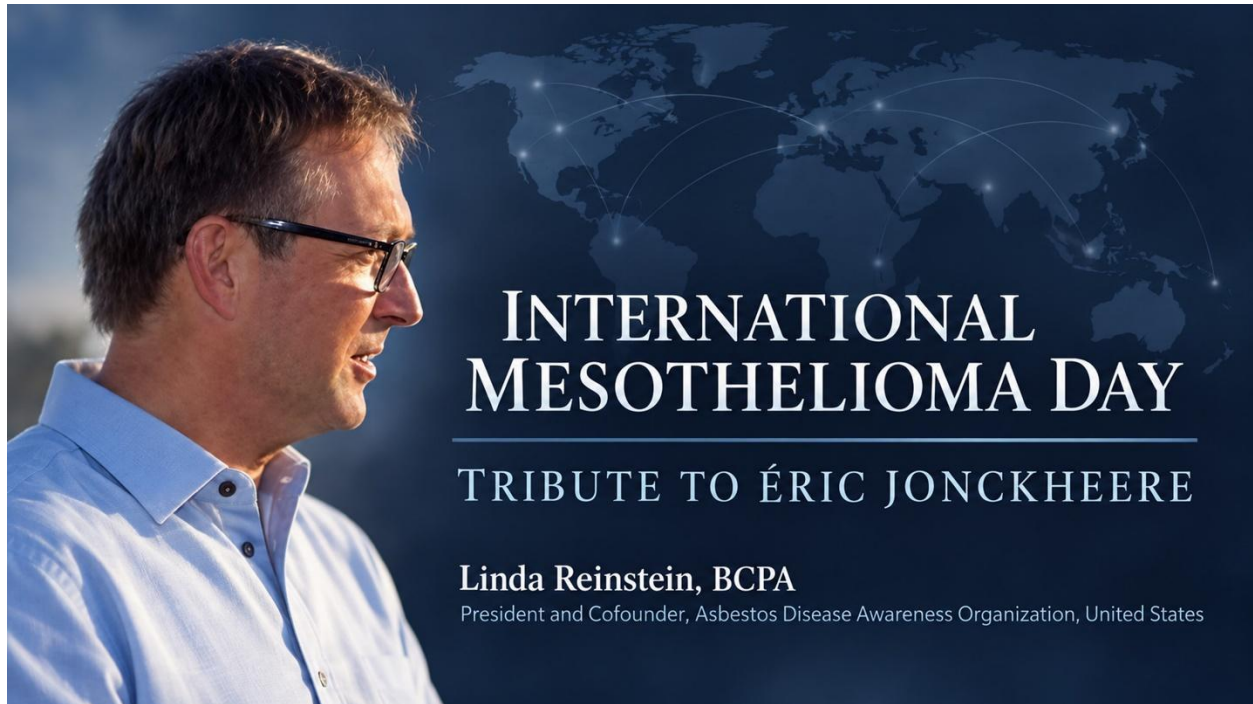


STATEMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES

Linda Reinstein, BCPA, Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization



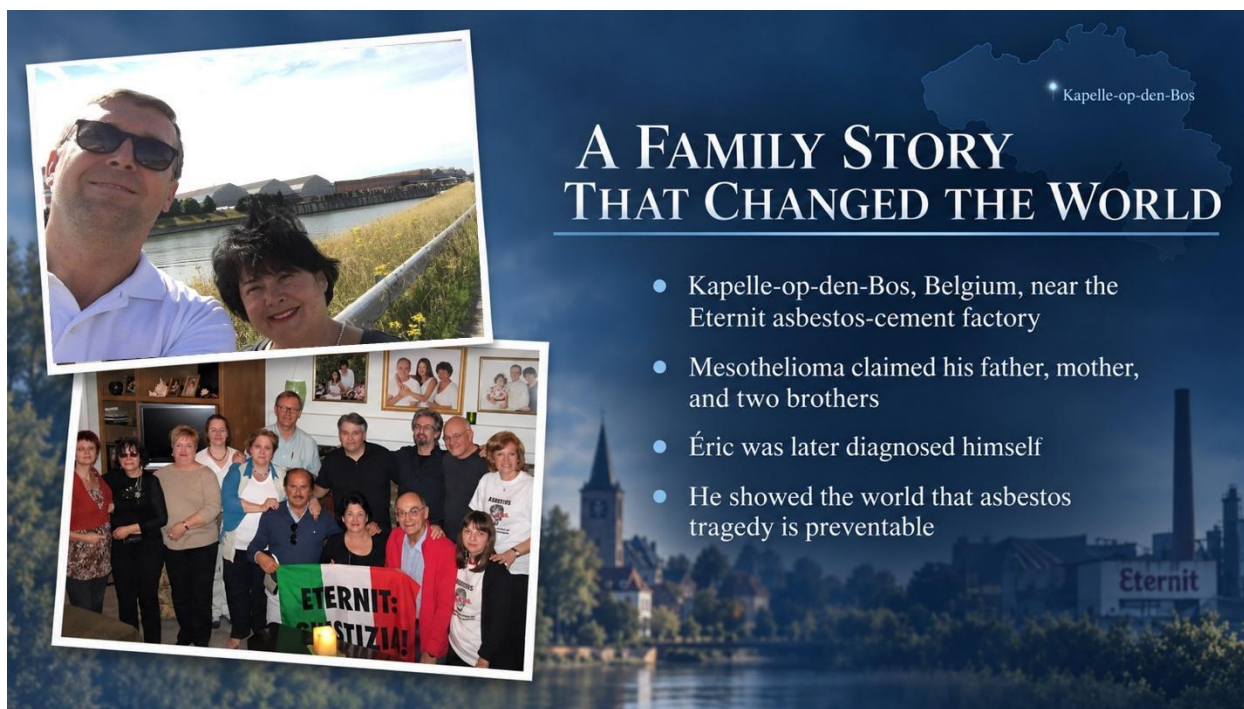
Thank you, Alec, and thank you to Workplace Health Without Borders for bringing us together to remember and honor Éric Jonckheere.

It is deeply meaningful to be part of this global gathering of people who knew Éric, worked beside him, and shared his determination to prevent asbestos exposure and asbestos-caused disease.

Éric and I came to this work through experiences that were intensely personal.

Our countries were different. Our families were different. But we understood one another because asbestos had changed both of our lives and our families forever.

We shared the experience of taking private grief and turning it into public action.



- Kapelle-op-den-Bos, Belgium, near the Eternit asbestos-cement factory
- Mesothelioma claimed his father, mother, and two brothers
- Éric was later diagnosed himself
- He showed the world that asbestos tragedy is preventable

The photographs on this slide bring that history close: Éric's family, Kapelle-op-den-Bos, and the Eternit asbestos-cement factory that stood at the center of so much loss.

I was fortunate to stand there with Éric and see the place through his eyes. It made clear that this was never an abstract public-health issue. It was a family and community story.

For Éric, the devastation was almost unimaginable.

He grew up in Kapelle-op-den-Bos, Belgium, near the Eternit asbestos-cement factory. His father worked there. Over time, mesothelioma took his father, his mother, and two of his brothers. Éric himself was later diagnosed with mesothelioma and died from the disease in 2024.

Yet when Éric spoke about his family, he did more than recount loss.

He connected their story to the larger truth about asbestos.

He understood that what happened to his family was not simply a family tragedy. It was a preventable public-health tragedy, repeated in communities around the world.

That understanding shaped his life.



A VALUED VOICE AT ADAO

- Spoke at ADAO conferences many times
- Brought facts, experience, and humanity
- Received the 2018 Alan Reinstein Memorial Award
- Helped connect personal stories with public policy

At the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization, we were fortunate to welcome Éric to our conferences many times. When he spoke, people listened.

The photographs here capture how I remember him at ADAO: at the podium, among colleagues and friends, and receiving the Alan Reinstein Memorial Award.

He brought facts and experience, but he also brought something equally important: humanity.

He could speak about policy, industry, law, and public health while never allowing us to forget the people and families behind every statistic.

In 2018, ADAO was proud to present Éric with the Alan Reinstein Memorial Award.

That award is especially personal to me. It honors my husband, Alan, whose mesothelioma diagnosis in 2003 led our family into a world we never expected to enter.

Presenting that award to Éric recognized something Alan believed deeply: that knowledge must lead to action, and that preventing exposure must always be our ultimate goal.

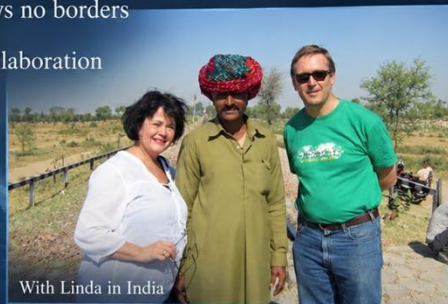
Éric embodied that principle.

AN INTERNATIONAL VOICE FOR JUSTICE

- President of ABEVA, the Belgian Association of Asbestos Victims
- Worked for justice, accountability, compensation, and prevention
- Believed asbestos knows no borders
- Strengthened global collaboration and awareness



European Asbestos Forum



With Linda in India



Asian Asbestos Conference

Following the example of his mother, Françoise, Éric became a powerful advocate for asbestos victims. He served as president of ABEVA, the Belgian Association of Asbestos Victims, and worked tirelessly for justice, accountability, compensation for victims, and prevention.

But Éric's vision was never limited by borders.

The photographs from India, the Asian Asbestos Conference, and the European Asbestos Forum reflect the reach of that work and the relationships he built across the international asbestos community.

He understood that asbestos fibers do not recognize national boundaries, and neither should our efforts to prevent exposure.

That is why Éric became such an important part of the international asbestos community.

ERIC'S MISSION REMAINS WITH US



- He turned personal experience into education
- Education into prevention and action
- A U.S. asbestos ban and a global end to asbestos use, exposure, and disease

Prevention protects the next worker, child, and family. Éric, we remember you. We honor you. We will continue the work we shared.

The photograph from Brussels is also how I remember this work: serious in purpose, but built through friendship, trust, and a shared belief that change was possible.

Éric told his family's story through advocacy, through his leadership, through the documentary *Breathless*, and through his book, *Asbestos: My War with the Devil's Dust*.

Again and again, he transformed personal experience into education.

And education into action.

Éric and I also shared a vision that remains unfinished.

We believed the United States must finally ban asbestos, and that the global community must continue working toward an end to asbestos mining, use, exposure, and disease everywhere.

For more than two decades at ADAO, our message has been simple: asbestos-caused diseases are preventable.

No family should have to experience what the Jonckheere family experienced.

No family should have to experience what my family experienced.

And no community should have to discover decades later that the air people breathed, the workplaces where they earned a living, or the materials surrounding their homes and families carried a preventable and deadly risk.

Éric understood that prevention is not abstract.

Prevention means protecting the next worker.

The next child.

The next family.

That is why his work mattered, and why it continues to matter.

Our greatest tribute to him is not simply to remember what he accomplished.

It is to continue the work.

To continue telling the truth about asbestos.

To continue standing with victims and families.

To continue advancing science, education, policy, and prevention.

And to continue working together until asbestos-caused disease becomes part of history rather than another family's future.



When I look at this final photograph, I see more than an advocate and colleague. I see a friend, a fellow mesothelioma warrior, and someone whose work continues through all of us.

When I think of Éric, I remember someone who understood the weight of this work and still carried it forward with courage, dignity, and extraordinary persistence.

Éric's voice, heart, and strength will be deeply missed.

But his mission remains with all of us.

May we carry it forward with the same determination, compassion, and courage that he showed throughout his life.

Éric, we remember you. We honor you. And we will continue the work we shared.

Mesothelioma Warriors Forever.

Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization
"United for Asbestos Disease Awareness, Education, Advocacy, and Community Support"
www.AsbestosDiseaseAwareness.org