

Mr. President of  
the drafting committee  
I wish to thank Mr. Emeru Tamerat  
for the preliminary report presented  
this morning on Elimination of  
discrimination against persons  
with leprosy. I found the report  
very insightful as to how the  
International community has to  
Address <sup>the</sup> Challenges of discrimination  
against individuals suffering from  
leprosy disease.

I particularly appreciate the  
recommendations suggested for  
taking actions, especially of the  
need to promote awareness worldwide  
and prevent the stigma from  
spreading thereby creating unnecessary  
fear and hostile attitude towards  
leprosy patients.

In this regard, we wish to stress  
that, as many leprosy patients are  
found in developing countries, including  
African countries, this awareness  
work has to be further strengthened

with the necessary government policies and sustained financing mechanism.

In the case of Ethiopia, being one of the countries in Africa that has been affected for many years now, the Government of Ethiopia has adopted appropriate policies and measures to address the challenge for many years now.

There is a full commitment to further strengthen the efforts or collaboration with the international community.

Finally I would like to commend once again the work ~~has been~~ done and the Advisory Committee for taking up the important issue that need to be addressed urgently and in a holistic manner ~~through~~ by governments, national, regional and global organizations operating in this area and other stakeholders.

Thank you