



Rotterdam Convention Conference of the Parties, Geneva, April 24 - May 5, 2017

The International Mesothelioma Interest Group calls on the international community to list chrysotile as a hazardous substance, as a matter of urgency.

Noting that

1. The eighth conference on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade – the formal name for the Rotterdam Convention – is due to take place soon, in Geneva in April-May 2017, and that several countries have proposed a modification of the decision-making procedures at the Convention,
2. Asbestos is well-recognised as a cause of considerable morbidity and mortality, and is a substance that is persistent in the environment. The latest estimate of its global toll is 194,000 occupationally-related deaths annually*, with 24,000 mesothelioma deaths**,
3. The Rotterdam Convention is intended to end the unsafe trade in hazardous products by elevating levels of transparency and empowering countries to protect their borders and protect the health of their population and environment regarding the trade of listed products,
4. The International Agency for Research on Cancer specifically lists ‘all forms’ of asbestos as carcinogenic to humans,
5. Chrysotile asbestos is not listed as a hazardous substance in the Rotterdam Convention,
6. At every Rotterdam Convention meeting since 2006, a handful of countries has succeeded in preventing the listing of chrysotile. This toxin has repeatedly escaped international regulation, despite its ongoing associated death toll. No other substance has been subjected to this continued blocking, and it is important to get it listed as a hazardous substance,

The International Mesothelioma Interest Group calls on the international community to list chrysotile as a hazardous substance needing prior informed consent, as a matter of urgency.

* 1. Forouzanfar MH, Alexander L, Anderson HR, Bachman VF, Biryukov S, Brauer M, et al. Global, regional, and national comparative risk assessment of 79 behavioural, environmental and occupational, and metabolic risks or clusters of risks in 188 countries, 1990–2013: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2013. *Lancet* 2015;386:2287-2323.

** Health statistics and information systems: Estimates for 2000-2015.

http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/estimates/en/index1.html