Reviewer's report

Title: Association study of the HLA-DRB1 locus reveals the first evidence for the association of HLA-DRB1*15 and DRB1*09 with leprosy and the impact of DRB1*09 on the onset of disease in Chinese population

Version: 4 Date: 18 August 2009

Reviewer: Marcelo Mira

Reviewer's report:

After a second revision of the manuscript, again, some improvement has been achieved, however:

1. The authors may have misunderstood my first coment from the latest review - perhaps I was not clear enough when asking to include results of HW equilibrium testin in the manuscript. It was not necessary to create a large table including detailed results but yet, just to state in "results" that "all markers with allele frequency above ___ have been tested and were in HW equilibrium".

2. In response to Dr. Monos, the authors credit Dr. Jean Laurent Casanova for the proposal of the two-step model for leprosy pathogenesis, with different genes controlling infection and clinical outcome - in fact, the idea is older than the reference provided and most likely should be credited to Dr. De Vries and his group from Holland. We suggest the reading of T. Ottenhoff's review on the subject for further information (Int. J. Leprosy 55(3), 1987).

3. We suggest the authors to submit the manuscript to an independent, native english speaking expert for revision.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.