

OPENING SESSION I
CHAIRPERSON: PROFESSOR BAOHONG JI

Objectives of the meeting

Leprosy research should be an important component of the global alliance. It is now time to revive and promote leprosy research, an activity that has declined greatly in intensity and in the number of scientists involved in the course of the last decade. As a first step, we have organized this Workshop, which is entitled '*Leprosy Research at the New Millennium*'.

The first objective of the Workshop is to assess the current situation of leprosy research at the global level, by reviewing progress in the various areas of leprosy research.

However, the Workshop will focus more on the future. The second objective is to identify needs for new concepts and new tools for leprosy elimination that might be generated by research projects within the foreseeable future.

The third objective is to devise strategies for promoting research through international collaboration, strengthening research capacity in leprosy endemic countries, and mobilizing the resources needed to support leprosy research.

The 3-day Workshop is divided into eight sessions, which include numerous scientific presentations and 'brainstorming' discussions. At the end of the Workshop, a list of recommendations related to leprosy research will be prepared by the members. To disseminate the scientific papers, discussions and recommendations that will result, a *Proceedings* will be published as a supplement to the December 2000 number of *Leprosy Review*, the publication of which is sponsored by the Association Française Raoul Follereau (AFRF), the British Leprosy Relief Association (LEPRA), and the Sasakawa Memorial Health Foundation (SMHF).

I welcome all of you to Paris, and hereby open the Workshop on Leprosy Research at the New Millennium.

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