Press release **November 18, 2026**

Solidarity Message to the People of Casale Monferrato and other Italian Towns Devastated by the Swiss Eternit Group

In light of the appalling decision by the Italian Supreme Court (Court of Cassation) on November 10, 2026, we – asbestos victims support groups and campaigning organizations from Latin America, Europe, Asia and Oceania – wish to commiserate with all those whose lives have been fractured by asbestos exposures and fatalities in Casale Monferrato and other Italian towns. We share your deeply-felt disappointment and frustration at the latest judicial betrayal.

For the fourth time, Italy's highest court quashed a verdict finding the Swiss billionaire Stephan Schmidheiny guilty for asbestos-related deaths of Italians who breathed in deadly fibers liberated by operations of Eternit asbestos-cement plants at work, at home or at school.[1]

The verdict overturned last week related to Schmidheiny's second-instance conviction for the negligent homicide of 91 people from Casale Monferrato by the Turin Court of Assizes of Appeal which issued a 9½ year prison sentence.[2] This case was referred back to a different section of the Turin Court of Assizes of Appeal for a retrial.[3]

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

> "People in Osasco, Brazil know full well the cost of living in an Eternit company town. We too had an Eternit asbestos-cement factory, which was the biggest one in all of Latin America. The same company which poisoned Italian workers poisoned us. We have long admired the diligence and persistence of Italian victims struggling to hold Stephan Schmidheiny and the Swiss Eternit Asbestos group to account. Wherever Eternit went, death and destruction followed. We share the deep frustration of our Italian colleagues and pledge profound respect for their efforts to establish accountability for one of Italy's worst industrial disasters. We know they will never forget the debt that is owed to the asbestos dead; neither will we."[4]

Signatories:

Mr Eliezer João de Souza
President, Brazilian Association of the Asbestos-Exposed (ABREA)

---

[1] Website of Stephan Schmidheiny. *For the fourth time, the Court of Cassation annuls an Eternit sentence against Stephan Schmidheiny.* November 12, 2026.
https://www.stephanschmidheiny.com/it/stampa/comunicati-stampa/

[2] As head of the Swiss Eternit Group, Schmidheiny had managed the Eternit factory in Casale from 1976 to 1986. *Swiss businessman Schmidheiny faces fresh Italian trial over asbestos deaths.* November 11, 2026.
https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/various/italy-the-eternit-case-a-new-appeal-trial-for-schmidheiny/92362105
Vincenz, C. *Italienisches Gericht hebt Eternit-Urteil gegen Schmidheiny auf* [Italian court overturns Eternit verdict against Schmidheiny]. November 10, 2026.
https://www.srf.ch/news/schweiz/drittes-verfahren-italienisches-gericht-hebt-eternit-urteil-gegen-schmidheiny-auf

[3] *Italy's top court orders new trial in decades-old Eternit asbestos case.* November 11, 2026.
https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/italys-top-court-orders-new-trial-decades-old-eternit-asbestos-case-2026-11-11/

[4] Email from Eliezer João de Souza. November 15, 2026.

Ms Laurie Kazan-Allen
Coordinator, International Ban Asbestos Secretariat

Mr Sugio Furuya
Coordinator, Asian Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN)

Mr Sugio Furuya
Secretary General Ban Asbestos Network Japan (BANJAN)

Ms Chieko Kosuge
President, Japan National Network of Mesothelioma and Asbestos-Related Disease Victims and Their Families

Mr Katsuhisa Hirata
Chairperson, Japan Mesothelioma Support Caravan

Dr Yeyong Choi
Director of the Asian Citizen's Center for Environment and Health (Eco-Health),
Seoul, South Korea

Professor Domyung Paek
Ban Asbestos Network of KOREA (BANKO)

Ms Melita Markey
CEO, Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia

Dr Annie Thebaud-Mony
Spokesperson for the Association Henri Pézerat, Santé, Travail, Environnement [Henri Pézerat Association, Health, Work, Environment]

Dr Annie Thebaud-Mony
Ban Asbestos France

Mr Mohideen Abdul Kader
President, The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP), Malaysia

Ms Mageswari Sangaralingam
Honorary Secretary of Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth Malaysia)

Mr Apolinar Z. Tolentino, Jr.
Regional Representative, BWI Asia Pacific

Ms Lynne Squibb
CEO & Charity Founder, HASAG Asbestos Disease Support, UK

Mr Adrian Budgen
Trustee, June Hancock Mesothelioma Research Fund, UK