

Rotterdam Convention Alliance (ROCA) Statement

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Canada, A Pariah State

The outrageous behaviour of the Canadian delegation regarding the listing of chrysotile asbestos on Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention has caused a groundswell of condemnation. Having kept quiet during the initial plenary session debate on June 21, the Canadian position was revealed yesterday when a consensus supporting the listing of chrysotile was emerging. When it became clear that negotiations might finally resolve the chrysotile impasse, Canadian delegate David Sproulu threw down the gauntlet with his statement: "Canada is not in a position to support the listing of chrysotile in Annex 3. Canada is unable to join the consensus."

Canada's betrayal of the Rotterdam Convention has earned it huge negative press coverage at home and abroad which culminated with it being named a Cancer Culprit for its destructive and hypocritical position. For the sake of a few hundred jobs at the one remaining Canadian asbestos mine, Canada has willfully and in full knowledge of the repercussions sided with the global asbestos mafia to prioritize commercial profit over public health. The industry prefers that people are not given the information that chrysotile asbestos is hazardous.

A leading trade unionist from the Philippines is calling for Canada to be "delisted" from the Rotterdam Convention. Incensed by the developments this week in Geneva, Gerard Seno from the ALU-TUCP has reason to berate Canada: 93% of the asbestos imported to the Philippines is from Canada.

ROCA delegate at COP5 Madhu Dutta says:

"There is no doubt amongst the observers in Switzerland that Canada had planned to let other countries do its dirty work in perpetuating the chrysotile veto. When the opposition of the small number of dissenting countries looked close to collapse, Canada emerged from the shadows. The disrespect shown by Canada for other delegations and their countries and human health and for the survival of the Rotterdam Convention is breathtaking."

INFORMATION

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