

**32nd IMF World Congress
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ITEM 12

RESOLUTION 2

**Resolution on Asbestos
Submitted by AMWU, Australia**

The World Health Organisation has declared that there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos. More than 100,000 workers die every year as a result of diseases caused by exposure to asbestos. The elimination of all asbestos and asbestos containing materials is the only effective means to prevent future asbestos-related disease and death.

We congratulate the IMF and its affiliates on their campaign for a global ban on asbestos, which has now been successfully implemented in more than **30** countries.

However, there remain more than 124 million people in the world who are currently exposed to asbestos. Sixty six million of these people live in the Asia Pacific Region, facing the prospect of developing an asbestos related disease.

The Global Asbestos Conference convened by the IMF in 2006 exposed the magnitude of the toll being taken by asbestos and asbestos containing materials on workers, their families and communities throughout the world. That Conference specifically addressed issues associated with the continuing and widespread use of asbestos; particularly in building materials throughout Asia. As a direct result, there have been a number of successful joint initiatives toward a global ban on asbestos.

Until a complete ban can be implemented, immediate action on a regional basis is necessary to ensure that workers, their families and communities do not confront the same painful experiences as those of industrialised countries that have now banned asbestos.

We recognise the vital role of groups representing victims, environmental and public health campaigners, unions and other non government organisations in devising and enforcing strategies to deal with the asbestos pandemic. We therefore call for the establishment of regional networks particularly in the Asia-Pacific region to provide support and information for those organisations and agencies currently providing asbestos programmes in the Asia-Pacific

region. The Network would provide an invaluable opportunity to share the experience and expertise of personnel and organisations such as Asbestos Victims Support Groups and those involved in clinical research such as that undertaken at facilities like the recently opened Asbestos Diseases Research Institute - The Banton Centre in Australia.

The IMF and its affiliates will contribute to the development of regional Networks where possible to campaign for :

- public education programmes about the dangers of exposure to asbestos
- development of safe work methods for asbestos and asbestos containing materials, including containment, in situ removal and demolition
- provision of occupational education programmes on these methods
- establishment of registers of people with past and/or current exposure to asbestos
- establishment of mesothelioma registers
- research into effective diagnosis, treatment and palliative care techniques and regimes for victims of asbestos diseases
- programmes assisting the families and communities of those suffering from asbestos diseases
- medical training programmes for the treatment of asbestos related diseases
- recognition of all work-related asbestos diseases as having occupation cause and therefore requiring employer compensation
- identification and development of safe and viable alternatives to asbestos
- implementation of the ban on asbestos