

## WELCOME GREETINGS

GREETINGS FROM JIAN ZEMIN  
PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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*“Eradicate Leprosy for the Benefit of Mankind”*

## ILA PRESIDENT'S WELCOMING MESSAGE



Welcome to Beijing for the 15th International Leprosy Congress. This meeting is termed “Centennial” because it commemorates the start of the new and hopefully the last century of the millennium’s old human struggle against leprosy. Our main goal in the future will be: *“Working Toward A World Without Leprosy.”*

It is important to recognize that this hopeful start is now made possible because of solid achievements from many people’s hard work over the last 100 years, since the 1st International Leprosy Congress held in Berlin in 1897. We have come a long way since that time, when all that was offered as an immediate solution to existing leprosy problems was to recommend isolation of the patients.

The solutions we are seeking at this Congress are far wider and deeper, encompassing both medical and social aspects, firmly based on solid scientific grounds as well as on human perspectives. Let us hope that the next important commemorative event for leprosy is not at the end of the new century, but perhaps only halfway, at the mid-century; hopefully marking the end of our leprosy work because then there will be no more problems to be solved.

We have a lot of work to do during this Congress under a new format. No doubt it is a little confusing, and many of the old-timers may feel somewhat uncomfortable, though I am convinced it is worth experimenting with. Our Chinese colleagues have been working hard in preparation. Therefore I wish you well in making this Congress a productive as well as an enjoyable one.—Dr. Yo Yuasa

## WELCOMING REMARKS FROM JI QUINGLIN, MAYOR OF BEIJING, CHINA

The first International Leprosy Congress was held about 100 years ago. It is a great honor today for the city of Beijing to host the last International Congress of Leprosy of the 20th century at such a crucial moment when we are about to enter the 21st century. Now, on behalf of the People's Government of Beijing Municipality and the more than 10 million hospitable residents here in the city, I would like to express our warm welcome to all the experts and guests participating in this grand gathering. I would also like to extend my heartfelt respects to you all from the international leprosy field who have made great contributions to the health and development of mankind.

As the capital city of China as well as the political and cultural center of this country, Beijing is also a metropolis that houses both numerous historical and cultural monuments and sites and urban facilities of mod-

ern times. Our city is noted for its beautiful natural reserves and rich historical and cultural heritage. At the same time, it has become the focus of the world attention for its increasingly developed science and technology and educational standards. With the expanding of the opening up and deepening of the economic structural reform, our city has changed a lot and is changing every day. In this connection, we, as the host of this Congress, are expecting you to spend some time visiting the historical sites and places of interest during the Congress so that you would be able to experience the charm of the Chinese culture and feel the rhythm of our city life while Beijing, old but full of vitality, is marching forward.

May I wish you a nice and pleasant and fruitful stay in Beijing!

May I wish the 15th International Leprosy Congress a complete success.

## WELCOMING GREETINGS FROM CHAIRMAN OF THE CHINESE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE PROF. YIN DAKUI, VICE-MINISTER OF HEALTH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

On behalf of the Chinese Organizing Committee of the 15th International Leprosy Congress now being held in Beijing, I welcome the participants, experts, scholars, social workers and friends who are attending this meeting and thank you for your support, present and past, in helping us in our antileprosy work.

The Chinese government has paid great attention to antileprosy work. During the last four decades and more, China has achieved great success in this work and has now realized the WHO proposal of making leprosy no longer a public health problem. But we still know, seriously, that to eradicate this disease in a nation with 1.2 billion people is not an easy task. We know that besides the efforts of our nation international support, materially and morally, is

also needed. We know that to realize the goal of eradicating leprosy in the world our nation has to take historic responsibilities. This goal will eventually be fulfilled in our country.

The Chinese government is paying special attention to this 15th Congress. As the host nation, we have been and will continue to cooperate cordially with all the international leprosy associations in the world to make this Congress a united, practical, creative and cooperative meeting. Let us unite and make the goal to eradicate leprosy in the next century worldwide be realized.

Autumn is the time of good weather and the most beautiful season in Beijing. We Chinese eagerly welcome your coming here and hope that you will have a memorable visit in our country.