

## **REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

1. The Fifty-second Session of the Governing Council was held in Lyon on 13–14 May 2010. The Chairperson, Professor Lars Hanssen (Norway) welcomed all the participants. The Director, Dr Christopher Wild, extended a warm welcome to participants on behalf of the Agency. Dr Mark Palmer (UK) was elected Vice-Chairperson. Dr Diane Steber Büchli (Switzerland) was elected Rapporteur.
2. A representative of Brazil, a former IARC Participating State, attended the session as an observer. Unfortunately, the observer for China was unable to attend the session as planned.

### **IARC Biennial Report 2008–2009**

3. The Director presented the scientific highlights of the Agency's work as described in the Biennial Report 2008–2009 (Document GC/52/2).
4. The Governing Council expressed its satisfaction with the work accomplished and commended the Director and his staff on the Biennial Report.

### **Address by the Director-General, WHO**

5. Dr Ala Alwan (Assistant Director-General, Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, WHO), speaking on behalf of the WHO Director-General, Dr Margaret Chan, expressed his appreciation of the close coordination and collaboration between WHO Headquarters, the six regional offices and the Agency under the Director's leadership.
6. The Director welcomed the increased communication and sharing of common goals between IARC and WHO Headquarters. Over the next year, he aimed to ensure that the priority areas for cooperation were defined. He acknowledged the importance of the participation of Agency scientists in advisory groups with WHO but emphasized the need to strike an appropriate balance between this role and the time dedicated to research. The Agency's role was to generate new evidence for the preparation of guidance and policy, for which there was an increasing demand, thus requiring it to maintain its own core focus on research.
7. The Governing Council commended the Agency and WHO Headquarters on their effective collaboration and the avoidance of duplication in their activities and thanked Dr Ala Alwan for attending the session.

## Director's Report

8. The Director had continued his efforts to improve communications within the Agency, including regular presentations to staff, open-door sessions, meetings with the Staff Association Committee and the IARC Staff Day. The new video facilities enabled staff to follow the proceedings of the Governing and Scientific Council sessions, which was much appreciated.

9. He gave details of current staffing levels at the Agency. The large number of visiting and postdoctoral scientists and research students contributed greatly to the scientific richness of the Agency's work. The IARC Staff Award had been introduced in 2009 to mark the contribution of staff who had served at the Agency for over 30 years.

10. In 2009 Agency staff published over 300 articles in 140 journals, 75% of them peer-reviewed publications; approximately one half of the publications had appeared in journals recognized as being in the top 20% of journals in the particular scientific field concerned.

11. Approximately 31 000 copies of Agency publications had been sold in 2009, of which 93% were books in the WHO/IARC Classification of Tumours ("Blue Books") series. The new agreement with WHO Press would increase revenue to the Agency from sales of these publications. The Director commended staff for their hard work in tackling the backlog in the publication of the IARC Monographs.

12. The Agency's renewed and enlarged ethics committee, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), had held its first meeting in April 2010. It included representatives from low-and middle-resource countries. Three to four meetings would be held every year, making use of the Agency's new videoconferencing facilities as far as possible. The 2009–2010 Biennial Report of the IRB can be found in document SC/47/11.

13. The level of voluntary contributions fluctuated considerably from year to year. The Director expressed his appreciation to the donors, especially the European Union, the United States National Institutes of Health, the Institut National du Cancer (INCa) and other funding organizations in France, for their valuable support.

14. A number of senior scientists had been successfully recruited. Nevertheless, the Director mentioned that barriers to recruitment are evident and include the early retirement age (62 years), limited contract duration (maximum two-year fixed-term appointment in the first instance) and the difficulty experienced by spouses or partners of staff who do not have European Union nationality in obtaining permission to work in France. The latter point is being followed up by the Director with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

15. The Director shared with the Governing Council his vision of the Agency's role in cancer prevention. The increasing global burden of cancer called for a special focus on prevention, especially in low- and medium-resource countries. The world increasingly looked to the Agency for leadership in cancer control, including cancer etiology, prevention, implementation research, cancer registration and training. An increase in its resources would transform its ability to meet these challenges. The Director felt a responsibility to make clear to the Governing Council the extent of the opportunities, and the resources which he considered necessary to capitalize on them.

16. Additional resources might be obtained by increasing the income from existing Participating States, recruiting additional Participating States or obtaining more extrabudgetary funding, particularly if sources in addition to current major donors could be accessed by the Agency. An increase of approximately €250 000 for each current Participating State or the contributions of 5–7 new Participating States would transform the Agency's contribution to global cancer prevention. A particular impact would be felt through the recruitment of mid-career scientists. Under the current organizational structure, Section or Group Heads, each fully qualified to supervise a large research team, were in charge of only a small number of such scientists.

17. The Governing Council recognized the advantages of IARC activities being supported by a regular budget to ensure focus is maintained on the Medium-Term Strategy, but also made it clear that the scale of increases mentioned above were unlikely to be forthcoming on the regular budget. The Director noted that as an international agency, IARC was obliged to confine itself to a limited range of sources of extrabudgetary funding. More funding might be available if the Agency was eligible to compete for national funds in Participating States but the issue could be a sensitive one. Seeking additional Participating States was encouraged by the Governing Council.

18. On the issue of extrabudgetary funding, the Chair of the Governing Council said that Participating States might consider allocating development assistance funds specifically to the Agency, in view of the seriousness of cancer as a global health issue.

19. One potential area for greater collaboration with Participating States was training. For example, the Agency was negotiating with Cancer Council Australia to fund a postdoctoral fellowship for an Australian national, financed under a bilateral agreement. This model could be adopted by other Participating States.

20. The Governing Council expressed its satisfaction with the Director's written and oral Reports.

### **IARC Medium-Term Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2010–2014** (see Document GC/52/6)

21. Outlining the structure of the document, the Director explained that the scope of the activities had been derived from IARC's Statute. Core priority areas, expected outcomes and resources had been identified and specific aims had been organized for each Section or Group.

22. The associated budget presupposed that the current balance between regular and extrabudgetary resources would be maintained, as the strategy could not be implemented with regular budget contributions from Participating States alone.

23. The Governing Council thanked the Scientific Council for reviewing the draft Medium-Term Strategy document and for its comments and recommendation for approval and adopted the Agency's Medium-Term Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2010–2014.

### **IARC Education and Training**

24. The Agency's previous activities and its plans for Education and Training were presented. Future plans had emerged from in-house discussion, from an *ad hoc* meeting of the IARC Advisory Group on Education and Training and the advice of the Scientific Council. A new Education and Training Group (ETR) had been established, headed by Ms Mary Heanue, to oversee the Fellowship Programme, the IARC Summer School and other courses. An internal advisory committee will ensure strategic planning and delivery.

25. It was decided to continue to focus training in IARC's areas of core expertise; courses would be more coordinated to ensure quality and to prevent fragmentation. The IARC Summer School would continue. The Agency would seek partnerships in providing courses. Priority would continue to be given to post-doctoral fellowships and to candidates or projects from low- and medium-resource countries. The Fellowships budget would be increased through funding from the regular budget and from external sources.

26. The Governing Council thanked the Scientific Council for advising the Director on the future priorities and opportunities in the key area of Education and Training, approved the direction to be taken by IARC in its pursuit of the Agency's Education and Training Programme, and requested that a review of Education and Training at IARC be scheduled during the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the Scientific Council in 2012.

### **Statement by the IARC Staff Association**

27. Dr McKay, Vice-Chairperson of the IARC Staff Association, noted the major changes at IARC in 2009 and welcomed the dialogue established between the management, the Staff Association Committee and the staff in general.

28. Areas covered in the report included the visit of the WHO Ombudsman; the administration's programme of increasing awareness against harassment; the Staff Association's Work Climate survey; the Staff Association's concern regarding the potential consequences of the economic crisis on employment at the Agency; the reclassification procedures; the lengthy nature of the clerical review; the IARC Staff Day and an analysis of the Agency's environmental impact.

29. The Chairperson thanked the Vice-Chairperson of the Staff Association for his presentation and welcomed the improved cooperation between the Staff Association and the Agency. The Governing Council noted the statement by the IARC Staff Association.

### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Agency**

30. Please refer to Document SC/47/7 for additional information regarding this item.

## **Biennial Financial Report and Report of the External Auditor for the financial period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009**

31. The Regular Budget for the biennium 2008/2009 was US\$ 44.751 million. The rate of collection of contributions from Participating States was 94.53% of the 2008/2009 assessments as at 31 December 2009. The shortfall of US\$ 2.45 million had been financed by a temporary transfer from the Working Capital Fund.

32. The Agency had experienced a significant budgetary exchange loss in 2008/2009, which had been incurred because the average US\$/€ exchange rate during the biennium had been lower than the rate used for the approved programme budget by about 14%. As a consequence, US\$ 3.9 million had been used from the Governing Council Special Fund to cover part of the exchange loss. The status of the Governing Council Special Fund was presented in document GC/52/Inf.Doc. No.2, which included all the commitments against the Fund as of 26 April 2010; the uncommitted balance was approximately €3.5 million.

33. The Voluntary Contributions Account included designated and undesignated voluntary contributions. Total income amounted to US\$ 22.16 million in 2008/2009, as compared to US\$ 23 million in 2006/2007. Expenditure had amounted to US\$ 23.1 million as compared to US\$ 21.6 million in 2006/2007. The balance of the Voluntary Contributions Account was US\$ 11.796 million as at 31 December 2009.

34. In the opinion of the External Auditor, the financial statements presented fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Agency, its financial performance and its cash flows for the period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009. The working relationship with IARC management had been constructive and the audits performed had been facilitated by excellent cooperation and dialogue.

35. The Governing Council accepted the Report of the Director on the Agency's financial operations for the financial period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009 and thanked the External Auditor for his report and opinion as well as the IARC staff for preparing the Report, as presented in Document GC/52/10.

### **Long-Term Capital Master Plan**

36. A capital master plan will be presented to the Governing Council in 2011. This will contain a full analysis of space needs, following a reorganization of the Agency's staff, and will incorporate the findings of the studies of the Agency's carbon footprint and energy consumption.

37. If the central air conditioning broke down during the summer, the tower building (which is 38 years old) would have to be evacuated, since all the windows are sealed shut. The Governing Council agreed that in the event of the air-conditioning showing signs of nearing collapse, the Agency could borrow €1.050 million from the Governing Council Special Fund on the understanding that it would be repaid by the City of Lyon and subject to there being sufficient cash balances in the Fund.

## **Report on publication activities**

38. Dr Nicolas Gaudin (Head, IARC Communications) explained that staff and resources had been reorganized and strengthened within the framework of a developing communications strategy and that the agreement with WHO Press had been renegotiated with a view to increasing revenue and providing incentives for more aggressive marketing of IARC publications. He mentioned that if the new agreement had been applied in 2009, income to the Governing Council Special Fund would have increased by 12% or approximately €244 700.

39. The Governing Council noted the Report with great interest and requested the Director to continue reporting annually on publication activities at IARC.

## **Requests for funds from the Governing Council Special Fund**

### **A. Publications**

40. Dr Nicolas Gaudin reported that there had been a steady increase in the sale of IARC publications through WHO Press in recent years. The majority of publications revenue was derived from the sale of Blue Books and the 40% increase in 2009 had been due in large part to the success of this series. The request to draw supplementary funding from the proceeds of sales was made primarily so that the publications programme could produce more Blue Books at a faster pace.

41. The demands on the Governing Council Special Fund and its financial position were discussed. Taking a conservative estimate of the income from publications together with the proposed expenditure in respect of the publications programme and scientific equipment, there would still be an uncommitted balance of €2 752 311 at the end of 2011. The balance could be slightly higher if any interest on investments was included.

42. The Governing Council authorized the Director to draw supplementary funding for the Publications Programme by returning up to 75% of the proceeds from the sale of publications from the Governing Council Special Fund to the Publications Programme, subject to there being sufficient cash balances available in the Fund.

### **B. Scientific equipment**

43. Three major pieces of equipment were requested: a gas chromatograph; an HPLC mass spectrometry system and a next-generation DNA sequencer.

44. The Scientific Council had endorsed the purchase of the equipment, although it had advised that the full running costs associated with the next-generation DNA sequencing equipment in particular should be established. The Agency had also been invited to join a next-generation sequencing platform being set up in Lyon and therefore a decision on whether to purchase the equipment in-house or participate in the shared facility would need to be taken.

45. The Governing Council agreed with the proposal to use up to €1 185 000 from the Governing Council Special Fund to equip the Agency in the areas of chromatography and next-generation DNA sequencing, including adequate bioinformatics support. It requested the

Director, prior to any investment being made, to submit in writing the selected option for next-generation DNA sequencing for evaluation by two members of the Scientific Council (Chair, plus one other member), with an associated detailed budget, and subsequently to the Chair of the Governing Council for approval. It agreed that the purchase should not lead to an increase in the overall regular budget agreed for the present biennium and it further requested the Director to report on this at the next session of the Governing Council.

### **Acceptance of grants and contracts**

46. The Governing Council authorized the Director to seek funding for the following:

- (a) Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) cooperation action on policy and epidemiological support II [European Commission in an amount of €1 268 948 for 12 months];
- (b) One-carbon metabolism biomarkers and lung cancer risk [National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute (NIH/NCI), USA in an amount of €2 866 151 for 48 months];
- (c) Pooled genome-wide analysis of kidney cancer risk [National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute (NIH/NCI), USA in an amount of €1 631 222 for 48 months];
- (d) B-vitamins, one-carbon biomarkers, vitamin D and cancer risk [European Commission in an amount of €1 957 872 for 60 months];

47. The Governing Council confirmed the provisional approval, given by the Governing Council Chairperson during one of the regular teleconferences between the Director and the Scientific and Governing Council Chairs and Vice-Chairs, for the extension of the grant to support the IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans [National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute (NIH/NCI), USA in an amount of €3 514 231 for 60 months]. It noted the *post facto* reporting of grants and contracts accepted by the Director and commended the staff on its success in winning competitive research grants.

48. The current thresholds for the value of grants and contracts requiring the approval of the Governing Council were increased from US\$ 500 000 (requiring prior approval by the Governing Council) and US\$ 100 000 (requiring *post facto* approval) to the same figures in €. All other grants or contracts exceeding these thresholds must receive the specific approval of the Governing Council. The Director may seek provisional approval via consultation with the Chairperson of the Governing Council within the framework of their regular discussions (meetings and/or teleconferences); grants and contracts would be formally presented to the full Governing Council at its next session.

49. The Governing Council also requested the Director to make a *post facto* reporting of all grants and contracts he has accepted with a value of more than €100 000 per project per annum, this amount to include any sums passed on to third parties.

## **Biennial Report of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee (OHSC), 2008–2009**

50. Dr Pierre Hainaut (Outgoing Chairperson, Occupational Health and Safety Committee) presented the Biennial Report on Occupational Health and Safety within the Agency. Dr Robert Baan (Incoming Chairperson) will replace Dr Hainaut after his ten years service.

51. The new Staff Physician, Dr Dorothée Cuche, had established close links with the Medical Service at WHO Headquarters, and was increasingly involved in day-to-day decisions within the Agency which had implications for health and safety. The Laboratory Safety Officer, Ms Brigitte Chapot, was now employed almost full-time on occupational health and safety activities because of the increased monitoring and oversight requirements for the implementation of health and safety regulations and the preparation of accreditation documentation required for the use of radioisotopes and genetically modified organisms.

52. A new version of the IARC Safety Manual had been issued in 2009. The laboratory infrastructure had been upgraded in order to obtain the required accreditations: in particular, the safety procedures for the use of liquid nitrogen had been updated and subsequently approved by external inspectors. Every staff member who came into contact with potentially hazardous substances was required to fill in a questionnaire every three months: the information thus obtained not only allowed the predicted use of such substances to be compared with the actual use, but had also provided the material for a paper on exposure to toxic substances in the laboratory, which had been published in the *Annals of Occupational Hygiene*.

53. The Governing Council thanked the Scientific Council for reviewing the Biennial Report of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee, 2008–2009 and the outgoing Chairperson, Dr Pierre Hainaut, for his work on this Committee. It expressed satisfaction with the arrangements in place to ensure the health and safety of the Agency's staff and requested the Director to continue reporting biennially on occupational health and safety issues at the Agency.

### **Membership of the Subcommittee on the Admission of New Participating States**

54. In the past, some Participating States had been unwilling to encourage further States to join the Agency because the resulting adjustments in assessed contributions might have led to an increase in their own contribution. Now that Resolution GC/51/R7 expressly precluded that possibility, the Chairperson hoped that more members, particularly those from regions outside Europe, would be willing to join the Subcommittee and promote the admission of new Participating States, for instance by exploiting their personal contacts or advising the Director about the best way to approach a particular State.

55. The Governing Council decided that the Subcommittee on the Admission of new Participating States 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.

### **Acceptance of donations**

56. The monetary donations or bequests from private individuals, which are paid into the Voluntary Undesignated Contributions Account, amounted to US\$ 12 630 in 2009. The Governing Council expressed its deep appreciation to the donors for their generous contribution to the research activities of the Agency.

### **Appointment of new Members of the Scientific Council**

57. The Governing Council appointed Dr Mads Melbye, Denmark; Dr Ahti Antilla, Finland; Dr Piet A. van den Brandt, Netherlands; Dr Bettina Borisch, Switzerland and Dr Martyn Smith, United States of America to serve for four years on the Scientific Council and thanked the outgoing members of the Scientific Council, Professor R. Herrmann, Dr K. Husgafvel-Pursiainen, Professor B. Kiemenev, Professor T. Ørntoft and Dr E. Ron, for their valuable work on the Scientific Council and for the contribution which they have made to the research activities of the Agency.

### **Any other business**

58. Following a recent incident of flooding in one of the Agency buildings Dr Hichem Lafif (Director of Administration and Finance) confirmed that the Agency's premises were adequately insured.

59. The forthcoming United Nations General Assembly special session on noncommunicable diseases in September 2011 would present the Agency with a unique opportunity to bring issues of particular concern before a high-level political audience. A preparatory conference on noncommunicable diseases is also due to be held in Moscow in March 2011.

### **Election of Chairperson for next Session and Date of next Session**

60. Professor Pekka Puska was unanimously elected Chairperson for the next session.

61. The 53<sup>rd</sup> Governing Council Session will take place in Lyon on Thursday 12 and Friday 13 May 2011.