

STATEMENT BY THE IARC STAFF ASSOCIATION

1. On behalf of the IARC Staff Association, we thank you for giving us the opportunity to make this presentation to you today. As you know, the year 2009 saw major changes at IARC, including the arrival of its new Director (DIR), Dr C.P. Wild, and the Director of Administration and Finance (DAF), Dr H. Lafif.
2. A new phase of dialogue has been established between the Management and the Staff Association Committee (SAC), and we would like to take this opportunity to thank the Management for its interest in the staff. In fact, time is now set aside for the Director to meet directly with staff members through "Open door" sessions, as well as meeting regularly with members of the Committee. Monthly meetings (DAF/HRO/SAC) enable us to follow through on various issues of interest to the staff, and quarterly meetings (DIR/DAF/HRO/SAC) give us the opportunity to discuss more general issues.
3. We also wish to emphasize that the broadcasting of the Scientific Council and Governing Council meetings, making them accessible to all staff members through an internal video link, has demonstrated a commitment to transparency and a willingness to involve staff members in two of IARC's most important events. This initiative is highly appreciated.
4. More recently, the Agency invited Monica Altmaier, Director of Human Resources at WHO and Dr Athanase Hagengimana, in his capacity as Ombudsman, for a presentation of their respective duties to the IARC staff, followed by a question-and-answer session. The Committee welcomed the Administration's initiative in making this meeting a joint event with the Committee. This visit also marks the beginning of a programme of increasing awareness against harassment/discrimination/misuse of authority.
5. At the same time, the Staff Association Committee has been working on a new survey on the work environment, scheduled for 2011, and in which a special section will be devoted to harassment.
6. At the last Governing Council meeting, the Committee expressed its concern over the economic crisis and the consequences it could have on employment at the Agency. The SAC would like to congratulate the Director for the measures taken to stabilize the least-secure positions in the Agency by limiting, to date, the number of temporary contracts to 17.

7. The Director confirmed his willingness to pay tribute to the Agency's staff by launching the first IARC Staff Day. For everyone involved, this event was an opportunity for exchanging and sharing in an open environment where rank and function had no bearing.

8. Along the same lines, the Administration approved the setting-up of new weekly or occasional recreational activities, supported by the Staff Association (CASCR). These activities allow staff members to meet on a regular basis to enjoy friendly and relaxing recreational breaks. The Committee would also like to underline the generosity shown by all staff during the various charitable activities undertaken during this year, which helped raise funds for the ARA Association (educating children with autism), for an orphanage in Haiti and for the purchase of medical equipment for a centre in Africa.

9. When we speak of Staff, of course, we mean IARC Staff at large, which extends to the young scientists and students who come to IARC each year and participate actively in the life of the Agency.

10. We would also like to underline the joint initiative of the Administration and the Committee to consider the need to act on the Agency's environmental impact. Limiting greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Agency's activities and its dependence on fossil fuel consumption is a necessary part of an environmental and economic strategy that will soon become essential. The first stage consisted of raising awareness among staff to lay the groundwork for responsible individual behavior, then the implementation of an Agency-wide carbon footprint report to measure various greenhouse gas emissions and their origins. Efforts to reduce our environmental impact are now to be taken into account. The Committee now relies on the mobilization of all staff members as well as on collaboration with the Administration to meet this challenge.

11. Regarding the structural changes within the Agency, the Committee is satisfied that the administrative and scientific reorganization of IARC put in place following the arrival of the Director has caused no reduction in posts. We would like to emphasize, however, that it was regrettable that the six months' study which led to these staff reassignments was made without prior consultation either with the Staff Association Committee or with some of those people concerned, creating a sense of uncertainty and discomfort among staff.

12. Despite the fact that the administrative and scientific reorganization, as well as the recruitment of staff according to the new organizational chart, were declared a priority by Management, the process of reclassification of general service posts for 2009 was only finalized one year later. We wish to draw particular attention to the 2010 plan for reclassification of professional and general service posts, knowing that the reclassification of the professional category, previously managed by WHO, will be fully conducted at the Agency for the first time.

13. The Committee hopes that all of this work will be done jointly with the Administration and that a special effort will be made on communication, in order to stimulate exchanges between staff and management, whether through the Committee or through official channels. We hope that the strengthening of the Human Resources team will respond to this expectation, which is particularly important to the Committee.

14. In a few weeks' time, the SAC will make a new call for candidates to replace four of its members, and we hope that there will be many candidates. Being part of the Committee represents a significant workload in addition to our daily work, as each member commits a lot of personal time, and this may be a barrier to potential applicants, as is recognized by the Administration: membership of the Committee is now acknowledged in the PMDS. Each member of the Committee demonstrates a sincere commitment and devotion to the defense and well-being of the Agency's staff and, in my capacity as President of the Staff Association, I wish to thank my colleagues for their commitment, and strongly hope that our fellow staff members will ensure that our Committee continues.

15. We will continue to represent IARC staff members to the best of our abilities, through maintaining collaboration with the Administration and Management, to ensure that our relationships are sustainable and constructive.

16. Finally we wish to conclude this address by paying tribute to our colleague and friend Didier Colin, who died on 1st November 2009.

17. Thank you for your attention.