



**Governing Council
Sixty-first Session**

**GC/61/19
02/05/2019**

*Lyon, 16–17 May 2019
Auditorium*

WITHDRAWAL OF A PARTICIPATING STATE – TURKEY

1. The Government of Turkey notified the Director-General of the World Health Organization of its intention to withdraw from participation in the operations of the Agency.
2. In accordance with Article XIII of the IARC Statute, copies of correspondence listed below are annexed to this document:
 - Letter dated 3 December 2018 from the Ministry of Health of Turkey through the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations Office in Geneva to the Director-General of the World Health Organization – Annex 1
 - Letter dated 20 December 2018 from the Director-General of the World Health Organization to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey – Annex 2.
3. The Governing Council is requested to note the decision of Turkey to withdraw from the Agency.

ANNEX 1



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA

2018/62441669-BMCO DT/22682840

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations Office at Geneva and Other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the World Health Organization (WHO) and has the honour to enclose herewith the letter by Prof. Emine Alp Meşe, Deputy Health Minister of the Republic of Turkey, addressed to Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organisation, regarding the withdrawal decision of Turkey from the membership of International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) due to a recent process of reallocation of resources to international organizations by Turkey.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the World Health Organization the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 3 December 2018



Encl: As stated

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Office of the Director General
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REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director General
World Health Organization
Geneva
SWITZERLAND

Dear Director General,

I am writing to you regarding the membership status of Turkey to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). As you kindly know Turkey is a member of IARC since 13 May 2011.

As a country whose efforts to fight against Noncommunicable Diseases have been rewarded by WHO and UN Agencies, we appreciate all efforts to fight against cancer of all UN Agencies, WHO in particular. In this success story, WHO's expertise and guidance has been one of the strongest leverage for us.

I would like to inform you that we are in the process of reconsidering our resources allocated to the International Organizations. As a consequence of this process, regrettably, Turkey submits its withdrawal from IARC in accordance with the Article XIII of the IARC Statute, Rules and Regulation. I kindly request from you to initiate the necessary steps for completion of our withdrawal from IARC.

I wish all the success in your works to further promote health and well-being of people. Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. Emine Aho Mesa,
Deputy Minister of Health,
Republic of Turkey

CC: Mr. Pavel Ursu, WHO Representative in Turkey, Çankaya, Ankara
Mr. Tamás Landes, Director of Administration and Finance, IARC, Lyon, France



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ANNEX 2



**World Health
Organization**

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In reply please
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Your reference:

H.E. Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Dr Sadik Ahmet Cad. No. 8
Balgat
TR-06100 Ankara

20 December 2018

Dear Mevlüt,

I have the honour to write to you following my discussion in Bueno Aires with His Excellency Mr Recep Erdogan, President of the Republic of Turkey, about Turkey's membership of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the cancer agency of the World Health Organization (WHO). I am recently in receipt of a letter on this subject from Professor Emine Alp Mese, Deputy Minister of Health, notifying me of the withdrawal of Turkey from its membership of IARC. A copy of this letter is attached for ease of reference.

Turkey joined IARC as a Participating State in 2011 and brings a vitally important regional representation to the IARC Governing Council, with a unique perspective among the 26 Participating States which helps shape the Organization's global cancer research agenda. Turkey's outstanding leadership in the fight against noncommunicable diseases, including cancer, aligns closely with IARC's mission within WHO of conducting "cancer research for cancer prevention". In fact, IARC collaborates with scientists worldwide to provide the scientific evidence on which cancer control policies, guidelines and recommendations are based.

ENCL: (1)

cc: The Head, Foreign Relations Department, Ministry of Health, Ankara
The Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations Office at Geneva and
other International Organizations in Switzerland
The WHO Representative and Head of Country Office, Ankara

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The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ankara

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Turkey has recently made major strategic and pioneering advances in protecting the health of its citizens through the creation of the new Health Institutes of Turkey, of which the Turkish Cancer Institute is one. Earlier this year, Dr Christopher Wild, Director of IARC, received a senior-level delegation from the Turkish Cancer Institute, and a number of new opportunities for collaborative research were identified. Turkey also hosts the IARC Regional Hub for Cancer Registration, supporting cancer registry development in surrounding countries where expertise is currently lacking. These developments substantiate remarkable potential for continuing and enhanced cooperation between Turkey and IARC at this critical time for the global cancer research agenda, as well as the further development of Turkey's Cancer Institute.

Turkey has a vital strategic presence on the IARC Governing Council as a Participating State. Turkey's withdrawal would represent a major loss to both IARC and WHO, and would result in a missed opportunity for cancer researchers in Turkey to participate in wider international collaborations, thus impairing global cancer research efforts.

For these reasons, I respectfully request you to reconsider the decision to withdraw Turkey from its role as an IARC Participating State. WHO stands ready to support Turkey's continued engagement and participation in IARC, and will continue to support Turkey in your country's fight against Noncommunicable diseases.

Please accept, Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

*with my very best
personal regards.*



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General