



**Statement by the delegation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, report on the implementation of the principles and guidelines for the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members, 18<sup>th</sup> Session of Advisory committee UNHRC,**

**Mr. President,**

Ethiopia welcomes the convening of the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of Advisory committee of the UNHRC, publicly opened this morning to discuss on thematic studies requested by the Council, including on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members.

My delegation thanks Mr. Imru Tamrat Yigezu, the Rapporteur, and the drafting group, for the preparation of the quality report review on the implementation of the principles and guidelines for the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members and we thank for his insightful presentation before us.

Ethiopia is pleased to be the co-sponsor together with Brazil, Estonia, Japan, Morocco, Portugal and Romania of the resolution adopted by Human Rights Council at its 29<sup>th</sup> Session in June 2015, entitled, the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members, requesting the Advisory Committee to undertake a study which reviews the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines by assessing the magnitude of segregations against persons affected by leprosy and their family members and to submit a report at its 35<sup>th</sup> session containing practical recommendations on the way forward.

The draft report clearly identified and pointed out that the attitudinal and structural barriers in society of age-old norms and practices of segregation and exclusion against persons affected by leprosy and their family members still persists. In many countries, several laws afford that "leprosy" is a legitimate ground for divorce or breaking the bond of marriage. Ethiopia concurs with the Advisory Committee that states are responsible on the follow-up and monitoring the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines by Promoting Awareness Raising of the Principles and Guidelines, Repealing Discriminatory Laws,

Promoting Social Rehabilitation measures, Using of Appropriate and Dignified Languages and Empowerment of Persons Affected by Leprosy and their Family Members. With this respect, Ethiopia, among positive steps it took, repealed its provision in the family which previously allowed dissolution of marriage on ground of leprosy.

Finally, as an international procedure, Ethiopia favourably supports the recommendation made by the AC to establish a follow-up mechanism within the United Nations Human Rights system, designed to encourage States and other relevant actors in the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines.

***I THANK YOU!***