



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

**Environmental and Occupational
Determinants of Cancer:**

Interventions for Primary Prevention

ASTURIAS (AVILÉS AND GIJÓN), SPAIN

Declaration of Asturias: Call to Action

Twelve million cancers are diagnosed each year worldwide, and each year over 7 million people die of cancer. The majority of all cancers occur in low- and middle-income countries, and this proportion is increasing. A substantial percentage of all cancers are caused by environmental and occupational exposures. Pregnant women, fetuses, infants, children and workers are especially vulnerable.

Many cancers caused by environmental and occupational exposures can be prevented. Primary prevention - prevention of the exposures that cause cancer - is the single most effective means of prevention. Primary prevention keeps cancer from ever occurring. Primary prevention saves lives and saves billions of dollars. Primary prevention depends absolutely on independent, publicly funded research on environmental and occupational causes of cancer.

The Declaration of Asturias calls for the primary prevention of environmental and occupational cancer in countries around the world. The following are key recommendations:

1. Prevention of the environmental and occupational exposures that cause cancer must be an integral component of cancer control worldwide. Such prevention will require strong collaboration across sectors the health, environment, labour, trade and financial sectors and among countries, and also with civil society and the media.
2. WHO to develop a global framework convention on control of environmental and occupational causes of cancer that concentrates on occupational and environmental causes of cancer identified by IARC as proven or probable carcinogens.
3. WHO to lead development of measurable indicators of exposure and disease to guide cancer surveillance in countries around the world.
4. All countries to adopt and enforce legislation for protection of populations, especially the most vulnerable populations, against environmental and occupational cancers.
5. All countries to develop communication campaigns that educate populations about environmental and occupational causes of cancer and about preventive strategies.
6. Corporations to comply with all rules and regulations for prevention of environmental and occupational cancers and to use the same protective measures in all countries, developed and developing, in which they operate.
7. Research to discover still unrecognized environmental and occupational causes of cancers so as to guide future prevention.