2nd Meeting of the Croatian Association for Cancer Research (Hrvatsko društvo za istraživanje raka, HDRIR)

HDTR-2 “From Bench to Clinic”

Hotel International, Zagreb, Croatia
8 - 9 November, 2012

The Croatian Association for Cancer Research (Hrvatsko društvo za istraživanje raka, HDRIR) established in 2009, organised its 2nd meeting, HDTR-2, in November 2012 in Zagreb. The aim of this meeting “From Bench to Clinic” was to promote our society and better communication between basic and clinical cancer research.

The two-day meeting covered main topics in basic and translational research in cancer, divided in sections:

Cancer signalling, Cancer genetics and epigenetics, Immunity and cancer, Cancer resistance. The opening lecture was given on the first day of the Meeting by the plenary speaker Professor Varda Rotter (Israel). On the second day, each of the four sections started with two lectures by invited speakers. From about 50 accepted poster presentations, several were selected for short talks in each section.

We received an excellent response, with 120 registered participants. The participants were from research institutes (51%), from universities (29%) and from medical institutions (16%). All together 34% were students.

The organisers were pleased and honoured that HDTR-2 brought together so many respected scientists and clinicians from Croatia, Slovenia, France, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Germany, Italy, Spain and Israel.

This meeting was an opportunity for cancer researchers and clinicians to gather and establish a good working relationship with each other and with other regional societies of the EACR.

Sonja Levanat
HDRIR President

Amparo Cano Garcia (Spain) presenting her lecture on new insights into tumour metastasis and new regulatory elements of epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition (EMT).

EACR poster award winner Petar Ozretić with the poster reviewing committee Oscar Burrone (Italy), Varda Rotter (Israel) and Biserka Nagy (Croatia).
A traditional SIC event was the “Giovanni Prodi” memorial lecture, awarded to Raffaella Giavazzi (Milan, Italy). She extensively revisited about 20 years of research on angiogenesis cancer: from the first molecules revenue in clinical trials as inhibitors (able to interfere with the vascularisation of tumours, the main source of nourishment and main way for the cell metastatic) up to drugs recently registered for the clinical use of some tumours, including ovarian carcinoma.

Approximately 225 high-quality posters were presented throughout the meeting in poster display sessions. 36 posters were selected for poster discussion in dedicated sessions (Tumour immunology and microenvironment, Cancer genetics, Cancer development and progression, Biomarkers and therapy). Most of these presentations were from young and promising scientists. To acknowledge their contribution in advancing Italian research against cancer many awards were assigned.

Stefania Capano (IRCCS, Candiolo, Turin) and Marta Cesca (“Mario Negri” Institute, Milan) won the traditional “Piero Trivella” Award for the best poster presented at the meeting. Valentina D’Amato (“Federico II”, University of Naples) was awarded the EACR Poster Prize. The “Elena Cappanini” Award for the best 2011 publication was assigned to Roberta Rosa (“Federico II”, University of Naples) and the “Pezzollet Foundation” scholarship was assigned to Samantha Solito (University of Padua).

The meeting ended by announcing the 55th SIC Annual Meeting that will be held in Catanzaro in September 2013. Giuseppe Viglietto will be the scientific organiser of the next meeting.

Moshe Oren, President of the EACR, closes the meeting with his lecture on p53 signalling in cancer
This one day symposium gathered for the first time the Portuguese cancer research community. In the absence of a national society for cancer research, Portuguese investigators are dispersed through their discipline of origin and/or circumscribed research interests and an open forum for presentation and discussion of their work was enthusiastically received. 200 delegates attended the meeting, which unfortunately could not host all those willing to participate due to logistic/space limitations. 83 posters were presented and discussed during the 2 hour lunch break. Lively discussions during lectures and at the poster session created an environment where people met each other for the first time in many cases, and also a platform to share their interests, resources and research findings with “neighbours”.

The Plenary Lecture was given by Carlos Caldas, from the Cambridge Research Institute, who discussed “Darwinian evolution and clonal heterogeneity in human cancer – biological and clinical implications” integrating data generated by large scale genomic analysis. The first block of lectures took place in the morning and focused on “platforms, facilities and resources and research findings with “neighbours”. The second block of lectures took place in the afternoon, after lunch and poster viewing. The first talk, by José Luis Passos Coelho (Hospital da Luz/Hospital Beatriz Angeló/FCM-UNL, Lisbon) on a population-based retrospective study of male germ cell tumours was followed by talks with a more “basic research” approach. Raquel Seruca (IPATIMUP, Porto) discussed the role of E-cadherin disfunction in gastric cancer, João Barata (IMM, Lisbon) gave a talk on IL-7R-mediated signalling in T-cell leukaemia and, finally, Miguel Godinho (IGC, Oeiras) presented data on the role of telomerase in melanoma progression using a zebrafish model.

At the end of the day Julio Celis (EACR Past President) and Carlos Caldas, on behalf of EACR, offered two prizes of €500 to a PhD student and an early Postdoc (<3yrs). The candidates were selected by a panel that had access to the abstracts and visited the posters over lunchtime. The prize for the PhD student was awarded to Maria do Rosario Andre (IMM, Lisbon) as first author of the poster entitled “Interleukin-6 expression in bone marrow-derived cells regulates metastatic disease”. The prize for the early postdoc was awarded to Salomé Pinho (IPATIMUP, Porto) as first author of the poster entitled “N-acetylglucosaminyltransferases III and V regulate Ecadherin stability at the cell membrane. Implications in the Epithelial to Mesenchymal Transition”.

A final address of Julio Celis to the audience preceded a poster viewing. The prize for the PhD student was awarded to Maria do Rosario Andre (IMM, Lisbon) as first author of the poster entitled “Interleukin-6 expression in bone marrow-derived cells regulates metastatic disease”. The prize for the early postdoc was awarded to Salomé Pinho (IPATIMUP, Porto) as first author of the poster entitled “N-acetylglucosaminyltransferases III and V regulate Ecadherin stability at the cell membrane. Implications in the Epithelial to Mesenchymal Transition”.

A final address of Julio Celis to the audience preceded a meeting of the Portuguese Division of EACR, where steps underway to create a Portuguese Association for Cancer Research were presented by Leonor David (IPATIMUP/Medical Faculty, Porto) on behalf of the Steering Committee – Carmen Jerónimo (IPO-Porto/ICBAS, Porto), Fátima Baltazar (ICVS, Braga), Fátima Cardoso (Fundação Champalimaud, Lisbon), Raquel Almeida (IPATIMUP, Porto), Luís Costa (FMUL/IMM, Lisbon) and Rita Barros (IPATIMUP, Porto). The feeling during and after the meeting was that the symposium created an opportunity for all cancer researchers in Portugal to organise a national Cancer Research Association. Next steps, including formalities and creation of a website, are underway.

We thank all speakers, chairpersons and delegates for their enthusiastic contribution. We thank EACR for the presence throughout the Meeting of Julio Celis and for his enthusiasm from the very beginning of this organisation, for the support of Robert Kenney in all the organisation process, and to Kathryn Wass, Rachel Warden and Andrew Binns for the excellent administrative and technical support. Local sponsors, Fundação Eng. António de Almeida and Novartis, were also invaluable for the success of this organisation.

Leonor David (IPATIMUP/Medical Faculty, Porto)
President of the Steering Committee of the Portuguese Division of EACR

4th MOKAD Multidisciplinary Cancer Research Meeting
Bursa, Turkey
13-16 December 2012

The 4th Multidisciplinary Cancer Research Meeting organised by MOKAD (the National Member Society of EACR in Turkey) was held in Bursa, Turkey, with 250 participants. Most of the participants were basic cancer researchers with the backgrounds of cell biology, molecular biology, chemistry, pharmacy, and medicine, while a few clinicians (medical oncology and surgery) also attended. Major breakthroughs in cancer research (nanotechnology, pharmacoepigenetics, personalised approaches, cancer stem cells, in silico drug design etc) were discussed in panels and plenary lectures in two lecture halls of the conference centre of Uludağ University. 40 lectures, 47 oral and 86 poster presentations were made. 3 poster awards were given. In addition to these common awards, 1 MOKAD special award and 1 the best cancer researcher of the year award were given to senior academics. As a new activity, “Project Bazaar” was organised in which researchers submitted their planned multidisciplinary projects and then sought for partners from the audience, who are required by the project, during their presentation time frame. It was a very useful and promising activity. According to the feedback, this was a successful meeting and it has been decided to organise it again in two years’ time.

More about Affiliated National Societies

14 national cancer research membership societies are now established members of EACR as ‘Society Members’. Over 6000 cancer researchers are members of EACR by virtue of their National Society membership in Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, Turkey and the U.K.

EACR welcomes its newest National Member Society, the Portuguese Association for Cancer Research (ASPIC)
The 4th Annual Meeting of the Israeli Society for Cancer Research
Ramat-Gan, Israel
8 May 2012

The 4th Annual meeting of the Israeli Society for Cancer Research (ISCR) was dedicated to the topic “The 2012 Cancer Route – From Bench to Bedside”. The meeting took place at the Wohl hall, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, on 8th of May 2012, and was chaired by Prof. Uri Nir from the Bar Ilan University.

The meeting held five sessions: RNA and Cancer, Intervening with tumour growth, New horizons in cancer therapy, Outstanding poster presentations, and a walk through poster session. Seventeen lectures were delivered by Israeli scientists and guests from abroad. The keynote speakers were Prof. Arnold Levine from Princeton University, NJ, USA and Prof. Michael Stratton from Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, Cambridge, UK. Prof. Stratton delivered a talk on “Evolution of the cancer genome”.

A special session was dedicated to the memory of the late Prof. Eleasar Flescher, founder and the first secretary of the ISCR. Prof. Yona Keisari, Tel Aviv University, spoke in memoriam. A lecture was given by Prof. Arnold Levine on “The Regulation and Activation of P53 Functions by A Wide Variety of Stress Signals Protects us from Cancers.”

Both guests gave outstanding presentations, which stimulated questions and discussions.

The meeting focussed mainly on translational research. The lectures dealt with various topics pertinent to cancer detection and therapy. Among the issues presented and discussed were: micro RNA as a new possible therapeutic approach in Ewing sarcoma; Rational design of heparanase inhibitors for cancer therapy; CTLA-4 blockade: the triumph and drawbacks of the first widely applied immunotherapy for metastatic melanoma; Biological and immunological aspects of tumour ablation by intratumoral alpha radiation; Competitors of Ras escort proteins for cancer therapy; Immune inhibition of rat gliomas by subcutaneous exposure to unmodified live tumour cells; Proteasomes and cancer: formation, activity and therapy. Met regulation of tumour growth and blood flow, and others.

The society honoured Prof. Isaac P. Witz, Tel Aviv University, founder and former ISCR President. Prof. Witz is a scientist of world renown in cancer research and one of the pioneers in Tumour Microenvironment in the global arena. He fulfilled many national and international duties, and currently serves as the president of the International Cancer Microenvironment Society.

This year, we had 349 registered participants, 157 senior scientists and 189 students and training physicians. 134 abstracts were submitted of which 8 were selected for oral presentation and the rest were presented as posters. Two research students Liron Zahavi (Dept. Molecular Genetics, Tel Aviv University) and Ahuvit David (Sheba Medical Ctr.) were awarded 250 Euro each for their excellent research and posters.

The meeting received financial support from the Israel Cancer Association, the EACR, Roche, Merck-Serono, and others.

The new Second Edition has been comprehensively revised and updated to include major advances in cancer biology over the past six years. Updates include current information on:

- The tumor microenvironment • Metastatic dissemination • Tumor immunology
- Cancer stem cells • The epithelial-mesenchymal transition • Multi-step tumorigenesis
- Invasion and metastasis • Mutation of cancer cell genomes • Greatly expanded treatment of traditional therapy • Epigenetic contributions • MicroRNA involvement
- The Warburg effect

Besides its value as a textbook, The Biology of Cancer is a useful reference for individuals working in biomedical laboratories and for clinical professionals.