

Report on the 4th World Congress of Pathophysiology

Based on the decision made by the International Society for Pathophysiology (ISP), the 4th International Congress of Pathophysiology (ISP-2002) was held in Budapest, Hungary, from June 29 to July 5, 2002 on the new campus of the Eötvös Lóránd University of Sciences, located on the banks of the Danube. This Congress was an organic continuation of the first three extremely successful events held in Moscow, 1991, under the Presidency of *Georgy Kryzhanovsky*, then in Kyoto, Japan, 1994, under the Presidency of *Yukata Oomura*, and the latest Congress took place in Lahti, Finland, 1998, where *Osmo Hänninen* was the President.

ISP-2002 (with *Emil Monos*, as President, and *Lajos Szollár* as Secretary-General) covered a wide range of scientific topics from the mechanisms of the human and animal diseases through to the therapeutic interventions. In addition, the advanced methods of education of pathophysiology were addressed. The program was developed by the local Organizing Committee in cooperation with an International Advisory Board (IAB) of more than a hundred experts (the complete list of names is included in the volume “Final Program”). The scientific presentations of ISP-2002 delivered results from the fields of pathophysiology, clinical physiology, as well as numerous disciplines related to the physiological sciences. The scale of observations ranged from the molecular level to the level of the organism as a whole. The 700 announced presentations were programmed in 42 symposiums of the Congress and 12 separate poster sections. Each session was chaired by internationally recognized experts, most of whom were on the IAB. Internationally renowned guest speakers delivered their plenary presentations, one after the opening ceremony, and during the days of the Congress commencing the morning session (names are listed in chronological order): *E.S. Vizi* (Hungary), *T.H. Hintze* (USA), because of unforeseen absence of *G. Kaley* from the Congress, *A.W. Cowley Jr.* (USA), *N. Westerhof* (The Netherlands), *O.H. Petersen* (United Kingdom), *T. Sakata* (Japan), and *G.N. Kryzhanovsky* (Russia). The 6th International Conference of the *European Society for Noninvasive Cardiovascular Dynamics* was integrated in the program of the ISP-2002 and took place in the form of two symposiums.

Numerous institutions and organizations provided indispensable support for ISP-2002 in various forms. High patronage by Professor Ferenc Mádl, President of Hungarian Republic, support from the International Union of Physiological Sciences (IUPS), the American Physiological Society, the Semmelweis University Budapest, the Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences, as well as the dedicated job of the local and foreign organizers were decisive in raising high international interest in the Congress. Seven hundred abstracts received from 48 countries represented around 2000 researchers. The total number of registered participants was 660. Based on the preliminary registrations in excess of 3000, the attendance could have been significantly higher, had the alarming political and economic events of last year not deterred quite a few potential attendees and sponsors from participating. In spite of these circumstances, the ISP-2002 was a financially balanced meeting.

One of the main objectives of the Local Organizing Committee was to promote and stimulate communication between experts both during and following the Congress. In attempt to meet this goal, a high number of IAB members were invited, the ISP-2002 home page was developed and published (<http://isp2002.sote.hu>), in the “Abstracts” volume (*Acta Physiologica Hungarica* 89/1-3, 2002) and the “Final Program” booklet each paper abstract featured the E-mail address of the respective speaker, and the book of “Abstracts” contained a full name index.

Congress bags, donated by Gedeon Richter Ltd. and presented to each participant, contained, besides the “Final Program” and book of “Abstracts”, a small memorial bronze medal with the logo of ISP-2002 on one side, and a portrait of King István (Saint Stephen) on the other one to reflect upon the millennial historical past, the deep and rich European traditions of Hungary.

Functions of the Congress Secretariat were provided by the staff of Coopcongress agency. Members of the team deserve congratulations also for offering high-standard social programs to the participants covered by ISP-2002 registration fee. These events included the opening ceremony with inspiring musical performance by Jenő Hubay Chamber Orchestra, followed by a hospitable social evening, the solemnly impressive organ concert by Norbert Balogh in Matthias Cathedral, the magnificent banquet aboard the Danube cruiser “Európa”. Ten well organized optional cultural programs were also offered to the participants at extra cost.

The team of “Duna” TV Channel, under the leadership of Emmi Tarján program-editor, made an on-site report on July 4 in cooperation with the President, the Secretary-General, and numerous participants of the ISP-2002 which, along with the “live” interview with Ákos Koller, Deputy Secretary-General of the Congress, was broadcast in the program “Calendar” (Kalendárium) on July 5. With support of the Coopcongress, several versions of the summary on ISP-2002 were forwarded to the Hungarian News Agency (MTI).

Council Meetings and the General Assembly of ISP to elect new leadership of the International Society took place during the Congress. Ceremonial Hall of the Council of the Semmelweis University hosted the leadership electoral meeting. Rector Péter Sótonyi, in the capacity of host, awarded Ignác Semmelweis medals to the preceding presidents of ISP (*G. Kryzhanovsky*, *Y. Oomura*, *O. Hänninen*). In a secret ballot *Q. Han* (China) was unanimously voted President Elect for a 4-year term. *O. Matsuo* (Japan) was elected the new Treasurer, *A. Lochner* (Republic of South Afrika) became newly-elected Vice-President, and *S.V. Grachev* (Russia) Executive Vice-President. Vice-President *D. Lewis* (Sweden), Editor of “Pathophysiology” *T. Yoshikawa* (Japan) and Secretary-General *Lajos Szollár* (Hungary) were confirmed in their post. *Emil Monos* (Hungary) was elected President. After hearing the reports from the ISP officials, election and re-election of the 25 board members took place at the General Assembly of ISP. Recipients of 10 junior awards were announced. Venues of the next ISP Congresses were decided based on high-standard bid presentations: Beijing will host the Congress in 2006, and Montreal will follow suit in 2010.

The local organizers have received words of compliments and letters of acknowledgement from both domestic and foreign participants during and after the Congress. The participants highly acclaimed the general scientific level, excellent organization, informal friendly spirit, hospitality, fascinating sights of Budapest. On the basis of all mentioned above, it can be claimed with certainty that ISP-2002 was a successful World Congress, and, besides its significant contribution to the development of pathophysiology and the physiological sciences in general, it also served well the cultural reputation and scientific respect of Hungary in the world at large.

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