

OPEN LETTER

TO: ALL DELEGATES TO ROTTERDAM CONVENTION COP 10

We demand the right to know if toxic substances are entering our countries

The 'Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade' has the objective to promote information sharing, shared responsibility and cooperation in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals to protect human health and the environment from harm and to contribute to the environmentally sound use of those chemicals.

The Rotterdam Convention is an important Convention. However, in the 18 years since the Convention came into force it has not been able to meet its full potential. It is now at a critical juncture.

Hazardous chemicals that meet all conditions to be listed under the Convention are being continually blocked, despite the Convention's own scientific committee, the Chemical Review Committee (CRC), determining that they are meeting all requirements for listing onto Annex III.

At the previous COPs a very small number of Parties blocked the listing of certain substances and hindered the vast majority of countries basic right to know about what hazardous chemicals are entering their country. This is a problem, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, which have a limited chemicals management system. It means officials, employers, workers and consumers in receiving countries do not know of these hazardous materials entering their country and are therefore not protected.

The longest blocked chemical is chrysotile asbestos. Asbestos, long banned in most Global North countries is responsible for the deaths of over 200,000 workers every year and recognised as the cause of more than half of all occupational cancers. Other hazardous chemicals whose listing are currently being blocked from inclusion on Annex III of the Convention are: acetochlor, carbosulfan, fenthion formulation, and paraquat formulation.

Shockingly, some producers of these blocked hazardous substances are using the non-listing to falsely claim their products are safe, present no risks to health and the environment and try to make it look like they are supported by a majority of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention. These actions are directly undermining the goal and effectiveness of the Convention and its credibility and thus need immediate response.

WE CALL ON ALL PARTIES TO THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION COP 10 FACE-TO-FACE MEETING IN JUNE 2022 IN GENEVA SWITZERLAND TO:

1

LIST ONTO ANNEX III OF THE CONVENTION, ALL CRC RECOMMENDED HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS AND SUBSTANCES BLOCKED UNTIL NOW

2

REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS IMPORTANT CONVENTION

3

IMPLEMENT THE RIGHT TO KNOW FOR ALL PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION AND RESPECT THE SCIENTIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE CRC

