

## Guest Editors Introductory Words

Dear readers,

It is expecting that a year 2020 remains in our minds as turning point in both, negative and positive sense. Due to a SARS-COV-2 virus pandemic, we have again recognized that a human being is only a part of nature, not a master of nature.

TOXCON, Interdisciplinary Toxicological Conference, was established 25 years ago to meet Czech and Slovak toxicologists together, and also their foreign collaborators. For organizers, the year 2020 was rather strange. To be or not to be held TOXCON? This was a question! Now, after several months, we can say that a risk was worthy of it. TOXCON 2020 was organized by the Czech Society for Experimental and Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology, Czech Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, the Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Science, Charles University and the Slovak Toxicology Society SETOX. The date of the 25<sup>th</sup> TOXCON was set up to September 3-5, 2020. It was after the first spring-summer experience with coronavirus, but at that time no one knew what the near future would bring – very hard to predict! Therefore, organizers had to prepare several scenarios of the conference; some of them were quite new, as on-line broadcasting. New technology and much more communication with IT professionals were needed to arrange “hybrid mode” of conference, i.e. a personal attending of lectures at the Faculty of Architecture, Czech Technical University in Prague (with strict hygiene rules) and a distance participation. The extraordinary efforts of the organizers were rewarded by an exceptional number of 163 participants namely from the Czech Republic. No wonder that Slovak colleagues preferred on-line participation. On site participants found a mask with a logo of TOXCON in their congress bags, we have probably set a new standard for the future.

The 25<sup>th</sup> TOXCON 2020 was dedicated to the memory of prof. Marie Stiborová, outstanding and world-recognized biochemist and toxicologist. Not only scientific

results, but her kind approach to colleagues and students, honesty and modesty, these qualities will remain in our hearts. During three days a record number of lectures was presented by speakers. Three keynote lectures (two of them on-line) given by prof. E.P. Guengerich, prof. K. Hemminki and prof. V.M. Arlt, covering fields of xenobiotics metabolism, molecular epidemiology and carcinogenesis of natural compounds, were followed by 36 lectures in standard “toxcon” sessions as Pharmacotoxicology and Occupational Toxicology, Military Toxicology, Ecotoxicology, Developmental Toxicology, Methods in Toxicology, Metabolism of Xenobiotics and actual sessions, as Cytotoxicity, Carcinogenicity and Genotoxicity or Toxicology of Natural Compounds. Last but not least, a number of posters were exhibited and deposited on website during the TOXCON 2020. *Ad hoc* evaluators were really busy by reading of 110 posters and discussing with presenters to award the best ones. The present Supplement contains 10 original papers and 2 reviews. Contributors covered a broad spectrum of toxicological discipline.

Social part of the conference was prepared in a dual mode to “spread” participants in appropriate distance and adhere to the rule of number of people gathered in a group. Gala-dinner, either on a boat Czechia on Vltava River or classic evening at Hotel Legie went in pleasant fall weather.

The 25<sup>th</sup> TOXCON 2020 was unforgettable event, which passed unexpectedly well in the difficult period of the COVID-19 stage. Many thanks to all organizers and many thanks to brave and discipline participants!

On behalf of the organizers of the 25<sup>th</sup> TOXCON 2020  
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