



**Governing Council
Sixty-first Session**

**GC/61/12
21/03/2019**

*Lyon, 16–17 May 2019
Auditorium*

STATEMENT BY THE IARC STAFF ASSOCIATION

1. On behalf of the IARC Staff Association Committee (SAC), I would like to thank the Governing Council for the opportunity to speak to you today to tell you about the work of the SAC during the past twelve months.
2. Following the Annual General Assembly in June last year, the Staff Association Committee has changed slightly and I would like to thank the outgoing committee members for their hard work. The current SAC is made up of nine members and a part-time secretary.
3. The main role of the SAC is to represent the staff working at the Agency: to defend their rights and interests. It is the focal point for staff questions and concerns and we work hard with our colleagues in the administration to ensure that IARC is a pleasant place to work. To this end, the committee meets at least twice a month to discuss topics raised by the staff and to plan and implement action and activities in accordance with their wishes.
4. We have regular meetings with the IARC Director, the Director of Administration and Finance and the Human Resources Officer. We also have SAC representation on the Women in Science Advisory Group, the Occupational Health and Safety Committee, the Recruitment Selection Committees and the Cafeteria Committee. Since last year, we are also working more closely with the Early Career Scientists Association.
5. In July 2018, two of our members attended the fourth Global Executive Office (GEO) meeting in Manila, hosted this year by the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO). As usual, our participation at this meeting was funded by the WHO administration. The meeting gives the staff association representatives from all the WHO Regional offices, as well as UNAIDS and IARC, a valuable opportunity to get to know each other better and to facilitate discussions on issues of mutual interest. It also helps us to prepare for the Global Staff Management Council (GSMC) meeting that takes place each year usually in October.

6. The annual Global Staff Management Council meeting last October was held in Manila. Among the many topics discussed were the WHO transformation, including Career Management and Geographical Mobility and Policy issues, such as the Prevention of Harassment, Parental Leave and flexible working arrangements.

7. Dr Tedros continues to give strong support for the work of the WHO Staff Associations and we want to take the occasion to express our appreciation.

8. All IARC staff benefited this year from a series of free online webinars entitled "you are the UN" developed by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) including conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, cultural awareness and working under pressure. We were also fortunate to be able to send a representative to the annual FICSA Council Meeting held in Vienna in February. This year's discussions focussed on important topics of common concern such as whistleblowing policies, the increasing use of 'non-staff' in most UN organizations, telecommuting and alternative working arrangements and staff/management relations in each organization.

9. On 7 December last year, the second Respectful Workplace Day had, was dedicated to Scientific Integrity. All personnel were invited to a plenary session in the Auditorium for general discussion on the policies in place and how to avoid breaches of scientific integrity at IARC. This was followed by a very convivial breakfast for all staff. Three working groups were organised to discuss plagiarism and copyright infringement in the areas of publications and thesis, Laboratory reports and presentations, and data science and informatics. The morning activities were followed by a plenary session for all personnel with feedback from the working groups.

10. The main focus of the SAC, in the first few months of this year, has been the bi-annual Work Climate Survey. We had an excellent response rate to the survey and, in general, positive feedback from staff with several recommendations from staff to improve the day-to-day work environment. The vast majority of us are proud to work for the Agency, find our work satisfying and feel that our supervisor has confidence in our work.

11. However, IARC personnel raised concerns on the working modalities at IARC, the lack of in-house career opportunities and a perceived deterioration in respect towards staff in lower grades. The SAC uses the Work Climate Survey to create its road map for the following year and our three priorities going forward will be more flexible working arrangements, more transparency of career opportunities and continuing the work that has already been put into place to prevent all types of harassment.

12. The SAC aims to continue meeting with the Director, the Director of Administration and Finance and the Human Resources Officer to build on our constructive and positive relationship.

13. This year, the weekly gym, Pilates, Zumba, and yoga classes have continued to be popular and we have just added a regular, more relaxed, lunch time walk. As in previous years, IARC will again send a team of athletes to the UN Inter-Agency Games, to be held this time in Lisbon, Portugal.
14. A number of highly successful social events have also been organised. The SAC believes that these events provide an important opportunity for inter-Agency communication and the chance for colleagues to relax together. As well as the traditional end-of-year events, we organised a highly popular ski-outing in January, a trip to a vineyard and we have recently launched an international dinner series. New activities are being explored and we are delighted to announce that IARC now has a book club.
15. The sale of IARC-branded merchandise continues to grow with more items added to the range and the profits being used to sponsor participation in local sporting events and to purchase or renew the sports equipment that is needed for the regular lunchtime activities.
16. In order to keep all personnel well informed of our activities we have introduced a bi-monthly newsletter to improve communication and encourage feedback on our activities.
17. As the Chair of the Staff Association, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my extremely dedicated colleagues for their commitment and enthusiasm and once again, I thank the Director and the members of the Governing Council for giving us the opportunity to address the Council today.