

Asian Solidarity Delegation to Quebec, Canada & global campaigns

Report

2010 Dec 6~10

Asian Ban Asbestos Network (A-BAN)



Contents;

Asian Solidarity Delegation trip report;

Day 1 December 7, in Montreal

10:00 Press conference at Community Centre

Public meeting at the University of Quebec

Day 2 December 8, in Quebec City

Early morning interview- CBC – Quebec City

Meeting with CSD (Canadian Trade Union in Quebec)

Meeting with Parti Quebecois at the Quebec national assembly:

Public meeting at the University of Laval

Day 3 December 9, in Quebec City

Press conference at the National Assembly in Ottawa

Press conference at the National Assembly in Quebec City

Meeting with the Minister Gignac and governmental officials from the Ministry of National Resource, CSST in Quebec City

Day 4 December 10, in Montreal

Interview on CBC radio, Montreal aired at 6.30 pm

Demonstration outside Charest office in Montreal City

References

Worldwide local campaigns;

Dec 7, Seoul, Korea

Dec 7, Tokyo, Japan

Dec 8, Victim's protest letter campaign worldwide (1400 messages, 40 organizations, 17 countries)

Dec 9, Hong Kong

Dec 9, Delhi, India

Dec 9, Paris, France

Dec 9, London, UK

Dec 9, Manila, Philippines

Dec 10, Mumbai, India

Appendix; Media coverage;

Acknowledgment

A-BAN and delegation to Canada appreciate all supporters particularly ADAO (Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization in USA) and IBAS (International Ban Asbestos Secretariat based in UK) for their financial, various support and active involvement.

Kathleen Ruff is another delegation member joining from British Columbia, Canada. She organised all programs for the delegation. She attended the 2010 October annual A-BAN meeting in Bandung, Indonesia. At the Bandung meeting, an agreement was made among all the participants that the Canadian new mine issue should be A-BAN's top priority as the most serious threat to Asian workers and residents. Owing to the October agreement, these activities by the delegation and global campaigns were organized and carried out in December only a little more than one month later. She showed incredible energetic driving force and leadership using her expertise on all kind of Canadian asbestos issues as well as international stories. She is long time human rights activist and expert and presently co-ordinator of the Rotterdam Convention Alliance.

We appreciate all the Canadian supporters whose effort made the delegation's program so powerful, particularly:

In Montreal

- Micheline Beaudry, Quebec Solitaire
- Eric Darier, Greenpeace Quebec
- Flory Doucas, Quebec Public Health Association
- Louise Vandelac, professor, UQAM
- Rae Aston, Social activist
- Dr Fernand Turcotte, Laval University
- Andre Paradin, Amnesty International

In Quebec

- Yv Bonnier Viger, Laval University
- Pierre-L Gosselin, Laval University
- Lorraine Chartier, political candidate
- Amir Khadir, Christian Richard Fecteau, Quebec Solidaire

In Ottawa

- Steve Staples, Lauren Hunter, Rideau Institute
- Nathan Cullen, Pat Martin, Tim Howlett, New Democratic Party



Asian Ban Asbestos Network (A-BAN)

Z Bldg. 5F, Kameido 7-10-1, Koto-ku, Tokyo, 136-0071, Japan
Phone +81-3-3636-3882, Fax +81-3636-3881
E-mail 2009aban@gmail.com

December 9, 2010

Asia calls on Québec: Stop the New Asbestos Mine

A statement by the Asian Solidarity Delegation to Quebec

We are here today representing asbestos victims, trade unions and health organizations in Asia. We are horrified by the plans of the Government of Québec to provide a \$58 million loan guarantee to develop new asbestos mine. It has been predicted that if this project goes ahead, the new Jeffrey mine will produce over 5 million tonnes of asbestos in the next quarter century.

This asbestos won't be used in Québec or anywhere in Canada – Canadian citizens do not want to risk hazardous exposures to asbestos and they are right not to do so. No human being should be subjected to such dangers. The likely destination for these asbestos shipments is Asian countries, a fact which we view as morally indefensible as well as racist. Is the life of a worker in Mumbai worth less than that of a worker in Québec?

Around the world, asbestos is killing one person every 5 minutes.¹ The International Labor Organization estimates that there are more than 100,000 asbestos-related deaths every year. The World Health Organization believes the death toll is higher and that future fatalities will escalate due to ongoing hazardous exposures. Epidemics of asbestos-related diseases have been documented in countries such as the UK, France, Australia, Italy and the U.S. Similar epidemics are emerging in Japan and Korea; in both countries, the scandal caused by the asbestos deaths of workers and residents who lived near asbestos mines or asbestos-consuming factories has been widely reported.

¹ See Asbestos Policies of International Agencies and Organizations, page 9-11.

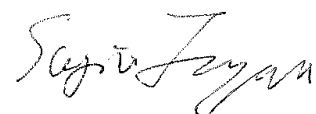
In most asbestos-consuming countries in Asia, the epidemic of asbestos-related diseases remains largely invisible. Asbestosis and cancer victims are dying without proper diagnoses and treatment (their illnesses are often misdiagnosed); in most Asian countries, the injured are unable to obtain financial support or compensation. We know that many asbestos victims in this region worked with asbestos from Québec. In fact, Asian countries remain the most important customers for Québec asbestos exporters. We are in no doubt that the owners of the new Jeffrey asbestos mine intend to ship the majority of annual production to Asian destinations: more money for the anonymous international investors, more pollution and environmental exposure for Québec citizens and more asbestos deaths for Asia.

How many dead Asians are enough for the Québec Government to accept that this indefensible trade has to end? Every human being has the right to work and live in a healthy environment. Are the tragic repercussions of asbestos exposures in Asia and elsewhere of less significance than a few hundred jobs in Québec?

Asbestos industry propagandists assure people in Québec that asbestos can be used safely under controlled conditions. Yet, research in Québec has proved conclusively that such conditions do not exist in Québec workplaces². They most certainly do not exist in India, Thailand, Indonesia or the Philippines. For many years Québec's asbestos lobby has, by means of aggression and deception, prevented the truth about asbestos from being told. This taboo has been broken by Québec's own medical doctors and health professionals, who have challenged the Québec Government to stop the mining and export of asbestos. We thank them for their integrity and courage.

At this critical moment when the asbestos industry wants to launch another generation of asbestos disease, we have come in person to make a direct, human appeal to the citizens of Québec. We are confident that once they are aware of the tragic asbestos reality which exists in Asia, they will put pressure on their Government to STOP THE MINE.

On behalf of the Asian Solidarity Delegation to Québec
Coordinator of the Asian Ban Asbestos Network (A-BAN)
Sugio FURUYA (Mr.)



² *Project provincial amiante* <http://www.santepub-mtl.qc.ca/Publication/pdftravail/projetamiante.pdf>

Introducing the Members of the Delegation from Asia

Japan

Sugio Furuya is the Secretary General of the Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, a founding member of the Ban Asbestos Network of Japan (BANJAN). He has been active in the Japanese campaign to ban asbestos and obtain justice for asbestos victims for over 20 years.

Kazumi Yoshizaki The appalling and unnecessary asbestos death of her beloved father, spurred Ms Yoshizaki to campaign for a worldwide ban on asbestos. She is an active member of the Japan Association of Mesothelioma and Asbestos-related Disease Victims and their Families.

India

Anup Srivasta is the Education Officer for South Asia for the global trade union federation: Building and Woodworkers International. He has worked, in particular, to inform construction workers about the risks of building products that contain asbestos since in many countries, including Canada, construction workers have high levels of asbestos-related disease.

Omana George is a Program Coordinator at the Asia Monitor Resource Centre (AMRC), a well-known civil society organization that has been promoting workers' rights in Asia for over 30 years. She has been involved in campaigns to achieve a ban on asbestos in India, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Indonesia

Muchamad Darisman is a community activist from the Local Initiative for Occupational Health & Safety Network (LION) in Bandung, Indonesia. He has been part of a joint Indonesian-Japanese-Korean task force investigating hazardous asbestos exposures to workers and members of the public in Indonesia for 3 years. During this time, he has interviewed scores of at-risk individuals, photographed multiple examples of asbestos contamination and participated in scientific research.

Korea

Ye-yong Choi is the Executive Director of the Ban Asbestos Network Korea (BANKO), and a Director of the Asian Citizen's Center for Environment and Health, a member group of Friends of the Earth Korea. He has been researching asbestos issues in terms of 'international transfers of asbestos industry' in Asia and Europe for some years.

Jeong-rim LEE was diagnosed with malignant pleural and peritoneal mesothelioma in 2006. She has no asbestos-related work history but had the misfortune to live near Korea's 2nd largest factory producing asbestos-cement material. She is the mother of two children and a member of the Korean Asbestos Victims' Network.



< (from left) Furuya Sugio of Japan, Kathleen Ruff of Canada, Dr Fernand Turcotte of Canada >

Day 1

December 7, in Montreal

10:00 Press conference at Community Centre

The press conference got off to a good start with a room full of journalists, print and radio reporters like – Toronto Star, CBC etc.

We started off with an introduction of our delegation by Dr. Fernand who professor of public health, has been a very courageous leader in challenging the Chrysotile Institute. He spoke about the importance of Asian delegation to Quebec and why it is imperative to say that opening the mine is what we in Asia do not want and have to say NO to the Jeffrey mine!

Kathleen then spoke in French to the media telling them why we are here, what is our concern as people from Asia and why financing the mine is detrimental to the people of Asia.

Sugio Furuya who is the representative of the delegation started the address with

saying the following:

“This has never happened before: that the people from the countries where Québec’s asbestos is sent have asked to be heard by the people of Québec.

We are here because we are gravely concerned about the possibility of a new asbestos mine being built in Québec. The consortium of international investors has asked the Québec government to give a \$58 million loan guarantee in order to open this mine. If this project goes ahead, the new Jeffrey mine will produce over 5 million tonnes of asbestos over the next quarter century.

This asbestos won’t be used in Québec or anywhere in Canada – Canadian citizens do not want to risk hazardous exposures to asbestos and they are right not to do so. No human being should be subjected to such dangers. The likely destination for these asbestos shipments is Asian countries, a fact which we view as morally indefensible as well as racist. Is the life of a worker in Mumbai worth less than that of a worker in Québec? “

He then introduced the delegation members one by one starting with Anup Srivastava from the Building and Woodworkers International who spoke on behalf the international trade union movement, Indian trade union movement and workers all over the world.

“Our venerated leader Mahatma Gandhi listed commerce without morality, science without humanity and politics without principle among the deadly sins. There is no doubt that these sins and others have been committed by people intent on selling deadly asbestos to Indian consumers. We urge the people of Québec, as mothers and fathers, daughters and sons, consumers, citizens and voters, to speak out on this issue. Enough life has been sacrificed in the pursuit of the asbestos dollar. Let it end here.”

The next speaker was Jeong- Rim Lee, Rachel who gave a moving testimony about her life and how she was exposed to asbestos and her sickness.

“Asbestos has destroyed my life.

When I first got sick, I did not know about asbestos. I had a vague idea that it was something used for roofs but that was all I knew.

In the last 5 years, I have learned a lot about asbestos. Most of all, I have learned how it can completely destroy a life and the life of those who love someone with an asbestos disease.”

The next speaker to address the media was Kazumi Yoshizaki. Her father dies of pleural mesothelioma in 2005.



< Rachel Jeong-Rim LEE of Korea >

“I know how horrible asbestos is. Asbestos fibers sneaked into my father’s lungs silently, stayed there for many years and suddenly rampaged. Asbestos caused him physical and mental pain. It took happiness, future, dream, hope, and stable mental state from him.”

Muchamad Darisman spoke about asbestos factory which he had visited in Indonesia and had a sack with him of the Canadian asbestos which is being used in Indonesia. He also showed pictures of the environment around which the asbestos factory is with the community all around the factory including a kindergarden.

The media was very interested in his photographs and knowing more about the conditions about the waste of asbestos sacks and garbage where the community and children are coming into contact with having no idea about how deadly the substance is.

The next speaker was Omana George who spoke about the conditions of workers and victims in India.

“The asbestos industry claim that its mineral is being sold only to companies that handle it securely. This is not the case, argued George, program coordinator at the Asia Monitor Resource Centre. She said many people in India, where much of Quebec’s asbestos ends up, have no idea what it is, let alone how to use it safely. People break it, cut it, therefore releasing the fibers. Afterwards, there isn’t medical expertise to properly diagnose asbestos-related disease, she added.”

Finally Yeyong Choi stressed upon the double standards of Quebec in protecting its people and on Mr. Charest saying that Canada is a leader in sustainable economy and global development.

“Mr. Charest has to see the fact that Québec is the leading exporter of the deadly mineral ‘chrysotile’ asbestos to Asia, exporting over 1.77 million tons during recent 11 years (1999-2009), which is 76% of Québec’s total asbestos export. The ratio of export to Asia is getting higher every year.

He added on to say that should the new mine is allowed, then all the asbestos must be not used in Quebec or Canada, but will all be exported to Asia. Aren’t our dead enough? “

The press conference went on for a much longer period than anticipated , the press were very patient and hung on to every word we spoke and appreciated all the information that we had to share.

Members of our delegation were then interviews by a few of the journalists on a one to one basis and here are a few links of our press conference yesterday that was featured in media reports this morning.

- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation – CBC news both Radio and TV coverage

<http://www.cbc.ca/health/story/2010/12/08/asia-asbestos-activists-visit-quebec.html#socialcomments-submit>

- Toronto Star

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/article/903341--victims-activists-urge-canada-to-stop-asbestos-exports>

- Canada News Wire

<http://www.canadanewswire.ca/en/releases/archive/December2010/07/c3195.html>

- UPI

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2010/12/08/Canada-urged-to-stop-asbestos-export/UPI-11961291818672/

- Digital Journal
<http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/301166>

- Canadian Mining Journal
<http://www.canadianminingjournal.com/issues/story.aspx?aid=1000395512>



<(from left) Rachel of Korea, Darisman of Indonesia, Kazumi of Japan>

December 7th Afternoon, in Montreal: Public meeting at the University of Quebec

In the afternoon, we went to the University of Quebec to have a public meeting and where there were many interested people from the community and journalists who came to the meeting. This one was a much longer meeting where there was a more interactive discussion in the end.

The meeting started off with an address from Dr. Edward Keyserlink whose brother had died of asbestosis while being exposed to asbestos while he was in the Canadian navy. He spoke about the overwhelming medical evidence that say that the usage of asbestos should be banned and there is no safe usage. Canada is at the point of using no asbestos at all but despite that Canada remains the promoter and the leader in the world pro asbestos crusade. Quebec mines and exports it and the federal government will not ban its export as a hazardous product.



He pointed out the responsibility of politicians to protect, not harm those affected 'anywhere' by the policies he supports. He appealed to the people of Quebec and

said that short-sighted political gain, wilful ignorance and negligent disregard of scientific evidence has displaced principle and duty and as a Quebecer and Canadian, he was ashamed of the governments both provincial and federal.

Members of the delegation then addressed the audience one by one and then in the following discussion, one of the questions that came up was that why are countries like Indonesia and India importing the substance and not stopping it? We responded speaking about the propaganda, the strong presence of the chrysotile institute in Asia, the misinformation campaign about asbestos and why Canada should be ashamed of itself in the role it plays for selfish gain.

Rachel and Kazumi's sharing moves the audience as they can really relate to what happened with them and how asbestos has destroyed their lives. It is a moving experience for those listening to them and they really make a connection with people who are listening to them.

After the public meeting- we left to Quebec City.

Day 2

8 December

Early morning interview- CBC – Quebec City

It was a live radio interview at the CBC-Radio studio in downtown Quebec city at 7:30am. Jeong-Rim Rachel Lee and Anup Srivastava were invited and Yeyong followed to support.

The interviewer was very aware of the issue and helped to articulate very clearly the concerns we had. In particular Rachel's story was delivered that this was not just worker's problem but resident's one as well like anybody could be the victim. It was a 10 minute interview but studio interview is a powerful medium to get the message to the listeners. Anup's answer was brilliant with the question about the asbestos miner's job if the mine closed, "We concerned their jobs, the money Quebec government is going to support the mine is their money so the money can be used for other sustainable way for themselves not the asbestos mine." the MC closed the interview "they wanted to end Quebec asbestos mine", which is very strong and clear remark.

CBC radio link

<http://www.cbc.ca/video/news/audioplayer.html?clipid=1688767990>



<Anup of India and Rachel of Korea>

**December 8th, in Quebec City:
Meeting with CSD (Centrale des Syndicats Democratiques, Central of
Democratic Trade Unions)**

Those present from the CSD were - Mr. Francois Vaudreuil, SCD President (CSD has 70,000 members) Mr. Normand Pepin, CSD official of the research department. He translated our English into French so we could not identify what was being said in French. Along with the President were 2 (male and female) secretariats of the National Asbestos Union which organize 270 Jeffery mine workers

Dr. Jacques Dunnigan

*We received two documents – one is a paper presented by CSD to the Regional Conference of Elected Representatives of the Eastern Townships and the Regional Committee on Natural Resource and territory (November 18. 2010) and another one is Dunnigan's personal advice for us! (See pp 47-48)
He said he had already read our press pack.

The meeting began with the President's remark and followed by Sugio's remarks that can be summed up as that the Solidarity delegation have come here in order to call on Quebec government to stop new Jeffery mine and to ask you, the people of Quebec to put pressures on your government to do so. Our opinions may be different but I hope and believe we could have constructive discussion. Followed by statements of the rest of the delegation members.

Dr. Jacques Dunnigan then gave a speech and the same has been scanned for further reference. This was followed by a discussion and in conclusion, the CSD president stated that they supported new Jeffrey mine project.

In conclusion, Sugio made 2 points:

- The CSD still does not have enough understanding about the asbestos reality in Asian countries.
- The argument that Canada is solely exporting chrysotile and cannot

substitute to inspect in your countries - it is the obligation of your own country - is irresponsible manner.

He asked them to reconsider their position again following today's discussion with our delegation.



< (from right) Mr. Normand Pepin, Dr Jacques Dunnigan, Mr. Francois Vaudreuil of the CSD leader >

Notes from Sugio of this meeting

Asbestos-related diseases are due to "bad practice"

*Situation in Quebec has been dramatically improved
landmark points - 1949 strike and 1975 registration*

Amphibole theory

*meso case in Quebec is due to amphibole used for 2 years during WWII
since 1975 there has been no meso*

Bio-persistence theory

Economic interest of substitute manufacturers behind ban asbestos argument

*If Canada stop export it must be replaced by Russia and other countries and
Canada has better practice or is better country.*

This sounded for us that they urged "Canada is better killer".

Long latency period theory

What you see now is the result of the past.

The current good practice doesn't cause danger.

*Infrastructure is not being caught up to rapid economic developments in
countries like India and Canada cannot substitute to national authority in those
countries.*

*Bad practice exists in small shops and major consumer using Quebec chrysotile
is following good practice of safe use approach.*

**December 8th afternoon,
Meeting with Parti Quebecois at the Quebec national assembly:**

The meeting took place mainly in French and it was obvious that they wished to hear what the delegation had to say and therefore to everything we said. Kathleen helped convey our position to them and they of course asked us all the standards questions.

- why are we here in Canada and why not in our countries working to stop import?
- If Canada were to stop mining and exporting asbestos then some other country will take their place
- Jobs that people will lose
- Support in Quebec for the mine and the question of safety not being an issue

The meeting concluded with them telling us that they will take everything we said into account and discuss it in their 52 member group. But refused to take any clear position other than that in spite of Kathleen asking them repeatedly to take a stand.



(left photo; Agnès Maltais, critic for health, and Scott McKay, critic for mines, for the Official Opposition, at the Quebec national assembly)

**December 8th afternoon, Quebec City:
Public meeting at the University of Laval**

The meeting began with an introductory speech by Dr. Yv Bonnier Viger who is the President of the Association of Physicians specialising in Public Health. He spoke about asbestos, the harmful effects of the substance, the diseases it causes, why it has been banned and what is the reason our team was in Quebec and our message and why we had come across the seas with this message.

Sugio then started the meeting with data on Canadian asbestos with using some

slides in PPT-Data. Followed by Kazumi then introduced her experience and conveyed the voice of asbestos victims and their families. Instead of Rachel who didn't attend the meeting Yeyong introduced her story and Canadian asbestos in Korea. Anup introduced campaign by the global trade union movements and showed pictures of February action in India. Darisman showed LAB chrysotile sack and explained his pictures. Finally Omana introduced asbestos reality in India and showed pictures as a testament to the situation.



In the audience there were very obviously 2 camps- people on our side and then those from the industry, town of asbestos and the Jeffrey mine itself. This led to a very direct and outspoken discussion where they kept trying to downplay everything we said about safety, about chrysotile being safe and about banning asbestos.

There was a geologist present in the audience who started talking about the diameter of the fibres and went into a very technical statement on how and why chrysotile is okay. He was completely squashed by a public health doctor who told him that as a geologist he can talk about the mineral and fibre but he has no authority to talk about the health effects of the substance.

The meeting concluded quite amicably after a lot of heated debates and raising of voices and nearly shouting in the room. One of the doctors came to Omana later and said that the trip of the Asian delegation with the message not to fund the mine and ban asbestos export was timely for Quebec and Canada and thank you to all of us for opening their eyes.

Phone interview with the Globe and Mail

The Asian delegation received a request for a phone interview by the Globe and Mail - who asked us about the purpose of our visit, what was our message to Canada and the people of Quebec. Details of the interview with Omana George who spoke on behalf of the delegation can be read here:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/lancet-asian-delegation-urge-canada-to-ban-asbestos-exports/article1830597/>

Day 3

9 December

Press conferences at the National Assembly in Ottawa

The delegation broke into 2 parts. Kazumi and Omana went to Ottawa to do a press conference at the Parliament along with Members of Parliament of the New Democratic Party.

They arrived in Ottawa and went to the Rideau Institute where they had a meeting with the Director Steven Staples and other colleagues present.

The next meeting was with the NGO called working on environmental and health issuescancer.org. The Director of the organisation has come to meet us and share their solidarity with us and our group and with the people of Asia. He expressed sadness with Canada's position in the asbestos lobby and exports. He was really happy to make contacts with us and would like to work with us in the future on asbestos and help us with our campaign. His organisation has a campaign against asbestos and nuclear energy.

Next is was an interview with Ian Austin who is the Ottawa based correspondent for the NY Times. He was quite direct and challenged us on our work and how much of an impact we will have and if the Canadian government will ever listen to us and if they did not what will be our reaction and the next step. We told him about our position and why Canada should not continue to play the role it is when it concerns its people and those in Asia.

Post lunch was the press conference. The speakers were Nathan Cullen who hosted the show and also said that labour groups have issued a press statement in Ottawa in support of the delegation and their position. The speakers were Kazumi first who gave an account of her father's illness and the victims movement in Japan followed by Omana who spoke about why countries in Asia do not want any more asbestos and spoke about the reality in Asian countries. The next speaker was Pat Martin who spoke about his history of working in an

asbestos factory and finally Thomas Mulcair who addresses the journalist in French.



<Omana speaking in front, at the press conference in the House of Commons, Ottawa>

Here is their press release -

New Democrats joined Asian asbestos victims and activists today to demand an end to Canada's deadly asbestos exports.

New Democrats pointed out that despite spending hundreds of millions of dollars removing asbestos from Parliament buildings, the Government of Canada continues to support the mining and export of the world's leading industrial killer.

"It is absolutely disgraceful that Canada now bears the shame of being one of the last places still exporting this deadly stuff," said New Democrat Natural Resources Critic Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley). "The lives of workers in the developing world should be more important than narrow political posturing by this government."

Cullen has introduced legislation to ban the mining and export of asbestos while assisting communities in transitioning to more sustainable economic activities. "Canada is becoming an international pariah for its asbestos policies," said Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre). "Without exaggeration, we are exporting human misery on a monumental scale."

"Once again, the Conservative government is showing that it is incapable of

acting responsibly. It is scandalous and shameful that this government is still allowing asbestos to be exported to countries that have no safety standards regarding its use. It is banned here but we export it. This makes no sense,” charged New Democrat Deputy Leader Thomas Mulcair (Outremont).

Joining the New Democrat MPs were Kazumi Yoshizaki of Japan and Omana George of India - part of the Solidarity Delegation from Asia to Quebec consisting of asbestos victims and activists from four Asian countries demanding an end to Canadian asbestos exports.

“We appeal to Prime Minister Harper: You do not promote asbestos as a safe product in Canada. So please stop promoting it as a safe product for developing countries. Please care about our lives. We call on you to support a ban on asbestos.” Sugio Furuya, leader of the Solidarity Delegation from Asia to Canada. After this, the 2 members of the team headed back to Montreal to unite with the rest of the delegation.

December 9th, Press conference at the National Assembly in Quebec City

Meanwhile the rest of the delegation went in the morning to the press conference in the National Assembly. Sugio spoke to the audience about the meetings with CSD and Parti Quebecois, public meeting at universities in Montreal and Quebec Cities. He said that the people are now becoming aware of tragic asbestos reality in Asian countries.



<(from left) Prof. Yv. Bonnier Viger, Furuya Sugio, Mr. Amir Khadir of Quebec Solidaire, Rachel LEE, Yeyong CHOI, Anup Srivastava>

Next step should be an action. He concluded by saying that we the delegation are hoping and believing there will be more support for our demand to stop new Jeffrey mine. The members of the delegation all spoke one by one which was followed by listening the debates at the national assembly.

**December 9th,
Meeting with the Minister Clement Gignac and governmental
officials from the Ministry of Economic Development and CSST
representatives in Quebec City**

The meeting started with the ministers speech followed by Sugio who said the following “ We have come here in order to call on you and your government to stop new Jeffrey mine. We know you has required a confirmation to accept a governmental loan guarantee - Workers protection similar to that in Quebec should be applied to workers in the countries where Quebec's asbestos was sent. As an asbestos victim, persons who have worked on asbestos issue in Asia, we know the real situation. Workers and the public are being exposed to asbestos under unsafe or even more dangerous situation and asbestos is killing more and more people in Asian countries. This is the real situation. Medical and occupational health experts in Quebec and anywhere in Canada confirm our statements. We strongly recommend you to listen to their voice. After our members speech, I would like to hear your clear answer whether you will support our demand or not.”

Rachel then spoke about her life and how asbestos affected her and has made her very ill. The other members of the team were then introduced briefly so that more time was saved for discussion.



<Minister Gignac (middle)>

Points made during the meeting:

The minister said his government has not decided but for us he looked to having fixed position to support the mine.

* Minister said that the situation in 50 years ago was so bad but it has been improved. Now Quebec has "one of best practice" in the world. He used "best practice" instead of "good practice" or "better practice" Then our two our liaison persons (Kathleen and Lorraine) to make comments.

KATHLEEN'S SPEECH AND REPLIES

* When Kathleen's speech became a little longer they started to talk each other talk in whispers. They would not hear and response earnestly and were not polite.

In conclusion the following remarks were made:

You urged that if Canada stop to export it must be replaced by Russia and other countries. But those countries are not only exporting but also using asbestos in their countries. Canada is only one country that is only exporting Quebec's asbestos is not used by people in Quebec and anywhere in Canada. It looks like a death exporter or death merchant.

LAST REMARK (mainly against the ministers opinion that your countries should apply Quebec's "best practice")

We prefer ban on asbestos rather than best practice.

And international organizations agree with us.

We have made efforts for ban asbestos and will continue to do so.

Japan and Korea have already introduced ban on asbestos and more Asian countries will introduce in the near future

It is a time to decide which side are you stand on, ban on asbestos or continued use?

Not only us, the whole world are watching what decision will be made.

Note: Please refer to Kathleen's meeting notes on this meeting for details and the discussions which took place.

Day 4

10 December

Interview with Omana on CBC radio, Montreal aired on 10 December at 6.30 pm

It's a scheme that combines creation and destruction in a very discomfiting way. Quebec has approved a plan by a consortium to re-open an old asbestos mine in the province. The new venture will create about four hundred badly needed jobs.

But a group representing Asian workers is upset about Canada's plans to re-start the Jeffrey Mine. Members of that group traveled all the way to Quebec this week to try to persuade politicians there to change their mind.

Omana George is an occupational health worker from India and part of the Asia delegation. We reached her in Montreal.

The link of the interview can be found on

<http://www.cbc.ca/asithappens/episode/2010/12/10/friday-december-10-2010/>

Listen to the audio link - Part three of the program - its on top of the page

QUEBEC ANTI-ASBESTOS LOBBY

Duration: 00:06:08

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Dec 10, Demonstration outside Charest office in Montreal City

It was a well organised demonstration with Flory and her team preparing flyers, materials and banners. The demonstration was well supported by members of Greenpeace, Quebec Solidaire and other supporters of our campaign.

There were several media and a live radio-interview by Kathleen just after the demo at the right spot.

This was the conclusion of our trip and the delegation left Canada on the 11th and 12th of December 2010.





<photo by Marie-josée roy>

REFERENCES

Asian Solidarity Delegation from Asia to Quebec: Official Press Pack

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_official_press_pack.pdf

<http://www.gban.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/The-Solidarity-Delegation-from-Asia-to-Quebec.pdf>

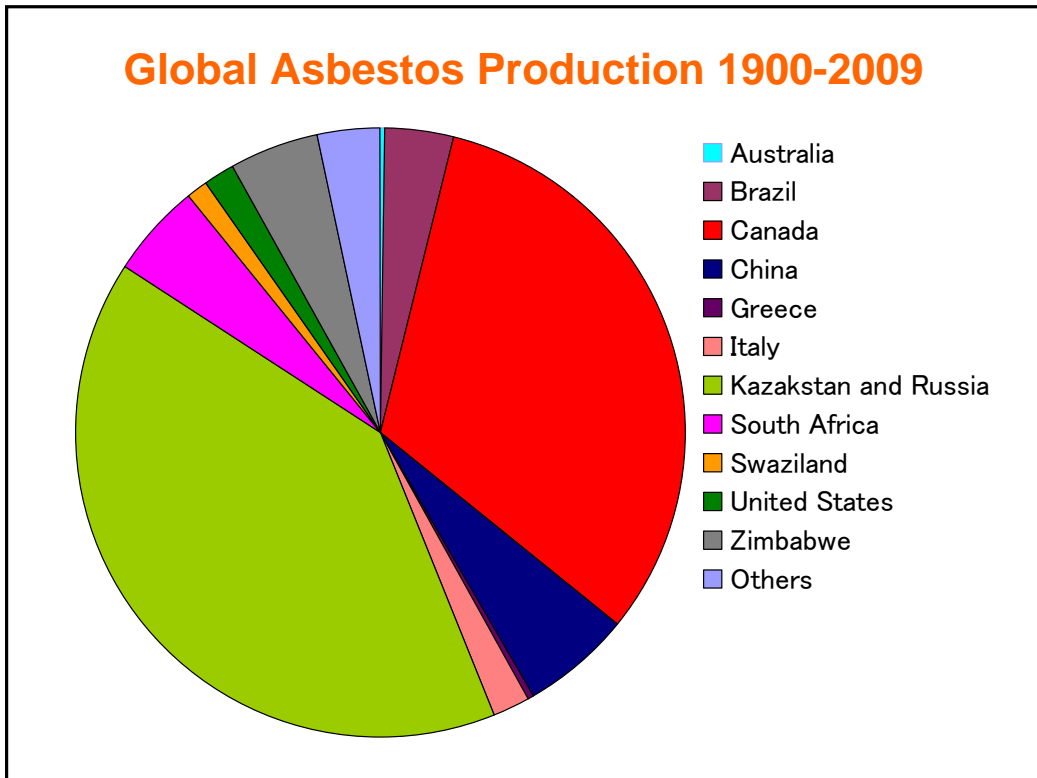
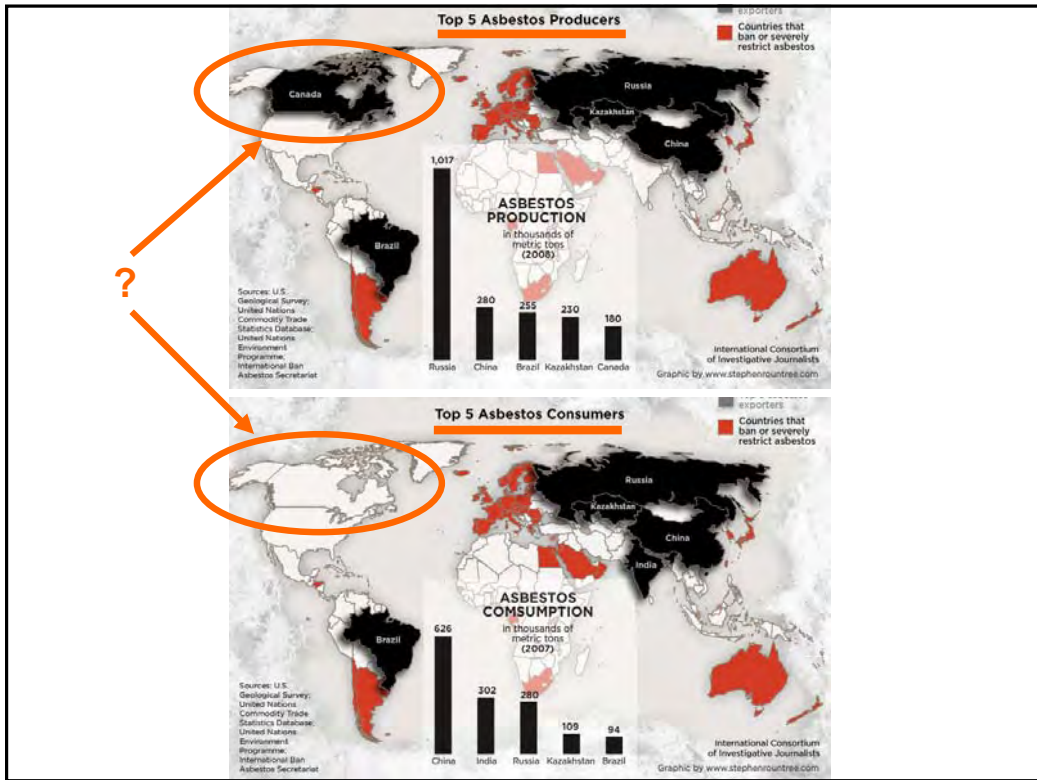
Asian Solidarity Delegation from Asia to Quebec Press Release in Montreal

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_press_rel_dec_7.pdf

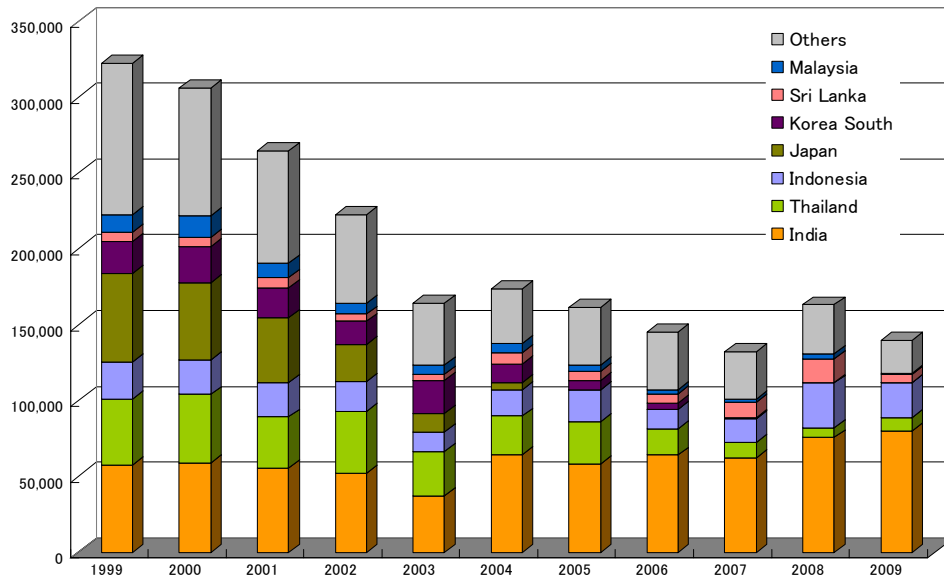
Letters from the Asian Solidarity Delegation from Asia to Quebec

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_a_ban_letters.pdf

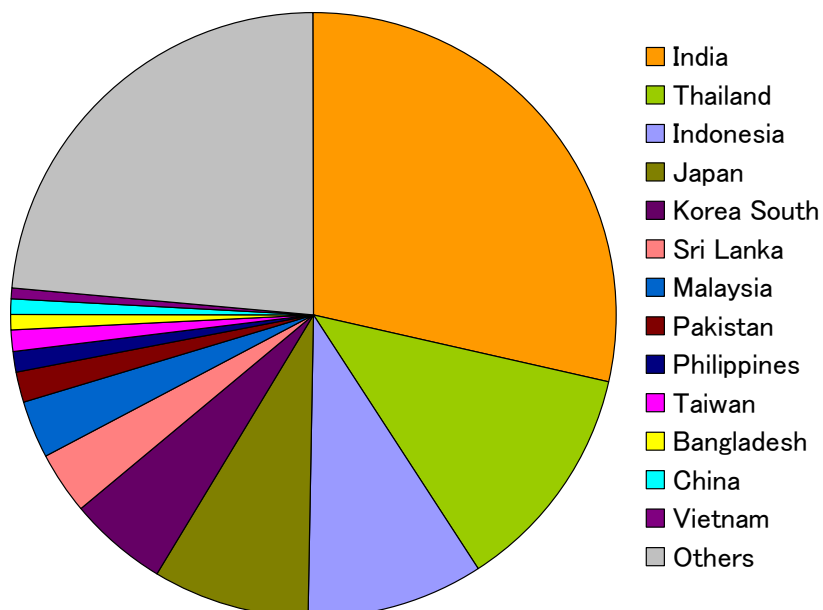
http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_delegation_lett_to_chadha.pdf



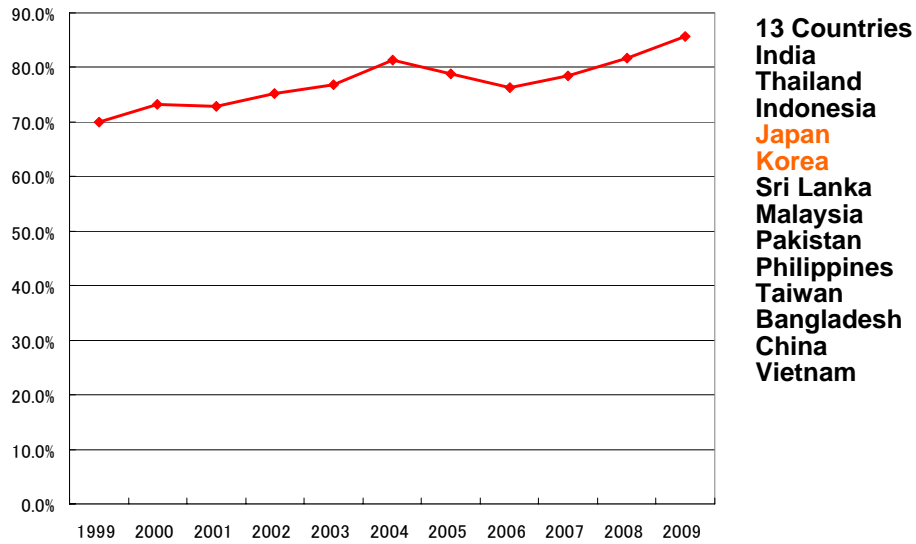
Canadian Asbestos Exports 1999-2009



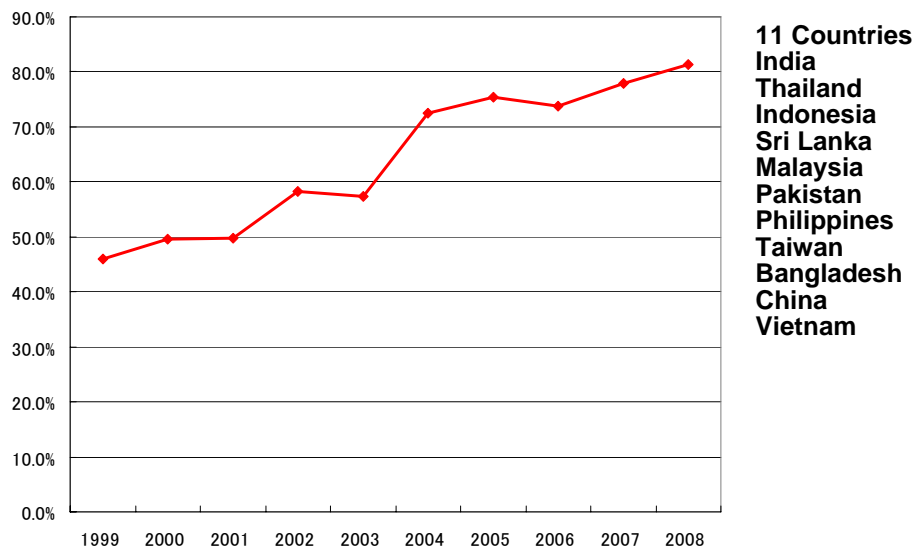
Canadian Asbestos Exports 1999-2009



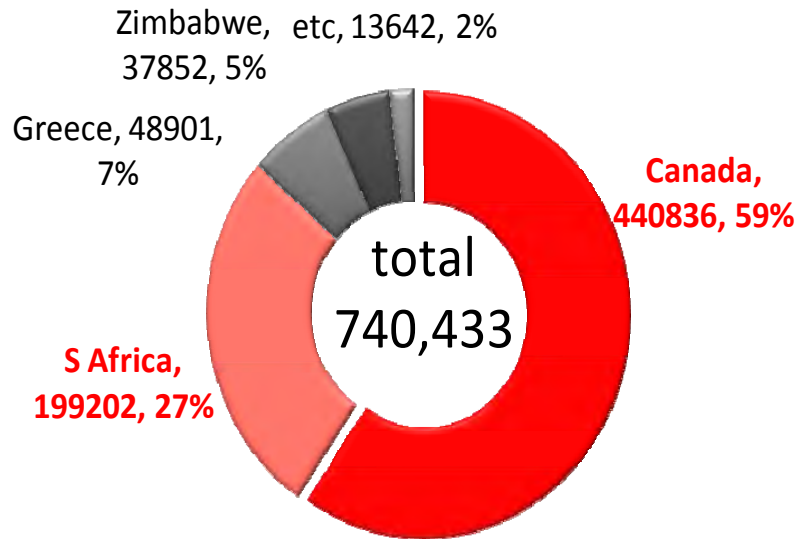
**Proportion of 13 Asian countries
(including Japan and Korea)
among Canadian Asbestos Exports 1999-2009**



**Proportion of 11 Asian countries
(excluding Japan and Korea)
among Canadian Asbestos Exports 1999-2009**

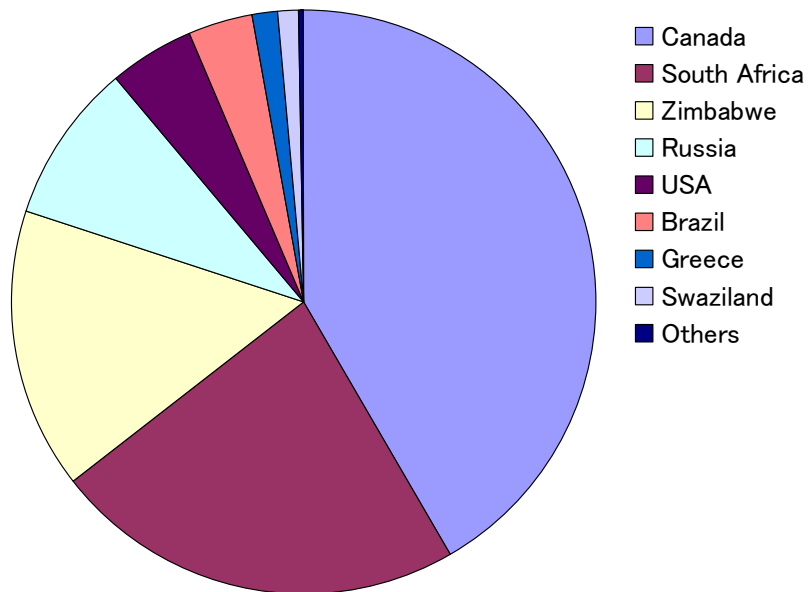


Canadian Asbestos Export to Korea 1991-2007

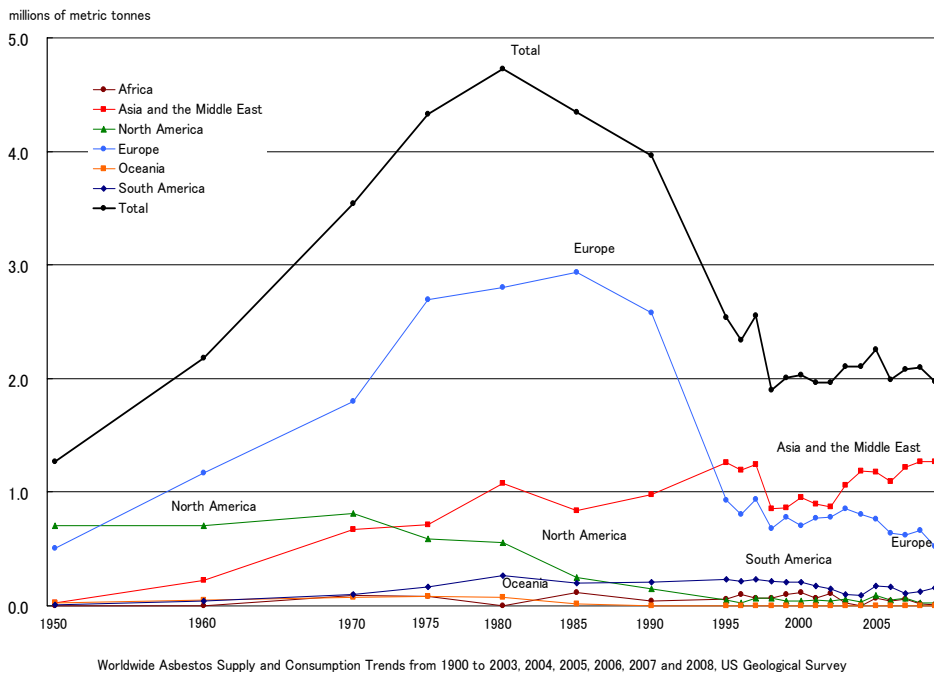


Ban Asbestos Network Korea

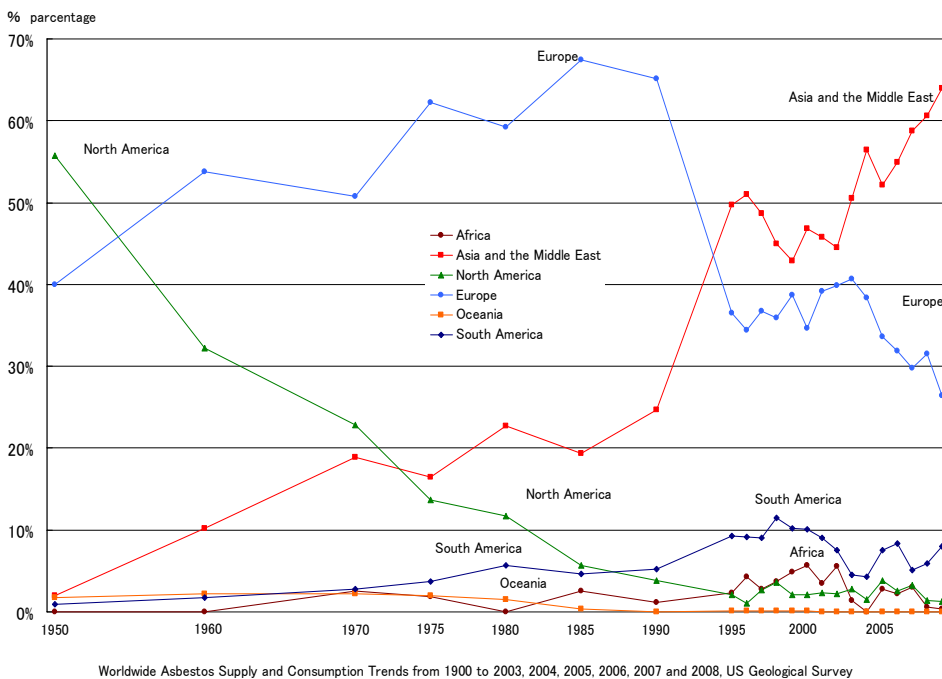
Canadian Asbestos Export to Japan 1998-2005



Trend of Asbestos Consumption by Continent 1950–2009



Trend of Asbestos Consumption by Continent 1950–2009

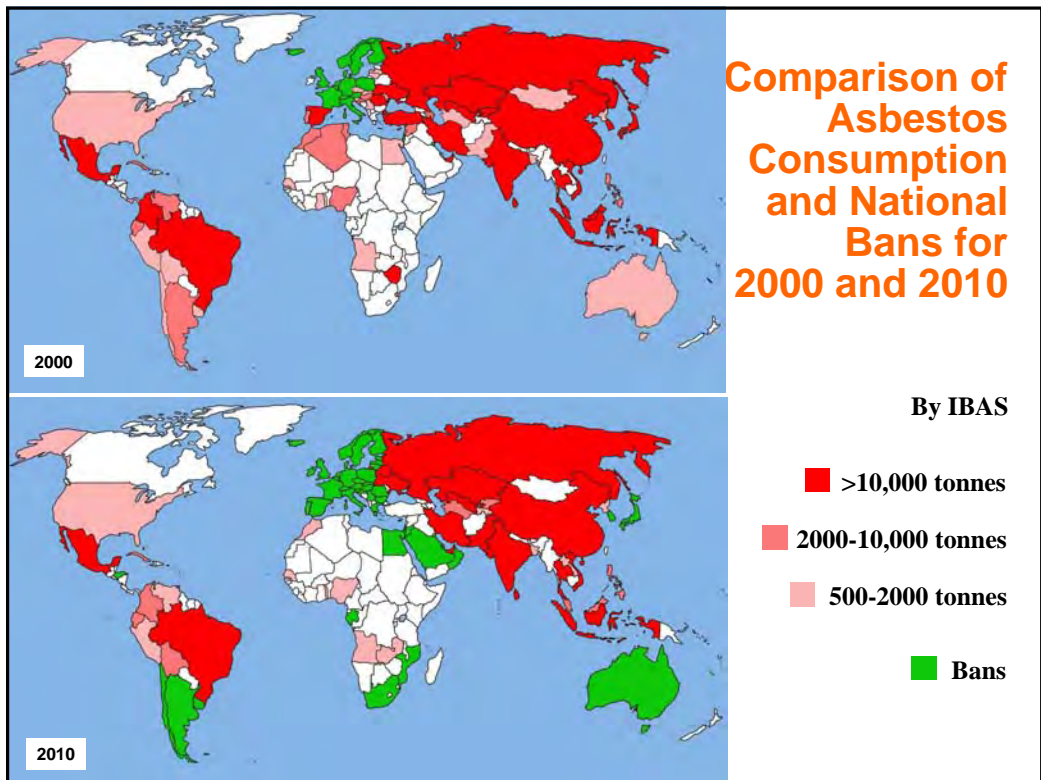


Top 10 Asbestos Consuming Countries in 2008

	Country	Asbestos Consumption (tonnes)	
1	China	554,419	27.0%
2	Russia	359,973	17.2%
3	India	348,538	16.6%
4	Kazakhstan	185,625	8.9%
5	Brazil	98,641	4.7%
6	Indonesia	78,037	3.7%
7	Thailand	69,291	3.3%
8	Ukraine	64,330	3.1%
9	Sri Lanka	58,109	2.8%
10	Vietnam	49,998	2.4%
	World Total	2,095,387	100.0%

Top 10 Asbestos Consuming Countries in 2009

	Country	Asbestos Consumption (tonnes)	
1	China	565,313	28.6%
2	India	340,544	17.2%
3	Russia	276,821	14.0%
4	Brazil	140,272	7.1%
5	Thailand	102,739	5.2%
6	Uzbekistan	98,635	5.0%
7	Indonesia	82,302	4.2%
8	Vietnam	80,875	4.1%
9	Ukraine	63,600	3.2%
10	Kazakhstan	40,217	2.0%
	World Total	1,977,069	100.0%



Summary: Banning Asbestos in Asia

Countries already introducing ban in some way	
Japan	2004 (with few exceptions, Industrial Safety and Health Act)
Korea	2007 (with few exceptions, Industrial Safety and Health Act)
Mongolia	2010 (Governmental Order, its real enforcement remains as a big challenge)
Singapore	1989 (raw asbestos, Environment Protection and Management Act)
Brunei	1994 (administrative rules by the Ministry of Development)
Countries setting goals to achieve ban in some way	
Thailand	By 2012 (voluntary phase-out plan developed in 2007)
Malaysia	By 2015 (voluntary phase-out plan developed in 2009)
Philippines	By 2018 (draft code of practice 2008, will be front loaded by new law?)
Vietnam	By 2020 (NPEARD developed in 2007)
Taiwan	By 2020 (EPA phase-out plan in 2010, legal prohibition)
Lao	By 2020 (drafted regulation?)
Countries starting discussion/consideration	
Cambodia	From 2009
Countries not yet establishing ban policy	

'Controlled Use' and the Reality in Asia



Vietnam 2004







Indonesia



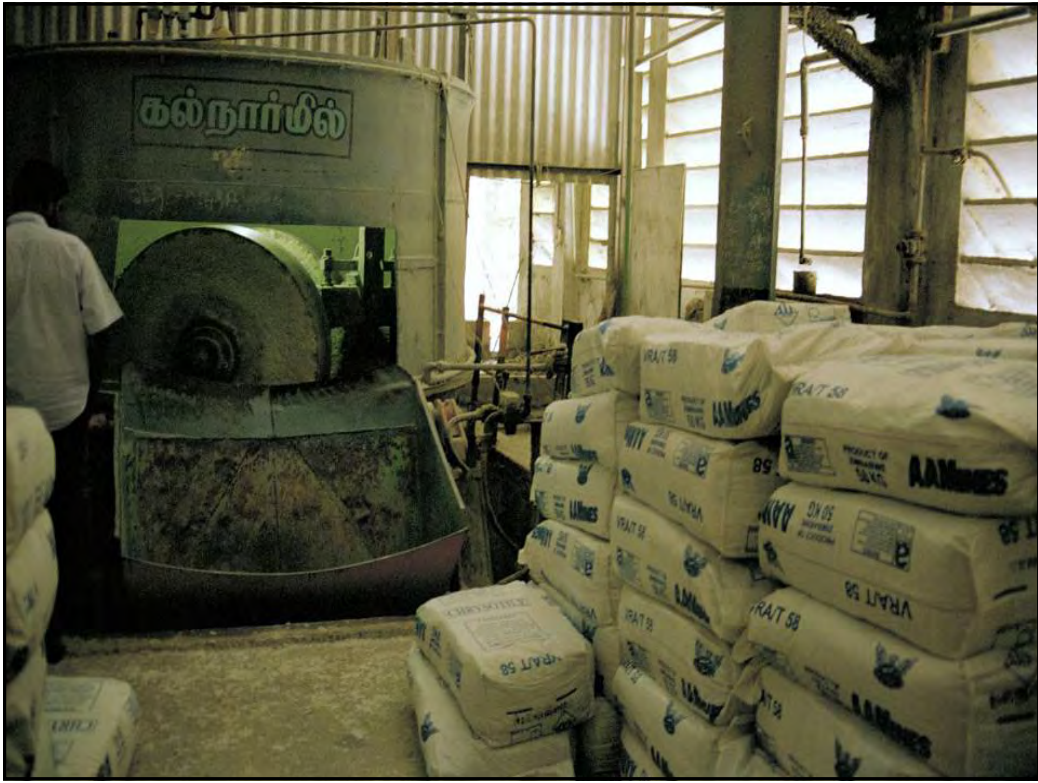






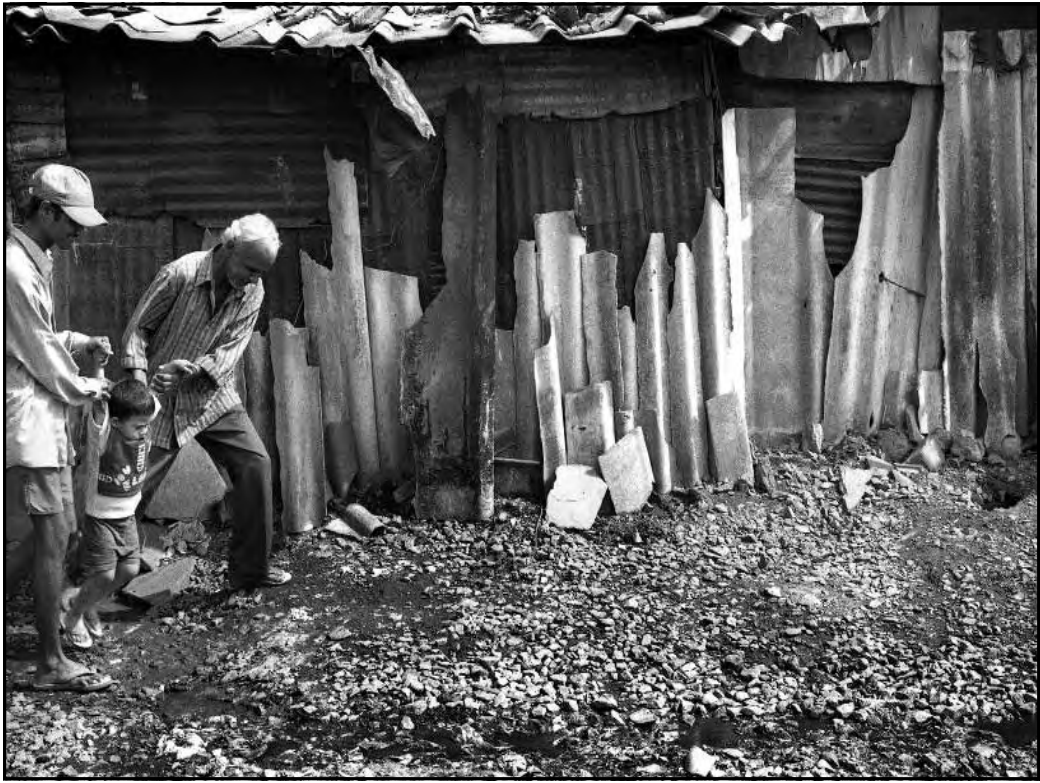












J.V. Furuya Sugio

Quebec City, December 8, 2010

On Canadian chrysotile asbestos exports :

A message for the Ban Asbestos visitors from India, Korea, Indonesia and Japan.

India, like many other developing countries, is certainly growing economically at an amazing pace, but remains a country in great need of basic infrastructures. The situation is different in Japan and Korea. Presently, Canada supplies about 20% of India's need for chrysotile, the rest coming from other sources such as Russia, Kazakhstan, Zimbabwe, Brasil etc.

Regarding specifically the issue of Canadian chrysotile export to developing countries like India and other developing countries, the question is : What would happen if Canada stopped exporting chrysotile to these countries? Answer : these countries would simply make up that 20% by importing the mineral from these other sources, again because of their obvious need to improve and develop their infrastructures. And so, this would not change one bit the situation regarding the health of some workers (which we all deplore), especially those working in some small « Pa & Ma shops » that do not give a damn about the basic, simple and proper work practices when using chrysotile (and many other products, incidentally!) But this is not the situation in the more important and major chrysotile-cement industry, where proper and controlled work practices are strictly applied.

Some trade unions and other lobbyists, who are asking Canada to stop exporting chrysotile to their country and are blaming Canada, should instead turn to their own authorities and demand to simply shut down those small plants that do not comply with the regulations in place.

As an exporter of chrysotile, and in spite of the fact that Canada's chrysotile production amounts to less than 8% of the world production, Canada recognizes that its responsibility is to make sure that all the information is available regarding the proper ways to use chrysotile. In addition to providing this information, Canada provides practical training sessions and specialized information for plant engineers, hygienists, occupational physicians and workers. In fact, amongst all the world producers of chrysotile, Canada is the leader in sharing its long-standing expertise in the safe and responsible use of this valuable material. And I am sure that your Canadian comrades, who have been successful in cleaning the mess they had to endure in decades past, would be quite willing to share their expertise with you.

But Canada cannot substitute for Indian and other national authorities in applying vigilance and inspection of their industrial activities. It is the solemn duty of these sovereign countries to see that their workers are protected.

The carcinogenic potency of amphibole asbestos varieties (crocidolite and amosite) has been established both epidemiologically and toxicologically, leading to it being no longer used in commerce. In 1989, a group of international experts convened by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Oxford (UK) had recommended that these asbestos varieties should be prohibited immediately, and that the use of chrysotile should be controlled and regulated at a permissible exposure limit of 1 fiber/ml in the workplace.

Today, the remaining practical concern is whether chrysotile can be produced and used safely, and if indeed this regulation carries a reasonable assurance that workers are adequately protected. Based upon current science, the short answer to this question is that in absence of amphiboles, the use of chrysotile at current Québec permissible exposure limits in the workplace carries no epidemiologically and clinically detectable increase in risk. Indeed, a number of recent scientific studies published in peer-reviewed journals have come to this conclusion. From these published studies, it can be seen that safety in the use of chrysotile is not a simple wish, but a reality.

Attached to this document, I will leave to your scrutiny a number of scientific references published over a 30-year period in peer-reviewed journals which attest to this reality. And I urge you to read them carefully.

IN CONCLUSION :

I will repeat again : Trade unions activists who are asking Canada to stop exporting chrysotile to their countries and are blaming Canada, should instead turn to their own national authorities and demand to simply shut down those small plants that do not comply with the regulations in place. I suggest that you follow the lead of your union comrades in Québec who succeeded some thirty years ago in cleaning up the mess they had to endure in decades past and in securing safe working conditions for their fellow workers.

Canada cannot substitute for your national authorities in applying vigilance and inspection of its industrial activities. You are coming from sovereign countries, and it is the solemn duty of your national authorities to see that your workers are protected.

**Jacques Dunnigan, Ph. D.
Professor (ret)
Université de Sherbrooke,
Ste-Catherine-de-Hatley, QC
Canada J0W 1W0**

JACDUN @ EGOCABLE. CA

(See attachment on the following pages.)

Worldwide national, regional and international campaigns

Actions supporting Solidarity Delegation from Asia to Quebec

<http://www.anroav.org/content/view/120/40/>

Online Petition against the opening of the Jeffrey Mines

<http://www.anroav.org/content/view/117/40/>

Indian Asbestos Victims Testimony

<http://www.anroav.org/content/view/119/40/>

Asian Solidarity Delegation Mission to Canada: Global Demonstrations

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_arch_demos.php

Social Media Action Alert: Help stop the Jeffrey mine

<http://www.gban.net/?p=1226>

***Nov 29, Letter to the High Commissioner of Canada in Australia and Letter
to the Consul General of Canada in Australia from Robert Vojakovic,
President of the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia***

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_lett_australia_high_comm.pdf

Dec 2, BWI, Canada - Stop Exporting Chrysotile to Asia
<http://www.bwint.org/default.asp?Index=3183&Language=EN>

Dec 3, Statement on asbestos from the BWI World Council and World Board
<http://www.bwint.org/default.asp?index=3186&Language=EN>
BWI briefing on Quebec government proposed subsidy for asbestos export
<http://www.bwint.org/pdfs/ASBESTOS%20BRIEFING.pdf>

Dec 3, Press Statement from Mohit Gupta, Coordinator of Occupational and Environmental Health Network of India (OEHNI), and Anup Srivastava, Education Officer, South Asia Building and Woodworkers International
<http://www.oehni.in/news5.php>

Dec 5, Press release from the Ban Asbestos Network Korea (BANKO), Korea
http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_korean_press_pack.pdf

Dec 6, Quebec action in Japan, video
http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/11297750?lang=ja_JP

Dec 6, Quebec action in Japan, photos
<http://picasaweb.google.com/109411723029547130835/101207QuebecActionInJapan?authkey=Gv1sRgCOPP88b2ia-nkgE&feat=email#>

Dec 6, TUCP Philippines - Asbestos protest calls for Canada to close Jeffrey mine
<http://www.tucp.org.ph/news/index.php/2010/12/asbestos-protest-calls-for-canada-to-close-jeffrey-mine/>

Dec 7, Statement from the Asbestos Victims Support Groups' Forum UK
http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_press_rel_dec_7.pdf

Dec 8, Asbestos Victims' Organizations Joint Letter
<http://www.gban.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Honorable-Jean-Charest.pdf>

Dec 8, Press release from the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO), USA
<http://www.gban.net/?p=1120>

Dec 8, Press release from the Association Nationale de Defense des Victimes de l'Amiante (ANDEVA), France
http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_andeva_press_rel_dec_8.pdf

Dec 9, Protest in Hong Kong, photos

http://picasaweb.google.com/sanjiv.pandita/Asbestoscanadadec10?authkey=Gv1sRgCISNoPTin83q_gE#

Dec 9, Letter to Prime Minister Cameron from the Asbestos Victims Support Groups' Forum UK

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_forum_lett_to_pm_dec9_2010.pdf

Dec 9, Letter to Agent-General Pierre Boulanger from Asbestos Victims Support Groups' Forum UK

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_forum_lett_p_boulanger.pdf

Dec 9, TUCP Philippines - ALU, BWI, TUCP Statement against asbestos and the open of an underground mine in Quebec

<http://www.tucp.org.ph/news/index.php/2010/12/alu-bwi-tucp-statement-against-asbestos-and-the-opening-of-an-underground-mine-in-quebec-canada/>

Dec 9, New Democrats and Asian delegates urge asbestos ban

<http://www.ndp.ca/press/new-democrats-asian-delegates-urge-asbestos-ban>

Dec 9, Ban Asbestos Canada offers support to Asia Solidarity Delegation

<http://cupe.ca/asbestos/ban-asbestos-canada-offers-support-asia>

Dec 13, TUCP Philippines - Statement on asbestos delivered five levels below the ground

<http://www.tucp.org.ph/news/index.php/2010/12/philippines-statement-on-asbestos-delivered-five-levels-below-the-ground/>

Dec 14, Letter to Quebec Premier Jean Charest from Linda Reinstein, ADAO

<http://www.qban.net/?p=1187>

Dec 14, Letter to Consul General of Canada in Australia from the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_actu_letter_consul_general.pdf

Dec 16, Letter to Quebec Premier Jean Charest from the International Mesothelioma Interest Group (IMIG)

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_mission_2010_imig_appeal.pdf

Dec 16, Letter to Mine Purchase Consortium Head Baljit Chadha from Barry Castleman

http://www.ibasecretariat.org/quebec_b_castleman_lett_to_chadha.pdf

Help ban Canadian asbestos

<http://action.davidsuzuki.org/asbestos>

Dec 7, Tokyo, Japan



Members of Japanese Asbestos victim and families, in front of Canadian Embassy in Tokyo



Dec 7, Seoul, Korea



In front of Canadian Embassy and Quebec Trade office in Seoul



Dec 9, Delhi, India,



Dec 9, HongKong



Dec 9, London, United Kingdom



Dec 9, Manila, Philippines



Dec 9, Paris, France



Dec 10, Mumbai, India



Appendix; Media coverage

Oct 9, La Prasse, Montreal, Canada

A 2
LA PRESSE MONTREAL VENDREDI 8 OCTOBRE 2010

ACTUALITÉS

PHOTO MICHAËL DARISSMAN, COLLABORATION SPÉCIALE

Les photos prises par le militant indonésien Muhammad Darisman montrent des gens, dont des enfants, qui se promènent dans un décharge pleine d'amiante. Celle-ci contient des déchets de l'usine Djabesmen, le plus gros fabricant de toitures d'amiante chrysotile de l'Indonésie. On peut voir des sacs au logo de Lab Chrysotile, une mine d'amiante située à Theford Mines, au Québec.

DÉPOTOIR D'AMIANTE EN INDONÉSIE

Des photos embarrassantes pour une mine québécoise

ISABELLE HACHEY

Penché au milieu d'un dépotoir, un enfant fouille les déchets à mains nues. Derrière lui, des adultes utilisent de grands sacs pour récupérer du plastique, des planches et des morceaux de ciment. Leurs sacs portent le logo de Lab Chrysotile, une mine d'amiante située à Theford Mines, au Québec.

Ces photos ont été prises le 6 août dans un décharge de l'usine Djabesmen, le plus gros fabricant de toitures d'amiante chrysotile de l'Indonésie. Elles «établissent clairement le caractère criminel, tellement il est négligent, de notre politique nationale d'exportation de l'amiante», s'indigne le Dr Fernand Turcotte, professeur d'ophtalmologie en médecine préventive à l'Université Laval.

Le Dr Turcotte dit avoir été ébranlé à la vue de ces clichés, qui prouvent selon lui «l'impossibilité de mettre en œuvre des règles censées ren-

dre l'amiante inoffensif pour la santé humaine. Quand on entend nos politiciens conjurer à tous les temps l'installation sécuritaire de l'amiante pour justifier son exportation dans les pays du tiers-monde, c'est proprement ahurissant».

L'amiante chrysotile est un produit cancérigène interdit dans la plupart des pays occidentaux. Le Canada n'utilise pas ce matériau dans ses propres constructions, mais encourage son exportation dans les pays en voie de développement, une politique jugée amoralisée par de nombreux professionnels de la santé au Québec, et dans le monde.

Selon le Dr Turcotte, si ce dépotoir était situé au Québec, «l'accès en serait interdit à moins de porter des combinaisons spéciales». Or, une dizaine de personnes chaussées de simples sandales récupèrent les rebuts de l'usine lors du passage de Muhammad Darisman, le militant indonésien qui a pris ces photos. L'usine est située à l'est de la capitale, Jakarta.

« Ces gens sont très pauvres et dépendants de ce que rejette l'usine. Ils ramassent le plastique, le bois et l'amiante parmi les déchets, pour ensuite les offrir à des revendeurs. L'un d'eux m'a dit qu'il gagnait un dollar par jour quand il était chômeur. Sa maison était située à 300 mètres, tout près du dépotoir. Il ne savait pas que l'amiante était dangereux », explique M. Darisman.

Des avertissements dans plusieurs langues étaient inscrits sur les sacs de Lab Chrysotile qui jonchaient le sol à l'extérieur de l'usine. Mais selon M. Darisman, aucune de ces langues n'était comprise par la majorité des Indonésiens.

L'amiante-ciment est récupéré par des familles pauvres pour construire des maisons. «On voit ça partout en Asie», dit Kathleen Ruff, militante canadienne qui se bat pour l'interdiction de l'amiante. «Des familles construisent des maisons en coupant l'amiante-ciment avec de petites scies mécaniques. Ça libère une grande quantité de fibres qu'elles respirent. C'est fatal.»

«Hors contexte»

Le président de Lab Chrysotile, Simon Dupré, dit s'assurer que ses clients utilisent l'amiante de façon sécuritaire. Il a visité à plusieurs reprises les usines indonésiennes qui importent l'amiante de Theford Mines sans jamais avoir noté de manquements graves. «Quand on envoie du

Contraintement à d'autres pays asiatiques, comme l'Inde, la campagne pour l'interdiction du minéral y est encore timide. Le «Ban Asbestos Network in Indonesia», ou l'INA-BAN, sera officiellement lancé le 17 octobre.

La tâche des millions ne sera pas facile, selon M. Darisman. «Une usine d'amiante indonésienne appartient au président de l'un des plus gros partis politiques du pays, dit-il. Nous manquons d'experts intéressés par le sujet et il y a un contrôle de l'information par le gouvernement et les entreprises en ce qui concerne les dangers de l'amiante.»

Les 26 usines d'amiante, qui emploient 7000 travailleurs indonésiens, peuvent aussi compter sur le soutien du Canada. En mars 2006, un «Symposium scientifique

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Amour-moi?	ARTS 10	Histoire éblouissante	ARTS 4
Annuaire du jour	AFFAIRES 10	L'ennemi	A 22
Bizness	AFFAIRES 6-7	Monde	A 22 & 24
Deux	AFFAIRES 11	Portes ouvertes	AFFAIRES 4 et 9
Épave	A 26-27	Société	ARTS 14 & 15

Météo
Prévision en météo et services en ligne-météo, maximum 10, minimum 5. AFFAIRES 9

- 60 -

Dec 9, The Gazette, Montreal, Canada (front page headline & inside coverage)

FILMS FLEE
A shortage of studios has cost Montreal \$500 million in lost movie shoots, Brendan Kelly reports, Page C1

The Gazette
MONTREAL | THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2010 | SINCE 1778 | BREAKING NEWS AT MONTREALGAZETTE.COM

Charest urged to cancel support for asbestos group

Prestigious medical journal the Lancet has joined the chorus of international groups accusing Ottawa and Quebec of hypocrisy in promoting the export of asbestos to developing nations while severely limiting its use domestically. Aaron Derfel reports that the Canadian Medical Association is siding with the Lancet in urging Premier Jean Charest to cancel a loan guarantee to a consortium that wants to expand the Jeffrey Mine in the Eastern Townships town of Asbestos. The critics argue that it is irresponsible of Canada to send this hazardous substance to developing countries that don't have the safeguards or restrictions that exist here.

Page A10

HAITIANS TAKE TO THE STREETS **Questions? En**

THE GAZETTE • montrealgazette.com • THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2010 4T

DEMONSTRATORS DEMANDING AN END TO CANADA'S EXPORTS OF ASBESTOS AND OPPOSING EXPANSION OF ASBESTOS MINES GATHER OUTSIDE THE QUEBEC TRADE MISSION OFFICES IN SEOUL ON JUNE 24, ST. JEAN BAPTISTE DAY.

Asbestos trade draws more flak

Canadian doctors, British medical journal oppose plan to expand Quebec mine

AARON DERFEL
GAZETTE HEALTH REPORTER

The Canadian Medical Association and the influential British medical journal the Lancet have joined the growing campaign against plans by the Quebec government to have a controversial asbestos mine expanded.

In an article published today, the Lancet accuses the Canadian and Quebec governments of hypocrisy in promoting the export of asbestos to developing nations, while severely limiting its use domestically.

CMA president Dr. Jeff Turnbull urged Premier Jean Charest to cancel the govern-

ment's proposed \$50-million loan guarantee to a consortium that wants to expand the Jeffrey Mine in the town of Asbestos, in the Eastern Townships.

"In a wealthy country like ours, we have the appropriate safeguards in place for asbestos," Turnbull said yesterday. "However, in developing countries where we send this hazardous substance, they don't have the same safeguards or restrictions.

"It's inconceivable for us as Canadians... to set up standards for our own citizens that we don't think will be put in place for other citizens across this world."

Jolyane Pronovost, press attaché to Quebec Economic Development Minister Clément Gignac, said the government hasn't yet reached a decision on the loan guarantee.

Deaths from lung cancer and mesothelioma - cancer in the lining of the body's internal organs - from asbestos continue to rise in Britain and Canada, the Lancet noted, reflecting the fact that symptoms of disease often occur decades after exposure.

The Canadian Medical Association Journal has reported the number of asbestos-related deaths rose to 286 in 2007 from 153 in 1984, and this is probably an underestimation, owing to difficulties in diagnosing mesothelioma.

Before studies proved the cancer-causing link, asbestos was hailed as a fire-retardant "miracle mineral" in the 1960s and 1970s.

"Canada is actively removing asbestos from its buildings," the Lancet said, but it is one of the world's biggest exporters of the fibrous mineral, shipping about 150,000 tonnes per year to India, Indonesia and the Philippines, where "little or no protection exists for workers or exposed populations."

Protests against the Jeffrey Mine project are to be held today in Quebec City, L'Ange-de-la-Croix and a number of Asian cities.

A delegation representing asbestos victims in India, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea is in Quebec to press the government to back down.

"How many dead Asians are enough for the Quebec government to accept that this indefensible trade has to end?" asked Sugio Furuya, coordinator of the Asian Ban Asbestos Network.

aderfel@montrealgazette.com

RELANCE DE LA MINE JEFFREY À ASBESTOS

The Lancet exhorte Québec à ne pas soutenir la mine d'amiante

ISABELLE HACHEY

La revue médicale britannique *The Lancet* exhorte le gouvernement du Québec à refuser son soutien aux entrepreneurs qui souhaitent relancer l'exploitation de l'amiante à la mine Jeffrey, à Asbestos, pour le prochain quart de siècle.

« *The Lancet* ajoute sa voix à celles de nombreux militants anti-amiante dans le monde, de l'Association médicale canadienne et d'autres, qui demandent que cesse cette exportation immorale de morts et de maladies liées à l'amiante chez des populations parmi les plus vulnérables du monde », dit le rédacteur en chef de la revue, le Dr Richard Horton.

« Nous demandons au gouvernement du Québec de ne pas soutenir la relance de la mine Jeffrey, qui continuerait ainsi d'exporter de l'amiante pendant encore 25 ans. Comme l'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS), *The Lancet* serait heureux de voir l'amiante disparaître dans toutes les régions du monde. »



La société Balcorp, consortium international dirigé par le Montréalais Baljit Chadha, se dit prête à acheter la mine Jeffrey d'Asbestos, à la condition que le gouvernement du Québec lui garantisse un prêt de 58 millions de dollars nécessaire à sa relance.

tion que le gouvernement lui garantisse un prêt de 58 millions de dollars nécessaire à sa relance. Si le projet va

« Les liens entre l'amiante et les cancers du poumon, dont le mésothéliome, sont établis depuis longtemps,

loppement où il y a peu de normes pour protéger les travailleurs ou la population en général de ses effets mortels. Ils devraient, en tant que gouvernements d'un pays riche, montrer l'exemple aux autres nations exportatrices – comme la Russie et le Kazakhstan – en déclarant que cette pratique n'est plus acceptable. »

Dans son dernier numéro, *The Lancet* rappelle que le Canada désamiante ses édifices à grands frais et a pratiquement banni de facto l'utilisation de ce minéral

dans ses nouvelles constructions, mais qu'il continue à en exporter vers des pays pauvres, une attitude jugée « hypocrite » par le magazine.

L'Association médicale québécoise (AMQ) appuie la prestigieuse revue scientifique. « L'extraction, la transformation et l'utilisation de l'amiante chrysotile sont nocives pour la santé. Point à la ligne. En autorisant la garantie de prêt, le ministre de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Innovation, Clément Gignac, cautionne l'exportation d'un produit qui tue annuellement 90 000 personnes, selon l'OMS », indique le Dr Jean-François Lajoie, président de l'AMQ.

Dans le monde, la mobilisation contre la relance de la mine Jeffrey prend de l'ampleur. Des manifestations sont prévues cette semaine dans plusieurs villes d'Asie et d'Europe. En Grande-Bretagne, des groupes anti-amiante doivent manifester aujourd'hui devant l'ambassade canadienne à Londres. Ils déposeront ensuite une pétition à Downing Street.

Le ministre britannique du Développement international, Alan Duncan, a récemment déclaré que son gouvernement était « totalement opposé à l'utilisation de l'amiante ». Il a ajouté que « l'exportation canadienne d'amiante est un sujet d'inquiétude ».

D'autre part, la délégation asiatique de militants anti-amiantes poursuit sa tournée au Québec dans l'espoir de sensibiliser les politiciens et la population à leur cause. Ils ont rencontré hier la critique péquiste en matière de santé, Agnès Maltais, et des dirigeants de la Centrale des syndicats démocratiques, qui représente les mineurs d'Asbestos. Faute d'avoir pu obtenir un entretien avec le premier ministre Jean Charest, ils rencontreront samedi le ministre du Développement économique, Clément Gignac.

« En autorisant la garantie de prêt, le ministre de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Innovation, Clément Gignac, cautionne l'exportation d'un produit qui tue annuellement 90 000 personnes, selon l'OMS. » — Le Dr Jean-François Lajoie, président de l'AMQ

La société Balcorp, un consortium international dirigé par le Montréalais Baljit Chadha, se dit prête à acheter la mine Jeffrey, à la condi-

de l'avant, la mine exportera 200 000 tonnes d'amiantes par année en Asie, où la demande pour le minéral cancérigène est en forte croissance.

dit le Dr Horton. Les gouvernements du Québec et du Canada ne devraient pas exporter de l'amiantes dans des nations en voie de déve-

THE LANCET

THE LANCET: Press Release

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LANCET CONDEMNS HYPOCRITICAL CANADA AND QUÉBEC GOVERNMENTS FOR EXPORTING DEADLY ASBESTOS TO VULNERABLE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

In a [World Report](#) published [Online First](#) and in this week's *Lancet*, the governments of both Canada and Québec are condemned by a number of anti-asbestos campaigners and the Canadian Medical Association for exporting asbestos to vulnerable developing countries. *Lancet* Editor Dr Richard Horton adds *The Lancet's* voice to those calling on the Québec Government not to provide a loan guarantee to a consortium that will revive Canada's currently dying asbestos exports for another 25 years. The [World Report](#) is written by Tony Kirby, Media Relations Manager at *The Lancet*.

For many years, Canada has been a major exporter of white asbestos or 'chrysotile', with other major exporters being Russia, Kazakhstan, and Brazil. But in the past two decades, bans on chrysotile (in addition to those long in force for blue and brown asbestos) have existed, either in law or de facto, in many high-income countries, including the United Kingdom, which banned chrysotile in 1999, and Canada itself, which has not legally banned chrysotile but has a de facto ban. As such, more and more of Canada's asbestos has been going to developing countries, where few or no protections exist and as such a time-bomb of deadly asbestos-related death and disease will continue to grow. Mesothelioma is a specific lung cancer caused by exposure to asbestos, and diagnosis is almost always a death sentence. In the UK, deaths from mesothelioma have climbed from 895 in 1990 to 2,249 in 2008, with no sign of declining, as the effects of workers' exposure in the 1960s and 70s continue to manifest. Similar trends are occurring in other high-income nations.

Canada's chrysotile resources have been dwindling. However, an Indian-led consortium (led by Montreal-based financier Baljit Chadha) is now planning to convert the recently closed Jeffrey Mine in Québec from open pit to underground, which would see Canada produce and export some 10% of the world's asbestos again. Protests are going on in London (9 Dec), Québec, and Asian cities against the Québec and Canada governments to stop the loan guarantee being given. In London, a coalition of UK anti-asbestos groups are protesting against the reopening of the Jeffrey Mine outside Canada House, London, before handing in a petition to 10 Downing Street. In Québec, an Asian Delegation from affected importing countries (including Indonesia, India, Korea and Japan) is holding a number of public events and press conferences across the province.

Laurie Kazan-Allen, coordinator of the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS) and producer of the British Asbestos Newsletter says: "For over a decade, we have been engaged in a David and Goliath battle with asbestos lobbyists, stakeholder governments and commercial interests. They maintain that asbestos can be used safely under controlled conditions, but we know this is wrong. A new asbestos mine in Québec would be an abomination."

Kathleen Ruff, Canadian anti-asbestos campaigner, author of *Exporting Harm: How Canada Exports Asbestos to the Developing World*, and senior human rights adviser to the Rideau

Institute, an independent research and advocacy organisation in Ottawa, says: “It’s not too late for the Québec Government to change its mind and deny the loan guarantee. They must set an example to the other asbestos exporters worldwide. If this mine re-opens, the Canadian and Québec Governments will have blood on their hands for generations to come.”

If governments in Canada recognise that restrictions and regulations are essential to protect our citizens from the devastating effects of this hazardous product, why do they allow asbestos to be exported to other countries that may lack the resources to protect their own citizens?” asks CMA president Jeff Turnbull. “We have a social responsibility to protect not only the health of Canadians but that of citizens elsewhere who are being harmed by a Canadian export. Canada should not be abdicating this responsibility,” he adds. Dr Richard Horton, Editor of *The Lancet*, said: “The links between asbestos and lung cancer, including mesothelioma, have long been established. The governments of Québec and Canada should not be exporting asbestos to developing nations where there are few or no workplace regulations to protect workers or the general population from its lethal effects. They should, as governments of a high-income nation, be setting an example to other asbestos-exporting nations – such as Russia and Kazakhstan – by declaring this practice is no longer acceptable.

“*The Lancet* adds its voice to those of the many anti-asbestos campaigners worldwide, the Canadian Medical Association, and others, who are calling for an end to this immoral export of asbestos-related death and disease to some of the most vulnerable people in the world. We call on the Government of Québec not to back re-development of the Jeffrey Mine which would continue asbestos exports for another 25 years. Like WHO, *The Lancet* will be happy to see asbestos phased out of use of in all parts of the world.”

Laurie Kazan-Allen, coordinator of the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS) and producer of the British Asbestos Newsletter T) +44 (0) 208 958 3887 / +44 (0) 7766 645880 E) lka@btinternet.com

Kathleen Ruff, Canadian anti-asbestos campaigner, author of *Exporting Harm: How Canada Exports Asbestos to the Developing World*, and senior human rights adviser to the Rideau Institute. T) +1 514 571-2696 E) kruff@bulkley.net

For Dr Jeff Turnbull, President, Canadian Medical Association, please contact Lucie Boileau Manager, Media Relations +1 613 731-8610 ext 1266 / + 1 613 447-0866 E) Lucie.Boileau@cma.ca

For Dr Richard Horton, Editor, *The Lancet*, please contact Tony Kirby T) +44 (0) 20 7424 4949 / +44 (0) 7920 592635 E) tony.kirby@lancet.com

For full *World Report* see: <http://press.thelancet.com/wrcanada.pdf>

“석면소비국 아시아에 밀집 캐나다 석면광산 허가 안돼”

아시아 환경운동가들 원정시위

최근 캐나다가 1급 발암물질인 석면 광산을 새로 허가할 예정이어서, 아시아 시민사회가 강하게 반발하고 있다. 한국과 일본, 인도네시아, 인도 등 아시아 환경·산업보건 단체로 구성된 아시아석면추방네트워크(공동대표 백도명 서울대 교수)는 지난 10일 캐나다 몬트리올과 퀘벡에서 항의 시위를 벌였다.

아시아에는 전세계 10대 석면 소비국 가운데 6곳이 밀집돼 있다. 현재 50여개국이 석면을 금지하지만 아시아에서는 한국·일본 말고는 모두 석면을 쓴다. 한국은 지난해부터 모든 형태의 석면의 수입·제조·사용을 전면적으로 금지한 바 있다. 미국 지리연구소가 집계한 자료를 보면, 2006년 한해 동안 중국이 53만1190t의 석면을 사용했으며, 이어 인도(37만3931t), 러시아(29만2541t) 순으로 석면 소비가 많았다.

캐나다는 아시아 지역에 대한 최대의 석면 수출국이다. 한국도 캐나다에서 가장 많은 석면을 수입했다. 캐나다의 퀘벡 주정부는 이달 안에 20만t을 생산할 수 있는 석면 광산을 새로 허가할 예정이다. 캐나다와 러시아, 남아프리카공화국 등의 광산업계와 정부는 백석면의 경우 ‘조심해서 사용하면 안전하다’는 논리를 내세워 대만과 인도네시아, 인도 등으로 수출하고 있다.

아시아석면추방네트워크는 유해물질의 국가간 이동을 금지하는 국제조약인 ‘바젤협약’에 백석면을 포함시켜야 한다고 주장한다. 하지만 캐나다, 러시아 등 석면 광산을 운영하는 국가들은 이에 반대하고 있다.

최예용 환경보건시민센터 소장은 “캐나다는 법적으로 석면을 금지하지 않지만 일상에서는 거의 쓰지 않는다”며 “석면 산업이 일본에서 한국으로 이동한 것처럼, 석면 산업과 석면의 국가간 이동을 금지하고 피해를 조사해야 한다”고 말했다.

남종영 기자

환경보건시민센터

3



지난 10일 캐나다 퀘벡의 백석면연구소 앞에서 아시아와 캐나다 환경·산업보건 단체 회원들이 석면 광산 허가를 반대하는 시위를 벌이고 있다. 환경보건시민센터 제공