

Newsletter 2004

IX International Congress of Reproductive Immunology, Hakone, Japan, October 11-15, 2004

The Assembly of ISIR
Hakone, Hotel de Yama
October 15th, 2004

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Gerard Chaouat: A final short ISIR Presidential report

Hakone, Hotel de Yama, October 15th, 2004

This report will be rather brief.

Hakone, Kyoto ! Bravo !

First, I want to thank Prs Makino, Koyama, Suji, Sakhai and Saito for the excellent Hakone and Kyoto meetings. The meetings were very successful scientifically, and “dense” as far as the programmes are considered. As far as the social events are concerned, they were wonderful and we will bring back home wonderful remembrances of sighting the Mount Fuji, Hakone lake, and for those continuing in Kyoto, the Golden Pavillon and Nijo castle, not to mention flamenco (yes !) and Koto, and Nakamura Ro restaurant. The later, and the Kyoto and Hakone banquets, have convinced me that Japanese food is a serious competitor to French ones !

But, most important, the two meetings have seen such important events as NIH sponsoring a session (on HIV !) , and above all the presence and active involvement of young investigators !

All over, the meetings represent a tremendous effort by our Japanese colleagues. They testify, by their scientific content, that indeed we see Reproductive Immunology into a new era !

As far as the report itself is concerned, here was what I sent earlier to the council, with some addendums modifications :

Meetings

The ISIR has sponsored several meetings, (not only the ASIR and JSIR, which, as usual, could use the ISIR names, but also we have been very happy to sponsor European meetings in Rhodes and Pilsen.

These meetings have been very successful, if one judges both by the attendance and the continuously raising quality in

the scientific programme. Of special importance for us are two points :

- a) The meetings have been joint meetings of the AASIR, EFIR, and ESRADI , in every case with participation of non European speakers. It should be noted, however, that they have been presented by Esradi as meeting of ESRADI with the participation of ISIR, EFIR, and AASIR, which poses a problem the new council will have to deal with
 - b) The Rhodes meeting was in close conjunction with the EFIS meeting, where indeed we also had a workshop
 - c) The Pilsen meeting was very successful, and very much praised for its scientific programme
- In every case, we have monitored as ISIR the scientific programme at a formative stage (as the constitution does require!) and helped reach new levels of excellence. I am sure the process will continue and help improve our perception by mainstream immunologists.
- d) Concerning Montréal, the Anne Croy / Malcolm Baines satellite one day face off was, I was told by many, successful, but I could not be there (IUIS council the same day ! but I met Anne later) nor could I attend the ICI workshop there, but, as in Stockholm, it was also successful
 - e) The ESRADI, via Peter Delves, have asked me to present a request for ISIR support /sponsor of their next meeting in Britain (Colchester) . See above for new council duties
 - f) . One of the things we still have to battle for, however, will be to regain a symposium status in the Next Rio meeting. The organisers are very keen to have us organise something there (like a satellite meeting) since several aspects of RI are important in South America (STDs, local parasites, pre eclampsia) and we could should indeed do something with Sylvia Daher! But as far as a symposium status is concerned, this will depend a lot on progresses in the field (new data of importance!) and the continuation of the ongoing improvement of our perception by mainstream immunologists.
 - g) I must say that our appearance at the Rhodes meeting has contributed to such an improvement, but there is still a way to go....

IUIS

Concerning IUIS, we will likely be asked to pay a small yearly due. The question is in balance because:

- The present constitution of IUIS does not distinguish between such “observers” affiliated organisations as ISIR and WHO and ICSU. It seems difficult to ask WHO and ICSU, for example, to pay a fee...
- The present constitution grants us voting right (one vote, small, but important : cf. the Brazil vs. Japan ICI 2007 case !). We have no voting rights in the Council. If we pay a fee, under the present constitution, we would have also council voting rights, but there is a risk that the Council representation and majority could be toppled by votes from “affiliated organisations” and “observers”, a fact I am myself personally against. Whatever, this will have to be examined more closely by the present IUIS council.
- Generally speaking, our perception within the Council is improving.

Journal(s):

This president helped as much as he could to have ASIR and AJRI have a secure status, and I think we must be very happy of the resolution of the legal cases which were on the way. I think we must be very happy of the way Ken Beaman is conducting the Journal, and the way the index factor is rebounding, with an increased flow in submissions. The introduction of an electronic submission process, and as well as the creation of data base are both important steps forwards. I think we must renew our support to AJRI, and help in case of merging of AJRI and JRI. Outside those aspects, as the soon to become past President, I am also very happy that AJRI not only survived what could have been a fatal blow, as ASRI members are certainly aware of, but as an augmented content together with a rebound in impact factor

Website

The website is international, and most of our (news) letters are now sent electronically, since I have NOT been made

aware of one of our members who would NOT have Internet access. However, web or not, the problem remains the same : the individual contributions from our members and member societies, peculiarly concerning the meetings they have organised, is ... well ... almost inexistent compared to what it could and should indeed be !

Dues:

The dues are still ridiculously small... especially if we have to pay a fee, and (as!) they have not varied since ... I know ISIR, and they are so small dues that it makes difficult to envisage credit card transfer, too (as an example, I regularly pay in cash at each world meeting to our treasurer). I think we must mandate our council for deciding a (modest, but real) increase in dues. The proposal I made to the general assembly was to pass from 30 \$ to 50 \$ per 3 years

Next meeting(s):

The council has received bids for the next meeting, and we have decided according to the best bids for Rijeka /Opatija in 2007.

We have also discussed bids for 2010, and we decided to make choices now always for 2 meetings in advance.

The 2010 meeting location will be in Australia on the great coral reef, and will be organised by Sarah Robertson.

Both meetings promise to be scientifically and socially exciting.

Please note: as in IUIS, submission of bids is OPEN and you can still submit before the next council if you wish so... for 2013 !

I have also received, via Peter Delves, and this has to be approved by the council, according to the Constitution, a request for the Next ESRADI meeting to have support of ISIR. See above !

It has advantages and inconveniences, in view of our policy towards EFIR and our regular members such as AASIR. This will have to be discussed by the New Council, in my view, since it would no be good that the “old council” pre-empt New council decisions

New council:

We can be more than reasonably satisfied by the emergence of many candidates for the New Council elections !!!

The vote was the one which had the largest number of casted votes since ISIR begun . It has been opened in presence of an observer (TJ Gill) and counted by D Rukavina, myself, the ballots being handled opened by J Szekeres Bartho

Results are

P E : K Koyama

SG : C Wira

Treasurer: I Sargent

Councillors

K Beaman

C Coulam

L Mincheva Nilson

R Georgieva

J Szekeres Bartho

Z Ulcova Gallova

The address of the President Daniel Rukavina at the Assembly of ISIR

Hakone, Hotel de Yama, October 15th, 2004

Dear friends and colleagues,

It is a great honor and privilege to be elected as the President of International Society of Reproductive Immunology. In the relatively short history of our Society (founded 1980) we have had the extremely good fortune to have as Presidents outstanding scientists not only recognized in our narrow field but much more broadly, in the scientific community. I would like to mention some of my older predecessors. Fortunately many of them are here and I wish to thank Professor Thomas J. Gill III, Professor Shinzo Izojima, Dr. Guy Voisin, Professor Pran Talwar and Professor David Clark. They are all Honorary Presidents of our Society. They were, and they still are, giants in both immunology and reproductive immunology. Today, I wish to give my full respect and my admiration to all of them. Here with us is Gerard Chaouat who was the President in the last three years and his contribution is very fresh in our mind. I would like also to recognize the first two Presidents who, unfortunately, have passed away many years ago but whose contribution was essential for the establishment and recognition of our Society. Academician Bratanov provided an enormous contribution by creating the atmosphere for gatherings of reproductive immunologists in Varna many years ago before our Society was established (I participated three times). Professor Rupert Billingham, whom I remember with a deep respect as a postgraduate student in his Department in Dallas, was one of the most prominent name in the recent history of immunology and transplantation.

Dear friends and colleagues, our scientific discipline is growing fast and is well-recognized in the scientific community: we are now affiliated members of IUIS. A great job has been done, but we have to proceed in our efforts that symposia in reproductive immunology are a regular part of the IUIS Congresses, thereby bringing the results and the breakthroughs of our research to interdisciplinary fields and to all immunologists. In our approach to IUIS, a critical step forward was achieved by Dr. Chaouat in the last three years, and I have asked him to proceed with his activities in order to help to realize goals I have mentioned.

Now, a few words about this Congress in Hakone. I have mentioned this event in my speech at the Banquet, but I think that I should repeat it at the Assembly as well. The scientific level of this Congress showed in the best way the impressive increase in the quality of our research. This was visible in the increasing number of young talented researchers as well as in the spreading of reproductive immunology globally. I would like to thank Professor Makino and his colleagues and all our friends in Japan for organizing a meeting at such a high scientific and social level. The Congress also showed the impressive advance of reproductive immunology in Japan. The quality of the plenary lectures was excellent, as was the quality of the oral presentations.

We all enjoyed in the beautiful settings of Hakone and the Hotel de Yama and the traditional Japanese hospitality and delicious food. Thank you for everything what was done. This Congress is really memorable one. The role of Japanese colleagues was recognized also by the election of Professor Koji Koyama as a President-elect of the ISIR. Professor

Koyama, my heartiest congratulations!

The main task of our Society in the next period is to continue to work on the promotion of excellence in our discipline. Our Congresses and those of national and regional organizations are important incentives in that way. Our journal, The American Journal of Reproductive Immunology (AJRI), is finally again on the right path, and this is an important factor in the promotion of quality and excellence. Our thanks go to Professor Kenneth Beaman, the new Editor, for his efforts and the results that he has achieved in the recent period.

In the next period we have to recheck the full membership status and strengthen our responsibility to the Society. The membership fee has always been modest (30 USD per three years); hence, the Council of ISIR voted that it should be 50 USD. This money is primarily used to support young scientists to attend ISIR Congresses and for loans to start up a new Congress.

The new Council of ISIR has been elected, and it consists of 5 officers and 6 elected Councillors. According to the Constitution, I have the right to appoint two additional Councillors. I have appointed Professor Shigeru Saito (Toyama, Japan) and Dr. Gordana Laskarin (Rijeka, Croatia).

Daniel Rukavina, President of the International Society for the Immunology of Reproduction

Tribute to Dr. Gerard Chaouat at the Assembly of ISIR

Hakone, October 15th, 2004.

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to thank Dr. Gerard Chaouat, our President for the last three years. It is at the same time easy and hard to find appropriate words to describe a personality like Gerard and the contributions that he has made to the field of reproductive immunology, to the Society and its development and finally to every member of the Society. It is an easy task because I have the possibility of using the nicest words. But, the problem is, and this is really my sincere opinion, that I can not find enough appropriate words. Dr. Gerard Chaouat is not only a brilliant scientist and a person of the highest intellectual qualities, very broad interests and education, but he is also a person of the highest moral values and, above all, a warm friend and colleague. I think that all members of our Society have had an opportunity to recognize and experience at least one facet of this extraordinary personality. In the last three years during his Presidency, the ISIR made really big steps forward. Many problems and some personal tensions which were present in the previous period

were overcome. He contributed to solve successfully the question of the future of the AJRI. He made an immense effort to include the ISIR as an affiliated member of the IUIS. He advocated and personally contributed to the development of reproductive immunology in a less developed countries and in countries in transition and so helped to spread our Society globally. His special contribution is work on the creating of the Network of Excellence of European laboratories in the field of reproductive immunology that has already been established. Both Gerard and I came to the idea that European reproductive immunologists should apply to the European Commission through the FP VI program Life Sciences, Genomics and Biotechnology for Health. After two years of work, during which his contribution was fundamental, we have a European Network of Excellence in our field, built of 16 laboratories from 9 countries, which focuses on the investigation of the early implantation processes. This is also a program to develop a virtual European laboratory in our field. I think this is one of the most important contributions to our Society as well.

Dear Gerard, on behalf of all friends and colleagues, members of the Society, it is my great pleasure to thank you for all your achievements and everything you have done for the Society in the last three years. I think that I have should stop, since, if I proceed, there will not be any nice words to say for me as a President of the Society in the next three years.

So, dear Gerard you have found your place in the gallery of great presidents of our Society. It is my pleasure to announce that the new Council of ISIR at its meeting last evening unanimously elected you a President d'Honneur of the Society. My congratulations. I am giving you the golden medal of the Society as a sign of our respect and our recognition to your contributions.



The speech given by Daniel Rukavina, the President of ISIR, at the Banquet, Hakone, October 13, 2004

Dear Professor Makino,

Dear friends and colleagues, dear Japanese colleagues

MINASAN-KONBANWA

It is my great pleasure and honor to thank you for all that you have done in the last three years to organize a scientific meeting at such a high scientific and social level. Being the organizer of many international meetings, as well as the VIII Congress of the ISIR, I am very well aware of all the effort you and your colleagues had to invest to organize such a memorable Congress. I think that this Congress has showed in the best way the impressive development of reproductive immunology in Japan. This is not a surprise for me at all, because I have developed very productive and pleasant collaborations with colleagues from Japan, Professor Koji Koyama and Professor Shigeru Saito.

The program of the Congress clearly marked a major step in the development of reproductive immunology in the 21st

century by emphasizing the interactions of new technologies and new concepts. On behalf of the ISIR I would like to thank the President of the International Congress Organizing Committee Professor Tsunehisa Makino, Secretary General Dr. Toshitaka Sugi and their coworkers for a job that was perfectly done. I would like also to thank Professor Koji Koyama , President of the Program Committee, Professor Kahei Sato, President of the National Committee and Professor Shigeru Saito, President of the Fund -raising Committee for all their efforts and contribution.

As you are aware, we held elections for the new President-elect of ISIR, and it is my great pleasure to announce that Professor Koji Koyama has been elected; this is still another confirmation of the globally recognized excellence of our Japanese colleagues. In the next two days we will still have many scientific discussion. However, just returning from beautiful excursions I would like to emphasize the social aspect of the Congress because it will last in our memories forever. We will never forget the excellent Hotel de Yama where we enjoyed in enormous kindness and patience of staff, which is highly professional; the beautiful and picturesque scenery of ASHI LAKE and MOTO HAKONE; and, most assuredly, MT. FUJI and the whole complex of the national park. Above all we have enjoyed - and are impressed by – the traditional Japanese hospitality and kindness. The fact that Hotel de Yama is situated in a beautiful natural setting of National park Fuji-Hakone helped us to create the proper atmosphere for scientific discussions, to renewal of old friendship and establishing new ones.

I would say that there are only few places in the world like Hakone. One of them is Opatija which is the setting for the next ISIR Congress in 2007. As the host, I am inviting everybody to come. Opatija has recovered completely from the consequences of the recent war and is again flourishing as it did in the period when royalty, including emperors, were regular guests. There are hundreds million dollars of investment being spend to achieve this renaissance, so that in 2007 you will find a splendid venue for our Congress. Finally, I would like to toast our host with many thanks and best wishes.

Professor Makino,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear Japanese colleagues,

MINASAN KAMPAI ARIGATO!