

**Press Release**

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**16 Years sentence for 3,000 Asbestos Deaths  
Historic Criminal Negligence Verdict in Turin Eternit Trial**

Eternit asbestos cement company magnates, Swiss Stephan Schnidheiny and Belgian Baron De Cartier de Marchienne have been found guilty today in a Turin court of criminal charges of causing wilful and deliberate environmental disaster and wilful and deliberate failure to implement precautions in the work place.

**They have been sentenced to 16 years imprisonment for an estimated 3,000 deaths from asbestos-related diseases as a result of Eternit's activities.**

In the UK, environmental and occupational health disasters have been caused by Turner & Newall (T&N) and Cape plc asbestos production. T&N's Leed's Armley factory notoriously contaminated hundreds of houses and the failure to protect workers at the Cape asbestos factory in Hebden Bridge led to a Government enquiry.

**In the UK, thousands of deaths have been caused by T&N and Cape activities but no criminal charges have ever been brought against the company executives.**

Tony Whitston, Forum Chair says:

"This historic verdict provides justice for thousands of asbestos victims in Italy. It sends a powerful message to companies not to flout workplace and environmental laws. The asbestos tragedy in Italy and the UK, and in many other countries, could have been prevented if action had been taken earlier. In the UK, asbestos manufacturers have, literally, got away with murder."

"The asbestos tragedy in the UK will afflict future generations if the Government persists in attacking health and safety legislation, cutting enforcement activity and thereby failing to prevent exposure to thousands of tonnes of asbestos in buildings in the UK."

END

## NOTES TO EDITORS

Eternit, T&N and Cape formed a cartel with other asbestos manufacturers.

In the mid-1970s Eternit joined with T&N and Cape to form the asbestos industry lobbying organisation called the “Asbestos Information Council.”

The Widness asbestos factory paid a license to Eternit to use their asbestos process patent. The company was bought by T&N in the early 1920s and sold to Eternit in 1986.