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OPEN LETTER TO DONA CADMAN, MP

September 14, 2009

Dona Cadman, MP
Surrey North, BC

Dear Ms Cadman:

We are writing to express to you our deepest thanks and respect for speaking up and stating your opposition to the mining and export of asbestos.

We realize that you are possibly being subjected to great pressure to try to make you back down from your clear, moral stand opposing export of asbestos. We thank you for your courage and integrity in staying firm in your position that Canada should ban asbestos use and export.

The science is irrefutable that chrysotile asbestos (which represents 100% of the asbestos sold in the world today) is a deadly carcinogen that causes mesothelioma and other cancers, as well as asbestosis. Public health authorities in Quebec, across Canada and around the world, as well as U.N. agencies, have all called for an end to the use of chrysotile asbestos since even in a technically advanced, wealthy country like Canada, the evidence is clear that chrysotile asbestos cannot be safely used. For this reason, the Quebec government's National Public Health Institute has, in fact, taken a position opposing the government's policy of increased use of chrysotile asbestos.

Asbestos related disease is the number one occupational killer in Canada. The Canadian Cancer Society has urgently called on Prime Minister Harper to implement the following plan of action in order to help eliminate asbestos related diseases across Canada and around the world:

- Immediately set a clear timetable for phasing out the use and export of asbestos;
- Implement a national surveillance system to track health outcomes of people who have been exposed to asbestos;
- Create a public registry of buildings that contain asbestos;
- Provide transition support for affected communities
- Include chrysotile asbestos on the Rotterdam Convention's list of hazardous substances

Pat Davidson, MP, has publicly stated that she also does not support the government's policy of exporting asbestos. Ms Davidson has publicly stated that, subsequent to her request, Natural Resources minister Lisa Raitt has told her that she will be bringing up the asbestos issue at an upcoming cabinet meeting.

We offer you and Ms Davidson our full support. We would like to work with you both to persuade the government to implement the Canadian Cancer Society plan of action.

We have also written to Ms Davidson informing her of our wish to work with you both on this important public health issue.

We thank you once again for your courageous, compassionate and ethical stand on ending Canada's shameful asbestos policy and look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely,



Kathleen Ruff, Rideau Institute on International Affairs, on behalf of:

- * Dr Kapil Khatter, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
- * Diana Daghofer, Prevent Cancer Now
- * Lisa Gue, David Suzuki Foundation
- * Stephen Hazell, Sierra Club of Canada
- * Denis St-Jean, Public Service Alliance of Canada
- * Dr Fernand Turcotte, Professor Emeritus of Public Health, Faculté de Médecine, Université Laval, Québec
- * Dr Pierre L. Auger, MD, Msc, FRCPC, Professeur de clinique, Département de médecine sociale et Préventive, Université Laval, Québec
- * Dr Murray Finkelstein, PhD MD CCFP, Department of Family and Community Medicine, Mt Sinai Hospital, Toronto
- * Dr John Last, MD, DPH, FRCPC, FFPH, FACPM, FACE, Emeritus Professor of Epidemiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa
- * Dr Pierre Gosselin, MD MPH, Professeur adjoint de clinique, Département de médecine sociale et préventive, Faculté de médecine, Université Laval, Québec
- * Dr Ray Bustinza, Chargé d'enseignement de clinique, Université Laval, Québec
- * Dr Yv Bonnier Viger, Médecin spécialiste en santé communautaire, Adjoint au Directeur de santé publique de Chaudière-Appalaches, Professeur au département de médecine sociale et préventive de l'Université Laval, Québec
- * Dr Tim K. Takaro, MD, MPH, MS., Associate Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University
- * Dr Michael Byers, Canada Research Chair in Global Politics and International Law, University of British Columbia
- * Alec Farquhar, Managing Director, Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers
- * Larry Stoffman, United Food & Commercial Workers Union, BC
- * Dr Micheline Beaudry, professeure titulaire associée, Département des sciences des aliments et de nutrition, FSAA, Université Laval, Québec
- * Albert Le Monnier, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Canada
- * Fe de Leon, Canadian Environmental Law Association
- * Dr James Brophy, adjunct Assistant Professor, University of Windsor
- * Dr Margaret Keith, adjunct Assistant Professor, University of Windsor
- * Ramsey Hart, MiningWatch Canada
- * Darryl Walker, British Columbia Government & Service Employees Union
- * Cathy Walker, Toxic Free Canada
- * Larry Hubich, Saskatchewan Federation of Labour
- * Rosa Goldstein, Victoria Raging Grannies