

BANKO – Ban Asbestos Network Korea

TO:

Québec Premier Jean Charest and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper

c/o Antenne du Quebec Seoul

5F, Leema building 146-1 Soosong-dong,
Jongno-gu, Seoul
110-755 Korea

c/o Canadian Embassy

16-1 Jeongdong Chongnogu Seoul
100-662 Korea

Dear Premier Charest and Prime Minister Harper,

We are representatives of Korean academia, environmental and labor groups as well as asbestos victims and their family associations all over the country. We're writing this letter on behalf of BANKO (Ban Asbestos Network Korea) which is a national network of Korean asbestos victims and citizens concerned about asbestos threats, including tens of thousands of labour unions, occupational and health organizations and environmental groups as well as A-BAN(Asian Ban Asbestos Network) which is a regional network of several dozens labor and environmental groups and experts.

Today, we call on you to cancel your Quebec government's \$58 million subsidy to save the bankrupt Jeffrey asbestos mine. The Jeffrey mine plans to export 200,000 tonnes of asbestos a year to Asia and elsewhere for the next 25 to 50 years, which may kill over 30,000 Asian labors and citizens with deadly disease mesothelioma according to academic research that every 170ton of asbestros consumption could result about 1 mesothelioma victim.

In past years, Canada has been exporting more than 200,000 tones of asbestos a year. Asbestos is one of the best known deadly human carcinogens, and is now claiming more than 100,000-150,000 cancer deaths a year worldwide. As Canada is the only remaining western country that exports asbestos pollution to the developing world, we join the international community in blaming the double standard of Canada.

Canada has been targeting Asian markets for its asbestos export (86% in 2009), as its consumption has dwindled down in other parts of the world. With declining markets, the asbestos industry in Canada has been dying out. However, Quebec province is now planning to open a new asbestos mine with a huge government subsidy to this dying industry.

Premier Charest, Québec's asbestos export dishonours Québec. Like others around the world, we are outraged the export of asbestos death. Please give this \$58 million subsidy to help asbestos victims, not to create more victims.

A-BAN – Asian Ban Asbestos Network

BANKO – Ban Asbestos Network Korea

A fundamental principle of public health and human rights is that the greatest protection must be given to the most vulnerable. We ask that the 200,000 tonnes of asbestos a year be put in Québec and Canadian schools, hospitals and buildings as you ask Asian to believe the controlled use and not exported overseas where protections are few and people are extremely vulnerable to asbestos harm. On this day, which is supposed to be a day of pride for Québec, do not bring shame on Québec, Premier Charest.

Here printed materials enclosed which is distributed for Korean and foreign presses. We urgently await your response,

Best regards

3 July 2012

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윤준하 JooHa YOON, Advisor, Korean Federation for Environment Federation (환경운동연합)
한광호 Kwangho HAN, General Secretary, Federation of Korean Trade Unions (한국노총)
정혜경 Hyekyung JUNG, Vice President, Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (민주노총)
정지열 Jiyol CEHONG, co-Chair, Korean Asbestos Victims and Families Association (한국석면피해자와가족협회)
박제빈 Jebin PARK, a son of the late Rachel LEE Jeong-Lim died of mesothelioma who has been Canada as a member of Asian delegation Dec 2010 (한국석면피해자와가족협회)
안종주 Jongjoo AHN, Author of the book 'A silent killer, Asbestos' and 'Asbestos Pollution'
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A-BAN – Asian Ban Asbestos Network