

## 26<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS OF BALKAN CLINICAL LABORATORY FEDERATION (BCLF) AND 6<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL CONGRESS OF MSMBLM

The 26<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF) and the 6<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the Macedonian Society of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (MSMBLM) was held from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> of October, 2018 in Skopje and it was organized by MSMBLM. This Association organizes the Congress of BCLF for the fourth time.

The Congress was organized under the auspices of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry (IFCC), European Federation of Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) as well as Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and Medical Faculty in Skopje.

Thirteen invited plenary speakers from Norway, Italy, France, USA, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, and R. Macedonia presented their lectures at the Congress as well as 32 lecturers with their 15-minute oral presentations from all Balkan countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Romania, Turkey, Montenegro, and the host country R. Macedonia. Sixty-nine participants from the Balkan countries and from other European countries and Canada presented their e-posters. A total of 260 participants attended the Congress.

At the Opening ceremony, on 3<sup>rd</sup> of October, Prof. Dr. Danica Labudovic, President of MSMBLM and President of the Organizing Committee of the 26<sup>th</sup> BCLF Congress and Prof. Dr. Jozo Choric, BCLF President had their opening speeches. The guests and participants of the Congress were welcomed by the Rector of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Prof. Dr. Nikola Jankulovski, the Dean of the Medical Faculty in Skopje, Prof. Dr. Sonja Topuzovska, the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy in Skopje, Prof. Dr. Svetlana Kulevanova, and the Minister of Health of R. Macedonia, Prof. Dr. Venko Filipche.

This BCLF Congress was traditionally enriched with a short music program. The Harflea quartet played a remix of Macedonian traditional folk songs. The Opening ceremony continued with the exceptionally interesting 45-minute scientific lecture of Prof. Dr. Sverre Sandberg from Norway, EFLM representative. His lecture was entitled »The challenging of POC Testing«.

Both working days of the Congress (Thursday and Friday) were characterized by a very tight schedule of lectures, beginning from 8.30 am and finishing at 6.30 pm on Thursday and at 6.00 pm on Friday.

The first morning session on Thursday (4<sup>th</sup> Oct), which topic was *Harmonization and standardization in*

*laboratory working* was opened by Prof. Giuseppe Lippi from Italy who spoke about EFLM strategy for harmonization of the preanalytical phase. This lecture was followed by presentations on: causes of analytical errors and mechanisms for their detection (Dr. Vera Lukic from Serbia), standardization and harmonization of laboratory diagnostics in chronic kidney diseases (Dr. Vanja Radishik Biljak, Croatia), accreditation of medical laboratories (Irina Leimoni, Greece) and clinical chemistry in R. Macedonia (Prof. Dr. Jasna Bogdabnska from R. Macedonia).

After the coffee break, one-hour lecture entitled »Six Sigma QC Design and Risk assessment for QC Frequency« was given by Prof. Sten Westgard (USA) in which he spoke about the control of laboratory working quality. Then professional presentations followed suggested by the firms – sponsors of the Congress.

The afternoon session began with the lecture on the pathophysiology of protein carbamylation (Prof. Phillipe Gillery from France), followed by the lecture on biomarkers in macular degeneration (Christos Kroupis from Greece), ST2 – a novel biomarker in ESRD (Prof. Evgenija Homshak from Slovenia), association of resistin and CKD (Jelena Munjas from Serbia), urinary nephrin – a biomarker in detection of diabetic nephropathy (Assist. Prof. Irena Kostovska from Macedonia), the effect of NaF on the expression genes in renal cell line (Assist. Prof. Semiha Dede from Turkey), and determination of methyl-glyoxal with UPLC (Assist. Prof. Abdullah Sivirkaya from Turkey).

*Endocrinology* was the topic of Session 3 on Thursday, and the first lecturer Assist. Prof. Milena Velizarova from Bulgaria spoke about thrombocytopenia in pregnancy; then, Prof. Sonja Kuzmanovska from R. Macedonia spoke about thyroid tests in pregnancy; Dr. Nela Rasheta from Bosnia and Hercegovina presented her lecture on PTH and BMD in hyperparathyroidism; Dr. Sci. Aleksandara Atanasova Bosku from R. Macedonia had a presentation on adipokine and insulin resistance in women with POS, and Tamer Bego from Bosnia and Hercegovina on genetic variants in the BIH population with diabetes mellitus.

The morning session on Friday (4<sup>th</sup> Oct.) was reserved for presentations related to markers in malignant diseases and was started with the plenary lecture of Prof. Tomris Ozben from Turkey on the use of circulating free DNA (cfDNA) in the diagnosis of

different diseases, among which cancer diseases (liquid biopsy). Another plenary lecture was given by Prof. Dr. Diana Plasheska-Karanfilska from R. Macedonia, where she spoke about the high-risk genes in onset of breast carcinoma. This was followed by 15-minute-oral presentations on the elevated IMA in patients with breast cancer (Ali Unlu, Turkey), telomerase targeted therapies in carcinomas (Zeliha Gunnur Dikmen, Turkey), activity of LCAT and POX-1 in patients with colorectal cancer (MS Pharm. Marija Mihajlovic, Serbia), and the benefit of multi-marker panels in diagnosis of ovarian carcinoma (Veselina Koleva, Bulgaria).

Session 5 was characterized by various presentations and lectures. The first two plenary lectures were given by Dr. Nevena Terzic Stanic (Montenegro) on laboratory disorders in patients with SLE, and the second given by Prof. Sanja Stankovic on pharmacokinetics in cardiovascular diseases. Fifteen-minute-oral presentations followed on: DEXA and bone biomarkers in the evaluation of bone diseases in patients with thalassemia and hemoglobinopathies (Prof. Eteleva Refatlari, Albania), evaluation of SP-A and SP-D as biomarkers of COPD (Regina Hasa, Albania), and blood proficiency testing study (Prof. Dr. Tanja Makarovska, R. Macedonia). The session continued with the professional presentations suggested by the sponsors of the Congress and presented by Assist. Prof. Aleksandar Petlichkovski from R. Macedonia, Dr.

Dubravka Antova from R. Macedonia and Panagiota Evangelakou from Greece.

The afternoon session was reserved for topics related to enhancing precision in medical diagnostics by using mass spectrometry (Prof. Dobrin Svinarov, Bulgaria), the future in the application of mass spectrometry in the clinical laboratory diagnostics (Fehime Benli Aksungar, Turkey), and the application of liquid chromatography – tandem mass spectrometry in determination of serum arginine in pregnant patients (Sedat Abusoglu, Turkey).

The final, 7<sup>th</sup> session of the Congress was reserved for presentations related to seasonal variability of VD in Bilecik province (Dr. Saadet Celik, Turkey), EF of hemoglobin in thalassemia patients (Selma Dyca, Albania), alterations in bone metabolism of obese patients (Prof. Dr. Aylin Sepichi Dincel, Turkey), risk management in biochemical laboratories (Prof. Dr. Katerina Tosheska-Trajkovska, R. Macedonia), and food intolerance (Dr. Pecko Desoski).

The Congress was declared to be closed by Prof. Dr. Danica Labudovic by expressing her gratitude to all lecturers and poster presenters as well as to the sponsors, who all together contributed in creating an excellent environment for exchange of scientific results, ideas, experiences and in building a professional net among the participants.



Prof Jozo Coric, President of BCLF welcoming the audience of 26<sup>th</sup> BCLF Meeting



Prof. Sverre Sandberg, lecturer of Opening ceremony





President of BCLF, Jozo Coric, with BCLF – EB members prof Tomris Ozben (Turkey), Prof. Anyla Bulo (Albania), prof Etleva Refatlari (Albania) and Dragana Sladoje Puhalo, PhD (BCLF secretary)



President of MSMBLM Prof. dr. Danica Labudovic with lecturers of 26<sup>th</sup> BCLF Meeting: (from left to right) asoc. research prof. Sonja Kuzmanovska, prof. Sverre Sandberg (Norway), Irini Leimoni (Greece), Vanja Radisic Biljak PhD (Croatia), Vera Lukic, PhD (Serbia), prof. Giuseppe Lippi (Italy) , assoc research Evgenija Homsak (Slovenia)



Prof.dr. Danica Labudovic, President and Assoc research prof Sonja Kuzmanovska, President of Scientific Committee with lectures of 26<sup>th</sup> BCLF Meeting (from right to left): asoc. prof. Sedat Abusoglu (Turkey), prof. Fehime Benli Aksungar (Turkey) and prof. Dobrin Svinarov (Bulgaria)