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:** 26 August 2009

**Reviewer:** Dimitri S Monos

**Reviewer's report:**

In the most recent version of the revised manuscript the authors include a table with the results of the Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium test they performed but they do not mention these results or make any comments in the manuscript. I think it is necessary to mention something about the reason the analysis was done and the significance of the findings.

It is unfortunate that the authors do not have access to the information that would enable them to perform the analysis at the amino acid level. This potentially could have revealed an association that would go beyond the individual alleles and implicate specific amino acid residues in the binding cleft of the DR molecule, hence facilitating the search for the M. leprae peptides that trigger the relevant immune responses.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests