

## WORKING PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE THE CONFIDENCE THAT, WHEN THEY GO TO WORK, THEY WILL BE PROTECTED.

Workers and their unions are on the frontlines in the fight against cancer and killer chemicals in the workplace. Unions are stepping up their organising campaigns, documenting cases, gathering evidence, and mounting legal challenges to stop companies from killing workers. Regulations are being fought for at national and international level, yet multi-billion dollar supply chains continue to cover up cancer-causing chemicals while companies deny responsibility. This is a global fight against corporate greed. They care about, we have to listen to them. Globalised corporate power requires us to coordinate our work across borders and to be strategic in our targeting and strategies.

The ITUC and the Global Union Federations are united in the demand to eliminate work-related cancers. Unions have campaigned against asbestos use for decades and currently around 60 countries have implemented full national bans on asbestos. The latest, and very important, is the asbestos ban in Canada in October 2018. Nonetheless, too many countries are still held captive by the corporate lobbying of producers and exporters. Many citizens have to live with the risk of asbestos-related cancers in their homes or workplaces where buildings still contain this deadly substance.

Too many major global corporations deny responsibility even when their workplaces are causing the deaths of their employees. Samsung is a case in point. More than 118 deaths have resulted from chemicals used in the processing of semi-conductors in Korea alone. More than double that number are suffering from illnesses. This company, like others, has spent millions on academic research and testimony to obscure their responsibility. They have deployed aggressive anti-union policies preventing workers from organising against this cavalier disregard for life.

The ITUC demands transparency. Workers have a right to know what the risks are to their health. Governments have a responsibility to regulate for transparency and

testing, along with the oversight of labour inspectors with monitoring and sanctions power. Working people should have the confidence that when they go to work they will be protected. Unions are taking action with a zero cancer campaign. We propose concrete action plans for zero cancer workplaces, with recommendations for governments and for companies and employers.

- » Cancer is on the rise - 18.1 million new cases and 9.6 million cancer deaths in 2018.
- » Work-related cancers represent at least 8% of all cancers worldwide.
- » 9% of work-related deaths are due to cancers.
- » Less than 1% of 200,000 chemicals used in the workplace have adequate human health information.
- » 125 million people are exposed to asbestos; without urgent measures this will lead to more than 300,000 deaths every year.