LEPROSY

The Forty-fourth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Director-General on leprosy;

Recalling resolution WHA40.35 and previous resolutions of the Health Assembly and the Executive Board on leprosy;

Noting with satisfaction the significant progress made during the past five years with multidrug therapy for leprosy control and with case-finding in the majority of Member States where leprosy is endemic - progress which has led to reductions in disease prevalence;

Recognizing the substantial and increasing support for leprosy control being provided by nongovernmental and other donor organizations;

Aware of the increasingly high priority accorded by several Member States to the elimination of leprosy as a public health problem;

Further aware of the opportunities to reduce disabilities due to leprosy through early case-detection, multidrug therapy and increased emphasis on managerial capabilities within leprosy control programmes and on disability prevention;

1. DECLARES WHO's commitment to continuing to promote the use of all control measures including multidrug therapy together with case-finding in order to attain the global elimination1 of leprosy as a public health problem by the year 2000;

2. URGES Member States in which leprosy is endemic:

   (1) to further increase or maintain their political commitment and give high priority to leprosy control so that the global elimination of leprosy as a public health problem is achieved by the year 2000;

   (2) to strengthen managerial capabilities within leprosy programmes, particularly at the intermediate level, and to improve training in leprosy for health workers at all levels, including medical students and student nurses;

   (3) to ensure that coverage of multidrug therapy is maintained at the highest level possible and that patients comply with treatment;

   (4) to strengthen case-finding activities through various approaches, including health education, community participation and training of health workers;

1 Elimination of leprosy as a public health problem is defined as the reduction of prevalence to a level below one case per 10 000 population.
(5) to integrate leprosy control within general health services and provide appropriate social and economic rehabilitation measures as soon as possible in accordance with local realities;

(6) to improve national information systems in order to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the elimination of leprosy;

(7) to coordinate the technical and financial resources made available for leprosy control by international and nongovernmental organizations so that they are utilized in the best way;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to strengthen technical support to Member States for the implementation of multidrug therapy together with case-finding so as to achieve the global elimination of leprosy as a public health problem by the year 2000;

(2) to continue to mobilize and coordinate scientific, technical and additional financial resources for implementing multidrug therapy together with case-finding, disability prevention and social and economic rehabilitation;

(3) to continue to strengthen national capabilities for leprosy control through support for training activities;

(4) to continue to support research for the development of improved drugs, diagnostic tools and vaccines through the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases;

(5) to promote further coordination with Member States and nongovernmental organizations in order to achieve the global elimination of leprosy as a public health problem by the year 2000;

(6) to keep the Executive Board and the Health Assembly informed of the progress made.