World Health Organization

Joint WHO/IARC Statement in response to the recent Lancet report

In response to allegations in the recent Lancet article, IARC in the dock over ties with asbestos industry (The Lancet, doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(13)60152-X), WHO (World Health Organization) and IARC (International Agency for Reserach on Cancer) state the following:

- All forms of asbestos are carcinogenic to humans (IARC Monographs Volume 100C) and stopping the use of all forms of asbestos is the most efficient way to eliminate asbestos-related diseases (WHO Fact Sheet No 343).

- The study on cancer in chrysotile workers in Asbest, Russian Federation, for which IARC is providing its epidemiological expertise, will supply important scientific information to better quantify the risk of cancers already known to be related to chrysotile as well as additional cancers suspected to be related to chrysotile, the asbestos fibre is the most commonly produced.
- WHO and IARC take conflict of interest seriously and use a rigorous process to protect our research and development of norms, standards and guidelines from undue influence.
- IARC confirms the completeness and accuracy of all data and statements of scientific results published in the British Journal of Cancer (Estimating the asbestos-related lung cancer burden from mesothelioma mortality , doi:10.1038/bjc.2011.563) and presented at a conference in Kiev.

IARC, as WHO's cancer research agency, remains committed to providing the most reliable, independent scientific evidence on which public health decisions can be based.