

UPDATE ON THE NOUVEAU CENTRE PROJECT

1. This document provides an update to the status of the “Nouveau Centre” project as presented during the Governing Council’s 54th, 55th and 56th sessions in documents GC/54/6, GC/55/9A, GC/56/10, respectively.

Background

2. In 1972, the 8500 m² Tower building opened to host IARC activities. Construction of the Tower was funded jointly by the French Government, the Rhône Department and the City of Lyon on land owned by the City of Lyon.

3. Reflecting expansion of IARC activities, three additional structures were later built on the compound. The Biological Resources Centre (BRC) and Latarjet buildings were built with funding made available by the Governing Council; and the Sasakawa/Takamatsu meeting spaces were built thanks to a generous donation from Mr Sasakawa from Japan. This resulted in the current footprint of 10 050m².

4. Since 2008, several technical reports revealed the poor state of the Tower building infrastructure. In 2012, all local partners and the Governing Council recognized that the state of the Tower’s infrastructure was such that it would no longer be viable for continued use by the Agency within a period of five to seven years. Presented with various potential options for long-term continuation of IARC’s Headquarters in Lyon, the Governing Council agreed with the recommendation made by the local authorities for a move to a newly built structure on new land for a “Nouveau Centre”.

5. Throughout the process of reviewing the options for IARC’s Headquarters, the Secretariat has benefitted from strong support and collaboration from the local partners which include the City of Lyon, Grand Lyon, the Rhône Department and Rhône-Alpes Region, as well as the local Government representation, the Rhône Prefecture. Clear statements of intent to continue to host the Agency have also been made at the very highest levels of the Central French Government and repeated at the Governing Council by the French representative.

State of the Tower

6. Since 2012, the City of Lyon has invested in a programme of urgent repair works for the Tower building (ventilation, air-conditioning and heating systems) in order to ensure occupancy for five to seven years. Despite these concentrated efforts, the state of the Tower remains a major concern and has already led to unanticipated interruptions of the Agency's work. During 2014, several unexpected incidents took place including: concrete falling from the pillars of the façades; significant leaks and ingress of rain water in offices, laboratories and biobank rooms during windy storms; and a major leak in the heating pipes causing the shut-down of the compound heating system and resulting in personnel having to work from home for 1.5 days. Such incidents, and the high probability that they could occur again in the future, demonstrate the unsustainable nature of IARC's use of the building.

7. The respective building teams of the IARC Secretariat and the City of Lyon meet on a regular basis to manage new issues and plan for potential scenarios, and some funds are being set aside accordingly. Considerations are taken in accordance with the planned move-in date to a new building during 2019; further delays to the "Nouveau Centre" project would require the team to make contingency plans for IARC personnel to potentially work from alternate locations until project completion. Earlier analyses demonstrated cost implications for such a move could exceed €20 million, depending on the functions which would have to be relocated and the duration.

Financing the project

8. Following the detailed study commissioned by Grand Lyon in 2012–2013, the Secretariat presented to the Governing Council, at its 55th session, a project scope for a new building of 12 685 m² with a cost of €64.5 million, to be financed at 49.9% by local authorities and 50.1% by the Central French Government. During the meeting, the French representative to the Governing Council stated that a recalculation of the project in line with French public institutional norms would be carried out in order to finalize a scope that was more in line with the Central Government's expectations.

9. This recalculation of scope was duly carried out during the summer of 2013, resulting in a revised project of 11 060 m² with a cost of €48.3 million. This revised project scope was submitted to the Governing Council at its 56th session in May 2014, and approved with a decision on the financing still pending from the Central French Government.

10. Since this latter failure to confirm funding for the "Nouveau Centre" project, considerable efforts were made to draw the appropriate attention to the urgency of this project at the Central Government level. Mr Collomb, President of Grand Lyon and Mayor of the City of Lyon, met with the Prime Minister in June 2014 where he presented the case personally. To reinforce the efforts at the inter-Ministerial level, Dr Wild wrote to the Prime Minister in August 2014 highlighting the risks IARC would face in the event of continued delay of funding confirmation for the "Nouveau Centre" project.

11. Professor Agnès Buzyn, French Representative and current Vice-Chair of the Governing Council, helped organize a meeting for the IARC Secretariat to escalate the issue at the highest levels of the Central French Government. Accordingly, in November 2014 Dr Wild met with Professor Lyon-Caen, the French President's Counsellor for Health and Medical Research, and M. Piquemal, the President's Counsellor for Europe and Global Issues. As a result, they committed to raise the matter with the President and call for an inter-ministerial meeting in order to make an announcement as soon as possible regarding the capacity of the French Government to finance the project.

Nouveau Centre Project progress

12. In parallel to efforts in securing full financing, progress on the project continued. Specifically, in order to remain within the 2019 timeline, Mr Collomb instructed the Grand Lyon/City of Lyon project team to proceed with the bidding for the detailed specifications' studies ("Programmiste" studies) which would inform an eventual bidding for architectural design of the "Nouveau Centre".

13. The bid was launched in December 2013 with proposals received at the end of January 2014, the technical review was carried out in February 2014, and the contract was signed in June 2014. The "Programmiste" studies began in July, involving IARC personnel and Scientific Council members in order to capture the needs of the Agency, at present and in the future. Initial findings of this study provide the following outlines of distribution of the space requirements:

- 7341 m² for scientific groups
 - o 2045 m² for laboratories
 - o 3878 m² for offices
 - o 1418 m² for biobank (storage and sample processing only)
- 1414 m² for administrative, technical and logistics services
- 2305 m² for common areas (conference rooms, cafeteria, etc.)

14. The second phase of the "Programmiste" studies, i.e. providing detailed general and technical specifications for the "Nouveau Centre" will be achieved by the end of December 2014. The next stages of the "Nouveau Centre" project, involving the appointment of an architect, would be ready to launch once the financial agreement is settled with the French Government.

Expected timelines

15. The project timeline as estimated in 2013 and confirmed at the 56th session of the Governing Council in May 2014 is at this point delayed by six months, with a new estimated move-in date of May 2019, should full project funding be confirmed before the end of 2014.

All partners in the project are conscious of the risks of further delays and the project management team has committed to finding ways to shorten milestones to the extent possible once the project is underway. Assuming a positive decision on the financing is finalized during the first quarter of 2015, the latest estimated timeline being discussed is:

- December 2014: detailed specifications study.
- January 2015–October 2015: bid for an architect.
- November 2015: choice of the architect.
- December 2015–December 2016: architectural studies.
- January 2017–September 2017: bids for building works.
- June 2017–Spring 2019: building works.
- May 2019: opening of the “Nouveau Centre”.