

[Charest Side-Steps Asbestos Export Responsibility As He Applauds His Own Environmental Awareness](#)

(Posted by Tom Lamb at www.AsbestosHUB.com on February 10, 2010; see <http://bit.ly/b9ioaM>)

Last week, during his economic mission to India, Jean Charest, Premier of Quebec, spoke before the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit. During his speech he emphasized the global impact of Quebec on climate change. He said:

During the past few years, we, as regional governments, have stopped defining our future according to our borders and territories, but rather as a single ecosystem - a single region.

These are inspiring words. We all have a responsibility to, not only our own communities, but to those surrounding us, to those we affect. We must recognize that our actions influence our neighbors as well as the entire world, and we have a duty to serve as protectors and as examples of sustainable policy.

Inspiring words, indeed. It's too bad that they are shadowed by Charest's blatant disregard for their meaning.

When confronted by Indian union workers at a news conference in Mumbai about the export of mass amounts of asbestos from Quebec to India, Charest denied any responsibility. He said simply that the responsibility rests with the Indian government. He said "We have taken all *our* responsibilities, we've put in place standards and have promoted them" (Emphasis mine).

Wait, what about all that single ecosystem, single region jargon? I guess not when it comes to Quebec making money on the export of a deadly material that is strictly regulated within its own borders.

Anup Srivastava of the Building and Wood Workers International union said, "We are here before the summit of sustainable development and we're talking about environmental questions, but I think the message is clear: asbestos is not green."

Srivastava cited Quebec as the second largest exporter of asbestos to India. Although Charest maintains that "there's a limit to what we can do", surely a ban on asbestos exports to India would have a huge impact on the standards currently in effect there.

Yet Charest refuses to elaborate, and perhaps even acknowledge, his contradictory position on the environment and asbestos exports by Quebec. For a little background, see my related post, "[Scientists Urge Premier Of Quebec To Stop The Hypocrisy And Ban Asbestos Exports](#)".

Read a more detailed report on Charest's visit to India at *The Canadian Press*, [Charest faces more questions about export of asbestos during visit to India](#).

Attorney [Tom Lamb](#) represents people in personal injury and wrongful death cases involving mesothelioma or other asbestos cancers. The above article was posted originally on his blog, **Asbestos HUB** – with active links and readers' comments.

<http://AsbestosHUB.com>