Romanian Society of Ultrasonography in Medicine and Biology

Romanian Ultrasonography in Vienna

Recently, at the end of August, in the heart of Europe, in Vienna, more than 2,000 specialists in all the fields of ultrasonography participated in the 13th Congress of the World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (WFUMB). The congress was held in conjunction with Euroson 2011 (23rd Congress of the European Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology – EFSUMB) and with Ultraschall 2011 (35th Joint meeting of the Austrian, German and Swiss Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine – Dreilandertreffen). It was a large meeting, of high scientific quality, organized by WFUMB (that includes the European Federation, with approximately 20,000 members, from which more than 10,000 are from the three German speaking countries).

The organizers expected more than 3,000 participants, but the attendance was lower, most probably because the congress was held at the end of August, which is part of the summer vacation season in many European countries. The quality of presentations and of the presented papers was very high, with more than 300 invited speakers from around the world. From a logistics point of view, everything was perfect, in the “German style”. Austria Center from Vienna, one of the largest venues in Europe, was the perfect place for the meeting.

A few words now about the Romanian participation. Since Vienna is quite close to Romania, many doctors performing ultrasound in our country decided to participate in this high level meeting, in order to listen to the most famous leaders in the field, to see what is new in ultrasonography and to see the newest ultrasound machines showed in the exhibition. In this moment, the Romanian Society of Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (SRUMB) is one of the important players in ultrasound in Europe. Some time ago, our society was the sixth largest national society, and now, even if the number of our members decreased, it is still in a good position. During the last years, I was involved in the leadership of EFSUMB, first as a member of the Educational Committee and in the last 4 years as Honorary Treasurer. During the meeting in Vienna, our SRUMB president, Prof. Radu Badea was elected member in the Educational Committee and prof. Adrian Săftoiu as editor of the Newsletter of EFSUMB. Both positions are honoring for our society.

But the most important thing for a national society is probably the scientific participation of its members. And here we must be proud of some very important positions: I was invited to present the Euroson Lecture, which is the most important lecture representing Europe. In this lecture, entitled “Can liver elastography replace liver biopsy – today or sometime?”, I presented an overview of the place of ultrasound elastography in the evaluation of liver fibrosis and of the future of this method as a possible replacement for an invasive procedure such as liver biopsy.

Other Romanian physicians were invited speakers to this meeting: Prof. Sorin Dudea from Cluj-Napoca, Prof. Adrian Săftoiu from Craiova, Assoc. Prof. Zeno Spârchez again from Cluj-Napoca, or Assist. Prof. Alina Popescu from Timişoara. Papers of other Romanian doctors were selected for oral presentation: dr. Adela Golea from Cluj-Napoca, Dr. Simona Bota and M. Iacob from Timişoara,
Dr. Mirela Gliga from Tg. Mureș and Dr. Comănescu from Craiova. Dr. Simona Bota was the Romanian representative in the Young Investigators session, having a nice and clear presentation concerning Acoustic Radiation Force Impulse Elastography of the thyroid gland in normal and pathological conditions. The total number of accepted papers from Romania was 50, 21 of them as oral presentations and 29 as posters (from a total number of 283 oral presentations and 344 electronic posters).

Which were the most relevant scientific topics of this meeting? First of all, EFSUMB issued and presented the 2011 “Guidelines and Recommendations on Good Clinical Practice of Contrast Enhanced Ultrasound for liver lesions” (third edition, after the ones published in 2004 and 2008) and secondly, for the first time, CEUS Guidelines for non-hepatic applications were published. Another important topic discussed was ultrasound elastography (comprising Real Time Elastography, Virtual Touch Quantification and Imaging, Transient Elastography and Shear Wave Elastography) for breast, thyroid, prostate and liver lesions. Other papers covered the topics of CEUS in the assessment of different diseases and organs. Lectures covering clinical ultrasound and video sessions in which interesting cases were presented made this meeting a very attractive one. The social program was also excellent and the weather was unusual for Vienna at this time of year, being more of a tropical kind.

Now, after the end of this world meeting, with good results for Romanian ultrasonography, we must look to the future. I consider that we must consolidate our European position and this is possible only if the following requirements are met: we must increase the number of SRUMB members – and this is the duty of all the members of our society; secondly we must continue to send good papers to be published in Ultraschall in Medicine (the official journal of EFSUMB); and thirdly, to actively participate (with papers of excellent quality) to Euroson 2012 (Madrid, in April) and WFUMB Meeting 2013 (Sao Paolo, in May).

Before ending this newsletter, I would like to underline again the great job done by our colleague, Assoc. Prof. Dana Fodor, Chief Editor of Medical Ultrasound, who managed to include the journal of SRUMB among the PubMed publications. This journal, published in English, includes high level papers regarding clinical ultrasound and the newest developments in this field and has received favorable international reviews.

Prof. Ioan Sporea, MD, PhD
Past President of SRUMB
Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology,
University of Medicine and Pharmacy Timisoara,
Romania