

## IARC celebrates 50 years of cancer research

**Lyon, France, 15 May 2015** - The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization, today celebrates the 50th anniversary of its establishment with the launch of the book *International Agency for Research on Cancer: The First 50 Years, 1965–2015*.<sup>1</sup>

The book charts the birth of the Agency, established by the World Health Assembly on 20 May 1965 as a major international cooperative effort to tackle cancer. Born from the realization that cancer would become a major health concern across the world, the Agency aimed to shape the face of cancer research and to provide the scientific evidence on which to base prevention strategies.

The book also describes the origin and development of IARC's main research themes, which have led to major breakthroughs in understanding the causes of cancer and how to prevent the disease. These include:

- the provision of global figures on the burden of cancer, in conjunction with cancer registries around the world
- the identification of the causes of cancer, including through the world-renowned IARC Monographs Programme
- the evaluation of approaches to the prevention and early detection of cancer.

IARC's accomplishments over the past five decades in the development of tools and infrastructures vital for conducting innovative cancer research are also highlighted, as is the major contribution to training through fellowships and courses in order to enhance cancer research capacity worldwide.

This examination of the Agency's history illustrates how, despite the changing landscape of cancer research, IARC's original vision of international cooperation and interdisciplinary science continues to be a valid response to the current needs for cancer prevention and control worldwide. This is ever more relevant as the disease burden increasingly falls on low- and middle-income countries.

To mark this anniversary, a celebratory symposium is being held today, in the presence of the Sénateur-Maire of Lyon, Mr Gérard Collomb. IARC is delighted to welcome many of those who have contributed to the achievements of the Agency over the past five decades.

The event is also an opportunity for the Agency to welcome Morocco as a new Participating State. Morocco is the 25th country to join IARC and the first to do so from the continent of Africa.

The symposium is being held in the Grands Salons of the Lyon Hôtel de Ville, with a number of distinguished guests, including Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Salma of Morocco, Her Royal Highness Princess Dina Mired of Jordan, Professor Agnès Buzyn, president of the French National Cancer Institute (INCa), and Dr Mark Palmer, Chair of the IARC Governing Council and Director of International Strategy at the Medical Research Council, United Kingdom.

### For more information, please contact

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<sup>1</sup> Saracci R, Wild CP (2015). International Agency for Research on Cancer: The First 50 Years, 1965–2015. Lyon, France: IARC. ISBN: 978-92-832-0440-4. Available from: <http://www.iarc.fr/en/publications/books/iarc50>.

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The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is part of the World Health Organization. Its mission is to coordinate and conduct research on the causes of human cancer, the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and to develop scientific strategies for cancer control. The Agency is involved in both epidemiological and laboratory research and disseminates scientific information through publications, meetings, courses, and fellowships. If you wish your name to be removed from our press release e-mailing list, please write to [com@iarc.fr](mailto:com@iarc.fr).