



## 53rd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council (19 June – 14 July 2023)

### **ITEM 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members**

Oral statement delivered by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)

*Check against delivery*

Mr. President,

APG23 thanks the Special Rapporteur on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members for her final report.

It is clear how, although part of the world is moving fast towards innovation and progress, many persons are left behind. Development is uneven and the right to development is unfulfilled for many, including people with leprosy.

Too often these people and their families are ripped from this right “by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized”, quoting from article 1 of the declaration on the right to development.

The people affected by leprosy, pay in real life a high price and carry a heavy burden of stigma and discrimination, ranking among those most left behind. This must stop and will stop only when words like solidarity, development, fraternity, cooperation will become actions and policies.

In this regard, the moment we are living in now requires a step ahead for the finalisation and adoption of the Convention on the Right to Development. Such a convention will help transforming promises into reality for many vulnerable/forgotten populations who have been denied the right to development and a dignified life without discrimination and stigma.

We would like to ask the Special Rapporteur for her opinion on the importance of the draft Convention on the right to development for advancing the realization of the rights of people with leprosy and the elimination of discrimination against them and their family members.

Thank you!