



STATEMENT BY THE IARC STAFF ASSOCIATION

1. On behalf of the Staff Association Committee (SAC) I would like to thank the Governing Council for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today and tell you about the activities of the Staff Association during the past year.
2. The main aim of the SAC is to assist staff working at the Agency and relay their questions, concerns and opinions to the Administration. When an issue is raised by a staff member, we try to find the answer to their question or orient them towards someone who can. We also participate in the recruitment, reassignment and selection of staff and organize a variety of social activities, both sporting and recreational, throughout the year that contribute to the health and well-being of the personnel.
3. For the first time last November, three first aid training course sessions were held with a view to obtaining the "Prevention and Civil Emergency Level 1 (PSC1)" certificate. The feedback of the 26 staff members who participated from across all sections of the Agency was very positive. Further courses will be planned and also refresher courses for those who have already obtained the certificate.
4. Since January, in addition to the already established weekly gym, yoga and Pilates classes, we have introduced regular Zumba sessions that are proving to be a great success.
5. We have also launched a select range of quality merchandise bearing the IARC logo for sale to the personnel and visitors.
6. Last summer, the SAC was invited to participate in the selection of a new catering company for the cafeteria. Feedback from the staff indicates a high level of satisfaction with the new company and the frequentation of the cafeteria has risen considerably.
7. In July 2016, the SAC Chair and Vice-Chair attended the Global Executive Office meeting (GEO) in Washington DC, hosted by PAHO. This meeting is supported financially by WHO administration and brings together representatives of all WHO Regional Staff Associations and IARC, UNAIDS and PAHO. The meeting gives the representatives a valuable opportunity to get to know each other better and to facilitate discussions on subjects and issues of mutual interest. It also helps us to reach consensus on approaches to ongoing agenda issues in preparation for the Global Staff Management Council (GSMC) meeting that takes place each year usually in October.

8. The proposal by the Staff Associations from the previous GSMC meeting to extend maternity leave to 24 weeks was successfully implemented on 1 October 2016. The new policy was welcomed by the staff members. At the last GSMC meeting, the staff associations suggested that management now needs to address parental leave, adoption leave, surrogate parent leave and also flexible working conditions for staff who have to look after elderly parents.

9. The staff also welcomed the new IARC tele-working policy issued last September that is seen as a positive move towards modernizing working arrangements. The new policy allows staff to work from home under certain specific circumstances and in cases of 'force majeure'.

10. The revised compensation package for P-staff was adopted last year and is being implemented progressively. A variety of communication methods are being used to inform the staff of the changes in the compensation package and how these will affect them. The implementation of the proposal to raise the Mandatory Age of Separation for all staff to 65 years old from 1 January 2018 has not yet been confirmed, but will be decided at the World Health Assembly in May 2017.

11. In February this year, the SAC carried out its biennial Work Climate Survey (WCS). This exercise is proposed anonymously to all personnel and is a useful tool for gaining an overall picture of their expectations. Comparing data obtained from successive surveys enables us to highlight areas that have improved or worsened in recent years and sharing the results with the Administration enables them to gain a clearer picture of the issues of current concern and identify areas where action could be most beneficial.

12. The results of this year's survey show that once again, the most outstanding positive feeling is pride felt by the personnel working at IARC. This is reflected in the sales of the IARC logo merchandise that far surpassed our expectations.

13. Morale at the Agency has increased steadily since the 2013 WCS and the personnel feel that they are treated equally across demographic groups and that in general they are treated with courtesy and respect.

14. Comparison with the 2015 survey indicates that the workload is now perceived to be more acceptable and that supervisors are more open to suggestions from their supervisees. However the perception of equitable treatment of men and women has declined. This is one area of general concern that the WHO Staff Associations are currently working to improve across the Organization and IARC's Director has created a Working Group on "women in science" to review the issue and to make suggestions for change at IARC.

15. In 2016, 18 people, or 10.5% of respondents, reported they had suffered harassment and this remains a concern for the SAC. Of these, 11 reported the incidence to their supervisor, the IARC physician or the administration. The WHO Staff Associations are currently working with management to revise the 'Prevention of Harassment Policy', which was adopted in full by IARC, and the revised Policy is expected to be finalized in October 2017. We are also planning to publish a 'code of conduct' that clearly defines the kinds of behaviour that are considered as harassment or sexual harassment illustrated by examples of both acceptable and unacceptable staff behaviours. It is hoped that this will also help to prevent problems by defining a standard that all personnel must respect.

16. WHO is also currently running a 'Respectful Workplace Initiative' that was officially launched last December. IARC is taking part in this initiative and training is being planned for all personnel in the course of the coming year. It is hoped that by raising awareness of the importance of respectful behaviour in the workplace, this will also help to reduce the number of cases of harassment in the future.

17. The SAC aims to continue meeting with the Director of Administration and Finance (DAF) and the Human Resources Officer (HRO) at least twice yearly and with the Director at least once a year to maintain and build on the constructive and positive relations that have been established in recent years.

18. As the Chair of the Staff Association, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues for their commitment and dedication and once again, I thank the Director and the members of the Governing Council for giving us the opportunity to address the Council today.