

REPORT FROM THE 6th NATIONAL CONGRESS OF LABORATORY MEDICINE

Contributed by Dr Manole Cojocaru, President of the Congress



Dr. M. Cojocaru, Prof. E. Granieri, Dr. Camelia Grigore, Prof. E. W. Koneman, Prof. C. Muss, Prof. Gh. Benga, Prof. M. Oellerich (from left to right).

The 6th National Congress of Laboratory Medicine with international participation (under the auspices of IFCC, FESCC, BCLF, WASPaLM, under the high patronage of Academy of Medical Sciences) was held in conjunction with the 2nd Symposium of Immunopathology and the 2nd National Congress for Clinical Laboratory Assistants at Cercul Militar, 11–13 October 2007, in the special ambiance of the beautiful city of Sibiu (European Cultural Capital in 2007 together with Luxemburg), localized in the center of Romania. The coming to Sibiu is both extraordinary and miraculous (it was founded over 800 years ago). Sibiu has a fascinating history, enriched by the cultural,

ethnic and religious diversity for which it is well-known. The venue offers a unique opportunity to intensively interact with colleagues of various specialties: molecular biology, hematology, microbiology, immunology, clinical chemistry, genetics.

With the great efforts and excellent organization by RSLM, many of our colleagues attended the congress, which signified the beginning of friendly exchanges between laboratory medical professionals in Europe and USA. RSLM is a growing society with active memberships that embraces all aspects of laboratory medicine. We have invited world experts who presented

papers to share with us their views on the clinical laboratory. The challenges in our discipline have never been more exciting. However, in order to meet them, we need to learn from each other and create mechanisms through which we can work together to accomplish the many formidable tasks that will demand our best.

The 6th National Congress is the largest gathering of laboratory medicine professionals. Our meeting was accompanied by mass-media representatives. The congress was a successful meeting, where the participants joined efforts to improve the development of laboratory medicine. The first goal – to update Romanian professionals – has been fulfilled by personalities from European countries. In this way, we also tried to ensure the internationality of the Congress.

The opening ceremony was held on the evening of October 11th at the Cercul Militar where President of the congress delivered his welcome speech to over 400 participants from all the country. He emphasized the importance of laboratory medicine for the progress of evidence-based medicine (EBM).

Prof Elmer. W. Koneman, Michael Oellerich, Bernard Gouget, Enrico Granieri and Nada Majkić-Singh each received a Diploma of Honorary Memberships of RSLM.

I am extremely proud to say we had a high standard of scientific content for the meeting. The scientific programme of the congress consisted of plenary sessions, educational lectures, free communications, symposia, and poster presentations on topics of wide ranging interest. The themes of the congress should remind us all of the great opportunity we had to meet people from different parts of Europe, a Europe that is no longer divided and can work together on seeking common solutions on how to improve and direct the care and treatment of people.

Professor E. Koneman, a well-known supporter of young doctors and promoter of important international studies in Romania, honored the event with his presence.

The latest knowledge about laboratory medicine was discussed by prestigious scientific personalities: E. Granieri (Italy), M. Cojocaru (Romania), Camelia Gurban (Romania), A. Udristoiu (Romania), V. M. Popilian (Romania), Camelia Grigore (Romania), Dragana Begović (Serbia), M. Boros (Hungary), E. W. Koneman (USA), M. Oellerich (Germany), S. Handjiev (Bulgaria), Manuela Anda Andrei (Romania), Claus Muss (Germany), Nada Majkić-Singh (Serbia), B. Gouget (France), L. Muszbek (Hungary), M. Cucuianu (Romania), Maria Greabu (Romania), Simona Alexandra Iacob (Romania), Zoran Mijušković (Serbia), Janet McMurray (United Kingdom), Simona Berbecar (Romania), Suzana Elena Cilievici (Romania), Ioana Culea (Romania), Olga Mihaela Dorobat (Romania), Crezante Lazar (Romania), Constanta Popa (Romania), Mariana Patiu (Romania), I. A. Gutiu (Romania), Gabriela Opri-

san (Romania), Alexandra Dana Maria Panait (Romania), Corneliu Zeana (Romania) and many others.

There were two satellite symposia: »Medical Genetics« organized by the Romanian Society of Genetics (president Prof Victor Ioan Pop) and »Advances in transfusional medicine« organized by the Romanian Society of Transfusional Medicine (president Dr Daniela Cristina Marinescu).

There were heated discussions after each presentation at the plenary sessions. The most encouraging phenomenon was that the younger generation demonstrated their talents and expertise in these fields.

The 2nd Symposium of Immunopathology represented a new stage in the gathering of knowledge regarding laboratory investigations and clinical aspects, thus increasing the possibility to determine the potential of the new drugs. The symposium was held to introduce new concepts, new products, and new information on the development of lab diagnostics and clinical medicine.

This year, the prize was awarded to Dr. Camelia Gurban, assistant professor of biochemistry at the »Victor Babes« University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Timisoara. This is the second year running when RSLM rewards distinguished specialists from our country, as well as young doctors with special merits in this field.

There were also two exhibitions (Clinilab and Tehnomedica) of diagnostic products in which the exhibitors demonstrated their new products. The industry companies presented the latest advances in technology and their clinical applications.

RSLM employees should work hand in hand to promote further development of our laboratory medicine. In these circumstances, the staff working in this congress has the special merit. Among these, mention should be made of the remarkable physician Gheorghe Benga, endowed with exceptional professional and human qualities, who discovered the first water channel protein in the red blood cell membranes – the protein later called aquaporin.

The closing session was held on the afternoon of October 13th. Prof. Dr Gheorghe Benga thanked the organizers for the success of the congress, and also for the contributions of the participants. RSLM continues the efforts to further raise and up-to-date the congress, to improve and to enhance its impact. It is necessary to understand laboratory diagnostics, as it is important to focus on the main aims, targets and functions of laboratory diagnostics in the complex field of patient treatment in health systems. Romania is going to be a member of EU and all the sectors, including healthcare and medicine, are working hard to meet the international standards. By working together, we can function as a dynamic scientific entity in the dynamic laboratory medicine field.

The rich social programme offered a wide range of cultural activities drawn from the rich profusion which Sibiu provides. The participants had the opportunity to visit the beautiful medieval city of Sibiu, an exciting city to stay in, making this a truly memorable visit.

In closing, we would like to express sincere appreciation and gratitude. Discussions revealed the interest for the papers presented in the symposium and the congress and I would like to thank the sessions moderators. I would like to express my gratitude to all the staff from RSLM who have worked hard behind the scenes for the success of this congress. I really appreciate the active support and participation of colleagues and friends from abroad, as well as of our colleagues from Romania. Dr Camelia Grigore, whose remarkable

contribution to the congress's organizing must be mentioned, and also Ms. Andreea Munteanu from Ralcom Exhibitions. The names of some other collaborators are also written in the programme of the congress thanks to their valuable contribution. Through this Congress we have enhanced the sharing of our knowledge and experience, and built up the understanding and friendship. I would like to express my appreciation and thanks for the support by the firms. Sibiu provided the foundation for this bridge of friendship. Sibiu is really a beautiful city and people are most hospitable.

Good luck for the future and thank you very much Dr Camellia Grigore!

The 7th Congress of Laboratory Medicine will be held in Bucharest October 20–22, 2008.