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Press Release

The DGUV (German Statutory Accident Insurance) institutions organized the world congress on *Safety and Health at Work in Germany* - Problems of asbestos victims could not be subject

Why could the location of asbestos victims off-topic on the "XX. World Congress on Safety and Health at Work 2014" this week in Frankfurt, not only the Federation of asbestosis support groups wonders.

The inglorious handling of the professional associations or DGUV with the asbestos victims in their own country would probably harm the image of the exemplary international DGUV in terms of occupational health and safety, industrial safety and prevention, to be presented to the world. International representatives of asbestos victims' association, however, are invited and tell about disease rates and the use of asbestos in America - which is good for the image of the DGUV and does not hurt, because it causes no additional costs for the DGUV. A session in which it comes to the social situation and problems and the German asbestos victims was not intentional. Shuns the DGUV here the discussion and international comparison in this social issue?

The increasing consumption of asbestos in Asia leads to repetition of the asbestos tragedy experienced by industrialized nations that have insertion into the past asbestos on a large scale today. From an international OSH Congress would actually also to be expected that this came to grips with this threat on a wide scale.

The background:

The DGUV and co-organizer ISSA (*International Social Security Organization*) refused a workshop at the IALI (*International Association of Labour Inspection*); Unions, victims' associations, etc. should participate from a very early stage of supposedly organizational reasons for the International Occupational Safety and Health Conference. Alternatively was on the

subsequent traditional German Congress "Arbeitsschutz Aktuell" (*Current Labour Protection*) of FASI (Fachvereinigung Arbeitssicherheit - Safety at Work Association). referenced, but again failed the project to address the situation of asbestos victims, says **Gerd Albracht**. Albracht initiated almost 20 years, the Hessian Occupational Safety and Health Administration, before joining the ILO (*International Labour Organization*) in 2002 and there was worldwide responsible for labor inspection. As a former longtime IALI President and Chairman of the VDGB (Association of German Commercial Inspectors Association) he fights as a highly knowledgeable expert in decades in the forefront against asbestos and for the rights of asbestos victims.

"The concept came first at the FASI chairman and then when VDGB representatives with great enthusiasm. After three weeks I got a rejection ... we would all agree unanimously on the FASI, after he had spoken well with the DGUV Representative to the FASI. They would all agree unanimously and an event with victims' associations would be for the FASI not in question, since they worked and the World Congress with prevention. I have a moment considering withdraw from the VDGB, of which I was chairman of 10 years. Then they brought the issue of asbestos as an alibi issue at the Congress. The World Congress has missed a great opportunity to bring together for the first time the asbestos victims' associations, the state supervisory authorities, employers and workers and Ban -Asbestos initiatives. Germany had the highest consumption of asbestos in Europe and today more than 1500 annually officially recognized asbestos deaths, the real number is epidemiologically derived at least twice as high.

In China, India and Russia, the handling and consumption of asbestos explodes. A compensation of asbestos victims will find often do not take place. An open dialogue with all representatives and groups could show how the ticking time bomb in these countries can be prevented and set a political and social signal for a worldwide ban on asbestos and to help asbestos victims. The WHO estimates worldwide over 100,000 asbestos deaths annually. "

Prof. Dr. med. Hans-Joachim Weitowitz (em. Occupational and Social Medicine University of Giessen), a highly nationally and internationally recognized occupational health physicians and scientists impressed for decades due to its own research results, the discussion in Germany about the health impacts of asbestos and the location of the victims. In Germany only 20% of applications for recognition of asbestos-related lung cancer were successful. The hitherto mainly caused by asbestos worldwide signal tumor "mesothelioma" occurs worldwide in relation to asbestos-related lung cancer 1 to 2.4. In Germany, however, the ratio is 1 to 0.8. This demonstrates that many of the complainants would be unreasonably refused. He stressed that trade associations that are responsible with their umbrella organization DGUV eV for the compensation of asbestos victims in Germany, in view of its own shameful record in the organized by them World Congress in a broadly based asbestos discussion might well succeed little.

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