

THIRD ISC GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Muscat, Oman 2025

# Note on the hosting of the ISC in France

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17 January 2025

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*For noting*



**International  
Science Council**

وزارة التعليم العالي  
و البحث العلمي والابتكار  
Ministry of Higher Education  
Research & Innovation



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The ISC secretariat has been hosted in France since 1972. In practical terms, the ISC has enjoyed the use of offices rent free (although paying current expenses, including utility bills, taxes and everyday repairs) and an annual cash subsidy. In 2007 the Secretariat was relocated to its current premises at 5 rue Vacquerie and the cash subsidy set at 500k EUR for a ten-year period (2007–2016). In 2017 the annual subsidy from France was reduced to 100k EUR. This is separate to the annual membership dues of the ISC Member in France.

The ISC does not have a formal framework hosting agreement with France. Its use of a building and annual cash subsidy have been underpinned by consecutive, multi-year agreements with the Ministry for Higher Education and Research.

The latest, nine-year, agreement for use of the premises at 5 rue Auguste Vacquerie in Paris expired on 31 December 2024. Over the course of the past 20 months the Secretariat has attempted to engage the French authorities (chiefly the Ministry for Higher Education, Research and Innovation and the Ministry for Public Finances) in discussions to renew the agreement for the use of the building and the cash subsidy.

The President and the CEO met several times and had very constructive talks with the then Minister of Higher Education and Research, Dr. Sylvie Retailleau in 2023 and 2024, before the government was dissolved following a snap general election held in June 2024. Since October 2024 the CEO has met on several occasions with high-level representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the Cabinet of the French Presidency. Verbal assurances have been provided by the French authorities that the ISC Secretariat can continue to occupy the current premises until a long-term solution is identified.

In the context of the above-mentioned discussions, the President and the CEO have broached the subject of a possible and desirable change of the legal status of the ISC in France from a non-profit organization registered in France to an international organization hosted by France, which would reflect more properly the global nature of the ISC's work and could also have fiscal advantages. This has been noted by the French authorities and is part of ongoing discussions.

The current situation is that the ISC occupies its building as of 1 January 2025 without an agreement. It is not clear whether a new agreement will involve moving to another building and/or if the ISC will be asked to pay rent.

Representatives of the Ministry for Higher Education, Research and Innovation have assured the CEO verbally that the cash subsidy of 100k EUR per annum will continue.

The above-mentioned uncertainties will be reflected in the 2024 accounts by a provision of some 40–50k EUR to cover the possible move to another building and the amortization of expenses in the premises at 5 rue Auguste Vacquerie.

The ISC Members are invited to note the current situation related to the hosting of the ISC in France.