

treatment to some products coming from such developing countries) and especially the access to US markets. The duty-free treatment began on January 1st, 1976. According to Section 502b of the Trade Act of 1974, some mandatory exclusionary criteria are part of the screening process. For instance, the developing country must not be a communist country unless the products of such a country receive nondiscriminatory treatment, or such countries are members of IMF and of GATT, or such countries are not dominated or controlled by "international communism" (what's that?). The members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) are also excluded. The countries which do not take "adequate steps" to cooperate with the U.S. in preventing the importation into the US of narcotic drugs or other controlled substances; we should remind that Mexico and MERCOSUR countries are technically excluded of the GSP, because of multilateral treaties (NAFTA, "Four Plus One"). The President could withdraw or suspend the GSP status to a given country which could no longer meet the exclusionary criteria.

Since 1984, the GSP committee (Trade Policy Staff Committee, chaired by the US Trade Representative, or USTR), has to decide, after public hearings, to grant, suspend or terminate the GSP status of the developing countries, out the the principle that they "take steps" (there is no guidelines for the assessment of such steps, so that it could be highly political!) to recognize to the workers five internationally recognized worker rights: the rights to association³, the right to organize and bargain collectively⁴, the prohibition of forced labour⁵, the minimum age for child

³ INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention*, no 87, 1948.

⁴ INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, *Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention*, no 98, 1949.

⁵ INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, *Forced Labour Convention*, no 29, 1930; *Abolition of Forced Labour Convention*, no 195, 1957.