out tariffs over a longer period on a limited number of products. Officials would be directed to present a plan for eliminating non-tariff measures for approval at the APEC's November 1998 Trade Ministerial meeting, with the objective of eliminating non-tariff measures no later than December 31, 2007. APEC economies would recommit to elimination of WorldTrade Organization (WTO)-inconsistent subsidies and sanitary and phytosanitary measures, of which there would also be studies, and commit to some of many suggested ecotech proposal. An annual report to Ministers would also be done within APEC on fisheries management cooperation in the Pacific Ocean, and adjacent regions.

Toys. The proposal is for progressive reduction of tariffs on targeted, toys, beginning from 1998 and completed by a date to be determined by participating economies (2000, and no later than 2005). It would comment to identification of existing technical, regulatory, and other unnecessary non-tariff measures by the end of 1998 and to consultation on actions and a scheduled for elimination of NOMS by the end of 1999. Progressive elimination of all identified non-tariff measures would be determined, preferably by 2000 and no later than 2005.

Gems and Jewelry. This proposal would reduce tariffs to 0–5% by 2005 on products in HTS Chapter 71m, which includes pearls, diamonds, precious stones, silver, gold, platinum, ''fine'' jewelry, silverware made of silver and silver plate, gold articles, imitation jewelry, and commemorative coins. The proposal would also address non-tariff measures in the same time period and include economic and technical cooperation on education and training.

Mutual Recognition Agreement for Telecommunications servicers. Proposes that interested APEC economies work to implement an Agreement for Mutual Recognition of Test Results and Certifications, and to complete work on a Mutual Recognition Agreement and Phase Agreements by June 1998.

Chemicals. This is a proposal for tariff liberalization, starting with a commitment to bring tariffs into conformity with rates established in the Uruguay Round Chemical Tariff Harmonization Agreement (CTHA) in two tranches: starting from applied rates, by 2001 for tariffs up to and including 10%, and by 2004 for tariffs over 10%, and to bring these rates in the WTO. Requests for longer staging would be considered for sensitive products. Once a critical mass has committed to the CTHA, further tariff liberalization would be undertaken starting with subsectors (e.g., fertilizer, cosmetics) where there is interest in moving ahead on an expedited basis. This process would lead to the eventual elimination of all chemical tariffs. Participants would initiate a work program on non-tariff measures. They would also compile a list of customs and regulatory barriers faced by chemical exporters to give to APEC's Committee on Customs Procedures for simplifying and harmonizing customs procedures and facilitating trade. The proposal would also task APEC's Investment Experts Group to undertake a review of investment policy and practices with respect to the chemical industry, which would be used to derive a list of liberalization options that could be selected either for individual action plans, or for collective action. It would additionally encourage economies to participate in international work already ongoing on chemical standards and testing. In cooperation with the private sector, it would develop a program of economic and technical assistance, including but not limited to workshops, seminars, and training activities.

Energy. This proposal includes certain primary energy commodities, electricity, energy products, technologies, services, and equipment. It would progressively remove tariffs on coal and gas and energy-related equipment by 2005, and identify and address existing technical, regulatory, and other non-tariff barriers, including standards and certification. It would establish a work program to identify and remove barriers to trade in services, to commence March 1998. Additionally it would review work of the APEC's Group of Experts on Government Procurement (GPEG) on principles of transparency in government procurement and work with GPEG in any areas where the generic elements and principles of transparency need to be developed to ensure full transparency in this sector. Finally, it would extend the investment facilitation work of APEC's Energy Working Group and develop a linked database on mining and energy-related investment opportunities, and reduce costs through cooperation on energy standards between 1998 and 2000.

Autos. This proposal calls for a four part work program aimed at establishing a more integrated and competitive auto industry in the region: (1) Standards harmonization, including obtaining APEC endorsement of the ''global agreement'' on automotive standards; (2) identification of customs issues and barriers, and development of steps to address them; (3) development of an economic and technical cooperation program; and (4) establishment of a regional dialogue of automotive issues, which would discuss trade and investment policy issues, and develop means of addressing them. Industry would participate in parts of the dialogue.

Food. The proposal calls for tariff reductions on a number of 4-digit H.T.S. categories in three food subsectors (fresh fruits and vegetables, processed foods and beverages) and other trade facilitation and ecotech activities, as well as market research studies. The proposal calls for tariff reductions on more than 50 H.T.S. 4-digit categories in three food subsectors: (1) fresh fruits and vegetables; (2) processed foods; and (3) beverages. The initiative proposes a reduction in tariff and other non-tariff measures from 1999 to 2004 to bring applied tariffs to 5% or less by 2004 with the aim of eliminating all tariffs in these subsectors by 1010/2020. An annex contains some additional H.T.S. categories of food products for possible future consideration.

Oilseeds and Oilseed Products. During the Uruguay Round, the United States proposed a ''level playing field'' initiative on oilseeds and oilseed products. The APEC proposal, which is jointly sponsored by the United States, Canada and Malaysia, exactly tracks this Uruguay Round initiative. The proposal covers basic oilseeds in H.S. 1201, 1203–1207 (e.g., soybeans, rapeseed, sunflowerseed, cottonseed), meals and vegetable oils derived from those rapeseed oil, safflower oil) and soy protein concentrates and isolates. There would be no exceptions on product coverage. The proposal calls for elimination of tariffs, non-tariff measures, export subsidies and other trade-distorting policies on all products by 2002, allowing for limited flexibility for extended staging on a product-by-product, economy-by-economy basis that would be agreed to by consensus of participants.

Rubber. The proposal would establish details for gradual reductions and/or

elimination of tariff and non-tariff measures. It would also call for economic and technical cooperation to cooperate in the development of domestic industries in rubber-producing economies through the transfer of production and manufacturing technology in order to reduce the risk of price fluctuations.

Civil Aircraft. All tariffs would be eliminated in two equal cuts on January 1, 1999 and January 1, 2000 and bound in WTO Schedules at zero. Commitments by non-WTO members could be made on an autonomous basis until WTO accession is complete. There would also be commitments by APEC economies to eliminate all customs duties and other charges of any kind levied on civil aircraft and related products and services (e.g., manufacture, repair, maintenance, etc.).

Fertilizer. This is a proposal to eliminate tariffs by 2002 and bind them in the WTO. It would also call for, by January 1, 2000, collective implementation of national transportation regulations governing the shipment of sulfur and fertilizers in accordance with the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, and encourage the development of technical assistance projects that would facilitate trade liberalization in this sector.

[FR Doc. 98–12908 Filed 5–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3190–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–98–3811]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R passenger cars that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is June 15, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL–401, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 10 am to 5 pm]

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Entwistle, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202–366–5306).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A), a motor vehicle that was not originally manufactured to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards shall be refused admission into the United States unless NHTSA has decided that the motor vehicle is substantially similar to a motor vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States, certified under 49 U.S.C. 30115, and of the same model year as the model of the motor vehicle to be compared, and is capable of being readily altered to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Petitions for eligibility decisions may be submitted by either manufacturers or importers who have registered with NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR Part 592. As specified in 49 CFR 593.7, NHTSA publishes notice in the **Federal Register** of each petition that it receives, and affords interested persons an opportunity to comment on the petition. At the close of the comment period, NHTSA decides, on the basis of the petition and any comments that it has received, whether the vehicle is eligible for importation. The agency then publishes this decision in the **Federal Register**.

Champagne Imports of Lansdale, Pennsylvania (''Champagne'') (Registered Importer 90–009) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which Champagne believes are substantially similar are 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R passenger cars that were manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by their manufacturer as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R passenger cars to their U.S. certified counterparts, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Champagne submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R passenger cars, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that non-U.S. certified 1990–1993 Bentley Continental R passenger cars are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standards Nos. 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence . . . .*, 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems*, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 109 *New Pneumatic Tires*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials.*

Petitioner also contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays:* (a) substitution of a lens marked ''Brake'' for a lens with a noncomplying symbol on the brake failure indicator lamp; (b) installation of a seat belt warning lamp that displays the appropriate symbol; (c) recalibration of the speedometer/odometer from kilometers to miles per hour.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment:* (a) installation of U.S.-model headlamp assemblies that incorporate headlamps with DOT markings; (b) installation of U.S.-model front and rear sidemarker/reflector assemblies; (c) installation of U.S.-model taillamp assemblies.

Standard No. 110 *Tire Selection and Rims:* installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror:* replacement of the passenger side