

## IARC/WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region meeting on cancer control and research priorities, hosted by the Supreme Council of Health of Qatar

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the World Health Organization (WHO) Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, and the Supreme Council of Health of Qatar convened in Doha for a three-day high-level meeting on cancer prevention.

The meeting, which took place on 20–22 October, was attended by the cancer focal persons of the governments of the member states in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region and a number of IARC senior staff and other international experts. Its aim was to identify priorities for cancer prevention and research in the region and formulate a series of evidence-based recommendations. Its main focus was on cancer epidemiology and surveillance, cancer causation and prevention, and screening and early detection.

Cancer is already ranked second of four leading causes of death in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Its incidence is expected to almost double in the next two decades, from an estimated 456 000 new cases in 2010 to nearly 861 000 in 2030,<sup>1</sup> the highest relative increase among all WHO regions.

Qatar was the first country in the Persian Gulf region to become an IARC Participating State, earlier this year, and has made significant investments in cancer research. In collaboration with IARC, the country aims to play a leading role in strengthening key partnerships and collaborative research programmes in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> GLOBOCAN 2008, Cancer Incidence and Mortality Worldwide. International Agency for Research on Cancer – Lyon, France. IARC, 2010. Available from: <http://globocan.iarc.fr>