

European Community

News Release

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TRILATERAL PRESS COMMUNIQUE

WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON ASBESTOS

On April 22, 1981, the governments of Canada and Quebec and the Commission of the European Communities agreed to sponsor a "World Symposium on Asbestos" in Montreal, May 25 - 27, 1982. The theme of the Symposium will be "Asbestos: Health and Society".

The Symposium will aim at open discussions on asbestos from the perspectives of the latest scientific and medical evidence, recent advances in technology and current socio-economic impact. More specifically, these discussions will focus on questions related to occupational and public health, product safety, the protection of the environment and trends in regulatory policy.

The 1976 E.C./Canada Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Cooperation has provided numerous opportunities for both sides to strengthen and expand their economic ties. Since 1978, questions concerning asbestos have been included in the program for industrial cooperation between the E.C. and Canada in view of the economic and commercial importance of this product for both parties and the need to resolve social and environmental issues connected with the production and use of asbestos.

A Steering Committee, which met in Brussels on April 22, and is composed of representatives from government, labour, industry and the scientific community, has been charged with the responsibility of organizing the Symposium and ensuring that all viewpoints regarding asbestos will be presented.

The cooperation between the Commission, Canada and Quebec offers a unique opportunity on an international level to reconcile economic interests with social, industrial and environmental requirements. Therefore, the partners in the Symposium anticipate that this gathering of international experts will help clarify issues presently the subject of controversy in many parts of the world.

Brussels - Ottawa - Quebec City, April 22, 1981