

**PART V**  
**STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES**  
**OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**



**REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC  
BUREAU REGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL**

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

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**STATEMENT BY PROFESSOR KIIKUNI  
REPRESENTATIVE, SASAKAWA MEMORIAL FOUNDATION**

Dear Dr Omi and all the colleagues in the WHO-Western Pacific Region

My foundation, established in 1974 to fight against leprosy, together with other international NGO's, have been collaborating with WHO and with the introduction of MDT, Multi-Drug Therapy, now elimination of leprosy, once only a dream comes to true. This year 2005 is the target year of leprosy elimination as a public health problem, defined by WHO experts and, with the leadership of D.G. Dr Lee who had started WHO career as leprologist, this target can now be achieved most of the country. The biggest leprosy cases are in India but courageous effort of the Indian Government, WHO office and NGO's, prevalence rate is now 1:2 and we are hoping to achieve 1 per 10,000 population prevalence by March 31, 2006, which is the end Indian fiscal year. Mr Hohei Sasakawa, WHO Special Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination, is now in Calcutta, India and asked me to deliver apologies for not attending this committee meeting.

In this Region, with the help of Dr Omi, Leprosy is eliminated in most of the countries except two countries, namely: Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands. But actual numbers of cases are small, less than 1,000. We would like to see further effort of WHO and government people to realize our common target. But to achieve our common target of eliminating is not the end of the problem brought about by leprosy.

Leprosy is the most widely discriminated and stigmatized disease of human kind. I would like to stress to the distinguished delegates here that leprosy elimination is only a first step towards a world without leprosy problems.

Our foundation, together with The Nippon Foundation, would like to stress the important of sustaining leprosy service with emphasis of “No discrimination” and I am happy to say we would like to continue our effort to work with WHO.