

WELCOME MESSAGE



**XXXVIII Annual ESAO Congress and
IV Biennial IFAO Congress**

9-12 October 2011, Porto - Portugal



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Porto for the 4th Joint ESAO-IFAO joint Congress (XXXVIII Congress of the European Society for Artificial Organs (ESAO 2011) and IV Biennial Congress of the International Federation for Artificial Organs (IFAO 2011)). I am quite sure you all are going to enjoy this conference held in the very hospitable and World Heritage city of Porto in Portugal.

The venue, the Alfândega (Old Customs House) Congress Centre is located in the very heart of the Porto historical centre on the north bank of the River Douro, overlooking the Port Wine cellars. Porto is a city of wonderful people, and a dream for food and wine lovers. So, make sure you enjoy it as much as possible with your friends and colleagues. I have been doing it there since I was born (not the wine in the first few years!) for 44 years, and I could never leave the city to live anywhere else!

We set ourselves the objective to make sure we would be able to organize a very international meeting, with participants coming, of course, mainly from the ESAO, but also from our sister societies: ASAIO and JSAO. This is clearly reflected on the program of the meeting. We have received abstracts from all over the world, which completely translates that it was feasible to reach our intention of having a multidisciplinary conference, enriched with participants from different cultures.

The meeting is organized as a combination of plenary talks, general oral and poster sessions and quite originally in these meetings symposia, proposed by specific organizers and approved by the program committee, that have their own keynote lectures.

The biennial congress of our International Federation with contributions of all continents and especially of European, North-American, and Japanese colleagues has become an interdisciplinary highlight in the field of development and application of artificial and bioartificial organs. Therefore, you can certainly enjoy a cutting edge scientific programme in the field of Artificial Organs Research and its Clinical Applications, allied to a wonderful social experience, and of course meeting with the key-players in the field. This is for sure the major and premier world event on artificial organs research and clinical applications.

The 4th joint IFAO/ESAO conference and its program, is mainly made by the conference delegates that will present their new results and scientific approaches to different problems. All the abstracts of these contributions are published in this issue of *the International Journal of Artificial Organs*.

A word of acknowledgement to ESAO, IFAO, and their boards, and especially to Profs. Heinrich Schima (ESAO-President) and Joerg Vienken (IFAO-President) for allowing us to organize the meeting and supporting us whenever necessary. A word of acknowledgment also to ASAIO and JSAO that have helped every time we needed. I would also like to thank all the Institutions, foundations and companies that have sponsored us and made the meeting possible.

Finally, I want to acknowledge also the contributions of several people in my research group (3B's Research Group of University of Minho) and especially of Ana Guerra, Patricia Malafaya and Filipe Ribeiro for being the support of all this organization effort.

From both a scientific and a social/cultural perspective, we really hope this will be a meeting to remember. Enjoy the conference, Porto and if possible Minho and other areas of Northern Portugal!

We are looking forward to welcoming and discussing with you in Porto,



Rui L. Reis

ESAO Congress President and the Organizing Team