



Press Release

September 8, 2023

Victims Denounce “Sportswashing,” Demanding Corporate Accountability

The global coalition of activists represented by the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS), the Asian Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN), the Building and Wood Workers’ International, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA (Australia), the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia (ADSA), the Indonesian Ban Asbestos Network (INA-BAN) and the Brazilian Association of the Asbestos-Exposed (ABREA) issue this formal declaration of solidarity with British and French asbestos victims’ groups calling for restitution by the Cape Asbestos Company, a former asbestos multinational.

Today, members of the Asbestos Victims Support Group Forum UK (the Forum) and the National Association for the Defense of Asbestos Victims (ANDEVA) are holding a protest outside the Stade de France¹ in Paris, calling on Altrad – the current owner of Cape – which is headquartered in Montpellier to make a £10 million donation to “research into life-extending treatments for mesothelioma.”²

In the Forum press release about this action, Forum Chair Rob Rayner explained:

“Cape’s asbestos products are responsible for many deaths. As Cape’s parent company Altrad has a moral obligation to put right some of the wrong that has been done. Altrad is a global brand, and a major sponsor of the French and New Zealand rugby teams. It is incomprehensible that they cannot find £10 million for mesothelioma research. In the eyes of asbestos victims, Altrad’s sponsorship of the French and New Zealand rugby teams is an insult, both to the sport and to the fans.”³

Expressing his agreement with Mr Rayner’s views, Coordinator of the Asian Ban Asbestos Network Sugio Furuya said:

“Asbestos victims around the world have paid a high price for the profits made by asbestos companies. It is only right that some of the accumulated wealth be used for the benefit of those whose lives have been irreparably damaged by the immoral activities of Cape and others who prioritized corporate profits over human life.”⁴

¹ The French and New Zealand rugby teams are competing in the opening match of the Rugby World Cup 2023 at the Stade de France, Paris on September 8, 2023.

² Mesothelioma is the signature cancer caused by exposure to asbestos.

³ Press release by the Asbestos Victims Support Group Forum UK. September 5, 2023.

<http://ibasecretariat.org/asbestos-victims-support-group-forum-uk-press-rel-sep-5-2023.pdf>

⁴ According to data cited in the 2017 paper below, there are up to 290,000 asbestos-related occupational deaths every year with at least the same number of people dying from domestic and environmental asbestos exposures.

Takala, J., Hamalainen, P. et al. *Comparative Analysis of the Burden of Injury and Illness at Work in Selected Countries and Regions*. 2017

http://www.icohweb.org/site/images/news/pdf/CEJOEM%20Comparative%20analysis%20published%202023_1-2_Article_01.pdf

Notes for Editors

1. For additional details, please email: Sugio Furuya at 2009aban@gmail.com or Laurie Kazan-Allen (IBAS) at lkaz@btconnect.com

2. Information about the groups which issued this press release can be accessed at:

- International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS)
Website: <http://ibasecretariat.org>
- Asian Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN)
Website: <http://anroev.org/aban>
- Building and Wood Workers' International
<https://www.bwint.org/>
- Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA
<https://www.apheda.org.au/>
- Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia
<https://asbestosdiseases.org.au>
- Indonesian Ban Asbestos Network (Ina-Ban)
Website: <http://inaban.org/>
- Associação Brasileira dos Expostos ao Amianto (ABREA)
[Brazilian Association of the Asbestos Exposed]
Website: <http://www.abrea.org.br>