



STATEMENT BY THE IARC STAFF ASSOCIATION

1. On behalf of the Staff Association Committee (SAC) I would like to thank the Governing Council for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today and tell you about the work and achievements of the Staff Association during the past twelve months.
2. The main role of the SAC is to assist staff working at the Agency and represent their interests to management. When an issue is raised by a staff member, we try to find an answer to their question or orient them towards someone who can help them. We also participate in the recruitment, reassignment and selection of staff and organize a variety of social activities, both sporting and recreational, throughout the year that contribute to the health and well-being of the personnel.
3. Following the elections at the Annual General Assembly in June last year, the SAC is now back to full strength comprising nine members plus our part-time secretary. I am delighted to be part of the dynamic new team whose energy and enthusiasm demonstrate a real commitment to making IARC an even better place to work.
4. In July 2017, two of our members attended the third Global Executive Office (GEO) meeting in Geneva, hosted this year by WHO Headquarters. This meeting is supported financially by WHO administration and brings together representatives of all WHO Regional Staff Associations including IARC, UNAIDS and PAHO. The meeting gives the staff association representatives a valuable opportunity to get to know each other better and to facilitate discussions on subjects and issues of mutual interest. It also helps us to reach consensus on approaches to ongoing agenda issues in preparation for the Global Staff Management Council (GSMC) meeting that takes place each year usually in October.
5. Dr Tedros, the new Director-General attended the opening and closing sessions of the meeting. We were encouraged to hear him express his strong support for the work of the WHO Staff Associations and his willingness to listen to the suggestions that were made, such as the modernization of parental leave policies to reflect the diversity of family settings.
6. We recently heard the good news that, following the Director-General's approval, adoption and surrogacy leave policies have been revised in accordance with our recommendations and that paternity leave has been increased from four to eight weeks for multiple births. This will be a great help to new parents who are often far from their home countries and therefore cannot rely on the help and support of their families.

7. The annual GSMC meeting last October was also held in Geneva. Of the topics discussed, the one that will directly affect the staff at IARC the most is the revision of the Prevention of Harassment policy. Although the number of harassment cases reported at IARC is generally low, we would like to see that figure reduced to zero and we are following the discussions concerning the revision of the policy with interest.

8. Two of our committee members attended training courses offered by The Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA). One course covered the essentials of staff representation and the other was about bullying and harassment in the workplace. We were also fortunate to be able to send a representative to the annual FICSA Council Meeting in February. This is an excellent occasion to meet staff representatives from UN organizations around the globe and work together to identify common priority issues for the coming year.

9. Last year, on 7 December, WHO and IARC celebrated the first "Respectful Workplace Day" to mark the first anniversary of the launch of the Respectful Workplace Initiative. This initiative is part of the WHO's reform agenda and stems from a decision made by the Director-General based on a recommendation from the 2012 GSMC meeting. The "Respectful Workplace Day" provided an opportunity for everyone at the Agency to refocus on our core values that are the foundation to the work that we do. The value of respect is deeply ingrained in the values of WHO/IARC through the WHO Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. This includes establishing and maintaining a respectful workplace that encourages trust, responsibility, accountability, courtesy, honesty, generosity, open communication and embraces the dignity and diversity of individuals.

10. All personnel were invited to meet in the Auditorium to watch the launch of Respectful Workplace Day broadcast live from Geneva. This was followed by a presentation from Dr Wild. The attendance was excellent. During the rest of the morning, smaller groups of personnel were asked to express their views on what a 'Respectful Workplace' signifies to them and the ideas from these discussion groups were collected with the aim to create an IARC email etiquette, a shared office etiquette and a meeting etiquette. These will be disseminated throughout the Agency in the coming months.

11. Just over a year ago, the SAC ordered the first batch of IARC branded merchandise for sale to personnel and visitors. Following the outstanding success of the goods, we have now added more items to the range. The profits from the merchandise sales are used to sponsor staff members participating in local sporting events and may also be used to purchase or renew the sports equipment that is needed for the regular lunchtime activities.

12. This year, the weekly gym, Pilates, Zumba, and yoga classes have continued to be popular. Unfortunately we were recently informed that due to lack of office space, the staff room that was previously used for relaxation, table tennis and for some of the lunchtime activities had to be converted to a classroom for training. The personnel are looking forward to the move to the "Nouveau Centre" and hopefully an end to the shortage of space.

13. The SAC are pleased to have been consulted about the plans for the "Nouveau Centre", with particular focus on the new cafeteria as this represents a communal space that all IARC personnel may use and enjoy. We made a short survey to gather the opinions of the personnel on the style of cafeteria that they would like to have and we expect that the results of this survey will be taken into consideration when the detailed plans for the cafeteria are drawn up.

14. The SAC aims to continue meeting with the Director of Administration and Finance (DAF) and the Human Resources Officer (HRO) at least twice yearly and with the Director at least once a year to maintain and build on the constructive and positive relations that have been established in recent years.

15. As the Chair of the Staff Association, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues for their commitment and dedication and once again, I thank the Director and the members of the Governing Council for giving us the opportunity to address the Council today.