

ISH 2014 World Congress

Report of the Chair of Council

The XXXVth World Congress of the International Society of Hematology (ISH) was held on September 4-5, 2014, in Beijing, China, hosted by the Chinese Society of Hematology (CSH). The President of the Congress was Prof. Xiaojun Huang, the Co-Chairs were Prof. Changgeng Ruan and Prof. Saijuan Chen, and Prof. Kaiyan Liu served as the Secretary-General. The ISH 2014 Beijing World Congress was highly successful and well organized, with a balanced scientific program in basic and clinical hematology. The venue was beautifully located next to the Beijing Olympic Garden with the spectacular Bird's Nest Stadium and Beijing National Aquatics Center. There were 420 international members with a total of 1450 attendees from 34 countries, and 410 abstracts were submitted to the meeting. ISH Travel Awards sponsored by the Congress Organizing Committee were presented to 22 junior hematologists from 20 countries. The scientific program started with Prof. Zhu Chen's excellent Miwa Lecture entitled "Acute Promyelocytic Leukemia: Achievements, Challenges and Expectations". Zhu Chen (Shanghai Institute of Hematology) described his original contributions in the role of ATRA and its implications in APL. He reviewed the mechanisms of ATRA in APL, the efficacy of arsenic trioxide (ATO), its synergy with ATRA, and lessons learned from leukemic genomics. Chen also focused on treatment algorithms in low-, intermediate-, and high-risk APL patients. His talk was followed by Jacob M. Rowe (Shaare Zedek Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel), who reviewed the role of stem cell transplantation, its indications, and survival data in AML. Rowe addressed clear indications and eligibility of adult AML patients for auto- and allogeneic HSCT. He also explained current challenges as well as controversies in allo-HSCT and RIC for older patients in CR1, the safety of MUD, the rate of relapse, the ability to "cure" at relapse, and GVL effect. In the IAD-EAD-APD joint session entitled "Genomic and Molecular Medicine in Hematology", Seichi Ogawa (Kyoto, Japan) covered novel somatic mutations in AML and MDS. Ruben Mesa (Mayo Clinic, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA) clearly highlighted molecular targeting in myeloid malignancies and state-of-the art knowledge in myeloproliferative neoplasms. Mesa elegantly covered targeting issues from TKIs, i.e. imatinib, to novel therapeutics and their future implications. Tayfun Özçelik (Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey) demonstrated very convincing data for careful interpretation of gene mutations in hematologic malignancies. Özçelik also cautioned us on "reading" and "translation" of genome sequencing data, giving excellent case examples from his original research. He explained his pioneering research in genomic sequencing and DNA-based diagnostics, including forensics in Turkey, as well as his recent discovery of the VLDR mutation in cerebellar hypoplasia associated with "quadrupedal gait in humans". During the congress there were also sessions on case-based presentations. The meeting also included various presentations on acute leukemias, lymphomas, CLL, CML, multiple myeloma, and coagulation and platelet disorders. The oral and poster sessions were well attended. During the ISH business meetings, David Gómez-Almaguer (Mexico) was elected as the



new Secretary-General of the Inter-American Division (IAD), replacing Carlos Ponzinibbio (Argentina), who had completed his term. Sabri Kemahlı was reelected as the Secretary-General of the European-African Division (EAD).

Future Perspectives

The ISH is the only world hematology organization, established by the national hematology societies in 1946. The ISH has always had the strongest commitment to serve, educate, and provide up-to-date knowledge, as well as to collaborate with professional societies including the ASH, ICSH, ISTH, and ISEH. As the newly elected Chair of Council, I envision a future for the Society as a strong source of global education in hematology, embracing all countries. I am planning to serve the Society within the framework of the following major topics: (a) to have an interactive, regularly updated, and user-friendly website; (b) to establish scientific working groups dealing with specified issues; (c) to establish a 'Code of Conduct' for scientific ethics; (d) to make the biannual congresses a venue where all basic and clinical researchers are able to present their latest findings, and where hematologists in general practice can be informed and inspired by the very best courses and lecturers; (e) to establish training courses and educational meetings between the biannual congresses in joint activity with national hematology meetings, aimed at enhancing the training and professional development of junior members and particularly those in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America; (f) to improve our fiscal responsibilities and our financial status; and (g) to improve communication among ISH members through an efficient website and to stimulate interactive bridging with other related professional hematological societies.

We look forward to seeing you all at the ISH 2016 World Congress, in Glasgow-UK, on April 18-21, 2016 (<http://www.ish2016.com>).

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