

Global Appeal 2007

To End Stigma and Discrimination
against People Affected by Leprosy

Manila, The Philippines, January 29, 2007

*"Every person is born free and equal
in dignity and human rights." **

Many people think that leprosy no longer
exists. But it does — and also the stigma and
discrimination it causes.

Discrimination against people affected by
leprosy is one of the oldest and most
pervasive examples of social injustice in the
history of the human race.

Even today, millions of men, women and
children continue to suffer social, economic
and legal discrimination, simply because
they or a family member have had leprosy.

Leprosy is a curable disease. Yet misguided
notions about leprosy persist,
with devastating consequences for those
thus stigmatized.

Denying the inherent human rights of
anyone on the basis of disease is indefensible.
Discrimination can never be justified.

Silence on this issue is not acceptable.

We urge you to join us in the fight to end
this social injustice.

Together, let us create a society in which
every individual is free and equal
in dignity and human rights.

Global Appeal 2007 is an initiative of Yohei Sasakawa,
WHO Goodwill Ambassador
for the Elimination of Leprosy,
endorsed and co-signed by leaders
of People Affected by Leprosy around the world.



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* From the First Article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)