



**INTERNATIONAL AGENCY FOR RESEARCH ON CANCER  
CENTRE INTERNATIONAL DE RECHERCHE SUR LE CANCER**

**Governing Council  
Fifty-first Session**

**GC/51/Min.3  
Original: ENGLISH**

*Lyon, 14–15 May 2009  
Auditorium*

**RESTRICTED DISTRIBUTION**

**MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING**

IARC, Lyon

Friday 15 May 2009, at 08:35

Chairperson: Professor Lars E. Hanssen (Norway)

Secretary: Dr Christopher P. Wild, Director, IARC

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Professor Pekka PUSKA, <i>Vice-Chairperson</i>	Finland
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Mr Sanjeev COMMAR	Australia
Ms Simone MESNER Dr Hemma BAUER	Austria
Dr Margareta HAELTERMAN	Belgium
Dr Gloria WISEMAN Dr Ariff ALLY Mrs Christine FITZGERALD	Canada
Professor Herman AUTRUP	Denmark
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Dr R.K. SRIVASTAVA	India
Dr John DEVLIN	Ireland
Dr Stefano FAIS	Italy
Dr Toshiyasu SHIMIZU	Japan
Mr Jeroen HULLEMAN	Netherlands
Mr Duk-Hyoung LEE Mrs Bo-Young YOO Mr Young-Sung LEE Professor Mong-Sei SOHN	Republic of Korea
Dr Oleg P. CHESTNOV Ms Nadezhda KULESHOVA	Russian Federation

Dr Carlos SEGOVIA	Spain
Professor Håkan BILLIG	Sweden
Dr Diane STEBER	Switzerland
Mr James KULIKOWSKI Dr Joe HARFORD Dr Mary C. WHITE	United States of America

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Dr Andreas ULLRICH, Cancer Alliances

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Professor Jack SIEMIATYCKI, Outgoing Chairperson, Scientific Council

### **International Union Against Cancer (UICC)**

Ms Isabel MORTARA

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## **1. REQUESTS FOR FUNDS FROM THE GOVERNING COUNCIL SPECIAL FUND: Item 16 of the Agenda**

### **A. Publications (Document GC/51/21A)**

Dr GAUDIN (Head, IARC Communications), introducing the item, said that, since its inception, it had been part of IARC's mission and strategic objectives to disseminate information and to generate sufficient income to sustain its publishing activity. In recent years, the majority of sales income had been derived from one series of publications: the *WHO Classification of Tumours* ("Blue Books"). Although the commercial success of that series had made it possible to produce less commercially viable, but highly relevant, publications, IARC needed to identify more resources to sustain its publishing activity. In order to collect more funds, a higher percentage of royalties was being renegotiated with WHO Press. Additionally, the Governing Council was requested to agree to a higher return of proceeds from the Governing Council Special Fund to the Publications programme.

Dr HARMFORD (alternate to Mr Kulikowski, United States of America) said that it would have been his preference to retain the current arrangement whereby 50% of sales revenue was returned to the publications programme and 50% was paid into the Governing Council Special Fund. He asked whether there had been any financial projections on the potential impact on other programmes if a greater portion of the proceeds from publications were taken from the Special Fund.

The SECRETARY said that the aim of the proposal was to link the Special Fund more closely to the publishing activities that generated income. He recognized that the "Blue Books" needed more support from the regular budget; the request for the facility to take up to 75% of the proceeds from sales of publications would provide flexibility and help to support the programme. The cost of producing a single Blue Book, including staff, consultants and meetings, was estimated to be US\$ 450 000 which was funded in part from the regular budget and in part from sales. The programme was extremely successful, but under-resourced.

### **B. Upgrading of telephone and sound systems (Document GC/51/21B)**

Mr KNOCHE (Acting Director of Administration and Finance) said that when the Director had taken up his post at the beginning of that year, he had reviewed outstanding projects. It had been established that there was no need to install some of the new security systems and it was therefore proposed to use the savings made as a result to partially fund urgent projects to replace the outdated sound system in the Auditorium and to upgrade the telephone exchange, which was becoming increasingly difficult to

maintain. There was no need to replace the equipment for simultaneous interpretation as it could be hired at a cost-effective rate.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on the requests for use of funds from the Governing Council Special Fund (Resolution GC/51/R10):

The Governing Council,

Having reviewed the proposals contained in Document GC/51/21A ("Request for use of funds from the Governing Council Special Fund: A. Publications") and in Document GC/51/21B ("Request for use of funds from the Governing Council Special Fund: B. Upgrading of telephone and sound systems"),

Noting the need to allow the Agency to sustain and expand its publication activities,

Recalling its Resolution GC/50/R5,

1. AUTHORIZES the Director to draw supplementary funding for the Publications programme by returning up to 75% of the proceeds from the sales of publications from the Governing Council Special Fund to the Publications programme, subject to there being sufficient cash balances available in the Fund;
2. REQUESTS the Director to submit such requests, if the need arises, at each Governing Council meeting, starting in 2010;
3. FURTHER REQUESTS the Director to report on an annual basis on Publications activities;

Noting the urgent need to upgrade the current central telephone exchange system and to replace the sound system for the Auditorium,

4. AUTHORIZES the Director to draw supplementary funding for the upgrading of the telephone and sound systems of up to US\$ 282 000 from the Governing Council Special Fund, subject to availability of an adequate balance in the fund; the savings from Resolution GC/50/R4 should be used for these two projects; and
5. REQUESTS the Director to report on the use of these funds.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

## **2. PRESENTATION OF CONSOLIDATED DOCUMENT REGARDING IARC SCIENTIFIC REVIEW PROCEDURES: Item 17 of the Agenda (Document GC/51/13)**

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, recalled that, in 2005, the Governing Council had set up a system of regular reviews of Clusters. A Cluster Review had been carried out in 2005 by the Scientific Council and external reviewers, following which proposals to modify the procedures had been submitted to the Governing Council. In 2008, the Scientific Council had been requested to consolidate the procedures and the combined document was presented in Annex 1 to document GC/51/13. However, following a lengthy discussion in Scientific Council and comments from the Secretariat, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Scientific Council had re-drafted the text, removing as much extraneous material as possible from the procedures; the new text was presented in Annexes 3–6 of the document. Some of the formal terminology had been removed and a new scoring system included which gave equal emphasis to scientific quality and to relevance to the role of the Agency. The Governing Council was requested to review the procedures contained in Annexes 3–6 and to authorize their use by the Scientific Council in place of the consolidated document in Annex 1.

Dr HARMOND (alternate to Mr Kulikowski, United States of America), noting the section entitled "Future research proposal", which encompassed the "strategic vision of the Group for the next years", asked how the achievements of the past would be measured against what it was hoped to accomplish in the future.

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, said that the Scientific Council felt that its duties included evaluation of past achievements, but that assessment of future programmes and potential was even more important in terms of input to the Scientific Programme; the majority of material presented to the Scientific Council was on current and future work.

Dr SEGOVIA (Spain) said that he supported the new procedures; the key performance indicators were coherent with those used in his own Institute and the lessons learned from the document could be applied to research in his country.

Professor AUTRUP (Denmark) asked how the reviews would be reported back to the Governing Council.

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, said that all of the deliberations of the Scientific Council, including Cluster Reviews and the Director's response to them, were contained in the formal report of the Scientific Council to the Governing Council.

Dr FRANCESCHI (Head, Section of Infections) said that, as her Section was due to be evaluated in November of that year, she wished to learn more about the assessment methods for the two Groups in her Section, as some of the forms she had been asked to complete appeared to duplicate information.

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, said that the aim would be to allow the Chair of the Review Group to prepare the review in discussion with the Section Head. More flexibility was allowed in the new procedures and it should be emphasized that the reviews were intended to be supportive rather than inquisitorial.

The SECRETARY said that he had found the process of establishing the new guidelines with the Scientific Council to be a constructive one; the guidelines could be reviewed as time went on to see how well they worked. There might be some need to adjust the document for the Sections over and above the information required of Groups.

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, referring to the question of timing, said that the Scientific Council usually indicated which Section it was to review at its annual meeting and the Section would then supply the information requested. Since 2005, however, the procedures had been reviewed in a minor way each year, which necessitated the input of the Governing Council to approve changes and therefore notification to the Sections had been delayed, giving them less time to prepare the information required. He sought the permission for the Scientific Council to make minor changes to the document without waiting for the approval of the Governing Council as that would allow Section Heads more time to prepare for the reviews.

The CHAIRPERSON, noting that regular contact between the Director and the Chairpersons was scheduled by telephone in between formal meetings, asked whether the representative of the Office of the Legal Counsel, WHO concurred in his view that it would be possible to agree to Dr Comber's suggestion.

Ms McKEOUGH (Office of the Legal Counsel, WHO) said that the guidelines had sufficient flexibility built into them to allow minor changes to be made. Responding to a query from Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland),

Rapporteur, she confirmed that, if necessary, minor modifications could be reported back to the Governing Council rather than requiring its agreement in advance.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on the consolidated document regarding IARC Scientific Review Procedures (Resolution GC/51/R11):

The Governing Council,

Recalling its Resolution GC/50/R16, in which it requested the Scientific Council to prepare a consolidated document of IARC Scientific Review Procedures,

Having considered Document GC/51/13, resulting from the above request,

1. THANKS the Scientific Council and the Secretariat for their joint effort in submitting a consolidated version of the IARC Scientific Review Procedures;
2. ADOPTS the revision of the IARC Scientific Review Procedures, as presented in Document GC/51/13 Annexes 3, 4, 5 and 6, which will form the new "Guidelines for IARC Scientific Review Procedures" to be used as from 2009;
3. NOTES that the guidelines used language that permits some flexibility in the method of conducting reviews and presentation of results; and
4. AUTHORIZES the Chairperson of the Governing Council, upon the request of the Chairperson of the Scientific Council, to adapt the guidelines in light of experience in conducting reviews. Any such adaptations shall be presented to the next session of the Governing Council for approval.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

### **3. DISCUSSION OF IARC FUTURE STRATEGY AND ACTIVITIES: Item 18 of the Agenda**

The SECRETARY, illustrating his remarks with slides, presented the context and priorities of the scientific strategy, which had been presented to, and had received general support from, the Scientific Council in January 2009.

On the question of IARC's role, one of the basic features of the Agency had been the inter-disciplinary nature of its research, which combined laboratory sciences with epidemiology. There was a general recognition that to conduct high-quality population-based research, laboratory support was essential. One of the strengths of the Agency was its ability to promote collaborative research internationally and that activity should be continued and recognized through the key performance indicators. The Agency had always had a focus on research in low- and middle-income countries. Research should provide the evidence base for public health decisions on cancer and be of the highest

quality; therefore one of the major challenges of the Agency in the coming year would be to attract world-class scientists. The projected increase in cancer occurrence over the next 50 years, especially in less-developed regions, demonstrated the growing need for an international cancer research agency. To identify the etiology of cancer often required large numbers and multicentre studies; the role of IARC was therefore very well suited to the future requirements of international and collaborative cancer research and cancer prevention. The Agency should also continue to develop key relationships with national cancer research agencies, particularly with those from Participating States. Partnerships with WHO and the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) were also of benefit.

There were five core priorities for the Agency: to describe cancer occurrence; to establish the causes of cancer; to evaluate cancer risks; to develop and evaluate prevention; and education and training. Cancer information was essential for etiology and cancer control but there was still a paucity of information; less than 20% of the world population was covered by cancer registries and only 8% were covered in Africa. To respond to low coverage, it was planned to strengthen registries in strategic sites. To support that area, a new Head of Section would be recruited; support to the core activities would be improved, including to childhood cancer; and there would be strategic investment in low- and middle-resource countries.

Cancer etiology would remain a major area of activity and particular emphasis would be given to nutrition and metabolism, as relatively little was understood about the risks related to dietary patterns. There were opportunities in that area and collaboration was envisaged with the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC). Of further interest would be involvement with mother:child cohort studies, particularly with the biological impact of early life and in utero exposure. Constructive discussions had already been held with the International Childhood Cancer Cohort Consortium (I4C). The link between agriculture and cancer, including contamination of dietary staples, would be an interesting area to explore. It was becoming increasingly possible to measure epigenetic changes, an area the Scientific Council had highlighted in 2008. A new Head of Section in Nutrition and Metabolism was being sought who could explore IARC's coordination role in international cohort studies, including EPIC and other opportunities and to explore partnerships with agricultural research organizations.

A new Section had been proposed for biomarkers, as there was a gap in developing good markers of exposure to environmental risk factors. That work would provide a bridge between research on mechanisms and that on etiology and prevention. He also wished to focus on metabonomics as this is one of the technologies that connects events at the molecular level to those at the macro level. Without investing hugely in its own equipment base, the Agency could benefit from some of the facilities in Lyon where the best NMR equipment was available and collaboration was possible on diet and cancer.

On evaluation of cancer risks, the IARC Monographs programme had a higher profile with its new Section status. There was a need to deal with a publication backlog. Seeing how new forms of evidence from biomarker studies and mechanistic data was going to inform decisions in the Monographs in future would be a new area of activity. To explore whether it would be possible to move to more quantitative assessment of risks was one of the challenges that would need to be faced.

Cancer prevention played a pivotal role in the Agency's activities in terms of screening and vaccination and the Governing Council's support on the previous day for implementation of prevention strategies had been encouraging. It was an area where there could be a link to WHO in terms of national cancer control programmes. The immediate actions would be to strengthen the research in screening strategies and to bring laboratory epidemiology and intervention studies together, using biomarkers along the cancer pathway to see how the interventions modulated the intermediate steps in carcinogenesis.

The Agency would review its education and training activities and integrate them in an overall plan in key areas such as cancer registration, prevention and epidemiology, possibly introducing distance-learning modules. He wished to explore the possibility of extending training fellowships through bilateral agreements with Participating States, perhaps instituting training fellowships that could be hosted in the Agency on projects in low- and middle-resource countries as that would strengthen research in those areas of the world and inspire young researchers to spend their careers in international health and cancer research. The dissemination of publications was also part of knowledge transfer and education.

He believed there was a great need for cancer research in Africa. He proposed five areas for cancer etiology and prevention on the continent; links between cancer and agriculture and increased training were also vital areas for investment. It would be his goal within 10 years to welcome an African Participating State to the Agency. One of the cross-cutting activities of the Agency could be a focus on Africa, working with the Scientific Council to set specific and measureable targets and to ensure that investment was worthwhile.

Professor PUSKA (Finland), Vice-Chairperson, said that he welcomed many of the priorities set out in the Director's report. On the subject of collaboration with research organizations, it should be remembered that not all countries had national cancer institutes; some accommodated cancer within national health institutes. Concerning etiology and prevention, he believed that the increased emphasis on nutrition, diet, physical activity and obesity would be positively received; many countries were working on separate alcohol control strategies and WHO was working on a global strategy. Tobacco, and in particular smokeless tobacco, was a significant issue. He agreed there should be a focus on agriculture, but attention should also be given to food industry

processes and practices; any results could be linked to the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius. Prevention, including screening and vaccination, was extremely important: his personal perspective on that area focused on primary-level population policies that dealt with lifestyles where IARC could provide strong guidance and evidence. Consolidating and prioritizing the results of research was important for national strategies. He agreed that biomarkers were important in monitoring national schemes.

Dr CHESTNOV (Russian Federation) said that it was unfortunate that a written copy of the presentation had not been made available for representatives to study in advance of the meeting. The Director had referred to using precise and measurable objectives to ensure tangible results but, for the time being, clear targets had yet to be set. The preparation of the medium-term strategic plan would require input from experts and from individual countries. It must also take into account the strategy pursued by WHO as a whole although, of course, WHO was a much larger organization. The overall strategic vision would, in its turn, dictate the details of the implementation plan.

Much of the responsibility for deciding the strategic direction of the Agency lay with the Governing Council, and members must decide what results they wanted to achieve before suggesting changes to the existing strategy. The proposal to expand the membership of Participating States to include an African nation was a departure from the original strategy of the Agency, for example.

Dr ADSHEAD (Director, Chronic Diseases and Health Promotion, WHO) said that WHO was strongly committed to the strategic direction and priorities set by the Director. WHO had designated Africa as a priority and the suggestion of working with African countries would therefore be particularly welcome. The emphasis on intersectoral action complemented WHO's approach to primary health care and to achieving concerted action, particularly in relation to chronic diseases.

Dr SRIVASTAVA (India) said that the Director's plan was well thought out; he particularly appreciated the focus on tackling a set number of preventable cancers in African countries. He supported the initiation of various types of bilateral arrangements for education and training. Not every country had more than one specialist cancer institute and therefore partnerships would need to be forged through the central cancer institute, not least in order to prevent duplication. Concerning etiology and prevention, when examining determinants of cancer, attention should be given to alcohol and tobacco in addition to physical activity and nutrition.

Ms FLAMANT (France) said that the strategic guidelines presented by the Director were excellent and highly relevant. France was also about to launch a new integrated cancer plan and was keen to avoid duplication of work with IARC. The Agency's focus on international and cross-border projects and the priority given to low- and medium-resource countries, including closing gaps and strengthening cancer registries, was particularly welcome. She appreciated the emphasis placed on linkages between nutrition and cancer as it was still a controversial subject in France and IARC could bring an objective and neutral approach to it. There was excellent collaboration between IARC and French research teams; in 2008 some 50 French teams had co-authored IARC publications. France was in favour of one or more African countries or an African regional organization joining IARC.

Dr FAIS (Italy) said that IARC provided a unique opportunity for the international community to learn about cancer. He commended the programme put forward by the Director, in particular its emphasis on developing countries and epigenetic projects. With regard to registries in low- and medium- resource countries, he believed that it was very difficult to manage co-existing infectious diseases and so data would have to be collected very carefully. The epigenetic approach was fascinating but could contain many pitfalls and before starting epigenetic studies, there should be a higher level of communication with basic science.

Dr DEVLIN (Ireland) said that the rationale for the Agency was to provide evidence to inform good public health decision-making and enable evaluation of community-based interventions and the assessment of the cost-benefits of public health programmes, and their implementation. The evaluation of different strategies for detection and early prevention was sometimes difficult for individual policy-makers, so IARC could identify the barriers and how to overcome them.

Mrs FITZGERALD (alternate to Dr Wiseman, Canada) said that Canada, as France, was developing its research agenda for cancer with its partners; the IARC process was therefore timely. She had been very pleased to hear about the collaborative initiatives because they would not only strengthen the Agency's finances, but also leverage resources and expertise around the world. She commended the proposed plans on education and training, which were much needed. In addition to the areas mentioned in the Director's report, she was particularly interested in translational research. Canada had completed internationally recognized work on the impacts of health research and therefore received favourably the comments on the framework for measuring the outcomes of the strategic plan.

Dr HARFORD (alternate to Mr Kulikowski, United States of America) said that the interplay of HIV, malaria and tuberculosis with cancer merited inclusion in the strategy on Africa. He was pleased that the focus on nutrition would include not only obesity, but also undernutrition. The inclusion of maternal and child health could link in to the Millennium Development Goals. He wished to emphasize that most cancers did not share common risk factors with other noncommunicable diseases beyond tobacco, obesity and nutrition.

Professor SIEMIATYCKI, Outgoing Chairperson of the Scientific Council, said that he had reservations about targeting low- and middle-income countries and particularly Africa; IARC had made important contributions to research and public health policy in countries lacking epidemiological expertise in the past and, in so doing, had spread the science of epidemiology. However, that work had been carried out in Europe, Africa and elsewhere without a specific or prescriptive policy obliging it to work in a particular area. It would be unfortunate if IARC moved towards a policy that did not allow it the freedom to choose which opportunities to follow.

The SECRETARY, responding to comments made, said that it was possible for the Agency to adopt an ambitious plan and broad scope of work because of the number of collaborative projects it was able to embark upon. His presentation had focused on new areas, but research on existing projects, including work on alcohol and smokeless tobacco, would continue. Obesity had been found to be increasing in Africa and in communities in transition. He took the point that epigenetics would need to be based on good basic science and IARC did have existing expertise in that field. There were distinct risk factors for large numbers of diseases and so the cancer agenda should not be simplified to common risk factors. He did not want to limit the Agency to work in low- and middle-income countries, nor did he wish to create a group devoted to Africa, but Africa was the area in which there was the least amount of cancer research; he would like to work on quality research that was within the medium-term strategic plan. By highlighting work in Africa, the Agency might be able to raise its profile, which would help to bring other partners and leverage external funding.

The CHAIRPERSON said that the Governing Council was grateful for the input of the Director and members on that item.

**4. PROCESS TO DEFINE AND ENDORSE IARC MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR 2010–2014: Item 19 of the Agenda**  
(Document GC/51/14)

The SECRETARY said that, in theory, the medium-term strategy for the period 2010–2014 should be completed and approved by the Governing Council by the end of 2009. However, in view of the time constraints, it had been agreed in consultation with the Office of the WHO Legal Counsel that the formal adoption of the strategy could be delayed slightly. He proposed that a joint working group should be convened, consisting of five members of the Governing Council, three members of the Scientific Council and a representative from WHO headquarters. The IARC administration would not be formally represented. The working group would meet twice in the autumn of 2009 and submit its final draft for the approval of the Scientific Council in January 2010. The final draft of the medium-term strategy and implementation plan would then be submitted for the approval of the Governing Council at its next session in May 2010.

Dr ADSHEAD (Director, Chronic Diseases and Health Promotion, WHO) said that WHO welcomed the opportunity to participate in the working group, which would enable it to contribute to the development of the medium-term strategy and the overall strategic direction of the Agency. She suggested that joint seminars or Web-based forums should be organized to enable all departments in WHO to contribute to the Agency's work.

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, suggested that the following members of the Scientific Council should serve on the working group: himself, his Vice-Chairperson, Dr Rivedal of Norway, and two more to be selected for their relevant areas of expertise. Unfortunately, Professor Siemiatycki, the outgoing Chairperson, was not eligible to stand.

Professor PUSKA (Finland), Vice-Chairperson, proposed Professor Autrup of Denmark for membership of the working group, the proposal being seconded by Dr HAELTERMAN (Belgium).

Professor AUTRUP (Denmark) proposed Dr Harford (alternate to Mr Kulikowski, United States of America), the proposal being seconded by Dr PALMER (United Kingdom), Rapporteur.

Mr HULLEMAN (Netherlands) proposed Dr Duk-Hyoung Lee of the Republic of Korea, the proposal being seconded by Professor AUTRUP (Denmark).

Dr BLANKSON (alternate to Professor HANSSSEN, Norway) proposed Ms Flamant of France, the proposal being seconded by Dr STEBER (Switzerland).

Dr STEBER (Switzerland) proposed Dr Keinhorst of Germany, the proposal being seconded by Ms MESNER (Austria).

The CHAIRPERSON, speaking in his personal capacity, proposed Mrs Fitzgerald of Canada, the proposal being seconded by Dr HARFORD (alternate to Mr Kulikowski, United States of America). The working group would thus consist of six members of the Governing Council, four members of the Scientific Council and a representative of WHO.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on the process to define and endorse the IARC Medium-Term Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2010–2014 (Resolution GC/51/R12):

The Governing Council,

Having considered the proposal described in Document GC/51/14 "Process to define and endorse IARC Medium-Term Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2010–2014",

Considering the recent arrival of the new Director and the associated re-organization of the Agency in a year of transition,

Considering the significant resource implications of holding an extraordinary session of the Governing Council with all or some of the Scientific Council members in attendance,

1. ENDORSES the Director's proposal to create a Working Group in 2009, comprised of six members of the Governing Council, four members of the Scientific Council and a representative of WHO. Technical and administrative support to the Working Group will be provided by the Secretariat (the Director and two senior IARC scientists). The Working Group, with the support of the Secretariat, will consider and finalize a draft Medium-Term Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2010–2014;

2. REQUESTS the Director to proceed as suggested;

3. NOMINATES Dr Herman Autrup (Denmark), Dr Christine Fitzgerald (Canada), Mme Pascale Flamant (France), Dr Joe Harford (USA), Dr Irene Keinhorst (Germany) and Dr Duk-Hyoung Lee (Republic of Korea) to participate in the Working Group; and

4. REQUESTS the Director to submit the final Medium-Term Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2010–2014 for discussion at the next Scientific Council meeting in January 2010 and for approval at the next regular session of the Governing Council in May 2010.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

**5. BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (ERC), 2007–2008: Item 20 of the Agenda** (Document GC/51/15)

Mr PASTERK (Scientific Coordination Office) presented the biennial report of the Ethics Review Committee in the absence of the Chairperson, Dr Byrne. For the past four years, the Agency had had a two-tier ethics review system: the Institutional Review Board, which met regularly in Lyon, and the Ethics Review Committee, which met twice a year in various WHO regions and sought to guarantee international consistency in ethical matters and reconcile different regional practices. The report listed the topics which the Ethics Review Committee had discussed and considered the issue of the care, including standard of care, to be extended to participants in Agency research studies, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. It also contained the report of the Institutional Review Board, which had considered 35 research proposals over the previous year. Where necessary, the Board had requested modifications to the study design, the recruitment of additional expertise or consultations with local ethical committees. He was confident that all research projects undertaken by the Agency were subjected to proper ethical procedures.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on the biennial report of the Ethics Review Committee (Resolution GC/51/R13):

The Governing Council,

Having reviewed the Biennial Report of the IARC Ethics Review Committee (ERC), 2007–2008 as contained in Document GC/51/15,

1. WELCOMES the Report;
2. THANKS the outgoing Chairperson of the ERC, Dr David Byrne, for this Report;
3. NOTES that the Director will propose changes to the current two-tier (ERC/IRB) ethics review system at IARC; and
4. REQUESTS the Director to continue reporting biennially on issues related to ethics at the Agency.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

**6. PROPOSED CHANGES TO IARC ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (ERC)/ IARC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) STRUCTURE: Item 21 of the Agenda** (Document GC/51/16)

The SECRETARY said that the two-tier structure introduced in 2005 had improved operational procedures and documentation of the ethical review process. However, it consumed considerable resources, and he felt that it was no longer the most appropriate system. After consultations with the Chairpersons of both bodies, the WHO Research Ethics Review Committee and the Scientific Council, he now proposed to have a single body, the Institutional Review Board, with an independent Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, three staff members of the Agency and seven members from other bodies, including the WHO Research Ethics Review Committee, and from low- and middle-income countries. The new videoconferencing facilities to be installed at the Agency would enable members to participate in the meetings more fully and increase the diversity of expertise within the Board. A small ad hoc group of international experts would be appointed, which the Board could consult occasionally on issues it acknowledged to be beyond its own expertise. The new structure would be introduced in January 2010.

Mrs FITZGERALD (alternate to Dr Wiseman, Canada) said that the new Institutional Review Board must have clear terms of reference and that its members should, between them, have all the required core competencies, including bioethics.

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, said that the Council had approved the merger of the two ethics committees in principle, although details of the new body's terms of reference and membership remained to be specified. He felt that it should have at least one member with expertise in the proposed area of research, in order to ensure that the research design was appropriate to the subject-matter. Poorly designed research would inevitably be unethical.

The SECRETARY said that the existing *Rules and Procedures Concerning the Ethical Review of Research Proposals at IARC* (see [http://ethics.iarc.fr/Documents/RAP\\_2008.pdf](http://ethics.iarc.fr/Documents/RAP_2008.pdf)) and the *IARC Standard Operating Procedures for Institutional Review Board and Ethics Review Committee Approval* (see [http://ethics.iarc.fr/Documents/SOP\\_2008.pdf](http://ethics.iarc.fr/Documents/SOP_2008.pdf)) would be used for the time being. The scientific expertise of Board members would be assured by the independent Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, who would be senior scientists in areas of research relevant to the Agency's work, by Agency staff members and by members from the cancer research community in Lyon.

Mr KULIKOWSKI (United States of America) welcomed the proposed ad hoc group of international experts, which would help the Agency to respond to the difficult issue of international informed consent. The terms of reference should clearly state the need to ensure that Agency research was beyond all ethical reproach. The Agency should establish an independent and transparent system of ethical appraisal which would protect research participants and guarantee accountability.

Replying to a point raised by Mrs FITZGERALD (alternate to Dr Wiseman, Canada), Mr PASTERK (Scientific Coordination Office) said that minor changes would be required to the rules and procedures and standard operating procedures of the Institutional Review Board, mainly related to the number of members and their areas of expertise. There were no plans to change the ethical review procedures themselves.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on the proposed changes to the IARC Ethics Review Committee (ERC)/IARC Institutional Review Board (IRB) structure (Resolution GC/51/R14):

The Governing Council,

Noting the constant need for IARC to ensure that it adheres to the highest ethical standards in its research,

Further noting the Scientific Council request to the Director to prepare recommendations to the Governing Council to adapt the ethics review process to the Agency's new needs,

1. ENDORSES the Director's proposal, as detailed in Document GC/51/16, to establish a single committee "The IARC Institutional Review Board (IRB)", with a modified membership from the current IRB (i.e. 12 members from diverse backgrounds: an independent Chair and Vice-Chair (both external), three members of IARC staff and seven additional members external to the Agency);
2. DECIDES that the appointments to the new IRB will be made by the Chairperson of the Governing Council;
3. DECIDES that the new IRB structure will be implemented as from January 2010 and that current arrangements will continue until the end of 2009; and
4. THANKS the outgoing members of the "Ethics Review Committee (ERC)" for their guiding role, views and advice in ensuring that international consistency and completeness in ethical approval be achieved.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

**7. ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS: Item 22 of the Agenda** (Document GC/51/17)

Mr KNOCHE (Acting Director of Administration and Finance) drew the Governing Council's attention to the monetary donations listed in document GC/51/17. Most of them were donations or bequests from private individuals and generally the amounts involved were very small, although there had been one bequest of US\$ 279 000 during the current year.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on acceptance of donations (Resolution GC/51/R15):

The Governing Council,  
Having been informed by Document GC/51/17 of the unconditional donations accepted by the Director under the authority vested in him by Resolution GC/4/R3,  
EXPRESSES its deep appreciation to the donors for their generous contribution to the research activities of the Agency.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

**8. ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS AND CONTRACTS: Item 23 of the Agenda** (Document GC/51/18)

Mr KNOCHE (Acting Director of Administration and Finance) invited the Governing Council to take note, post facto, of the grants to a value of more than US\$ 100 000 per annum obtained by the Agency in 2008, which were listed in document GC/51/18.

Dr COMBER, Incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Council, noted the success of the Radiation Group in obtaining external funding. Were there any plans to increase the Group's activities in the light of that additional funding?

The SECRETARY said that the Radiation Group would continue to be financed by a combination of regular budget and external funding. An additional visiting scientist award had been allocated to it. One of the research grants listed in the document related to the development of an agenda for research into the long-term health consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, and the Agency would be bidding for further research funding in that area in future.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on acceptance of grants and contracts (Resolution GC/51/R16):

The Governing Council,

Having considered Document GC/51/18 "Acceptance of grants and contracts",

In accordance with IARC Financial Regulations,

1. NOTES the post facto reporting of grants and contracts accepted by the Director as detailed in Document GC/51/18; and
2. COMMENDS the staff on its success in winning competitive research grants.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

#### **9. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ADMISSION OF NEW PARTICIPATING STATES: Item 25 of the Agenda**

The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the members for Canada, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom, plus the Chairperson of the Governing Council ex officio, should continue as the members of the Subcommittee on the Admission of New Participating States.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on membership of the Subcommittee on the Admission of New Participating States (Resolution GC/51/R18):

The Governing Council,

Recalling its Resolution GC/18/R14 nominating members of the Subcommittee on the Admission of new Participating States and the requirement to nominate new members at the end of each session of the Council,

DECIDES that this Subcommittee shall be composed of, in addition to the Chairperson of the Governing Council (member ex officio), the representatives of Canada, Germany, Japan and the UK, who shall hold office until the next regular session of the Council.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: Item 26 of the Agenda**

Mr IFLAND (Germany) thanked staff members for their hard work in preparing for the Governing Council session. He was particularly pleased that the documentation had been distributed in good time.

**Professor Puska (Finland), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.**

**11. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON FOR NEXT SESSION: Item 27 of the Agenda**

Mr HULLEMAN (Netherlands) proposed that Professor Hanssen should remain Chairperson for the next session, the proposal being seconded by Professor AUTRUP (Denmark), Dr SEGOVIA (Spain), Dr HAELTERMAN (Belgium), Mrs FITZGERALD (alternate to Dr Wiseman, Canada), Dr FAIS (Italy), Mr COMMAR (Australia), Mr IFLAND (Germany), Ms MESNER (Austria) and Dr STEBER (Switzerland).

**Professor Hanssen was unanimously re-elected Chairperson.**

**Professor Hanssen resumed the Chair.**

**12. DATE OF NEXT SESSION: Item 28 of the Agenda**

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution on the dates of the Fifty-second Session of the Governing Council (Resolution GC/51/R19):

The Governing Council,

1. DECIDES to hold its next regular session in Lyon, France, on the Thursday and Friday preceding the opening of the World Health Assembly in the year 2010; and
2. REQUESTS the Director to inform members of the Council as soon as these dates are known.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

**13. APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL (CLOSED SESSION): Item 24 of the Agenda** (Document GC/51/19)

**The Governing Council met in closed session from 12:35 to 13:00.**

On the resumption of the plenary session, the RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution concerning the appointment of new members of the Scientific Council (Resolution GC/51/R17):

The Governing Council,

In accordance with the provisions of Article VI of the Statute of the Agency,

1. APPOINTS

Dr Giulio Superti-Furga, Austria )

Dr Richard Gallagher, Canada ) to serve for four years on the Scientific Council

Dr Florence Demenais, France )

2. THANKS the outgoing member of the Scientific Council, Dr Jack Siemiatycki, for his valuable work in the Scientific Council and for the contribution which he has made to the research activities of the Agency.

The draft resolution was **adopted**.

Professor AUTRUP (Denmark) called upon the Scientific Council to indicate in future which areas of expertise it would like new members to cover.

**14. CLOSURE OF SESSION: Item 29 of the Agenda**

The CHAIRPERSON thanked his Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur, as well as the Director and his staff, for their hard work during the session.

The SECRETARY likewise commended his staff on their excellent work. He thanked the Chairperson, officers and ordinary members of the Governing Council for their positive messages and constructive suggestions, which would support the staff in their endeavours.

The CHAIRPERSON declared closed the Fifty-first Session of the Governing Council.

**The meeting rose at 13:10.**