



Association Nationale de Défense
des Victimes de l'Amiante
et autres maladies professionnelles



Union Aid Abroad APHEDA
The global justice organisation of the Australian union movement



Press Release

November 26, 2023

Asbestos Victims Worldwide Call for Action by Brazil's Supreme Court

This week, Brazilian asbestos victims are demonstrating in Brasilia over the postponement by the Supreme Court (STF) of a decision which could have shut down operations at the country's Cana Brava asbestos mine, the only mine still producing asbestos in Brazil. The long-awaited verdict had been scheduled to be handed down in early November; it never came.¹

Asbestos victims, their families and supporters, campaigners and others were dumb-founded by the judicial mystery. Asked for his interpretation of this development, Lawyer Leonardo Amarante, who has been representing members of the Brazilian Association of the Asbestos-Exposed (ABREA) for many years, said:

“As in many other countries, our Supreme Court can sometimes move at a glacial pace. Nevertheless, it is most unusual for the Court's timetable to be altered at the last minute and without any explanation. The case pending was relatively simple with the unconstitutional nature of a state law in contravention of a STF ruling having already been decided. The Ministers – as STF Judges are called – were asked to determine whether mining should cease immediately or whether a one-year phase-out period should be allowed. The information vacuum which currently exists regarding this litigation is something I have never seen before.”

With an embargo on Russian exports put in place by Western countries, asbestos producers from Russia – which previously supplied 60+% of the asbestos used worldwide every year – are experiencing logistical problems supplying customers, the majority of who are in Asian countries. There is no doubt that demand for Brazilian asbestos has grown under the circumstances. Nevertheless, there is no excuse for a substance deemed to be too dangerous to be used in Brazil to be sent overseas.

Speaking on behalf of the Asian Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN), Coordinator Sugio Furuya said:

“Members of ABAN and other international asbestos victims' groups are well aware of the human cost of asbestos use. As we are unable to be with our ABREA colleagues in Brasilia at their protest, we are sending them this message of solidarity and support for the efforts they are making to protect the world from the deadly consequences of exposures to Brazilian asbestos.”

¹ For background information to this press release see:

Kazan-Allen, L. *What's Going on at Brazil's Supreme Court?* November 13, 2023.

<http://ibasecretariat.org/lka-whats-going-on-at-brazils-supreme-court.php>

Notes for Editors

For additional details, please email: Fernanda Giannasi (ABREA) at fer.giannasi@terra.com.br or Sugio Furuya (ABAN) at 2009aban@gmail.com

Information about the groups which issued this press release can be accessed at:

- Associação Brasileira dos Expostos ao Amianto (ABREA)
[Brazilian Association of the Asbestos Exposed]
<http://www.abrea.org.br>
- International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS)
<http://ibasecretariat.org>
- Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI)
<https://www.bwint.org/>
- Occupational and Environmental Health Network of India (OEHNI)
<https://oehni.in>
- Environics Trust, India
<https://environicsindia.in>
- Indonesian Ban Asbestos Network (INA-BAN)
<https://inaban.org/whoweare/>
- Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA
<https://www.apheda.org.au/>
- Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia
<https://asbestosdiseases.org.au>
- Asbestos and Dust Diseases Research Institute (ADDRI, Australia)
<https://adri.org.au/>
- Association Belge des Victimes de l'Amiante
[Belgian Association of Asbestos Victims (ABEVA)]
<https://www.abeva.eu/index.php?lang=fr>
- Association Nationale de Defense des Victimes de l'Amiante
[National Association for the Defense of Asbestos Victims (ANDEVA)]
<https://andeva.fr/>