



**53rd Congress of the European Societies of Toxicology Bratislava
Congress Opening Ceremony Speech held September 10, 2017 at
the Slovak National Theater in Bratislava**

**Prof. Mumtaz Iscan, PhD, ERT
EUROTOX President**

Dear distinguished Speakers, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of EUROTOX EC, I am honored to welcome our distinguished invited speakers, colleagues and all participants.

I would like to present my sincere thanks to all of you for joining us at this 53rd Congress of EUROTOX, organized by the Slovak Society of Toxicology, here in the lovely city, Bratislava.

We are very happy to have more than 1100 participants from 54 countries at this EUROTOX Congress.

The Slovak Society of Toxicology and the SCP have done an excellent job in making this event a truly scientifically and socially a remarkable one. I would like to thank them for their hard work, enthusiasm and professionalism. I particularly thank Helena and Mojmir for their energy and competence during the organisation of the Congress. My special thanks also go to the PCO (Guarant) especially Reneta Somolova for the organisation.

The 3.5 congress days provide a marvelous opportunity to engage with colleagues, forge and renew collaborations and friendships, and of course, learn. The program promises stimulating lectures and presentations on scientific breakthroughs, important professional training/education opportunities. The 2017 SOT/EUROTOX debate entitled “ Toxicology testing of drug combinations does not add significant value to human risk evaluation beyond what is known for the individual agents“ was a huge success at SOT Annual Meeting in Baltimore, USA, on 13th of March, 2017. The expectation will not be different here in Bratislava on Tuesday noon.

After the 52nd EUROTOX Congress in Sevilla, Spain, the EC has engaged in several key initiatives which were part of our Society's goals.

In line with one of the goals of EUROTOX which is to increase the collaboration and partnership with global scientific societies to strengthen the impact of toxicology and shape its future, the Executive Committee Core Members had a joint meeting with SOT Board members to discuss potential areas of mutual interest that go beyond the traditional debate in London in January, 2017. We continued these series of meetings at the SOT Annual meeting in Baltimore last March 2017. The initial issue agreed upon was the exchange of the SOT Merit Award Lecture and the EUROTOX Bo Holmstedt Memorial Lecture at SOT and EUROTOX Congresses. The first EUROTOX Bo Holmstedt Memorial Lecture will be on the 2018 SOT program while the first SOT Merit Award Lecture at EUROTOX will take place at EUROTOX 2018 Brussels Congress. Furthermore, we agreed to develop a joint statement considering the use of science in chemical regulation and decision-making. To this end, currently, we are working on a joint paper on "The Use of Science in Safety Evaluation" for publication.

We also initiated collaboration with SETAC. Recently EUROTOX was presented at the SETAC Global Horizon Scanning project meeting in May 2017 in Brussels which was well attended by representatives of regulatory bodies (such as EFSA and ECHA), WHO, UN, national authorities), academia (SETAC staff and members, several universities) and industry (agro-chemical, petroleum, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals). The outcome of this meeting is likely to open new avenues to increase our impact in bringing solutions to the stakeholder issues identified and support building regulatory frameworks based on solid science.

The SubCommittee members' great enthusiasm has continued in serving for the goals of the society. The Education and ERT SubCommittees together have continued their efforts particular in the harmonisation and training standards for ERT across Europe and the official recognition of ERTs in Europe. The Communication SubCommittee has updated all members with recent news regarding the activities of EUROTOX and toxicological events on going in EUROPE and elsewhere through our web page, e-newsletters and facebook.

Currently, we are also working on a strategic action plan to address key issues. We will keep you posted on this.

As we look further ahead, the 54th annual Congress of EUROTOX is going to be held in Brussels, Belgium, September 2-5, 2018. On February of 2017, the 2018 Scientific Programme Committee had a meeting in Brussels and reviewed the 86 submitted scientific proposals and has already prepared an exciting scientific programme, highlighting the latest research results and trends in the field of toxicology. You will hear the updates regarding the organization preparations and more at the congress closing ceremony from the President of the next congress.

As you can see lots of activities of EUROTOX took place during the last one year to advance the goals of our society; EUROTOX. The energy and creativity our members bring to these committees propel our society forward. I am thankful for these efforts.

Finally, on behalf of the Executive Committee of EUROTOX, once again I thank you for participating in this congress and I am very proud to declare officially open the 2017 53rd European Congress of Toxicology here in Bratislava.

Thank you.

Mumtaz Iscan

10 September 2017