EACR President: Moshe Oren

Moshe Oren discusses early plans for EACR-23 in Munich 2014, and examines how the Association’s Strategic Plan will lead us forward for the next two years.

Last summer I had the honour of becoming President of EACR, an association that continues to grow rapidly in international recognition and regard. It gives me great pleasure to write my first ‘Yearbook’ message as President.

I wish to begin by thanking my predecessor Julio Cella for his active and ongoing support, not least in greatly extending the Association’s involvement in cancer policy at the highest levels. I would also like to congratulate him on the success of the EACR-22 Congress, which was acknowledged by all participants as being a truly outstanding scientific event.

EACR-23

You will be aware that EACR-22 in Barcelona was the best-attended EACR Congress to date, with over 1800 participants and an outstanding programme of speakers. The EACR Biennial Congress is now the largest cancer research conference of its kind in Europe and as our plans progress for EACR-23, I believe that the excellent scientific programme will attract even greater numbers of participants to Munich, 5-8 July 2014.

The structure of the Congress will be recognisable to those of you who have previously attended an EACR Congress: high-profile plenary sessions will be complemented with three parallel sessions of symposia covering a wide variety of topics. The Congress will also benefit from the exciting new addition of Plenary Symposia, where two renowned speakers will address lectures on a related topic, with ample time for searching questions and discussion. Confirmed speakers will appear on the website in the near future.

EACR is particularly pleased to be developing this Congress with the active support of AEK: the German Cancer Society - Experimental Cancer Research. AEK’s support of the Congress, combined with the dedicated efforts of the Local Organising Committee chaired by Axel Ullrich, will undoubtedly make a major contribution to its success.

European Cancer Congress 2013

This year you will have received a personal copy of the ‘Advance Programme’ for the European Cancer Congress (ECC) 2013 in Amsterdam, 27 September - 1 October 2013. This highly multidisciplinary congress will cover every area of cancer from research to treatment and care. As a founding member of ECCO, EACR is an active partner in the congress and this is reflected in the programme tracks of interest to our members. In particular, I would like to draw your attention to the EACR Society Session at the ECC, which I am delighted to be co-chairing with Reuven Agami. The EACR session focuses on MicroRNAs in Cancer and will feature as additional speakers Thomas Brabletz, Anders Lund and Fatima Mechina-Gengou.

As in previous years, members will benefit from preferential registration rates at the European Cancer Congress and have exclusive access to the EACR Society Lounge. The Congress will also host EACR’s Annual General Meeting of members and I hope that many of you will be able to join the meeting. The Association will also be represented at the information stand in the exhibition area, and I hope that you will visit to speak with EACR staff and find out more about EACR-23 and upcoming EACR meetings in the educational programme.

EACR Strategic Plan

In February 2013 the EACR Executive Committee met to set out the Strategic Plan that will guide EACR activities for the next two years. EACR’s overarching mission remains the same: to advance cancer research, from basic research to prevention, treatment and care. The EACR will actively seek to make policymakers and the medical community aware of the fact that, with the advent of knowledge-based personalised medicine, basic cancer research and intensive crosstalk between laboratory researchers and clinical oncologists will become indispensable. The EACR is perfectly positioned to promote awareness of this growing need and to provide input towards its effective implementation.

The Strategic Plan now also notably emphasises the importance of cancer policy. I believe that a coordinated and strategic approach is required to tackle the health problems that face the global population now and in the future, and EACR is committed to be part of this coordinated effort.

The Plan also establishes a strong EACR policy position on the issue of gender inequality in scientific research. We have committed to improving the position of women in science by defining and addressing barriers to equality in every aspect of EACR activity. I am sure you will be interested in the report from the 2nd European Gender Summit on page 21, which reports on this issue.

A warm welcome

Part of the EACR strategic plan covers the need to enable and support collaboration and communication between cancer researchers within Europe and beyond. In line with this aim, I am delighted to welcome EACR’s newest affiliated National Society, the Associação Portuguesa de Investigação em Cancro (ASPIC) – the Portuguese Association for Cancer Research, which has just been established. We were pleased to support Leonor David and her colleagues as they set out to create a strong and motivated national society for cancer researchers in Portugal. I’d like to take this opportunity to offer all those involved my best wishes for the success of your new society.

Finally

I hope that you will be able to attend EACR-23 in Munich next year and that you will help me by raising awareness of the congress and other EACR meetings. Most participants in Barcelona said that it was personal recommendation that encouraged their attendance so we all have a part to play in winning success for our important Congress. To help this along, you will find a poster included in the centre of this Yearbook: I urge you to display it at your place of work. The EACR office will be happy to provide you with the poster PDF file, so that you can print out additional copies and distribute them to all interested parties.

May I wish you a successful year in advancing your professional endeavours and hope that you will continue to cherish your membership of EACR.