



**Governing Council  
Sixty-sixth Session**

**GC/66/11**  
15 March 2024

*Lyon, 15–16 May 2024  
Hybrid format*

**STATEMENT BY THE IARC STAFF ASSOCIATION**

1. On behalf of the Staff Association Committee (SAC), I would like to thank the Governing Council for the opportunity to speak with you today about the work and achievements of the Staff Association over the previous twelve months.
2. The main role of the SAC is to assist staff working at the Agency and represent their rights and their interests to management.
3. After two-years of absence following the collective resignation of the previous SAC in 2021, the move to the current building in January 2023 brought a series of new challenges for staff and the administration.
4. A new SAC took office following elections held in May 2023. According to its own statutes, the committee should work with a minimum of ten members, but exceptional approval was granted at the Staff Association General Assembly to allow the committee to take office with only seven members, and one part-time secretary.

I am delighted to be part of this dynamic new team whose energy and enthusiasm demonstrate a real commitment to making IARC an even better place to work.

5. In November 2023, two representatives of the SAC attended the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Global Staff Management Council (GSMC) in Cairo, Egypt, hosted this year by the World health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (WHO/EMRO).
6. This meeting is partially supported financially by IARC administration and brings together representatives of Administration and Staff Association committees of WHO Headquarters/Geneva, WHO Global Services Centre/Kuala Lumpur, the six WHO Regional Offices, IARC and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).
7. Of the topics discussed, the ones that will directly affect the staff at IARC the most are the implementation of the Business Management System (BMS), contractual modalities, and the WHO Internal Justice System. Although the number of cases reported at IARC is generally low, a clear and efficient process would help to protect staff members' rights.

8. IARC SAC sent a member of its committee to the 77<sup>th</sup> Council of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) last February. Our delegate took part in several working groups meetings on topics including staff-management relations, human management relations, social issues, the compensation package, and attended trainings on legal issues concerning staff across the UN Common System, the UN Joint Common Pension Fund, and the UN High-Level Committee on Management's Mental Health Strategy.
9. Attending the 22<sup>nd</sup> GSMC meeting and the 77<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council re-established IARC Staff Association's ties with other WHO and United Nations Staff Association Committees.
10. Following its election in May 2023, the SAC coordinated the re-establishment of recreational and physical activities at IARC. The Committee also organized the first Children's Christmas Party in IARC's new building, as well as the Personnel's Christmas Party in an external location. These were the first in-person end of year parties in four years and they were very appreciated by all IARC personnel.
11. In January 2024, the SAC called for the renaissance of a dedicated Committee for Cultural, Artistic and Sports activities at IARC. The creation of such a committee alleviated the general workload of the SAC and enabled it to focus entirely on its mandate to defend the rights and the interests of staff.
12. In February 2024, the SAC organized a first joint meeting with the Sustainable Research Agency Committee. The aim of this meeting was to identify opportunities for joint action to encourage environment-friendly behaviours at IARC and advocate on workplace-related ecological issues. Going forward, a SAC member will permanently sit on the Sustainable Research Agency Committee.
13. A member of the committee recently joined the Committee of IARC cafeteria which opened early March this year. Having a cafeteria at IARC was long awaited by all the personnel and the SAC thanks management and related teams for their dedication to making it happen.
14. The SAC is currently working on the elaboration of a guide to clarify the committee's functions to staff, the process on how to help personnel preserve their rights and their interests, and the different mechanisms that exist to resolve disputes within IARC and the WHO/UN system.
15. The SAC recently launched the 2024 anonymous Work Climate Survey (WCS) for all personnel to express their opinion on their employment conditions. The last WCS was conducted in 2021 but its results were not published due to the collective resignation of the former committee in June 2021.

Once available, the results of the 2024 WCS will be made available to personnel and will guide the SAC to determine its priorities for the upcoming biennium.

16. The SAC communicates on its actions via regular newsletters, dedicated time during IARC's monthly Town Hall meetings, the display of posters throughout the building for special issues, and via general communications on intranet and by e-mail. Open doors are also organized on a weekly basis to meet with staff.

17. The SAC will have a first meeting with the Director, the Director of Administration and Finance and the Human Resources Officer on 9 April 2024.
18. The committee meets at least once monthly with the Human Resources Officer and Staff Physician. These meetings are very important to have ongoing and open lines of communication.
19. We firmly believe that open and honest communication between the SAC and the Administration is instrumental to advancing and nurturing staff interests and well-being while best accomplishing the mission of the Agency.
20. As the Chair of the SAC, 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 this opportunity to address the Council today.