

# International Agency for Research on Cancer

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**Governing Council  
Sixty-first Session**

**GC/61/Min.4  
Original: ENGLISH**

*Lyon, 16–17 May 2019  
Auditorium*

## **MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING**

IARC, Lyon

Friday 17 May 2019, at 14:10

Chairperson: Professor Mads Melbye (Denmark)

Secretary: Dr Elisabete Weiderpass, Director, IARC

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### Participating State Representatives

Professor Mads MELBYE, <i>Chairperson</i>	Denmark
Dr Stephen M. ROBBINS, <i>Vice-Chairperson</i>	Canada
Ms Kate TROTTER	
Professor Brendan MURPHY, <i>Rapporteur</i>	Australia
Ms Elisabeth TISCHELMAYER	Austria
Mr Lieven DE RAEDT	Belgium
Dr Ana Cristina PINHO MENDES PEREIRA	Brazil
Dr Markku TERVAHAUTA	Finland
Ms Tuula HELANDER	
Professor Norbert IFRAH	France
Dr Jocelyne BÉRILLE	
Mr Thomas DUBOIS	
Ms Barbara LÜBBEN	Germany
Dr Orsolya PACSAY-TOMASSICH	Hungary
Professor Péter NAGY	
Dr Zoltán MÁTRAI	
Dr Nilambuj SHARAN	India
Professor Reza MALEKZADEH	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Mr Keith COMISKEY	Ireland
Professor Silvio BRUSAFERRO	Italy
Dr Mauro BIFFONI	
Dr Hiroyuki HORI	Japan
Dr Hitoshi NAKAGAMA	
Mrs Kay OHARA	
Dr Latifa BELAKHEL	Morocco
Mr Henk SOORSMA	Netherlands
Mr Jeroen HULLEMAN	
Professor Pål Richard ROMUNDSTAD	Norway
Dr Al-Hareth M. AL-KHATER	Qatar
Dr Tae Ho YOON	Republic of Korea
Mrs Jee Young KIM	
Mr Bong Geun YUN	
Dr Jae Kwan JUN	
Dr Igor KOROBKO	Russian Federation
Dr Sergey IVANOV	
Dr Alexey NOVOZHILOV	
Dr Rafael DE ANDRÉS MEDINA	Spain

Dr Sandra KLEINAU Dr Karin SCHMEKEL	Sweden
Dr Diane STEBER-BÜCHLI <i>No Representative</i>	Switzerland Turkey
Dr Mark PALMER Dr Mariana DELFINO-MACHIN	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Dr Ann CHAO Dr Gabrielle LAMOURELLE Mr Patrick CONNALLY	United States of America

### **World Health Organization**

Dr Soumiya SWAMINATHAN, Office of the Director-General, WHO

Ms Sigrid KRANAWETTER, Principal Legal Officer, Office of the WHO Legal Counsel

### **Observers**

Dr Samar AL-HOMOUD, Chairperson, IARC Ethics Committee

Dr Christine FRIEDENREICH, Incoming Chairperson, Scientific Council (*unable to attend*)

Dr Sonali JOHNSON, Head, Knowledge, Advocacy and Policy, Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)

Professor Giske URSIN, Outgoing Chairperson, Scientific Council

### **External Audit**

Mr Lito Q. MARTIN, Commission on Audit, Philippines (*unable to attend*)

### **Secretariat**

Dr E. WEIDERPASS, *Secretary*  
Dr T. LANDESZ

Dr M. ALMONTE  
Dr P. BASU  
Ms A. BERGER  
Dr F. BRAY  
Dr P. BRENNAN  
Dr I. CREE  
Ms D. D'AMICO

Dr P. FERRARI  
Ms E. FRANÇON  
Dr M. GUNTER  
Dr K. GUYTON  
Dr Z. HERCEG  
Dr R. HERRERO  
Dr O. KELM  
Dr Z. KOZLAKIDIS  
Dr B. LAUBY-SECRETAN  
Dr T. LEE

Mr F. LOZANO  
Dr V. MCCORMACK  
Dr J. MCKAY  
Ms A. SANTHIPRECHACHIT  
Dr A. SCALBERT  
Dr J. SCHÜZ  
Dr I. SOERJOMATARAM  
Dr M. TOMMASINO  
Dr J. ZAVADIL

## **1. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ADMISSION OF NEW PARTICIPATING STATES: Item 21 of the Agenda**

The CHAIRPERSON asked for volunteers to serve on the Subcommittee.

Dr PINHO MENDES PEREIRA (Brazil), Dr ROBBINS (Canada), Vice-Chairperson, Mr HORI (Japan), Mr SOORSMA (Netherlands) and Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) indicated their willingness to serve.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution, entitled "Membership of the Subcommittee on the Admission of New Participating States" (GC/61/R15):

The Governing Council,

Recalling its Resolution GC/18/R14 nominating members of the Subcommittee on the Admission of new Participating States and the requirement to nominate new members at the end of each session of the Governing Council,

Recalling its Resolution GC/53/R20 deciding that the number of members and composition of the Subcommittee shall be agreed upon at each regular session of the Governing Council,

DECIDES that this Subcommittee shall be composed of the Chairperson of the Governing Council (member ex officio), and representatives of Brazil, Canada, Japan, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, who shall hold office until the next regular session of the Council.

The resolution was **adopted**.

## **2. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: Item 22 of the Agenda**

### **Proposed alliance of leading cancer control centres**

Dr DE ANDRÉS MEDINA (Spain) explained his tentative proposal for a new way of tackling the Agency's resource constraints: an alliance of leading cancer control centres based in IARC Participating States, which would make use of national capacity and funding, fit in with other existing networks and provide an attractive prospect for new investment. Membership would be entirely voluntary, and members should be very clear about the commitment they were willing to make. He suggested that the Governing Council should establish a working group, operating by email and teleconference, which would analyse existing networks of cancer control institutions and draw up a modest but robust pilot scheme to test the value of the proposal, which could be scaled up in due course.

Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), supported by Professor MURPHY (Australia), Rapporteur, noted that the Agency was already a member of the International Cancer Research Partnership ([ICRP](#)), which fulfilled largely the same functions as the proposed new alliance. It was important to avoid duplication of effort.

Ms TROTTER (Canada) declared herself open in principle to the idea of the new alliance. However, it would be difficult to achieve an effective structure without spending money on administration. Any working group that was set up must carefully examine the likely costs and benefits of establishing an alliance and the feasibility of expanding or connecting existing networks.

Ms LÜBBEN (Germany) drew attention to another network of cancer institutions, [Cancer Core Europe](#), of which her country was a member. In the interests of optimizing the activities of existing networks wherever possible, she agreed with the proposal to establish a working group. It must be clear, however, that any alliance that was established must not incur any additional costs for the Agency.

Professor IFRAH (France) said that it would be difficult to organize and finance a completely new alliance; it would also be difficult to decide which of the centres of excellence in a particular country should join it. He would prefer to strengthen and/or expand existing networks.

Dr KOROBKO (Russian Federation) said that his country would join the working group if it was set up. He could see the benefits of the proposed alliance, but it must not incur any additional costs.

Dr KLEINAU (Sweden) agreed with the idea of exploring the possibilities for an alliance of cancer institutions. Membership of any such alliance must be open to a wide range of institutions: her own country, for example, did not have a national cancer institute, as all research related to cancer was conducted by universities.

Dr CHAO (United States of America) said that, providing that there were no cost implications, the proposed working group might usefully explore the need for a new alliance and its objectives. However, if the new alliance would be expected to reallocate research funding, for instance, it should be noted that not all cancer institutes had the authority to do so.

Dr BELAKHEL (Morocco) welcomed the proposed working group. An alliance of the kind proposed by Spain could help to avoid duplication and research and make use of the various strengths of cancer institutes in different countries.

Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) asked how the proposed working group could operate without incurring any costs. He felt that the concept of the alliance was not yet well enough developed for the Governing Council to endorse it formally.

Dr ROBBINS (Canada), Vice-Chair, said that the alliance might well require considerable financial and human resources. He did not oppose the creation of a working group, but for the present it should confine itself to defining precise objectives for the alliance.

The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the member for Spain and other interested Participating States should meet informally to draw up more detailed plans for the alliance for submission to the Governing Council at its next session. It did not seem appropriate for the Agency to become involved, for instance by facilitating a working group, at such an early stage of planning.

Mr SOORSMA (Netherlands) agreed that the proposal to create a formal working group seemed premature.

Dr DE ANDRÉS MEDINA (Spain) said that his proposal was intended to align the various research programmes, coordinate their activities and ensure a predictable commitment from Participating States. In principle, it would be open to all types of institution. The working group, which should include the Director of the Agency, would appraise the current situation and prepare various scenarios for submission to the Governing Council at its next session. It was important that the initiative should come from IARC rather than an individual Participating State. He had hoped that some action would be taken over the coming year.

Dr ROBBINS (Canada), Vice-Chairperson, suggested that the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and the Director should discuss the issue further at one of their regular teleconferences and decide how to proceed.

It was so **decided**.

### **3. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR NEXT SESSION: Item 23 of the Agenda**

Dr ROBBINS (Canada), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

On the proposal of Dr STEBER-BÜCHLI (Switzerland), Professor Melbye was unanimously re-elected as Chairperson, the proposal being seconded by Ms TISCHELMAYER (Austria), Professor ROMUNDSTAD (Norway), Dr KLEINAU (Sweden) and Dr KOROBKO (Russian Federation).

Professor Melbye resumed the Chair.

On the proposal of Professor MURPHY (Australia), Rapporteur, Dr ROBBINS (Canada) was unanimously re-elected as Vice-Chairperson, the proposal being seconded by Dr DE ANDRÉS MEDINA (Spain).

### **4. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT SESSION: Item 24 of the Agenda (Document [GC/61/Inf.Doc. No.5](#))**

Dr LANDESZ (Director of Administration and Finance) recalled that, for some years, a number of Participating States had requested a change in the traditional dates of the Governing Council sessions, namely the Thursday and Friday preceding the World Health Assembly, because those dates clashed with other meetings, such as those of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee (PBAC) of the WHO Executive Board. The suggested alternative was to hold the Governing Council session either at the beginning of the week preceding the Health Assembly, or later in May or the beginning of June.

Some Participating States had also suggested that the session could sometimes be held in a city other than Lyon: a session held in Geneva would enable members to raise awareness of IARC's work with permanent missions and Health Assembly delegates, or the session might be held in the autumn back-to-back with a session of one of the WHO regional committees.

Professor MURPHY (Australia), Rapporteur, pointed out that the annual session of the Governing Council provided an invaluable opportunity for members to meet Agency staff and learn about their work; that could only be done in Lyon, where all the Agency's work was conducted. Personally, he was able to attend the Governing Council session only because it took place immediately before the Health Assembly. He would not be able to justify a longer stay in order to accommodate a change of date. In any case, in his experience, few members of the Governing Council actually attended the Health Assembly.

Ms LÜBBEN (Germany) said that changing the date of the Governing Council session might enable more active participation by the WHO Secretariat.

Dr CHAO (United States of America) appreciated the efforts IARC had made over the last year to engage with Permanent Missions in Geneva, though which much was learned. She expressed a preference for holding the Governing Council session a few days before the Health Assembly, which would enable WHO staff and diplomats from the permanent missions to attend, and also allow Agency staff to attend the Health Assembly. A date in late May or early June was not appropriate because of other meetings taking place at that time, such as those of the Executive Committee of the Pan American Health Organization. It was important for Agency staff to participate actively in the Governing Council session, which meant meeting in Lyon, quite apart from the cost implications of holding the session in a different city.

Mr HORI (Japan) supported the suggestion to hold the Governing Council session just before the meeting of PBAC. That would make matters easier for countries such as his own, which were currently members both of that Committee and of the Executive Board itself.

Ms TROTTER (Canada) expressed the concern that changing the dates of the Governing Council session might mean that some Participating States would have to send lower-ranking representatives. Holding the session in a different city posed a considerable logistical challenge, requiring transfers of staff and equipment and complicating the provision of language services. As the USA, Canada appreciated the efforts IARC had made to engage with Permanent Missions in Geneva.

Dr STEBER-BÜCHLI (Switzerland) asked whether many WHO staff were actually likely to attend the Governing Council session, even if the dates were changed.

Dr LANDESZ (Director of Administration and Finance) said that the cost of holding a session in Geneva was not necessarily much higher than that of holding one in Lyon. The Executive Board meeting room at WHO headquarters would be available free of charge immediately prior to the PBAC meeting, and the interpreters employed for the Governing Council sessions were based in Geneva anyway. Additional costs would, however, be incurred if the session were held in a different city. The loss of the opportunity to interact with senior Agency staff was a disadvantage, but the Director and senior staff might perhaps attend sessions of the regional committees, and side-events on the Agency's work could be organized on those occasions.

Replying to a point raised by Ms LÜBBEN (Germany), he said that it would be difficult for the IARC Secretariat to prepare for a Governing Council session at a completely different time of year, since it had to prepare extensive documentation for the Scientific Council session in January, as well as other meetings.

The CHAIRPERSON, summing up, said that most members appeared to favour holding the Governing Council session at the beginning of the week preceding the Health Assembly, but keeping it in Lyon.

The RAPPORTEUR read out a draft resolution that he had revised in the light of the discussion, entitled "Date of the Sixty-second session of the Governing Council" (GC/61/R16):

The Governing Council,

1. DECIDES to hold its next regular session in Lyon, France, on the Monday and Tuesday of the week preceding the opening of the World Health Assembly in the year 2020; and
2. REQUESTS the Director to inform members of the Council as soon as these dates are known.

The resolution, as amended, was **adopted**.

## **5. CLOSURE OF SESSION**

The SECRETARY thanked the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Rapporteur and all members of the Governing and Scientific Councils, the IARC Ethics Committee and UICC for their active participation in the session. She paid tribute to the hard work of the scientific and administrative staff, which had made the session such a success.

The CHAIRPERSON congratulated the Director and her staff on the excellent organization of the session, he thanked all members of the Governing Council and declared the session closed.

**The meeting rose at 15:15.**