“The EADV has become a giant ship”

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Erwin Tschachler, M.D., Professor of Dermatology and Venereology in Vienna, will become the president of the EADV after the congress in Amsterdam. A short introduction to the person who will lead the EADV the forthcoming years, speaking about recent results, his goals for the future, the Amsterdam congress and his personal motto, derived from the classic Latin philosopher Seneca.

Could you please introduce yourself in a few lines?
“After I graduated from Medical School in Vienna in 1978, I worked for 4 years in different medical specialities to get my *jus practicandi* (i.e. the right to work independently as general practitioner). When during that time I rotated to the 1st Department of Dermatology at the University of Vienna and met the charismatic and inspiring department chairman Klaus Wolff, I decided that dermatology was the most interesting medical speciality and I joined his department in 1983 working with Georg Stingl on immunological aspects of skin diseases. Already during my residency, I was interested in the new, mysterious disease AIDS and went to the US to join the laboratory of Robert Gallo at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland to do basic research on human retroviruses. After my return to Vienna in 1989, I joined Georg Stingl’s department in Vienna as associate professor and became full professor of Dermatology and Venereology in 1996. Besides directing my research laboratory in Vienna, focusing on Kaposi sarcoma, I became scientific director of the CERIES, a basic research laboratory on skin physiology in Paris, funded by Chanel. Since 2004 I am head of the research division for skin biology and pathobiology at the department of dermatology of the medical university of Vienna.”

NEEDING BRIDGES

What do you think of the headline of the congress?
“the eadv has become a giant ship”

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How do you want to achieve these goals and how?
“The success and the progression of the EADV is owed in large parts to the work done by the members of the different committees and the excellent support from our staff both in Brussels and Lugano. Therefore I will aim at facilitating the work of the committees and fostering their co-operations.”

What were the highlights in most recent years?
“There have been many important achievements in recent years. For me three developments have put the academy in very stable conditions: The finance committee with its chair Martino Neumann together with the treasurer Jorgen Ronnevig has helped to give the academy a solid financial base, the scientific committee lead by Luca Borradori until 2013 and now by Martin Röcken, has done an excellent job in further improving the quality of our congresses, and the rules and regulations introduced during the presidency of Frank Powell have made the EADV a truly democratic and transparent organisation.”

FUTURE GOALS

When does your period as the president of the EADV start, and what are your most urgent goals?
“I will become president after the congress in Amsterdam. My main goal as president will be to help the academy to continue its growth to become THE reference for dermatovenereological education and training in Europe.”
Do you have a personal motto yourself?
“Non est ad astra mollis e terris via (Seneca) - there is no easy way from the earth to the stars!”

Is there one thing you are especially looking forward to in Amsterdam?
“As to the congress – it’s the excellent program of our congress – I will try to attend as many sessions as possible! As to the city – the Rijksmuseum – I have not visited it yet after its re-opening.”

Looking at the future, how will the EADV develop? What is the urgency for the organisation in the near future?
“The EADV has become a giant ship – it will steer its course as the biggest organisation of dermatovenerologists in Europe, assume its role as an integrating force for European dermatovenerology and continue to focus on the advancement of excellence in clinical care, research, education and training in dermatology and venereology.”

Do you have a special wish for the organizers and the attendants of the EADV Congress in Amsterdam?
“I would like to thank the organizers – I know how much work and headache it is to be involved in the organization of a congress of that size and complexity. For the attendants I wish that they enjoy both the scientific program of our congress and the opportunity to meet their colleagues in an enriching environment.”