

11th World Congress of the International Photodynamic Association (IPA)

Shanghai, China, 28-31 March 2007

Meeting Report

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Over 450 participants from more than 30 different countries travelled to Shanghai in March to attend the 11th IPA World Congress. This was organised locally by the Congress President, *Professor Jing Zhu (China)* and Secretary General, Professor Yuanlong Yang (China) in association with *Professor Qian Peng (Norway)* as the Scientific Committee Chair. This Congress followed in the great tradition of these biennial conferences which routinely attract leading clinical and scientific researchers in the fields of photodynamic therapy (PDT) and photodiagnosis (PD) alike.

Shanghai is a very modern Chinese city with a high-rise, neon-lit horizon to match. It is a major centre of commerce, finance, trade, manufacture, education and scientific research for China and is located in the Yangtze region of the central Eastern part of the country bordering the Yellow Sea. The conference hotel, the Sofitel Hyland Hotel, was very comfortable and centrally located on the Nanjing Road (one of the busiest streets in China) close to the Bund and other areas of local interest. The Bund or waterfront is dominated by colonial architecture – a legacy of concessions granted to foreigners (namely the British, French and Americans) in the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century. The opposite Pudong side of the Huangpu River is dominated by skyscrapers of which the Oriental Pearl TV Tower is a major landmark.

The IPA is an academic society whose membership consists of the most prominent international clinicians and scientists involved in performing and researching PDT and PD. It aims to promote the study of diagnosis and treatment using light and photosensitisers, to disseminate such information to the members of the IPA, the medical community and to the general public. The biennial World Congress therefore plays an important role in the activity of the society and attendance is an excellent way to keep abreast of new developments in this rapidly evolving field.

28th March 2007

Following the formal IPA Board meeting, the Congress opened in the evening with a Welcome Ceremony including two guest lectures delivered by *Johan Moan (Norway)* and *Jun-Heng Li (China)* respectively detailing the history of PDT in general and in China. The Welcome Reception was a traditional Chinese banquet accompanied by numerous forms of traditional Chinese entertainment – acrobats, puppeteers and musicians to name but a few and was a great opportunity for everyone to get acquainted/reacquainted.

29th March 2007

The first whole day of the scientific meeting was predominantly set aside for a series of highly informative plenary sessions delivered by some of the World's leading authorities. *Kevin Smith (USA)*, *David Kessel (USA)* and *Brian Wilson (Canada)* commenced proceedings by considering photosensitising agents, mechanisms of cellular death and light administration respectively. A series of application reviews then followed summarising the current state of the art in dermatology (*Lasse Braathen, Switzerland*), gastroenterology (*Stephen Bown, UK*), pneumology (*Harubumi Kato, Japan*), head & neck surgery (*Colin Hopper, UK*), neurosurgery (*Herwig Kostron, Austria*), urology (*Raphaella Waidelich, Germany*) and gynaecology (*Peter Hillemans, Germany*). A quick read of this list quickly demonstrates the wide range of clinical areas where PDT and PD are currently being applied.

Lunchtime symposiums considered photodynamic cell purging (*Chair: Qian Peng, Norway*) and the new directions of PDT (*Chair: Bjorn Klem, Norway*). The plenary sessions then concluded with interesting talks on photodetection (*Stephan Lam, Canada*), antimicrobial PDT (*Stanley Brown, UK*), photodynamic drug delivery (*Hubert van den Bergh, Switzerland*) and PDT technology transfer to developing countries (*Thierry Patrice, France*).

The parallel sessions commenced after tea and ran in triplicate, starting with sessions on photosensitisers (*Chairs: Ravindra Pandey (USA) & Johan van Lier (Canada)*), light sources & dosimetry (*Chairs: Timothy Zhu (USA) & Dominic Robinson (The Netherlands)*) and mechanisms of action (*Chairs: Johan Moan (Norway) & Heinrich Walt (Switzerland)*). A dinner cruise on the Huangpu River (sponsored by PhotoCure ASA) then followed. This was the highlight of the social programme and as dusk fell the lights of the city came alive.

30th March 2007

The parallel sessions continued on Friday morning with the first part of dermatology (*Chairs: Trond Warloe (Norway) & Georges Wagnieres (Switzerland)*), gastroenterology (concentrating on the use of porfimer sodium) (*Chairs: Herbert Wolfson (USA) & Drew Schembre (USA)*) and photodetection (*Chairs: Sune Svanberg (Sweden) & Brian Pogue (USA)*). Organisers received so many abstract

submissions in these areas it was necessary to split the topics over two separate sessions.

Subsequent parallel sessions considered otorhinolaryngology & pneumology (*Chairs: Merrill Biel (USA) & Eric Edell (USA)*), neurosurgery (*Chairs: Katherine Drummond (Australia) & Samuel Eljamel (UK)*) and molecular targets (*Tayyaba Hasan (USA) & Kristian Berg (Norway)*).

At lunchtime the General Assembly of the IPA Membership was chaired by the IPA Secretary General, *Professor Patrick Barron (Japan)*. It was announced that the IPA Board Directors had decided that the 2011 IPA World Congress would be hosted by *Professor Herwig Kostron* in Austria. It was already known that the next IPA World Congress will be held in Seattle, USA (11-15 June 2009) and is being organised by *Professor David Kessel*. Further details (as they become available) about the forthcoming IPA Congresses can be found on the IPA website (www.pms.ac.uk/ipa). Members were also requested to check and update their website entry as required. Researchers interested in joining the IPA can also find membership application details on this website.

Time was then allocated in the programme for viewing of the numerous scientific posters being presented by delegates and to visit the interesting collection of stands provided by exhibitors.

Parallel sessions continued with new techniques (*Chairs: Yoram Salomon (Israel) & Guo-Giang Yu (USA)*), PD & PDT with porphyrin precursors (*Chairs: Alcira Batlle (Argentina) & Zvi Malik (Israel)*) and urology & gynaecology (*Chairs: Patrice Jichlinski (Switzerland) & Tetsuya Muroya (Japan)*) and concluded for the day with vascular targets (*Chairs: Zheng Huang (USA) & Malini Olivo (Singapore)*) and the second parts of dermatology (*Chairs: Rolf-Markus Szeimies (Germany) & Xiuli Wang (China)*) and gastroenterology (*Chairs: Alex Hsi (USA) & Peter Mlkvy (Slovakia)*). In fact there were so many interesting sessions available it was sometimes difficult to decide which parallel session/presentations to attend and some proved so popular that only standing room remained.

In the evening, a Gala Banquet (sponsored by Biolitec AG) was held at the Yu-Yuan Garden with further traditional entertainment being provided by the organising committee.

31st March 2007

The final day of the Congress closed at lunchtime following the final parallel sessions; infectious diseases and immunology (*Chairs: Michael Hamblin (USA) & Mladen Korbelik (Canada)*), combined photodynamic therapy (*Chairs: Woong-Shick Ahn (Korea) & Kai Wang (China)*) and the second part of photodetection (*Chairs: Andrea Leunig (Germany) & Hidetoshi Honda (Japan)*). The closing plenary session considered the new horizons of PD & PDT, specifically diagnostics & treatment of tumours using laser techniques (*Katarina Svanberg (Sweden)*) and photochemical internalization: a technology for site-specific drug delivery (*Kristian Berg (Norway)*).

And so another international World Congress of the IPA concluded. It was both a scientifically rigorous and clinically relevant meeting. The programme was packed full of high quality content, delivered by both eminent and up-and-coming researchers. Discussions were interesting and thought provoking demonstrating that this is an area of medical research where there is still much to learn and to apply to further improve patient care. For many Western participants this was their very first trip to China and although Shanghai is only a small portion of this vast and diverse country, it was unforgettable.