

THE WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

**WMA DECLARATION  
ON  
LEPROSY CONTROL AROUND THE WORLD AND  
ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PERSONS  
AFFECTED BY LEPROSY**

Adopted by the 62<sup>nd</sup> WMA General Assembly, Montevideo, Uruguay, October 2011

Leprosy is a widespread public health problem, with approximately 250,000 new cases diagnosed annually worldwide. It is a curable disease and after starting treatment, the chain of transmission is interrupted. Leprosy is a disease that have been inadequately addressed from the point of view of investments in research and medical treatment.

The World Medical Association recommends to all National Medical Associations to defend the right of the people affected with leprosy and members of their families, that they should be treated with dignity and free from any kind of prejudice or discrimination. Physicians, health professionals and civil society should be engaged in combating all forms of prejudice and discrimination. Research centers should acknowledge leprosy as a major public health problem, and continue to research this disease since there are still gaps in understanding its patho-physiological mechanisms. These gaps in knowledge may be overcome through the allocation of resources to new research, which will contribute to more efficient control worldwide. Medical schools, especially in countries with high prevalence of leprosy, should enhance its importance in the curriculum. The public, private, and civil sectors should unify their best efforts in order to disseminate information that would counteract prejudice towards leprosy and that acknowledges its curability.

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