REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE PATHOBIOLOGY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY OF TUMORS

CLUJ-NAPOCA ROMANIA
28-30 APRIL, 2010

Prof. Dr. Maria Sajin and Dr. Rares Buiga

The international Conference **THE PATHOBIOLOGY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY OF TUMORS** took place in Cluj-Napoca, 28th-30th of April 2010, and it was organized by the Oncology Institute "Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuț ă" Cluj Napoca, under the auspices of the Romanian Division of IAP (Prof. Maria Sajin), the Organization of European Cancer Institutes-OECI (Prof. Antonio Llombart-Bosch, Pathobiology Working Group Leader) and the Romanian Society of Pathology - SRAP (Prof. Petre Florescu, Dr. Areti Dinulescu).

The Cancer Institute Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuta from Cluj-Napoca, as a part of OECI network, was the host of this major event for Romanian pathology, in conjuntion with the International Academy of Pathology (IAP) that sponsored a part of the organization costs.

The purpose of the conference was to spread innovative knowledge amongst the Romanian pathologists and to increase their awareness of the implications of new molecular techniques in the diagnosis of tumours.

Another important objective of the conference was to improve the practical diagnostic skills of the participants by organising a slide seminar with some of the most interesting cases presented by the invited speakers (1-2 cases each).

The topics covered different localization in tumour pathology like breast, kidney, lymphoma, soft tissues, neuroendocrine and gynaecologic tumours.

The event was organised in three conference days: first day - plenary lectures of the keynote and invited speakers; second day - conferences on specific area of interest and molecular profiling as a support for diagnosis; the last day - a slide seminar with most interesting and relevant cases from the invited speakers from Romania and from abroad.

The group that enthusiastically agreed to contribute to this event consisted of Antonio Llombart-Bosch from Spain, a great friend of Romanian pathologists, the "promoter" and the heart of the congress; Kristin Henry from UK, the elected president of the IAP and the president of the Education Committee of the IAP; Claudio Lombardo from Genoa, Italy, the Special Assistant to the OECI President; Philippe Terrier from Institute Gustave Roussy, France a specialist in sarcoma pathology; Jose Antonio Lopez Guerrero from the University of Valencia, Spain; Elias Campo from the University of Barcelona, Spain; George Kontogeorgos from the University of Athena, Greece; Maria Sajin, the president of the Romanian Division of IAP from the University of Bucharest, Petre Florescu from. the University of Cluj ; Areti Dinulescu the president of the

Romanian Society of Pathology ; Marius Raica from the University of Timisoara, Romania; Eugen Mandache from the University of Bucharest. The local organization crew was conducted by Ioana Neagoe, Rares Buiga, and Doinita Crisan.

The manifestation generated a considerable amount of interest from the Romanian pathologists, biologists and researchers, reflected in the great number of the participants, more than 150.

The conference was hosted in a brand-new auditorium in the City Plaza Hotel located in the very centre of Cluj-Napoca, not far from the Institute of Oncology and University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

The official opening ceremony started with an introductory speech by Prof. Valentin Cernea, the medical director of the Oncology Institute. The event continued with Claudio Lombardo who presented the general philosophy and the basic organization of OECI, aiming to build an European area for cancer research. Then Prof. Petre Florescu stressed the importance of the continuous medical education in the formation of good pathologists, Prof. Antonio Llombart-Bosch presented the activity of the Pathobiology Working Group of the OECI. Following this, Prof. Maria Sajin presented the mission of the Romanian Division of the IAP and Dr. Areti Dinulescu presented the challenges that the Romanian Society of Pathology will have to face in the years to come.

In the plenary sessions of day one and two, each guest speaker presented a special lecture with a focus on bimolecular mechanisms of disease or new approaches in diagnosis.

Very appreciated topics were those on “dendritic cell tumours” by Kristin Henry, on “new molecular classification of breast carcinoma”, the “effects of the Chernobyl accident on renal tumors”, by Antonio Llombart Bosch, and the one on “management of sarcoma specimens” by Philippe Terrier. Elias Campo raised the interest of the auditorium with his “lymphoma diagnosis from morphology to molecular genetics”. George Kontogeorgos offered an up-to-date analysis on the complex topic of “gastroenteropancreatic neuroendocrine tumours” and José Antonio López-Guerrero focused on “molecular staging of prostate cancer and the role of the new biomarkers”. Last but not least, Samir El Andaloussi presented an innovative way of “intracellular nucleic acid delivery- applications and potential implication for cancer treatment”.

From the Romanian side, the topics covered subjects like Radiogenomics - Valentin Cernea, Validation of new biomarkers for cancer therapy - Ioana Berindan Neagoe, Circulating tumour cells - Rares Buiga, Angiogenic markers - Ovidiu Balacescu, Castleman’s disease - Bogdan Fetica, Prostate adenocarcinoma - Petre Florescu, Cryoglobulinemic glomerulonephritis - Costel Spanu, Lymphangiogenesis in tumour therapy - Marius Raica, Diabetic nephropathy - Eugen Mandache, Biopsy in pulmonary paediatric pathology - Dan Gheban, Borderline ovarian lesions - Patriciu Achimas Cadariu, Cytogenetics of oxaliplatin resistant cancer cell line - Piroska Virag, DNA lesions as predictive factor in cervical carcinoma - Ioana-Carmen Brie.

In the Poster Sessions, extended over all the three conference days , were presented some 40 posters divided in three main domains: pathology, molecular biology and clinical medicine.

The most interesting and challenging part of the conference was, of course, the **SLIDE SEMINAR** held in the last day. Each speaker presented one or two interesting cases. The slides were sent in advance in Romania by the authors, were scanned with the kind help of Prof. Ianos Jung from University of Targu Mures and were posted as virtual slides on the PATHONET web site (http://www.pathonet.org/), the digital histology portal of our colleagues pathologists from Hungary. Therefore, every participant was able to develop his own interpretation and his diagnostic hypothesis before the slide seminar session. This ended in a very animated interactive session, highly appreciated by everybody, in terms of both content and format.

The conference was not only work, but also an occasion for celebration, both for the speakers and participants. On the 29th of April, the second day of the Conference, the University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Iuliu Hațieganu" of Cluj-Napoca awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa to Professor Antonio Llombart Bosch. The touching ceremony took place at the University in the presence of a large audience.

Beside the lunches offered at the City Plaza Hotel, the first day was crowned with a Gala Dinner at Marco Polo Restaurant, and the second day with a Special Dinner at Chios Restaurant on the banks of the little lake in the Central Park nearby. The works of the Conference were closed with a thematic trip of two days in some of the most representative parts of Transylvania, including the medieval city of Sighisoara, the birth place of Dracula, one of the most beautiful and well preserved inhabited citadel in Europe.

A saddening event was the quite unexpected decease of Professor Petre Florescu, the iconic figure of paediatric pathology in Romania and a co-organizer of this event. He died from a sudden heart attack the next morning after the closure of the conference. He will be remembered by the generations of students and pathologists who benefited from his great generosity and knowledge

Overall this International Conference was a success, whose main benefit was to bring together the members of the two major professional societies of Romanian pathologists, the Romanian Division of IAP and the Romanian Society of Pathology, under the cover of the IAP and OECI.