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IARC, Lyon and web conference

Wednesday 7 May 2025, at 9:00 Central European Summer Time (CEST)¹

Chairperson: Professor Norbert IFRAH (France)

Secretary: Dr Elisabete WEIDERPASS, Director, IARC

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¹ Celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary of the Agency's foundation took place on the afternoon of 7 May.

Participating State Representatives

France

Professor Norbert Ifrah, **Chairperson**
Mr Nicolas Albin
Ms Aya Amour [unable to attend]
Ms Roxane Berjaoui [remotely]
Dr Thomas Dubois

Australia

Professor Dorothy Keefe, **Vice-Chairperson**
Ms Marilyn Penn, **Rapporteur**

Austria

Ms Elisabeth Tischelmayer [remotely]

Belgium

Mr Arno De Potter
Ms Anne Swaluë [remotely]

Brazil

Dr João Paulo de Biaso Viola
Dr Ronaldo Corrêa Ferreira da Silva
[remotely]
Ms Livia de Oliveira Pasqualin [remotely]

Canada

Dr Fei-Fei Liu
Ms Kimberley Dayman

China

Mr Guangming Gao
Mr Wanqing Chen
Professor Jie He
Ms Ni Li
Ms Biyue Pan
Mr Tao Wei
Mr Wenqiang Wei
Ms Yawei Zhang

Denmark

Dr Morten Frisch [remotely]

Egypt

Professor Mohamad Hassany [remotely]
Dr Hatem Amin [remotely]
Dr Mohamed Gamal [remotely]

Finland

Dr Mika Salminen [unable to attend]
Ms Tuula Helander [remotely]

Germany

Ms Miriam Schmidt
Mr Chris Braun [remotely]
Ms Barbara Lubben [remotely]

Hungary

Professor Gabriella Liskay [remotely]

India

No Representative

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

No Representative

Ireland

Mr James Scully

Italy

Dr Mauro Biffoni

Japan

Dr Hiroyuki Mano
Mr Motohiro Hamada [remotely]
Mr Masato Izutsu [remotely]
Mr Tomohiro Matsuda
Dr Tatsuhiko Shibata
Dr Wakako Toga

Morocco

Dr Loubna Abousselham
Dr Youssef Chami Khazraji

Netherlands

Mr Tom Moers [remotely]
Ms Suzanne Damman

Norway

Professor Tone Bjørge [remotely]
Dr Karianne Solaas [remotely]

Portugal

Dr José Dinis
Dr Rita Sá Machado [unable to attend]

Qatar

Dr Al-Hareth M. Al-Khater
Dr Noora Mohammed A. Al Hammadi

Republic of Korea

Mr Tongryoung Jung
Ms Hyun Jung Ho
Mr Yeol Kim
Ms Eunsik Shin
Mr Han-Kwang Yang

Russian Federation

Mr Oleg Sonin [unable to attend]
Ms Anastasia Badgdatyeva [unable to attend]
Dr Aleksandr Filimonov [unable to attend]
Ms Elena Kirsanova [unable to attend]
Mr Anton Minaev [unable to attend]
Dr Andrey Moskalyov [unable to attend]
Mr Eduard Salakhov [unable to attend]
Dr Anton Snegovoy [unable to attend]
Mr Ivan Tarutin

Saudi Arabia

Professor Mushabbab Al Asiri
Dr Ali Saeed Al Zahrani [remotely]

Spain

Dr Elena Doménech Cruz [remotely]

Sweden

Professor Madeleine Durbeej-Hjalt [unable to attend]
Professor Jonas Oldgren [remotely]

Switzerland

Ms Lara Sponagel
Ms Mari Viro Moser [remotely]

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Dr Mark Palmer
Dr Isobel Atkin

United States of America

Dr Matthew Lim
Dr Satish Gopal [remotely]
Dr Maya Levine [remotely]
Ms Lauren Mikulsky [remotely]
Mr Lars Spjut [unable to attend]

World Health Organization

Mr Guy Fones
Ms Holly Moore
Mr Derek Walton

Observers

Scientific Council

Dr Luis Felipe Ribeiro Pinto
Outgoing Chairperson

Dr Sirpa Heinävaara
Incoming Chairperson

External Audit

Ms Ritika Bhatia [remotely]

IARC Ethics Committee

Dr Samar Alhomoud

Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)

Dr Cary Adams

IARC Secretariat

Dr E. WEIDERPASS, Secretary
Ms C. MEHTA

Dr P. BASU
Ms A. BERGER
Dr F. BRAY
Dr P. BRENNAN
Dr A. CARVALHO
Dr V. CHAJES
Mr C. CHAUVET
Dr G. CLIFFORD
Dr P. FERRARI
Dr Z. HERCEG
Dr M. JENAB

Ms J. JONGERIUS
D. KAVANAGH
Ms. A. KIRJASUO
Dr Z. KOZLAKIDIS
Ms N. LAMANDÉ
Dr B. LAUBY-SECRETAN
Dr D. LOKUHETTY
Mr F. LOZANO
Mr S. LUBIATO
Dr V. McCORMACK
Dr J. McKAY

Ms S. MOLDAN
Ms K. MULLER
Dr S. RINALDI
Dr M. SCHUBAUER-BERIGAN
Dr A. SCHMÜTZ
Dr J. SCHÜZ
Dr C. SCOCCIANI
Dr I. SOERJOMATARAM
Ms V. TERRASSE
Ms V. VOCANSON
Dr J. ZAVADIL

Interpreters

Ms Antuanetta Arakelyan
Ms Olga Chapou Melnikova
Ms Lucy Patricia Corbett
Ms Maryna Ginko
Ms Nyssa Gregory
Ms Antonina Guryanova

Ms Malika Kadyrova
Ms Amandine Mouillard-Etienne
Mr Arthur John Nagy Beard
Ms Anne Serratrice
Mr Adrian Tanner
Ms Nikol Zhamal

Précis-writers

Ms Michèle Abdou
Ms Teresa Lander

EVALUATION REPORT OF THE IARC MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY FOR 2021–2025: Item 10 of the Agenda

(Document GC/67/6)

Mr EXERTIER (Consultant, Office of the Director), illustrating his remarks with slides, presented the key findings of the evaluation of the IARC Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2021–2025. The evaluation framework was based on the “theory of change” and the United Nations results-based management methodology, and was compliant with United Nations standards and the WHO evaluation policy. It was structured on the IOOI model (inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts) and sought to answer the question “to what extent has the implementation of the MTS 2021–2025 contributed to generating scientific knowledge for cancer prevention?”. The evaluation report covered 44 KPIs, 21 detailed case studies and assessments of 17 research teams. He thanked the Director and her staff for their cooperation and the members of the Evaluation Working Group for their guidance.

The inputs of the MTS framework focused on governance, budget, workforce and infrastructure. In the area of governance, 14 potential new Participating States¹ had been identified. The evaluation recommended the allocation of additional resources to the recruitment campaign, greater senior management involvement, consolidation of the IARC network of advocates and the development of tailored strategies matching the needs of prospective Participating States. As for the budget, voluntary contributions, 77% of which came from only seven donors, were now on a par with the regular budget. The recommendations were to implement a key account management approach to manage major funders more effectively and to adopt results-based budgeting. The gender balance in the workforce was good; the recommendations were to encourage wider geographical representation from Participating States in the Middle East and Asia.

The IARC infrastructure had been greatly enhanced by the move to the new building. The recommendations were to implement the eco-friendly action plan and to strengthen synergies with the WHO Academy and scientific partners in the Lyon-Gerland Biodistrict. To leverage the full potential of the Biobank, the recommendations were to expand collaborations to external partners, pursue certification by the International Organization for Standardization and extend open science practices. In the area of information technology (IT), IARC should strengthen its cybersecurity infrastructure and implement an appropriate enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution.

The outputs considered in the evaluation were scientific publications, learning events and courses, training programmes and fellowships and the methods and processes used in the implementation of the MTS. It was recommended that the Secretariat adopt the Relative Citation Ratio to complement the h-index; develop guidelines for annual reviews that incorporated publication ratios and reflected branch-level contributions; and encourage inter-branch collaboration and synergies. One major challenge lay in establishing synergies with the WHO Academy, for instance migrating IARC learning resources to the WHO Academy platform. IARC must address key dimensions such as registration and traceability of participants, accreditation, cybersecurity, the economic model and the visibility of IARC’s learning activities. In the area of fellowships, the main challenge was to ensure the active participation of IARC in the new doctoral school in oncology (*Ecole doctorale cancérologie biologique*

¹ Colombia, Czechia, Greece, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, United Arab Emirates.

santé – CanBioS), established in collaboration with local partners in Lyon in 2023. In respect of implementation of the MTS, the IARC environmental policy would require greater resources and support from senior management and a shift from isolated initiatives to corporate-level ambition and a roadmap for sustainability.

The outcomes of MTS implementation had been classified into partnerships and international collaborations, capacity-building, dissemination and visibility and open science. In the area of partnerships, IARC was encouraged to allocate resources and integrate monitoring tools, such as a customer relationship management system, into the ERP project. There was potential for greater synergy with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on nutrition programmes and the International Labour Organization on worker protection and occupational cancers. Capacity-building activities were mainly concentrated in IARC flagship programmes, namely the IARC Summer School, the Global Initiative for Cancer Registry Development (GICR) and GICRNet. The financial support allocated to those activities should reflect their importance for the Agency's capacity-building efforts and its work in general. To increase the dissemination and visibility of the Agency's work, further analysis of the current assessments of media and policy impact at the programme level were required and the Global Cancer Observatory should be upgraded. To enhance its open access policy, the Agency should continue to invest in open research data, open-source software and open education, and should work towards joining the European cOAlition S network, which provided free access to research publications.

In the area of impact, the evaluation had covered cooperation with WHO on prevention policies, clinical practices and economic and social impacts. Improved cooperation with WHO was one of the major achievements of the MTS, including the joint strategic workplan for 2023–2025, a partnership on the three WHO flagship initiatives on breast, cervical and childhood cancer and IARC contributions to prevention policies through the *IARC Monographs Programme*, the *IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention*, the WHO Classification of Tumours series ("Blue Books") and the Codes Against Cancer. However, the evaluation had concluded that the *Monographs Programme* was at risk because of its over-reliance on a single funder. In respect of social and economic impacts, the valuable research undertaken on cancer inequalities in Europe should be expanded to the global level. IARC had produced insightful studies on the economic cost of cancer, but it had not been possible to set up a dedicated research team on health economics during the current MTS.

In conclusion, he said that the main challenge was to avoid "silos" and encourage greater synergy between programmes. Pillars 1 and 4 of the MTS were still underfunded. Priority areas for the next MTS should be the economic and social impact of cancer, evolving risk factors for cancer and populations in transition, and implementation research. The cross-cutting research teams introduced during the current MTS had improved collaboration between branches, strengthened external partnerships and increased the visibility of IARC research, as well as providing valuable training for the next generation of scientific leaders.

Ms SCHMÜTZ (Consultant, Office of the Director) said that the evaluation had produced 31 recommendations, which had been classified in three main groups: strategic focus and resource optimization, focusing on the 10 IARC flagship programmes, health economics modelling and cancer inequalities and on more context-specific implementation research; coordination with WHO and other

key partners, and in particular a closer alignment with WHO's Fourteenth General Programme of Work in areas such as climate change and health; and organizational synergies, increasing collaboration within the Agency and improving the visibility of existing partnerships. IARC research on carcinogenesis should be realigned to match the Agency's updated priorities and structure. Open science initiatives would be moved forward through shared research platforms such as the Biobank and the Scientific IT Platform.

The 10 flagship programmes, classified into global databases (Global Cancer Observatory, CanScreen5), large-scale epidemiological and laboratory research (*Mutographs* study, EPIC), cancer encyclopaedias (*Monographs* Programme, WHO Classification of Tumours series, *IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention* series) and training and capacity-building programmes (GICR, IARC Summer School, Codes Against Cancer), would be the central elements of the next MTS. The Secretariat was introducing new systems to track the public health impact of the flagship programmes, using case studies, impact analyses and bibliometric tools to ensure visibility and alignment with strategic goals.

The first two phases of the MTS development process, evaluation of the current MTS and analysis of the global cancer research and control landscape, were complete, and the third and final phase, drafting of the new strategy, was now under way. The final draft of the new MTS would be submitted to the Governing Council at its 68th session in 2026.

Mr DUBOIS (France) commended the Secretariat on its preparations for the new MTS. It was essential to match the planned activities with the available budget, while ensuring that scientific quality was maintained.

Dr LIU (Canada) welcomed the Secretariat's focus on implementation research and the social and economic impact of the Agency's work. Rigorous prioritization would be required to implement the ambitious scientific programme effectively. In view of the current very small number of major donors, it was essential to identify a wider range of funding sources.

Mr DE POTTER (Belgium) welcomed the recommendations arising from the evaluation related to the flagship programmes, cancer prevention, health economics modelling, cancer inequalities, climate issues and One Health. He stressed the importance of close alignment between the Agency's work and the WHO global cancer initiatives. Future evaluations of the MTS should be fully external in order to strengthen the independence, transparency and credibility of the assessment. They should also place greater emphasis on the Agency's direct contributions to policy, development and implementation, particularly in low- and middle-income settings in order to provide a more complete picture of its strategic value.

Dr MANO (Japan) commended the success of the Agency's scientific work and highlighted the Biobank and large cohorts as the key infrastructures of molecular epigenetics and also for cancer prevention. Japan had made considerable contributions to the Blue Books and to large-cohort studies through the Japan Public Health Center-based Prospective Study

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution, entitled “Evaluation report of the IARC Medium-Term Strategy for 2021–2025” (GC/67/R5):

The Governing Council,

Having reviewed [Document GC/67/6](#) “Evaluation Report of the IARC Medium-Term Strategy for 2021–2025” and its [Appendices](#);

Recalling its Resolutions [GC/63/R4](#), [GC/64/R12](#) and [GC/66/R8](#),

1. COMMENDS the Secretariat for the comprehensive and detailed report and for the work accomplished;
2. THANKS the Working Group for its excellent work on the preparation of the MTS 2021–2025 evaluation;
3. THANKS the Scientific Council for its review thereof, for its comments and for its recommendations;
4. RECOGNIZES the strong scientific and operational performance of IARC demonstrated in the report, as well as its impactful research worldwide, as highlighted by the Scientific Council; and
5. APPROVES the Evaluation Report of the IARC Medium-Term Strategy for 2021–2025.

The resolution was **adopted**.

2. REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE FINANCING OF IARC: Item 11 of the Agenda

([Document GC/67/7](#))

Ms MEHTA (Director of Administration and Finance) said that the Working Group on Sustainable Financing for IARC had met four times since the previous session of the Governing Council. It had finalized its terms of reference and approved a definition of the term “sustainable financing”, and had agreed that the Working Capital Fund should be used to cover short-term deficits only. The Secretariat had agreed to undertake a benchmarking exercise within the United Nations system and review the relevant reports of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit.

Mr CHAUVET (Strategic Engagement and External Relations Officer) reported on the ongoing work on the IARC investment case, which was intended to show the return on investment that funders might expect from cooperation with IARC and from work on the Agency’s scientific priorities. Initially, the Secretariat had prepared an estimate of the benefits of cervical cancer screening, treatment and immunization contributed by IARC to the total benefits derived from the WHO Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative. The investment case covered the relevant scientific literature, fellowships and training, data dissemination programmes and the Agency’s role in the implementation of the WHO Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem, and would include the views of external experts and stakeholders.

The literature review showed that 31% of the top 1000 articles on cervical cancer included at least one author with an affiliation to IARC. The 47 articles in which IARC was listed as the first author had

been cited over 96 000 times. An Overton analysis had shown that IARC scientific papers had been cited in a total of 405 policy documents, including 237 WHO documents and documents published by the European Union, the World Bank and various United Nations entities. At national level, papers with IARC affiliation had been cited in 730 policy documents by more than 18 countries, principally the United States of America with 195 citations.

Future work on fellowships and training would cover the design of training courses on cervical cancer screening, to be delivered on the WHO Academy learning platform, which would be of particular benefit to low- and middle-income countries. Work on data dissemination would assess the contribution of the IARC *Monographs*, the *Handbooks* on Cancer Prevention series and the WHO Classification of Tumours series to the monitoring and evaluation framework of the Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem.

Participating States were encouraged to join the Working Group if they had not already done so.

Mr TARUTIN (Russian Federation) noted that the international political and funding landscape had changed radically since the formation of the Working Group. Many entities of the United Nations system were now struggling to find the resources needed to fulfil their mandates. He asked for details of the Secretariat's strategy for obtaining the additional funding it needed. Would the current process of reprioritization and restructuring within WHO have financial or other implications for IARC? The United Nations had launched its UN80 initiative, intended to identify improvements in efficiency and possible areas for structural change and programme realignment: could the Secretariat identify potential synergies with that process?

Ms MEHTA (Director of Administration and Finance) said that the Secretariat was actively seeking new donors and additional funding from existing donors, particularly flexible funding. Many efficiency measures had already been introduced, including freezing of recruitment to staff posts, downgrading of posts and a ban on business-class travel. IARC received no funding directly from WHO, but the WHO restructuring might affect its scientific collaboration with the Agency. She would investigate the UN80 process. The proposed adoption of the Quantum ERP system would open up opportunities for scientific and administrative collaboration with other entities of the United Nations system.

Mr CHAUVET (Strategic Engagement and External Relations Officer) elaborated further on the resource mobilization strategy. The contributions of the four new Participating States that had joined the Agency in the previous 5 years provided flexible funding. During the period of the current MTS, the Agency had almost doubled the funding obtained through competitive research grants, from an average of €12–13 million in the period 2016–2021 to an average of €20–22 million during the implementation period of the current MTS. The funding provided by direct donors – governments, philanthropic organizations and the private sector – had also increased; for instance, the Kingdom of the Netherlands had funded a large programme on paediatric cancer in Africa, and other programmes had been funded by Australia, Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

All relationships with non-State actors and the private sector were carefully managed to preclude conflicts of interest. Finally, the Agency had established relationships with non-traditional donors, including high-net-worth individuals in France and elsewhere and other private individuals; even those who had donated only small amounts were acknowledged in the engravings on the doors and windows

of the new IARC headquarters building. The IARC@60 celebrations were intended to raise awareness of the Agency even further among potential donors and the general public. The scientific conference in May 2026 that would mark the end of the year-long celebrations would include the launch of the IARC investment case, showing how investment in the Agency's work made sense in both scientific and economic terms.

Mr IZUTSU (Japan), participating remotely, endorsed the principles of sustainable financing agreed by the Working Group – predictability, flexibility, resilience, independence, transparency and endurance to drive long-term impact. IARC should restructure its activities to maintain its core functions, even if official donor funding decreased, but it should not increase the budget above current levels.

The CHAIRPERSON commended the Secretariat on its resilience and the intensive work that had enabled it to secure large amounts of extrabudgetary funding.

Mr DE POTTER (Belgium) said that his country wished to join the Working Group.

Ms MEHTA (Director of Administration and Finance) said that, pursuant to the Terms of Reference of the Working Group, Belgium was welcome to attend meetings as an observer.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution, entitled "Report of the Working Group on Sustainable Financing of IARC" (GC/67/R6):

The Governing Council,

Having reviewed [Document GC/67/7](#) "Report of the Working Group on sustainable financing of IARC",
Recalling Resolution [GC/66/R10](#) establishing a formal working group on sustainable financing of IARC,

1. THANKS the Secretariat for the report of the Working Group;
2. NOTES the progress made by the Working Group and its guidance to the Secretariat, as conveyed in the report;
3. APPROVES the proposed Terms of Reference of the Working Group (annexed hereto);
4. REAFFIRMS the mandate of the Working Group for an additional one year;
5. DECIDES that this Working Group shall be composed of representatives from Canada, Italy, the Russian Federation and the United States of America;
6. ENCOURAGES other Participating States to join future discussions of the Working Group as guests or observers upon invitation by the Working Group; and
7. REQUESTS the Director to report back to the Governing Council at its 68th Session in 2026 on the work and any recommendations of the Working Group.

The resolution was **adopted**.

3. PROPOSED PROGRAMME AND BUDGET (2026–2027): Item 12 of the Agenda

(Documents [GC/67/8](#) and [GC/67/8-Annexes](#))

Ms MEHTA (Director of Administration and Finance) said that she would begin her presentation with a brief overview of the proposed MTS 2026–2030; it was the starting point for the consultative process that would culminate in the drafting and presentation of the Proposed programme and budget 2026–2027 to the Scientific Council and the Governing Council. Ms Kirjasuo (Administration and Finance Officer) would provide an update on the financial elements of the proposed programme and budget for the biennium.

The MTS 2026–2030 was still under preparation and the overall structure had been shared with Governing Council members. The pillar structure, representing IARC's priorities, would be maintained with a few modifications. Pillars 1 to 4 remained the scientific pillars, while Pillar 5 would cover the entire spectrum of IARC's research infrastructure and support the four pillars in a cross-cutting manner. Pillar 6 would cover leadership and governance and services to science and research, including administrative support. It was hoped that the new pillar structure would better support the management and reporting of IARC's work and allow a clear demonstration of the Agency's value proposition.

The preliminary programme tree for the MTS 2026–2030 showed the results framework and the second level of objectives sitting under the pillars. Programmes were the core of IARC's research and contributed to the value that IARC brought to cancer research prevention across the world. Under the programmes, IARC planned its work in projects, which were the third level of the results framework; they provided details about concrete activities that would be carried out by IARC scientists and researchers. A summary of information about the proposed programmes and projects was provided in Annex 1 of document GC/67/8. A detailed project proposal book had been made available to the Scientific Council as a restricted document earlier that year.

A new aspect of the presentation of IARC's work were the flagships: while all of the Agency's research programmes and projects were important, some had been identified as having the potential to fast-track IARC's research to address the urgent need for prevention interventions. The Secretariat had defined 10 IARC flagships according to the unique value proposition of each in the field of cancer research and prevention. If properly funded and implemented, they would lead to cutting-edge research, robust data collection and capacity-building initiatives, providing critical resources to researchers and policy-makers worldwide and helping to shape global strategies to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer. Each flagship was designed to address specific gaps in cancer knowledge.

During preparation of the Programme and budget for the 2025–2026 biennium, the Secretariat had noted the need for a comprehensive budgeting approach. Consequently, in drafting the budget for the 2026–2027 biennium, it had been decided to move away from a resourced-based approach which focused solely on the regular budget and the assessed contributions of Participating States. In order to capture the full scope and capability of the Agency in the budget document, the Agency had chosen, for the first time, to adopt a results-based approach.

Ms KIRJASUO (Administration and Finance Officer), presenting a summary of the proposed programme and budget for the 2026–2027 biennium, said that a total budget of €114.5 million had

been drawn up and split between IARC's scientific pillars, as shown in paragraph 3.3 of document GC/67/8. The figure might seem high when compared to the budget of €60 million for the 2022–2023 biennium, but the realized expenditure for that biennium, once all of IARC's work had been completed, had amounted to €93.8 million, which was some 50% higher than the amount that had been originally budgeted. The discrepancy between the budgeted figures and actual expenditure could be accounted for by grants that had been approved after the budget had been drawn up and received during the biennium.

The Agency knew that it would be able to attract more funding to support its work, although it could not predict the amount it would receive or to which programmes grants would be made: for instance, the 2024–2025 budget was currently being implemented and only 24 expenditures were known at the current time. Expenditure during the current biennium was set to be over €100 million against the original budget of €72 million. The new budgeting approach would better reflect the work IARC aimed to complete, even though a large portion of the grant-funded work had not yet been applied for or approved.

Approximately 65% of IARC costs were scientific and administrative staff costs and 35% were activity costs. There was a high dependency on staff to deliver results. Fig. 5 of document GC/67/8 showed the distribution of funding to each pillar of the MTS, showing the amounts allocated from the regular budget (assessed contributions) and the amounts required from extrabudgetary sources (voluntary contributions). Some activities were easier to fund from extrabudgetary sources. Planning for the 2026–2027 biennium was still under way, and some activities might be shifted from one objective to another before the budget was finalized. There were statutory increases in staff costs, which were determined by the International Civil Service Commission, and costs related to the After-Service Health Insurance scheme. Some core positions that had previously been funded from extrabudgetary sources could no longer be sustainably funded from them and had been brought into the regular budget, thereby causing an increase of approximately €0.5 million in the regular budget. The total increase in the staff budget of €6.3 million did not include any increase in staffing. Some programmatic changes had been proposed, but they would not lead to an increase in costs.

Further cuts amounting to €1.5 million had been made to the activity budgets in order to try to balance the proposed budget. A large part of the activity budget was directed towards basic infrastructure and the operational costs of the Agency. Most scientific activity was funded by external grants and voluntary contributions.

The year 2024 was the first in which more IARC expenditure had been drawn from voluntary contributions than from the regular budget: in 2021, for instance, the regular budget had still accounted for two thirds of total expenditure. With a shrinking assessed contributions budget, IARC continued to implement efficiency measures, including streamlining management and administration posts in order to make more funds available for science. The cutting of senior positions had fed into the trend of hiring more junior staff, with an increase in P3 and P2 positions, as well as an active use of P1, a post not generally used in other United Nations agencies.

IARC had been very pleased to welcome two new Participating States in 2024, with their contributions being added to the regular budget in the 2026–2027 biennium. In previous years, the Agency had

requested budget increases without success, although the amounts paid by individual Participating States had decreased over time. It should be recalled that new Participating States joined with their own desires for collaborative projects and they could not be expected to pay for inflationary increases alone.

The additional assessed contributions requested by IARC for 2026–2027 amounted to less than €1 million per year, shared between the 27 Participating States. While it was reasonable to request the Agency to make efficiency measures, it was difficult to continue to justify the policy of zero nominal growth which had existed for nearly two decades. IARC was doing everything it could to maintain the excellent quality of its independent scientific work while operating under budgetary constraints, but it was no longer sustainable: competitive grant funding could not compensate for the gaps and a tipping point had been reached where further small savings would start to have a much bigger impact on the Agency's work.

Although some of IARC's flagships were able to attract funding from competitive grants, others struggled to fit into grant call conditions or were ineligible to compete. In order to resolve the situation, IARC branches made every effort to produce lean and efficient budgets for their programmes, continuously scrutinizing structures to find efficient ways to manage work, and assigning flexible funding to unfunded programmes. Some funding gaps reached 50–60% of the total required: IARC therefore asked for more flexibility in the allocation of assessed contributions, requesting that the amount the Director was authorized to transfer as credits between sections of the budget be increased from 15% to 30% for the remainder of the current biennium and for the biennium 2026–2027. The increase in the share of funding derived from grants tied the budget to donor priorities, thereby increasing the risk that IARC's strategy and agenda would become more donor-driven rather than focused on the priorities of Participating States.

Allowing IARC to redirect funds more flexibly across objectives would not solve all of the budget issues since flexible budgets were small. In addition, it was not known in advance which of the flagships would attract donor funding: the Global Cancer Observatory for instance, was a global public good with among the most frequently cited papers of any discipline in the current millennium, yet its budget was incredibly modest. Similarly, funding of the Monographs Programme was problematic, with a sweet spot for cost efficiency being derived from maintaining the current three volumes per year: cutting production to only one volume per year would only reduce the budget by 30% but would mean that IARC would only be able to evaluate about 12% of priority carcinogens within a five-year period, leaving an immense gap in the evidence synthesis available. The cost could be measured in the number of additional euros that would be spent by national healthcare systems on additional cases of cancer and in human lives. It was an example of small changes that could have a major impact on the Agency's scientific activities. In order to address the gaps, IARC was requesting additional contributions to its Core Voluntary Contributions Account, inviting Participating States to become flagship champions. The Secretariat requested the Governing Council to support the Proposed programme budget 2026–2027 as presented, together with the increased flexibility in reallocation of funding.

The CHAIRPERSON said that the free and self-governing nature of the Agency's research was at stake, with the possibility that IARC's orientation could be decided by external actors who could seek to modify its global public health objectives.

Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) expressed appreciation for the clear and well-argued presentation by IARC staff. He shared the opinion that having a zero nominal growth budget for such a long period of time was not sustainable and represented a failure by the Governing Council to support the strategy of IARC and the work of its staff. For too long, Participating States had fallen back on financial hardship as an argument for not investing in what was clearly a crucial international activity which, the United Kingdom believed, required support and further investment. He noted that more than half of the budget of the Agency came from external grant funding, which meant that it was harder to deliver the Medium-Term Strategy because of the donor requirements attached to those grants. He sought the comments of the Director on the extent to which external grants made it harder to deliver the Medium-Term Strategy.

He also wished to learn the extent to which the shift in the profile of staff grading had made it harder to present the Agency as a viable place to work. The United Kingdom would certainly support the budget proposal and indeed, the United Kingdom, as requested, had increased its contribution to the Agency through the Core Voluntary Contributions Account since the inception of that mechanism in 2019. It was important to demonstrate support for IARC's critical activities and to invest in them.

Mr DE POTTER (Belgium) acknowledged the rising operational demands and inflationary pressures faced by the Agency and recognized the importance of ensuring that IARC could continue to fulfil its mandate effectively. He understood that adjustments might be necessary to maintain the Agency's core functions and long-term sustainability, after nearly two decades without a nominal increase. He trusted that the current budget would enable IARC to continue to deliver high-quality and independent scientific work with global relevance and he thanked the Secretariat for its effort to maintain transparency, independence and strategic focus throughout the process.

Dr LIM (United States of America) welcomed the efforts to further integrate the budget by making clear IARC's total expected resources across regular and extrabudgetary funds as it helped Participating States to better review expected results across the strategic framework. He welcomed the additional budget revenue received from new Participating States. The United States continued to hold a zero nominal growth policy for budgets at international organizations and therefore requested that financing from assessed contributions in the 2026–2027 biennium, as set out in summary table J of document GC/67/8-Annexes, should not exceed €50.6 million, a figure that would represent no change in the current assessment of the United States but still provide a 3.9% increase in the regular budget compared with 2024–2025. That was the highest level that the United States could possibly support.

Mr SCULLY (Ireland) agreed with the statements by the representatives of the United Kingdom and Belgium and strongly supported the proposed increase to the annual assessed contributions of Participating States. Since joining IARC in 2007, Ireland had enjoyed a constructive and mutually beneficial relationship with the Agency, and it was keen to build on that relationship going forward. As a small country, Ireland recognized the clear benefits of countries pooling resources and the opportunities that presented for shared research initiatives that were of benefit to the populations of Participating States as well as to those of countries that did not have well established healthcare systems. He noted the impact of inflation on budgets over a number of years. At a time of global uncertainty, it was important to reinforce commitment to multilateral institutions such as IARC. The

proposed assessed contribution increase was proportionate and justified; he sincerely hoped that consensus could be reached on its approval.

Ms SCHMIDT (Germany) supported the proposed budget and its strategic priorities, including a shift towards a results-based approach and the emphasis on transparency and long-term impact. The new programme tree and its alignment with the upcoming Medium-Term Strategy provided a clear framework for advancing IARC's mission to prevent cancer. She recognized the importance of the IARC flagships and their role in ensuring visibility, sustainability and scientific excellence. In particular, she valued IARC's leadership in identifying carcinogenic hazards and strengthening cancer prevention, especially in low- and middle-income countries. She welcomed the continued focus on essential programmes such as the Global Cancer Observatory and the *IARC Monographs*.

She acknowledged the difficult international context in which the budget had been drawn up: the global financial environment for multilateral cooperation was becoming increasingly fragile. Against that background, including the anticipated withdrawal of the United States from several international organizations, it was more important than ever to reaffirm a commitment to international cooperation and to the institutions that underpinned it, including providing IARC with the financial stability to continue its globally relevant work and its critical role in protecting public health based on science and evidence. Germany supported the proposed increase in assessed contributions as a necessary and proportionate measure to sustain IARC's work in challenging times, and she encouraged other Participating States to do likewise.

Dr DE BIASO VIOLA (Brazil) said that IARC played a key role in cancer control and prevention globally, acting in collaboration with institutions and countries worldwide. The Agency demonstrated leadership in its work in low- and middle-income countries where cancer had an impact on health and on social and economic well-being. It was important that decisions and actions should be based on scientific data and that fake news be fought energetically. IARC needed to work independently, with stability and without any conflicts of interest, including interests not related to science. In order to complete its mission with excellence, IARC must have economic independence. Brazil strongly supported the budget increase requested.

Mr IZUTSU (Japan), participating remotely, said that the new programme tree structure seemed well-placed to meet future challenges and to accompany IARC in meeting its vision of ending cancer before it began. The two newly added pillars played a crucial role in utilizing the research results of the first four pillars and in promoting collaborative research. The change of methodology to results-based budgeting could help to maximize future cancer care with a limited budget. Japan understood that the proposal to increase the assessed contributions was mainly due to inflation, but IARC should continue to control the number and grades of staff to retain its sustainability and resilience. He appreciated the Secretariat's efforts to engage new Participating States, which helped to expand the donor base. Given the variety of perspectives of Participating States, it would be crucial to restructure activities that would be of benefit to all regions. He would prefer the proposed programme budget to be agreed by consensus rather than by taking a vote.

Professor BJØRGE (Norway), participating remotely, thanked IARC for its excellent work in reducing the global cancer burden. Assessed contributions from Participating States remained the most reliable

source of funding for IARC's programme budget. For several years, there had been a discrepancy between IARC's activities and the budget. In a challenging global situation where the work of WHO and IARC was more important than ever before, Norway expressed its support for the proposed budget and for the increase in assessed contributions from Participating States that would allow the Agency to maintain its core and flagship programmes.

Ms TISCHELMAYER (Austria), participating remotely, thanked IARC for the efforts made in producing the proposed budget calculations. Due to Austria's current restricted budget situation, it could not approve the Proposed programme budget 2026–2027: it would prefer to accept a budget decrease and could not accept an increase of more than it had paid in the 2024–2025 biennium.

Dr FRISCH (Denmark), participating remotely, said that in line with the United Kingdom, Belgium, Ireland, Germany, Brazil and Norway, Denmark supported the proposed budgetary increase and the assessed contributions set for the biennium 2026–2027.

Ms DAYMAN (Canada) said that Canada appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat in developing the Proposed programme and budget 2026–2027 and in particular its engagement with Participating States earlier in the year through the financing dialogue. She recognized the importance of the current year in planning for the continuation of IARC's work, including the identification of the flagship priorities: having those areas clearly articulated was crucial to driving informed discussions on prioritization, especially if the funding gap was not fully filled. She recognized the importance of the programme budget, which would be the first to fall under the new Medium-Term Strategy 2026–2030 and which was being put together in a very challenging fiscal environment. She noted the shift towards results-based budgeting and looked forward to monitoring and discussing how the new approach addressed levels of risk and uncertainty and the focus on outcomes in work planning.

Mr MOERS (Netherlands (Kingdom of the)), participating remotely, thanked the Secretariat for the excellent presentation which showed the importance of a fully funded programme and budget. After some 20 years of zero nominal growth, the Kingdom of the Netherlands supported the proposed increase in assessed contributions for the 2026–2027 biennium.

Ms SPONAGEL (Switzerland) thanked the IARC team and the Working Group on Sustainable Financing for their leadership and the substantial work invested in developing the Proposed programme and budget 2026–2027. The efforts were much appreciated and reflected both the relevance of IARC's mission and the importance of predictable and sustainable funding to address global health challenges, especially evidence-based cancer control and prevention. She welcomed the flagship projects and the efforts made by IARC for many years to improve cost efficiency and prioritization. She also understood the budgetary challenges the Agency was facing, especially in the light of inflation. Nevertheless, Participating States, including Switzerland, were facing significant budgetary constraints and were under pressure with respect to the request for an increase in assessed contributions. In addition, discussion of IARC's budget should take into account broader developments in the health architecture, such as the ongoing reprioritization and budget cutting at WHO and in international research funds and the fundamental challenges faced by the international community. She commended IARC for its efforts to improve prioritization and efficiency. The proposed increase in assessed contributions, however, would place Switzerland in a complicated situation with respect to

its own national accountability and the consistency of the approach of its Parliament. Switzerland was therefore unable to support the proposed increase and aligned itself with the positions of Austria and the United States, although it remained committed to continued collaboration and to supporting IARC's vital work.

Dr HELANDER (Finland), participating remotely, thanked IARC for the work it had been doing for many years and particularly in the current challenging situation. In line with Denmark and Norway, Finland supported the proposed budget for the forthcoming biennium.

Dr DUBOIS (France) said that France supported the adoption of the Proposed programme and budget 2026–2027 and invited Participating States that had expressed reservations to reconsider their position on zero nominal growth. Against a background of rising inflation and growing demands on the Agency, a moderate increase would appear justified to ensure the continuity of IARC's essential functions. The issue had been debated for several years and collective progress had been made: a majority of Participating States were currently in agreement on the proposed budget, and France invited those with reservations to propose a compromise that would allow all to reach a common position.

The CHAIRPERSON, noting the many impressive results achieved by the Agency, as outlined in the presentations made to the Governing Council, said that a large number of Participating States were convinced that adherence to a zero nominal growth budget was no longer tenable. It would be problematic to have the strategy of IARC guided exclusively by external financiers whose demands could challenge the decisions taken by IARC on the basis of science and approved by the Governing Council. He asked whether a consensus position could be found to take forward the research that would help to combat the cancer burden in many countries: recent publications showed that science had enabled some Participating States to significantly reduce the incidence of lung cancer in their countries. IARC had played a leading role in the fight against tobacco. He invited Governing Council members to think collectively in order to achieve a consensus on the proposed budget.

Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) recalled that the decisions concerning the IARC Statutes required a two-thirds majority vote by its members.¹ He believed that Governing Council members who had argued successfully with their respective ministries on support for the proposed programme and budget would welcome the opportunity to express their position in a vote in order to assess, formally, the overall status of members of the Governing Council. It would be difficult to reach consensus, since a small number of representatives of Participating States had already stated that they could only accept zero nominal growth. Given the limited opportunity to reach a compromise, he would be in favour of holding a vote.

Mr TARUTIN (Russian Federation) noted that three Governing Council members had opposed the increase in assessed contributions and asked whether the Secretariat could formulate an alternative compromise proposal that would meet the concerns raised by Participating States.

¹ See Article V, paragraph 5 of IARC Statute, Rules and Regulations, fifteenth edition.

The CHAIRPERSON said that it would be difficult for research activities to be funded at IARC if the principle of zero nominal growth were maintained. He proposed that further reflection should take place and that reconsideration of the item should resume on the following day.

It was so agreed.

4. REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNING COUNCIL SPECIAL FUND: Item 13 of the Agenda

([Document GC/67/9](#))

Ms KIRJASUO (Administration and Finance Officer) drew attention to the status and forecast of the Governing Council Special Fund as outlined in [document GC/67/Inf.Doc.No.2](#). The proposals presented in document GC/67/9 fell within the figures highlighted under “total potential requests” and, in accordance with cautious budgetary practice, there were budgetary reservations for any items that could be expected to arise, such as provisions for currency realignments.

Dr FOLL (Scientist, Genomic Epidemiology Branch (GEM)), representing the IARC Data Science Steering Committee, presented the first request for support from the Governing Council Special Fund which was to modernize the computing infrastructure for the IARC Scientific IT (SIT) platform. The platform was designed to provide cost-effective and centralized infrastructure for securely storing and analysing scientific data and high-performing computing resources with global protection standards. The platform was becoming an important strategic asset, enabling complex data analysis for cancer research, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and open-science initiatives that supported the IARC Medium-Term Strategy. The Platform had enabled centralization of IT computing resources, such as high-performance computing, by enabling user-friendly access. It was a web portal application with graphic design interfaces ranging from general purpose statistical software to domain-specific software. It was a powerful and shared computing facility that provided direct access to the data stored in the IARC central repository.

Since its inception, the Scientific IT Platform had undergone continuous development, with phase 1 being used to generalize its usage among IARC scientists. In phase 2, which was taking place in the current biennium, access was being rolled out to external collaborators. In phase 3, in the next biennium, it was proposed to sustain the Agency’s vision to create and become a global open data hub for cancer research. The IARC computing infrastructure must keep pace with increasing demands and the current challenge was to replace the computing servers, which were reaching the end of their operational lifespan and were no longer covered by warranties. The Governing Council was therefore requested to approve an envelope of €250 000 from the Governing Council Special Fund for the purchase of the new computing servers. The investment aligned with the Agency’s mission to foster high-quality research and global collaboration and would enable it to meet growing computational demand in modern cancer research. The Scientific Council had approved the proposal and recommended its approval by the Governing Council.

Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that, from GC/67/Inf.Doc.No.2, the sum appeared to figure over a period of 3 years instead of as a one-off cost.

Ms KIRJASUO (Administration and Finance Officer) said that although the sum had initially been included over 3 years in error, she had decided to maintain it on the basis of a cautious accounting principle. It would be prudent to make allowance for other budgetary requests that might be made in future years.

Ms KIRJASUO (Administration and Finance Officer) said that the second request for funding was to cover the shortfall in the regular budget regarding staff costs for 2025. The total regular budget with respect to staff costs had been €4.3 million higher than budgeted entirely as a result of unprecedented statutory increases. The increases were beyond IARC's control as they were determined at the United Nations level and because IARC was based in Europe, which had been particularly badly hit by a rise in the cost of living, inflationary costs and the energy crisis. IT costs had also risen in two-digit percentages. The regular budget had been very tight since IARC had begun the biennium with budget cuts.

IARC had taken action to decrease the shortfall in the regular budget, including through streamlining management structures and leaving positions unfilled when the incumbent had left or retired, while efficiency measures with respect to travel had already been implemented for a number of years. The Agency continually sought better conditions in procurement, such as with its new electricity contract, and looked to participate in larger-scale contracts to make savings, such as the WHO contracts for Microsoft Office licences and cybersecurity services. However, after so many years of continuous budget challenges, the Agency was very lean, and it could not make further savings without cutting core positions and thereby cutting the research programme itself, which was already underfunded. Programme support costs, or indirect costs, had also increased due to inflation. Grant funds were available, but they were very tightly bound to project outcomes, with very limited flexibility.

Staff costs for the biennium had been budgeted at €36 million but were expected to be €40.3 million, leading to a total deficit of €4.3 million. IARC had already made €2.8 million in efficiency measures, leaving a remaining shortfall of €1.5 million. The Governing Council was requested to support the allocation of €1.5 million from the Governing Council Special Fund to address the shortfall.

Mr HAMADA (Japan), participating remotely, said that the purpose of the Governing Council Special Fund was to cover unforeseen expenses and not those anticipated in the regular budget. The current proposals were to use the Fund for computer infrastructure, staffing expenditure and the ERP system: however, it was his belief that the costs for the computer platform and the ERP system could have been anticipated. Increases in staffing expenditure as a result of inflation, as discussed in the financing dialogue, were necessary, but should be managed within the regular budget. The number and grade of staff should be better controlled.

Ms DAYMAN (Canada) recognized the complex and unpredictable landscape in which IARC was operating. The current situation was unique, and the Governing Council Special Fund had a healthy balance: therefore, Canada supported the allocation of €1.5 million to address the shortfall. At the same time, she noted that the projection of the Fund's balance in 2028 was less than half of its value at the beginning of 2025 and she requested that measures be taken to ensure that the Fund was replenished and that it retained a healthy balance over time. Measures should be taken to ensure that the present requests to transfer funds from the Governing Council Special Fund were not repeated.

Ms TISCHELMAYER (Austria), participating remotely, said that Austria could support the requests for support from the Governing Council Special Fund for the new computer servers and for the ERP, but she echoed the remarks of the Council member for Japan that the personnel budget should be part of the regular budget. She was concerned that the proposal to take funds from the Governing Council Special Fund in the current year to support personnel costs could be repeated in the 2026–2027 biennium.

Mr BOUTARIN (Information Systems Officer), presenting the request for support from the Governing Council Special Fund for the new ERP system, said that the Agency's systems, applications, and products in data processing (SAP) system had been underfunded and it therefore covered a limited scope of operational needs; consequently, the Agency relied on additional standalone systems, some of which were outdated, creating data silos and making reporting challenging. The time spent by support staff in navigating multiple systems impacted productivity and effectiveness. The current SAP software was a version implemented 17 years previously: it was nearing the end of its life, which was scheduled for 2027, and it was therefore urgent that it should be replaced. IARC had an annual running cost for its ERP system that was eight to nine times lower than that of other United Nations entities of a similar size.

If the Agency were to move to a new SAP system, it would require full implementation with added scope to replace all of the current standalone systems. Moreover, a new SAP system would not be aligned with United Nations systems and did not come with a United Nations template: it would therefore require significant tailoring to meet IARC's needs. Additionally, the new SAP licensing model made all former licences obsolete, which would force the Agency to give up on past investment and to re-invest. Managing a full SAP system would also require a dedicated ERP team, thereby adding to its running costs. All of those factors would contribute to costly implementation and high future running costs. In summary, transitioning to a new SAP system was not a suitable option for IARC.

Exploring other alternatives, IARC had worked with WHO in 2023 and 2024 with a view to joining WHO's new Business Management System (BMS) but, after experiencing implementation delays and technical and functional constraints, it had been concluded by both WHO and IARC that it would not be feasible for IARC to join the WHO BMS.

Since both SAP and the BMS had been deemed unfit for purpose, IARC had actively explored other options, identifying the need for a single, cloud-based system that aligned with the IARC roadmap and digital transformation initiative, with a large functional scope and a unified user experience. The system would need to be aligned and shared with United Nations systems, with shared services, skills, licences and costs. The solution identified was a collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Quantum ERP system.

Ms KOLEVA DABOS (Associate Human Resources Officer) said that, following a discovery workshop, IARC proposed a partnership with UNDP to implement Quantum, a cloud-based ERP system that had been designed for the United Nations. It was a large-scope solution that would transform operations by replacing outdated systems with an integrated and efficient tool. It was a practical and cost-effective choice. In sharing an infrastructure with UNDP, the Agency would avoid the high cost of developing and maintaining a custom-built system, thereby benefiting from economies of scale in the long run. Quantum also provided advanced capabilities, such as artificial intelligence and machine

learning, ensuring that operations evolved in step with technological advancements and innovations. UNDP offered a deep understanding of United Nations requirements and had a proven track record of successful European implementation. Two implementation approaches had been examined, based on customization and on efficiencies. The customization approach would require a longer implementation timeline, added complexity, higher costs and added maintenance. The efficiencies or template approach would require internal transformation: instead of heavy customization, IARC would implement the system as it had been designed, leveraging best practices already built in, ensuring faster deployment and reduced costs. The implementation risk would be lower as the template had already been proven to work in other United Nations entities. The template approach had therefore been chosen as the more practical and financially responsible choice.

The plan was to begin an accelerated implementation strategy for the template approach in the third quarter of 2025, with an expectation that the system would go live in the second quarter of 2026. To proceed with that critical project, it would be essential to secure the necessary resources. The external implementation cost and buffer would be €3.8 million, and the internal implementation cost would be €1.2 million. In summary, €5 million was requested from the Governing Council Special Fund for implementation of the UNDP Quantum system to ensure operational continuity for IARC.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution, entitled “Requests for support from the Governing Council Special Fund” (GC/67/R8):

The Governing Council,

Having reviewed Document [GC/67/9](#) "Requests for support from the Governing Council Special Fund: A. Computing infrastructure for the IARC Scientific IT Platform, B. Staffing expenditure and C. New Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system" and Document [GC/67/Inf. Doc. No.2](#) "Projection of Governing Council Special Fund Account for 2025-2028",

Noting the support from the Scientific Council (as contained in Document GC/67/9),

AUTHORIZES the Director to use up to a maximum of €6.75 million from the Governing Council Special Fund, subject to there being sufficient fund balance, for the items and amounts detailed below:

	Approximate cost (€)
Computing infrastructure for the IARC SIT platform	250 000
Staffing expenditure	1.5 million
Investment in a new ERP system	5 million
Total requested budget	6.75 million

Ms TISCHELMAYER (Austria), participating remotely, said that Austria would abstain from approval of the draft resolution as it could not approve the request for staff expenditure.

The resolution was **adopted**.

5. TRANSFER TO THE WORKING CAPITAL FUND – REPAYMENT STATUS: Item 14 of the Agenda

([Document GC/67/10](#))

Ms KIRJASUO (Administration and Finance Officer), providing a report on the status of the Working Capital Fund, including the repayment of receivables, said that in 2024, the Agency had decided to replenish the Working Capital Fund from the Governing Council Special Fund. Additionally, there had been a small increase to the Working Capital Fund from the payments made by two Participating States. At the time that it had authorized replenishment of the Working Capital Fund in 2024, the Governing Council had requested an update on the repayment of arrears that had originally caused its depletion. No payments of arrears had been made in 2024 and the balance of payments due stood at €3.5 million.

Dr LIM (United States of America) expressed appreciation for the opportunity to review the repayment of the transfer from the Governing Council Special Fund to the Working Capital Fund. He reiterated that the Working Capital Fund was intended to bridge short-term cash deficits from late payments and not to manage chronic arrears. He was very concerned to learn that no repayments had been made and that the Working Capital Fund continued to be used to cover new arrears in a situation where no payments had been made since 2019. The United States had new language to propose to address the issue and would welcome continued discussion on the matter through the Working Group on Sustainable Financing to ensure that the problem was resolved and that a full solution was presented to the Governing Council in May 2026.

The RAPPORTEUR read out the following draft resolution, entitled “Transfer to the Working Capital Fund – Repayment status” (GC/67/R9):

The Governing Council,
Having reviewed Document [GC/67/10](#) "Transfer to the Working Capital Fund – Repayment status",
Recalling its Resolution [GC/66/R7](#),
THANKS the Secretariat for the report;
NOTES that no payments of outstanding contributions having caused the need for such transfer have been received;
REQUESTS the Secretariat to report on the status of any repayment of the arrears and the budgetary implications of any continued non-payments.

The CHAIRPERSON asked whether any Governing Council member wished to oppose or abstain from adoption of the draft resolution.

Dr LIM (United States of America) requested that additional language be added to the resolution as follows:

4. NOTES that it is a common principle in the UN system for the Working Capital Fund to be used for short-term cash deficits resulting from late payments of Assessed Contributions and that it was not designed to cover chronic arrears in Assessed Contributions.

5. NOTES that Article 5 of the IARC Financial Regulations allows for the Working Capital Fund to temporarily finance appropriations pending receipt of statutory annual contributions to the budget, with interim financing reimbursed as soon as, and to the extent that income is available for that purpose.

6. REQUESTS that the Secretariat end the use of the Working Capital Fund in instances of chronic arrears, consulting with the Working Group on Sustainable Financing to develop an interim solution that would ideally begin being implemented effective 1 January 2026 with a full solution presented to the Governing Council in May 2026.

Ms MEHTA (Director of Administration and Finance) noted that there had been some discussion with the representative of Canada on the additional wording proposed by the United States and she proposed that consideration of the draft resolution be postponed until the following day to allow time to consult with the representative of Canada once again.

Dr PALMER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that the issue raised by the United States was linked to how the Governing Council would decide to deal with future non-payments from a particular country and the possible exclusion of that country from membership of the Agency. He inquired whether the Secretariat had developed a position on the situation, given that it was detrimental to IARC's budget planning and to its ability to operate.

Ms MEHTA (Director of Administration and Finance) said that the financial implications due to non-payment of assessed contributions had been discussed in the Working Group on Sustainable Financing and the Secretariat had agreed that a long-term and sustainable solution must be found. At present, there was no alternative to charging the unpaid sums to the Working Capital Fund. It would be against the Statutes to remove the sums in question from the budget. With respect to expenditure, the sums that had not been paid would cause a reduction in IARC's programme, but she would request that the impact should not be immediate. Looking to the next five years, consideration would be given to how to prioritize within the Medium-Term Strategy.

Mr TARUTIN (Russian Federation), referring to the new paragraph 6 to the draft resolution proposed by the United States, asked whether the Secretariat could propose a short-term or "interim solution". Further, he wished to know what other solutions could be found apart from stopping using the Working Capital Fund in instances of chronic arrears.

Ms MEHTA (Director of Administration and Finance) said that the Secretariat was not in full agreement with the proposal set out in paragraph 6, and the representative of Canada had forwarded compromise language by email which merited further consideration. Members of the Working Group on Sustainable Financing could make a recommendation to the Governing Council.

Ms KIRJASUO (Administration and Finance Officer) said that an in-depth discussion on possible short-term solutions would be required. The Secretariat clearly understood that it could not continue to use the Working Capital Fund in instances of chronic arrears. A solution must be found in the present case, but an agreement must also be found on how to deal with similar cases in the future. The assessed contributions received by the Agency were continually declining and work was ongoing in the Working Group on Sustainable Financing to find solutions for the long-term sustainability of the

Agency in an environment in which budgets were decreasing. It was hoped to prevent a sustainable solution to the Governing Council in 2026.

The CHAIRPERSON said that it would not be possible for the Governing Council to continue to vote indefinitely for a budget that could not be executed. He proposed that the Governing Council should return to the matter on the following day given that celebration of IARC's 60th anniversary would take place later that afternoon.

It was so **agreed**.

The meeting rose at 13:30.

The initial celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the foundation of IARC, including the launch of the IARC@60 publicity campaign, took place on the afternoon of 7 May 2025.