

# GLOBAL APPEAL 2008

To End Stigma and Discrimination against People Affected by Leprosy

*"To many of us, worse than the very disease is the prejudice that comes along with it." \**

**L**eprosy is one of the world's oldest diseases.

For much of history, it was incurable.

Countless millions suffered its disfiguring effects.

Today, leprosy is easily treated with multidrug therapy.

Since the 1980s, over 16 million people have been cured worldwide.

Diagnosed early and treated promptly, leprosy leaves no trace.

Far harder to remove is the age-old stigma.

Based on ignorance and fear, society continues to discriminate against people affected by leprosy, even after they are cured.

This has devastating consequences for them and their families.

It limits their opportunities for education, employment and marriage, and it restricts their participation in community life.

Defining a person by his or her disease is unacceptable.

We appeal to society to understand the facts about leprosy.

We call for actions to end the stigma and discrimination.

We join people affected by leprosy in affirming the right of every human being to live with dignity.

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\*Francisco A.V. Nunes, Brazil, founder member of MORHAN  
(Movement to Reintegrate People Affected by Leprosy)

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Nicholas Howen  
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