



INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION-ASIA PACIFIC

ITUC-AP Regional Conference on Asbestos
“Realising an Asbestos-free World”
Intensifying regional campaign awareness and activities

6-7 March 2018, Jakarta Indonesia

Joint Communique on Asbestos

“Realising an Asbestos-free World”

- We, affiliates of the ITUC--Asia Pacific together with allied and partner organisations met on 6-7 March 2018 at the ITUC-AP Regional Conference on Asbestos in Jakarta, Indonesia, under the theme “Realising an Asbestos-free World”.
- We reaffirmed that a Healthy and Safe Workplace is a fundamental human right and workers’ right and that we as trade unions will continue to take immediate actions for workers’ Occupational Health and Safety as our top priority.
- We reaffirmed our support for the International Labour Organization (ILO) Resolution concerning asbestos (adopted by the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference, June 2006) that confirmed the ILO Convention on Safety in the Use of Asbestos (C162) does not provide a justification for the continued use of asbestos.
- We condemned the needless death of more than 107,000 workers every year from asbestos-related diseases and are deeply concerned that millions of workers, the majority now in developing or transition economies, continue to face serious risks of deadly cancers from asbestos exposure, when alternative safer products are available.
- We condemned attempts by the asbestos industry to misrepresent the evidence on the deadly health impacts of chrysotile asbestos on exposed workers and communities, including misrepresenting positions of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the ILO and the World Trade Organisation..
- We confirmed that the elimination of the future use of asbestos is the most effective means to protect workers from asbestos exposure and to prevent future asbestos-related diseases and deaths and that asbestos industry arguments of ‘safe use’ of this deadly fibre is invalid.

- We noted with concern the asbestos diseases among workers are already occurring in this country of our meeting, Indonesia. We noted also the likelihood of increased asbestos related cancers for workers, community and consumers in the coming decades as Indonesia has not yet banned chrysotile asbestos and remains in the world's top 3 importers of asbestos fibre.

Therefore, we decided:

- To organise international and national campaigns to promote the elimination of the use of all forms of asbestos and asbestos-containing materials in our countries and globally; and
- To resolve to campaign for the realisation of "an Asbestos-free World" for health and safety of all workers, their families and their communities.

Those specific priority actions should include:

- To call on governments across Asia to follow the advice of the WHO and the ILO on asbestos, in regard the most effective means to stop exposure and asbestos diseases is to stop using all types of asbestos, including chrysotile, as soon as possible,
- To lobby all governments which have not already done so, to ratify the ILO C162 while moving to eliminate the use of asbestos, to immediately take steps to reduce risk of exposure to asbestos fibres among workers and the community and to develop systems for safe asbestos removal and waste disposal,
- To lobby governments to list Chrysotile (white asbestos) as a hazardous/carcinogenic chemical within the Rotterdam Convention, Annex III and any other international agreements as appropriate,
- To campaign for improved diagnosis and just-compensation for workers and other victims of asbestos related diseases,
- To promote to workers and policy makers, independent evidence on the deadly health impacts of exposure to chrysotile asbestos and all other asbestos types; and
- To publically condemn the asbestos industry's misinformation in any forums they make these false claims.