Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

Since the 34th Congress of ISMH in 2002 in Budapest a groipu of colleagues (Executive Committee members, Regional Representatives, Scientific Committee Members, Congress Presidents and the prominent active members) altogether have been involved in the promotion and development of balneology as a medical discipline and science through our shared roles and intensified activities in ISMH. After the last 5 congresses (Budapest, Istanbul, Porto, Paris and Lanjaron) we are now having the 39th one in Kyoto/Japan very soon and the 40th one in Brazil next year which I think will play crucial roles the future of ISMH. With this presidential address I wanted to share with you my thoughts and perspectives for a stronger, effective and successful association.

1. Executive Committee and Regional Representatives

In the 37th ISMH Congress which was held 23–26 June 2010 in Paris. Prof. Dr. Christoph Gutenbrunner (Hanover) who has served as Vice President and Leader of the Scientific Committee and Prof. Dr. Pal Geher (Budapest) who has served as the Treasurer for the years 2002–2010 completed their period of ISMH Executive Committee membership.

The ISMH Assembly which was held during the Congress ended with the elections for the ISMH Executive Committee members; Prof. Karagülle (Istanbul) was reelected as the President for the 2012–2016 period and Prof. Dr. Shaul Sukenik (Beer Sheva) was elected as Vice President and the Leader of Scientific Committee and Dr. Alain Françon (Aix-les-Bains) as the Treasurer for the period of 2010–2014, and General Assembly has agreed with the composition of Executive Committee as follows:

Prof. Dr. M. Zeki Karagülle, President (2012–2016)
Prof. Dr. Christian F. Roques, Secretary General (2010–2014)
Prof. Dr. Tamas Bender, Past President (2010–2014)
Prof. Dr. Shaul Sukenik, Vice President (leader of the scientific committee) (2010–2014)
Dr. Alain Françon, Treasurer (2010–2014)
Regional representatives of ISMH:
Dr. Pedro Cantista, Europe
Prof. Dr. Yoshinori Ohtsuka, Near East and Asia
Prof. Dr. Bruce E. Becker, America

Elections of New Executive Committee Members and Regional Representatives

In the next Assembly of ISMH which will take place during the 39th World Congress of ISMH in Kyoto Japan on the 13th of May 2014 at 17:30–18:30, elections are to be held for the following positions which will be vacant because of the ending of related positions’ term;

- President elect (2014–2016, to act as the president for the period 2016–2020)
• Secretary General (for the period 2014–2018)
• Vice President (leader of the scientific committee): (for the period 2014–2018)
• Treasurer (for the period 2014–2018)

Regional representatives of ISMH will be also defined with new inclusions for a global composition for the period 2014–2018:
• Europe
• Asia
• Japan/Australia
• North America
• South America
• Africa

World Congresses of ISMH
Considering the increasing popularity of ISMH and scientific activity globally and need to gather more frequently for direct communication and exchange of information and increasing demand for international collaboration ISMH Congress should be organized annually.
1. The next Congress 40th World Congress of ISMH is planned to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in the year 2015. The congress will take place parallel to ABINAM (Brazilian Association of Mineral Water Industry) Congress with their main sponsorship.
2. For the Congresses of the years 2016 there is only one candidate country Canada who expressed the interest and going to present the proposal in ISMH Kyoto Assembly. I think and I hope either Romania (already expressed their willingness) or Italy (not yet expressed) would fit best for 2017. I think Tunisia, Russia, Poland are the best suitable candidates for the following years up to 2020.

Attracting new and young members to ISMH
Considering the empowerment of membership status of ISMH we should find ways to attract new and young members as well as new collective members;
1. To organize educational and training programs, workshops, courses and seminars for young colleagues
2. To assist and support young fellows for their scientific activities and works and facilitate their participation to the meetings and congresses
3. To support and collaborate with the national balneology associations, institutions and establishments
4. To create of Committee of Balneology/Medical Hydrology Associations consisting of the presidents (or secretary generals) of each country’s ISMH member association.
5. To assign an ISMH representative from each country if possible

Other Activities of ISMH
1. General Assembly of ISMH during the 38th ISMH Congress in Lanjaron Spain has decided unanimously that Balneology as a continuation of former Annals of Medical Hydrology of Professional School of Medical Hydrology and Hydrotherapy Facultad de Medicina - Universidad Complutense de Madrid, would be the official journal of ISMH. But, no submission has been done for the publication in the Balneology journal so far. We have to
decide firstly if we need such a journal or not. Then if the answer is yes (I believe it is yes) we should discuss and find the ways to promote it for becoming a strong journal with an impact factor to be attractive to recruit articles.

2. Open Board of Medical Hydrology/Balneology. The need, the functions, the frame and the activities and other related issues of this board is open to discussion and planned to be discussed in a special meeting. The ISMH member colleagues who are the members of the existing European Boards should share their experience with us and bring their expertise to the preparing meetings.

3. I personally and other ISMH Managing Board members are taking part of the diverse activities, attending a variety of meetings, making presentations in different meetings and occasions. We would be glad to receive proposals regarding future planned activities of ISMH beyond the congresses and scientific meetings.

Financial Status of ISMH

Considering the “very” poor financial status and sources of ISMH (it at the moment only depends upon the memberships fee, which is 50 Euro for individual members and 150 Euro for corporate members) we should focus on how we can improve it. There may be several ways and options:

- Improvement of membership fee collection and increase the fee to 100 Euro/year.
- Improvement of collective or corporative membership positions as follows:
  - National Balneology, Medical Hydrology Associations or Societies
  - Scientific Associations, Foundations or such Organizations
  - Any other type of Scientific Establishments, Institutions or alike
- Increasing the collective membership fee to 500 to 1000 Euro/year.
- Improvement of ISMH website with possible advertising banners to be placed at the site by paying a yearly fee like 100 to 500 Euro
- Reserving a share for ISMH from the ISMH Congress revenues (10-20% of the revenues)

Ladies and Gentleman, Distinguish Attendees,

I think we all are truly looking forward to the congress which will take place in coming two and a half days with the motto “Responses of the Human Body to the stimuli from Nature”. The agenda of the congress reflects the up-to-date status and results of the scientific research on natural balneotherapeutic factors; water, mud, climate in general and the “healing environment” of the traditional spa resorts in particular. It covers all aspects of our common field and will be comprehensively presented as key lectures by the invited internationally prominent speakers.

As our hosts, the president of the ISMH World Congress Dr. Shigeko Inokuma and Japanese colleagues and the members of BCPM (Japanese Society of Balneology, Climatology and Physical Medicine), I am really excited about our traditional global scientific and social meeting; the 39th one and I do really appreciate the organizers for their great efforts and I am convinced about the success and am looking forward to also social program and traditional food and entertainments during our stay in Kyoto, Japan.