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Preface

The 12th Congress of the International Diabetes Federation held in Madrid on 22–28 September 1985, was not only the one with the largest attendance ever (over 4500), but also, as the past IDF President, Dr Leo P. Krall, put it, the one that should henceforth be an obligatory reference for gauging the scientific success of the future congresses of the Federation. In an attempt to accommodate the varying demands of a highly qualified, diverse and large audience, the scientific programme was formulated, for the first time, in a nonconventional manner. All facets of modern diabetology, ranging from the latest research developments, through the most challenging problems in clinical diabetology to the most recent practical advances in the education of diabetic patients were carefully integrated, offering all with an interest in the field easy access to the most recent information irrespective of their background or specific interest – an equitable collection of work produced by research workers, clinicians and educators resulting in a well-balanced programme.

The relatively new 'Meet The Professors' sessions provided an exciting venue for informal, relaxed discussions, on controversial topics in clinical and basic diabetology, with recognized leaders in the field. The Poster Discussion sessions, one of the novelties at this congress, were also unanimously welcomed as a spontaneous forum for the exchange of new ideas and often proved to be an invaluable source of information for future work. The traditional Memorial Lectures were very well attended; some of them generated unprecedented enthusiasm arising from the extraordinary combination of science and performance.

Most of the fields of current interest in diabetes were covered and debated in a highly stimulating and friendly atmosphere. Much new data on several topical issues, including exciting new areas such as insulin gene expression or molecular mechanisms of insulin action and diabetes registries, was received in enthusiastic anticipation.

The impact of Diabetes Education sessions during this congress was more significant than ever before. These sessions were accompanied by an impressive series of poster presentations, related to patient education programmes, as prepared by Diabetes Centres from over 40 countries. This was indeed unique for an IDF congress and it helped raise the importance of diabetes education to the level of all other aspects of diabetology.

Another interesting section of the congress were the so-called 'Have lunch with ...' informal meetings which were aimed at encouraging young diabetologists from all fields to gain knowledge directly from senior scientists or clinicians with long established reputation.

This ambitious programme was made possible by the indefatigable and dedicated work of many colleagues in Spain and abroad. The high quality of the scientific work submitted at the congress, the exciting discussions generated by the abundance of new material presented in over 120 sessions (posters, oral communications), more than 30 symposia and workshops and the high and untiring interest shown by a very attentive audience resulted in one of the most creative meetings in the history of the IDF. It is hoped that this spirit will prevail in all future meetings of the Federation.

This volume comprises most of the original work presented at the congress and the contents will no doubt reflect the excellence of the meeting.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all those who helped in making this meeting a success.

MANUEL SERRANO-RIOS

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- 1961 Fourth Congress, Geneva, Switzerland
- 1964 Fifth Congress, Toronto, Canada
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- 1970 Seventh Congress, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1973 Eighth Congress, Brussels, Belgium
- 1976 Ninth Congress, New Delhi, India
- 1979 Tenth Congress, Vienna, Austria
- 1982 Eleventh Congress, Nairobi, Kenya

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