



PRESS RELEASE

FEBRUARY 14, 2020

### **Asbestos Scandal!**

On February 11, 2020 Brazil's former asbestos giant Eternit S.A. announced it would recommence the processing of asbestos fiber in order to reclaim and export 24,000 tonnes of asbestos. This action was condemned on February 12, 2020 by The National Association of Labor Attorneys (ANPT) which urged the Supreme Court (STF) to consider the status of a 2019 Goiás state law that allowed – in direct contravention to a 2017 STF ruling prohibiting the production, sale and use of asbestos materials – the extraction of chrysotile asbestos for export.<sup>1</sup>

The STF postponed its ruling on the unconstitutionality of the Goiás law which was due to be handed down on February 7, 2020. Given Eternit's plans, clarification of the “serious legal uncertainty” which now exists must be a matter of high priority, the ANPT said.

Commenting on this matter, President Eliezer João de Souza of the Brazilian Association of the Asbestos-Exposed (ABREA) said:

“Last year, ABREA was privileged to host members of the Asian Ban Asbestos Mission to Brazil at meetings in Osasco, São Paulo and Brasilia. Members of the mission brought personal testimony, scientific evidence and irrefutable footage revealing the deadly consequences of asbestos use in India and Indonesia, formerly the two biggest markets for Brazilian asbestos exports.<sup>2</sup> It is an abomination that Eternit should try and avoid the Supreme Court ban to inflict more toxic fiber on unsuspecting workers and communities in Asia.”

Agreeing with the ABREA President, Sugio Furuya, leader of the 2019 mission and Coordinator of the Asian Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN) , said:

“While justice for Brazilian asbestos victims has been curtailed – due to Eternit's corporate machinations capping compensation payouts – the company is willing to create yet more victims in Asian countries by exporting asbestos. It is inexplicable that the Goiás state law can supercede a ruling of the highest Brazilian Court. We look to the Court for immediate clarification. In the meantime, we hope that common sense will prevail and that all exports will be suspended.”

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<sup>1</sup> *Advogados condenam a Eternit por retornar um processo amianto: “Gravíssimo; acinte às decisões do STF”. E agora, ministro Alexandre de Moraes?* [Lawyers condemn Eternit for ignoring asbestos ruling: “Gravíssimo; comply with STF decisions”. And now, Minister Alexandre de Moraes?] July 13, 2020.

<https://www.viomundo.com.br/denuncias/advogados-condenam-eternit-por-voltar-a-processar-amianto-gravissimo-acinte-as-decisoes-do-stf-e-agora-ministro-alexandre-de-moraes.html>

<sup>2</sup> *The Asian Ban Asbestos Mission to Brazil 2019* [Missão Asiática Antiamianto no Brasil 2019].  
<http://ibasecretariat.org/asian-mission-to-brazil-apr-2019-link-page.php>

## Notes for Editors

1. For additional details, please email: Fernanda Giannasi (ABREA) at [fer.giannasi@terra.com.br](mailto:fer.giannasi@terra.com.br) or Sugio Furuya (ABAN) at [2009aban@gmail.com](mailto:2009aban@gmail.com)
2. Information about the groups which issued this press release can be accessed at:
  - Brasileira dos Expostos ao Amianto Associação [Brazilian Association of the Asbestos Exposed (ABREA)] Website: <http://www.abrea.org.br>
  - International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS) Website <http://ibasecretariat.org>

Unfortunately, the ANROEV website which had housed Asian Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN) information is currently unavailable.