



Permanent Mission of Israel
UNITED NATIONS - GENEVA

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UN Human Rights Council
47th Session, Item 3 - July 2021

**Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the elimination of
discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family
members**

Delivered by Mrs. Adi Farjon Israel
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Madam President,

Israel welcomes the Special Rapporteur's report on the impact of COVID-19 on persons affected by leprosy and their family members. We believe that it is important that the Special Rapporteur continue to raise awareness to this historical neglected issue. Israel will continue to support her work.

Madam President,

We must together continue to address the challenges that people with leprosy face, in order to protect their human rights, including barriers to the right to decent work and health, exclusion from the formal economy and lack of access to adequate housing. Israel is concerned that these issues have been further exacerbated by the pandemic. Where people affected with leprosy were already outside the formal economy and denied employment protection, they now further face the loss of jobs, incoming generating activities and safety nets. Israel is especially concerned that women and children may face multiple and intersecting discrimination on the grounds of leprosy.

Madam President,

Finally, we align ourselves with the Joint Statement given by Japan and echo its call for this Council to play a crucial role in further promoting the principles and guidelines for eliminating discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members in cooperation with the WHO, other UN agencies and civil society.

I thank you.