

Bangkok Declaration 2012 of the Asian Ban Asbestos Network – One Ban For All!

Preamble

The annual meeting of the Asian Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN) which took place in Bangkok on November 19, 2012, having considered the current asbestos status quo in Asia, determined that urgent steps are needed to progress an Asian-wide Asbestos Ban. It is unacceptable that while Japan and Korea have recognized the dire consequences for human health of exposure to asbestos, Thailand, China, Indonesia and other countries have not. **All Asian citizens have the right to live an asbestos-free life – One Ban For All!**

ABAN delegates took particular note of the unsatisfactory situation in Thailand, a country which has used 4 million tonnes of asbestos in the last sixty years. Despite a resolution issued nearly two years ago by the National Health Commission supporting a Thailand asbestos ban, no ban has been implemented.¹ As Thai asbestos stakeholders continue to exploit this delay to increase their profits from asbestos sales, the lives of more workers and members of the public are being endangered. It is absolutely essential that the Thai ban be brought into force with immediate effect.

Resolution

ABAN delegates have resolved to pursue all means, political, judicial, legislative and diplomatic, to achieve an Asian-wide Asbestos Ban. Free Trade Agreements which force countries to continue importing asbestos are both immoral and unenforceable as they propagate a situation which endangers human health and the environment. In all circumstances health must have priority over commerce. Such agreements will be exposed wherever they exist by ABAN which will lead campaigns to have them declared null and void.

Strategy

Non-governmental organizations, government agencies, trade unions and campaigning groups in Japan and Korea have accumulated considerable information on the asbestos hazard. Working parties are being constituted to enable this information be shared widely with campaigners in non-ban countries.

Conclusion

Human beings have the right to work and live in a healthy environment. The spread of the global epidemic of asbestos-related diseases must be prevented as a fundamental human right; this can only be done by banning the mining, processing, transport and sale of all types of asbestos.

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¹ <http://en.nationalhealth.or.th/?q=node/183>

A-BAN

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International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS)
Asian Network for the Rights of Occupational and Environmental Victims (ANROEV)
Asia Monitor Resource Centre (AMRC)
Building Workers International (BWI)
Australia: Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA
Bangladesh: Occupational Safety Health and Environment Foundation (OSHEF)
Canada: RightOnCanada
China: ANROEV China Network
Hong Kong: “No More Asbestos in Hong Kong” Alliance
Hong Kong: Association for the Rights of Industrial Accident Victims (ARIAV)
Hong Kong: Labour Action China (LAC)
India: Occupational and Environmental Health Network India (OEHNI)
India: KKNTC (trade union)
India: Orissa Asbestos Union
Indonesia: Indonesia Ban Asbestos Network (Ina-BAN)
Indonesia: Local Initiative for OSH Rights and Social Network (LION)
Indonesia: Federation of Construction, Informal and General Workers (FKUI)
Iran: Center for Research on Occupational Diseases
Japan: Ban Asbestos Network Japan (BANJAN)
Korea: Ban Asbestos Network Korea (BANKO)
Malaysia: Malaysia Trade Union Confederation (MTUC)
Malaysia: Consumer Association Penang (CAP)
Philippines: Associated Labor Unions (ALU)
Philippines: Institute for Occupational Health and Safety Development (IOHSAD)

T-BAN

Health Consumer Protection Program (HCP)
, Council of Work and Environment Related Patient’s Network (WEPT)
Federation of Occupational Health, Safety and Environment at Work
Thai Labor Solidarity Committee (TLSC)
Foundation for Consumers (FFC)
Federation of Consumer Organizations
Federation of Building and Wood Workers in Thailand (BWI)