EANM 2010—Welcome to Vienna!

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On behalf of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine, I am very honoured and pleased to welcome you to Vienna for the 23rd Annual EANM Congress, 2010. Following the congresses in 1991 and 2002, this is the third time that Vienna has had the privilege of hosting the annual congress. Together with the Austrian Nuclear Medicine Society, we have organised an attractive programme for both physicians and scientists. Our congress location, the Austria Center Vienna, is located between the tower blocks of the Donau City district and the Vienna International Centre (UN), in the most modern part of Vienna. It is easily reached by almost all forms of transport.

Vienna is one of the oldest university cities in Europe and has always been a city of historical and scientific importance. It was the centre of the Habsburg hegemony, which began in 1282 and endured for more than 630 years, until the end of the First World War in 1918. During that time many different nationalities with a population numbering as many as 56 million lived under the one crown within a global empire that stretched from Central Europe to South America.

The Habsburgs had their final summer residence at the famous Schönbrunn Palace, the first recorded mention of which dates back to 1642. The whole ensemble, including the palace, the park with its numerous architectural features, fountains and statues, and the zoo—the oldest of its kind in the world—was placed on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List in December 1996.

The Medical University of Vienna has centuries of tradition and experience. Indeed, the medical faculty was already renowned as an authority in medicine during medieval times,

with records from as long ago as 1399. Viennese medicine first attained international significance during the reign of Maria Theresia. Famous physicians such as Gerard van Swieten, Leopold Auenbrugger and representatives of the “Second Viennese Medical School”, including Karl Rokitsky and Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis, paved the way for other leading figures. By the beginning of the 20th century, Viennese medicine was recognised as being of the highest class internationally, as reflected by the award of four Nobel Prizes (Bárány 1914, Wagner-Jauregg 1927, Landsteiner 1930, Loewi 1936) during the subsequent decades.

Vienna is one of the most important European capitals. Owing to its geographical location at the meeting point of three cultures, Vienna has been at the heart of the most significant developments in European history. As the third UN city after Geneva and New York, and as a centre of cultural interaction, Vienna has become a well-established link between the former Eastern and Western Europe. Moreover, it is playing an important role in a still expanding European Union.

For centuries the Habsburg dynasty attracted some of the world’s most prominent artists to its court in Vienna. Famous composers such as Strauss, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert have helped to make Vienna the musical capital of the world. Today, Vienna continues to have a multifaceted cultural life, offering a choice of 70 theatres, 4 opera houses, 2 stages for musicals and about 100 museums, ranging from the Egon Schiele collection in the Museumsquartier to Schönbrunn Palace.

In both 2009 and 2010, following improvements in Austria’s political and social environment, the well-known Mercer survey of 221 international cities from across the globe chose Austria’s capital as the safest city with the best quality of life. Likewise, The New York Times selected Vienna as one of the 44 Places to Go in 2009.

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In 2009 Vienna hosted no fewer than 160 international congresses and, together with Barcelona, was the most valued congress venue worldwide. In the 2009 International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA) rankings, Vienna emerged as the most popular city for such international meetings for the fifth time in a row, clearly ahead of Barcelona (135) and Paris (131).

Some statistics on the Vienna meeting

The present status and future prospects of nuclear medicine will be discussed in four plenaries (including the Marie Curie Lecture), nine symposia, four joint symposia with related societies and associations (ESTRO, ESR, SNM, ESMI), four interactive sessions and one highlights lecture. Moreover, 13 continuing medical education sessions have been organised,

and daily Young EANM meetings (starting at 11:30 a.m.) and morning breakfast sessions sponsored by the industry (starting at 07:00) are newly scheduled events.

Overall a total of 1552 abstracts were submitted, of which 1362 were finally accepted, representing a rejection rate of about 12%. In about 11 featured sessions and 55 parallel sessions, 524 oral presentations and 942 posters will be presented during the meeting. Moreover, a dedicated technologists' programme has already been drawn up.

Vienna is very proud to host the EANM Congress for the third time, and we are sure that we shall have an excellent congress in 2010. On behalf of the EANM Executive Committee, the Local Organising and Scientific Committee and the EANM "Headquarters" of Vienna, it is my pleasure to invite you to the Congress and to wish you all a pleasant stay in Vienna.