



Asia Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

November 25, 2014

Dear Prime Minister, General Prayut Chan-o-cha

We are writing to urge you to ban use of asbestos and asbestos containing materials in Thailand. This would be consistent with bans in over 50 countries and with the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Asbestos is used predominately in fiber-cement roofing and vehicle brake and clutch linings. The danger arises from breathing the dust from asbestos product manufacture and use. The WHO, ILO and the international scientific consensus is that all types of asbestos including chrysotile or white asbestos causes cancer and a lung scarring disease (asbestosis) that can be totally disabling or fatal. There is no level of exposure to asbestos that is safe, even family members of asbestos workers and neighbors of asbestos air pollution sources get cancer from their environmental exposure.

Safer fiber-cement construction materials cost 6-15% more to produce. The World Bank notes that these products have superior impact resistance. The use of asbestos in construction materials assures that people's lives will be needlessly endangered throughout the life cycle of the building: construction, renovation, repair and demolition. The resulting costs in national health care and the resulting contamination of the living environment are enormous.

We therefore urge that you institute immediate measures to end the use of asbestos products in Thailand.

Sincerely yours,

On behalf of all participants of conference:

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Dr. Ken Takahashi

University of Occupational and Environmental Health, Japan

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Dr. Barry Castleman
Environmental Consultant, USA

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Dr. Paek Domyung
Seoul National University, Korea

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Mr. Sugio Furuya,
Asian Ban Asbestos Network (A-BAN) ,Japan

International experts and physicians among those gathered in the International Conference “Expedite Asia to be Free from Asbestos Hazard: Global Scientific and Social Evidence” held in Bangkok, have estimated the toll associated with asbestos use for each year it continues. The life years loss (8,000 life years from 566 victims in Thailand) and healthcare cost (about 14 million US dollars) caused by asbestos-related lung cancer and malignant pleural mesothelioma are extremely substantial in Thai people.