20 YEARS SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BANTAO ASSOCIATION
(BALKAN CITIES ASSOCIATION OF NEPHROLOGY, DIALYSIS,
TRANSPLANTATION AND ARTIFICIAL ORGANS)

ELEVEN CONGRESSES OF BANTAO

Momir Polenakovic* (Skopje), Dimitar Nenov (Varna), Ali Basci (Izmir), Ljubica Djukanovic (Belgrade), Dimitris Tsakiris (Thessaloniki), Vida Nesic (Belgrade), Adalbert Schiller (Timisoara), Goce Spasovski (Skopje), Horst Klinkmann (Rostock), Joerg Vienken (Bad Homburg), Dieter Falkenhagen (Krems), Peter Ivanovich (Chicago)

*Corresponding Author: Momir Polenakovic, Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Bul. Krste Misirkov, No. 2, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, E-mail: maknefpo@t-home.mk, Tel. +389 (0)2 3 23 54 00

Abstract

The Balkan Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs (BANTAO) was born in Ohrid on October 9, 1993. The war in former Yugoslavia negatively affected the development of nephrology and also the connections among the nephrologists from the Balkans. However, there was willingness for further mutual collaboration between the nephrologists from the Balkans. The war in Yugoslavia created hate among people, between the newly established countries, and there were problems with the recognition of the names of the new countries, and so, the nephrologists decided to apply the ancient principle of using the names of the cities, instead of the countries, as the founders of the Association. The main goal of BANTAO is to promote scientific and technical cooperation in the fields of renal disease and artificial organs between the regions on the Balkan Peninsula and the world, to give an opportunity for exchange of experience and knowledge among the experts in the area and to engage in collaborative projects in order to demonstrate that cooperation is possible even on the turbulent Balkan Peninsula. The I BANTAO congress was held in Varna from September 22 to 24th, 1995 (President – D. Nenov, Varna). The II congress of BANTAO was held from September 6th to 10th, 1997 in Struga, (President – M. Polenakovic, Skopje). The III BANTAO congress was held in Belgrade from September 18th to 20th, 1998 (President – Lj. Djukanovic, Belgrade). The IV congress of BANTAO was held in Izmir from 14th to 16th November 1999 (President – A. Akcicek, Izmir). The V Congress of BANTAO was held in Thessaloniki from September 30th to October 3rd, 2001 (President – P. Stathakis, Athens). The VI Congress of BANTAO was held for the second time in Varna from 6th to 9th October 2003 (President – D. Nenov, Varna). The VII congress of BANTAO was held from September 8th to 11th, 2005 in Ohrid, (President - M. Polenakovic, Skopje). The VIII BANTAO congress was held in Belgrade, 16–19 September 2007 (President – V. Nesic, Belgrade). The IX BANTAO congress was held from 13 to 15 October 2011 in Chalkidiki (President – D. Tsakiris, Thessaloniki). The XI BANTAO congress is being held on 26–29 September 2013 in Timisoara (President – A. Schiller, Timisoara). At the VII BANTAO Congress for the first time a CME Course was organized by ERA/EDTA and ISN/COMGAN entitled "Frontiers in Nephrology" with seven distinguished speakers. Very important event in the existence of BANTAO is the appearance of the BANTAO journal in 2003. The BANTAO journal has been published biannually since 2003. In the past 10 years, 20 regular issues; 2 supplements (Antalya and Chalkidiki congresses) have been published. Editors of the journal were as follows: 2003–2005 – D. Nenov, Editor; 2005–2009 – A. Basci, Editor; 2009 – Goce Spasovski, Editor. Until now 332 papers have been published. The BANTAO journal is on EBSCO, DOAJ, SCOPUS. After the First Congress of BANTAO, F. Valderrábano,
chairman of the EDTA – ERA Registry, at that time, wrote in Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation (1996) 11:740: "Nephrologists of the Balkan countries meet across political frontiers and war fronts – an example to politicians! BANTAO: a new European Medical Association overcomes Political obstacles." Despite the difficulties imposed by major events, such as devastating wars and catastrophic earthquakes in many countries of the Balkan Peninsula BANTAO has made considerable progress. The BANTAO Congress was established as the major scientific and institutional forum for Balkan nephrologists, with its own journal, indicating our will to communicate, to collaborate, to get to know each other and to share our difficulties. Now, we expect further successful work of BANTAO.

Key words: Balkan Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs, anniversary.

Introduction
After the successful IV Congress of the Yugoslav Society of Nephrology held in Skopje in 1989 under the Presidency of sMomir Polenakovic, the Board of the Yugoslav Society of Nephrology decided to submit to the Council of ERA-EDTA an application for organizing the XXVIII ERA-EDTA Congress in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The Council of ERA-EDTA under the Presidency of Horst Klinkmann, having in mind the development of nephrology in Yugoslavia accepted the application and decided the XXVIII ERA-EDTA Congress to be held on 1–4 September 1990 in Belgrade. President of the Congress was nominated V. Petronjic (Belgrade) and M. Polenakovic (Skopje) was nominated for Secretary General. In meantime, between the application and the Congress, a lot of preparation has been done for the Congress. M. Polenakovic has been invited with other distinguished nephrologists from the world to visit the Pope in 1990 in Vatican. During the visit the Pope has been asked to give a blessing to the transplantation in the world.

Unfortunately, due to the bloody war, Yugoslavia was split and the Congress was moved to Rimini in Italy, 6–9 November 1991.
20 years since the establishment of the BANTAO association...

V. Cambi as President and V. Petronjic as honorary President and M. Polenakovic as honorary Secretary General successfully organized the ERA-EDTA Congress in Rimini.

The war in former Yugoslavia negatively affected the development of nephrology and also the connections among the nephrologists from the Balkans. However, there was a willingness for further mutual collaboration between the nephrologists from the Balkans.

So, in Skopje, in 1991, the nephrologists from Macedonia (M. Polenakovic), Bulgaria (D. Nenov), Serbia (A. Radmilovic) and Turkey (K. Onen) launched an idea to establish a new association between the Balkan countries – Balkan Society of Nephrology [1].
The war in Yugoslavia created hate among people, between the newly established countries, and there were problems with the recognition of the names of the new countries, and so, the nephrologists decided to apply the ancient principle of using the names of the cities, instead of the countries, as the founders of the Association.

So, after the discussion this initiative has grown with time, and during the First Congress of the Macedonian Society of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs (MSNDTAO), on October 9, 1993 this idea was reconfirmed and transformed into the idea of establishing a Balkan Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs (BANTAO).

**BANTAO WAS BORN IN OHRID ON OCTOBER 9, 1993.**

So, BANTAO was born in Ohrid, R. Macedonia on October 9, 1993. Beside nephrologists from Balkan cities, our international well recognized colleagues H. Klinkman, J. Vienken, E. J. Dorhout Mees, D. Falkenhagen and P. Ivanovich helped us in the creation of platform for the Association [2].

A task force was formed from representatives of different societies from the Balkan Peninsula to make this project a reality. The task force included the following members: S. Kodra (Tirana), D. Nenov (Varna), Z. Kirjakov (Sofia), Gj. Masin (Skopje), M. Polenaković (Skopje), F. Akcicek (Izmir), E. J. Dorhout Mess (Izmir), Lj. Djukanović (Belgrade), A. Radmilović (Belgrade) and S. Strahinjić (Nis). Momir H. Polenaković, President of the Macedonian Society of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs, was elected as chairman of the task force.
20 years since the establishment of the BANTAO association...

Macedonian Society of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs

Dear Colleague:

In 1991 during a special meeting in Skopje, Macedonia, several representatives of the various societies of Nephrology and Artificial Organs started an initiative to found a Balkan Society of Nephrology and Artificial Organs. This initiative was expressed in a letter to your society dated May 17, 1991. This initiative has grown with time and at the recent First Congress of the Macedonian Society of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs, a task force was formed by representatives of different societies from the Balkan area to make this project a reality. It was clear for the participants that the founding of such a society would have clear impact on several aspects of the practice and research in Nephrology and artificial organs in the Balkan by first increasing the international visibility and potential collaborative work as well as recognition by international organizations. Secondly, such a society would facilitate exchange of experience and knowledge between the experts in our area. In addition it would be a very positive symbolic act showing that collaborative work for the betterment of life is possible and desirable in our area and that coming together will have better fruits on the human and cultural levels. It will also send a very clear signal to the outside world that the Balkans can be a place of collaboration and mutual understanding. Several international bodies such as the International Society of Artificial Organs and the International Faculty of Artificial Organs have signalled their interest and support in the formation of such a society.

The task force would like to invite your society and you personally to participate in the planning meeting and possibly the founding meeting to be held in Sofia, Bulgaria on the 15th of January 1994. For further information please contact the chairman of the Task force Prof Dr Momir Polenakovic, President of the Macedonian Society of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation, and Artificial Organs.

We look forward to your active participation in this important task.

Sincerely,

S. Kodra (Albania)
D. Nenov (Bulgaria)
Z. Kirilov (Bulgaria)
Gj. Mabre (Macedonia)
M. Polenakovic (Macedonia)
F. Acicie (Turkey)
E. Atabul Mersi (Turkey)
Lj. Djukanovic (Yugoslavia)
A. Radulovic (Yugoslavia)
S. Strahinjac (Yugoslavia)

Some of the Participants of the I Congress of the MSDNTAO and Founders of BANTAO
In the letter addressed to the Presidents of the Balkan Societies of Nephrology, the task force members wrote: "It was clear to the participants that the founding of such a Society would have a clear impact on several aspects of the practice and research in nephrology and artificial organs in the Balkans firstly, by increasing its international visibility and potential collaborative work, and recognition by international organizations. Secondly, such a society would facilitate the exchange of experience and knowledge between the experts in our area. In addition, it would be a very positive symbolic act showing that collaborative work for the betterment of life is possible and desirable in our area and that coming together will bear better fruits on the human and cultural levels. It will also send a very clear signal to the outside world that the Balkans can be a place of collaboration and mutual understanding. Several international bodies such as the International Society of Artificial Organs and the International Faculty of Artificial Organs have signaled their interest in and support for the formation of such a society".

**BANTAO CONGRESSES**

**THE I BANTAO CONGRESS WAS HELD IN VARNA FROM SEPTEMBER 22 TO 24TH, 1995**

The President of the congress was Prof. D. Nenov (Varna). The congress in Varna was very successful, with more than 80 papers presented by nephrologists from the Balkans as well as from other European cities.
Some of the Participants of the I Congress of BANTAO in Varna, 1995

The first congress of BANTAO has been accepted very positively among the nephrology community in Europe. Our well known colleague from Spain, Fernando Valderrabano has published a congress report [3]:

---

The first congress of BANTAO took place in Varna, Bulgaria. BANTAO stands for Balkan Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs.

This is an extraordinary initiative of nephrologists working in cities throughout the Balkan countries who have been able to create a scientific association and to organize its first congress, despite the boundaries of war, the rupture of international relations and other serious political problems which emerged in the Balkan countries after the disappearance of the former Republic of Yugoslavia.

Nephrologists from Varna, Sofia, Belgrade, Skopje, Niš, Timisoara, Ljubljana, Skopje, İzmir, Sisak, Cluj, Npoua, Thessaloniki, Tirana, Plzen, Istanbul, Kashag, Skopje, Bucharest, and other cities of the Balkan peninsula and surrounding countries met at this first congress and signed the constitution of the new association.

The main goal of BANTAO is to promote scientific and technical cooperation in the field of renal diseases and artificial organs between the Balkan cities. This goal will be achieved not only through a periodical congress, but also through lectures exchange, fellowship exchange, scientific research methods exchange, joint meetings and courses, publications and cooperation in the field of renal transplant. The association office is located in Varna and will collaborate closely with the Varna Kidney Foundation. BANTAO wants to work closely with other international societies, and especially with the EDTA ERA.

This first congress was organized under the coordination of Prof. D. Nenov and with the collaboration of Prof. Z. Kirikov, President of the Bulgarian Society of Nephrology. Various European nephrologists had the opportunity to participate in the congress and first congress of BANTAO in Varna. The scientific programme consisted of guest lectures and oral communications related to a wide variety of topics. In clinical nephrology, the most notable were studies in protection of kidney function by colchicine in familial Mediterranean fever, a clinicopathological study of kidney in pregnancy and the use of intravenous immunoglobulin G in patients with chronic glomerulonephritis. Diagnosis of interstitial nephritis, hypertension in chronic glomerulonephritis, as well as the pathological patterns of acute glomerulonephritis were other topics discussed.

Problems related to dialysis took up a large part of the programme. Optimization of haemodialysis, cardiovascular problems in dialysis patients, the markers of inflammation, the hepatitis C virus infection, the treatment of renal bone disease, problems related to paediatric dialysis, biocompatibility of haemodialysis, the use of drugs in dialysis patients and Beta-2 microglobulin were all discussed during the congress.

Renal transplantation, EPO and Balkan endemic nephropathy were topics included in the Congress sessions. Regarding renal transplantation, the experience in Turkey was presented as well as the morphological aspect of transplant dysfunction and the impact of switching to a new form of cyclosporin A. The frequency of vascular access thrombosis in EPO-treated patients was discussed as well as the use of this drug in pre-dialysis patients and end-stage renal disease patients. Presentations were given on the influence of EPO treatment on metabolism, survival, and lipid peroxidation of erythrocytes. Lastly, various studies about the etiology, epidemiology and prevention of Balkan endemic nephropathy were discussed.

More than 80 posters were simultaneously presented during the meeting.

BANTAO represents an extraordinary initiative and should receive both scientific and economic support from the EDTA ERA. The exceptional effort of collaboration shown by our Balkan colleagues, who have been able to carry out scientific activities in extremely adverse human conditions, is an example to the European nephrological community, which should not hesitate to offer all possible help to this new association.

Fernando Valderrabano
Chairman of the EDTA ERA Registry

Editors note
See also the abstracts presented on pp. 741–747 in this issue.
F. Valderrábano, chairman of the EDTA-ERA Registry, at that time, wrote in Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation (1996) 11:740:
"Nephrologists of the Balkan countries meet across political frontiers and war fronts – an example to politicians! BANTAO: a new European medical association overcomes political obstacles. This is an extraordinary initiative of nephrologists working in cities throughout the Balkan countries who have been able to create a scientific association and to organize its first congress, despite the boundaries of war, the rupture of international relations and other serious political problems which emerged in the Balkan countries after the disappearance of the former Republic of Yugoslavia. The main goal of BANTAO is to promote scientific and technical cooperation in the field of renal diseases and artificial organs between the Balkan cities. This goal will be achieved not only through a periodical congress, but also through lecturers exchange, fellowship exchange, scientific research methods exchange, joint meetings and courses, publications and cooperation in the field of renal transplant. BANTAO wants to work closely with other international societies, especially with EDTA-ERA. BANTAO represents an extraordinary initiative and should receive both scientific and economic support from the EDTA-ERA. The exceptional effort of collaboration shown by our Balkan colleagues, who have been able to carry out scientific activities in extremely adverse human conditions, is an example to the European nephrological community, which should not hesitate to offer all possible help to this new association"

THE II CONGRESS OF BANTAO WAS HELD FROM SEPTEMBER 6TH TO 10TH, 1997 IN STRUGA, REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The Second Congress of BANTAO was sponsored by the European Society for Artificial Organs (ESAO), the International Society for Artificial Organs (ISAO), the International Faculty for Artificial Organs (INFA) and the European Renal Association, European Dialysis and Transplant Association (ERA/EDTA). It was held in conjunction with the Second Congress of the Macedonian Society of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs. President of the Congress was M. Polenakovic, Secretary was A. Sikole.
M. Polenakovic and F. Berthou, President of the ERA EDTA said in the report on the II Second Congress of BANTAO that "The main goal of BANTAO is to promote scientific and technical cooperation in the fields of renal disease and artificial organs between the regions on the Balkan Peninsula, to give an opportunity for exchange of experience and knowledge among the experts in the area and to engage in collaborative projects in order to demonstrate that cooperation is possible even on the turbulent Balkan Peninsula". [5]

The scientific programme consisted of 23 guest lectures and 54 oral and 80 poster presentations covering six topics, i.e. epidemiology of renal diseases, acute renal failure, renal replacement therapy, systemic disease, progress in nephrology and drugs and the kidney. [4]
II Congress of BANTAO

Proceedings of the II Congress of BANTAO

E. J. Dorhout Mess (Izmir)

J. S. Cameron (London)

P. Ivanovich (Chicago)

A. Mandal (Dayton)

Participants of the II Congress of BANTAO in Struga 1997
20 years since the establishment of the BANTAO association...

H. Klinkmann (Rostock)

P. Schena (Bari)

S. Strahinjic (Nis)

S. Kovaceski (Struga)

Lj. Djukanovic (Belgrade)

D. Falkenhagen (Krems)

H. Maan (Aachen)

G. Masin (Skopje)

Participants of the II Congress of BANTAO in Struga 1997
THE III BANTAO CONGRESS WAS HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SIXTH YUGOSLAV CONGRESS OF NEPHROLOGY IN BELGRADE FROM SEPTEMBER 18TH TO 20TH, 1998

The President of the Congress was Lj. Djukanović (Belgrade) and the Secretaries were V. Lezaić and B. Stojmirović (Belgrade). The main topics were: renal replacement therapy in the BANTAO region, the role of auxiliary therapy in chronic renal failure and tubulointerstitial disorders and diseases. A Post-Congress symposium was devoted to Balkan endemic nephrology.

Opening ceremony of the III BANTAO Congress and the VI Yugoslav Congress of Nephrology, Belgrade, September 18–20, 1998
20 years since the establishment of the BANTAO association

From left to right: V. Djordjevic, P. Ivanovic, Lj. Djukanovic, H. Klinkmann, F. Berthoux

Participants of the III Congress of BANTAO in Belgrade 1999
From left to right: A. Buscaroli, P. Ivanovich, F. Berthoux, H. Klinkmann
Participants of the III Congress of BANTAO in Belgrade 1999
THE IV CONGRESS OF BANTAO
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
16TH CONGRESS OF THE TURKISH
NATIONAL NEPHROLOGY,
DIALYSIS, TRANSPLANTATION
AND HYPERTENSION SOCIETY
WAS HELD INIZMIR, TURKEY
FROM 14TH TO 16TH NOVEMBER
1999

Ali Basci (Izmir) was Secretary and F.
Akcicek (Izmir) was the President of the Con-
gress. Symposia about the Marmara (north-
western Turkey) earthquake attracted great atten-
tion. The issues of collaboration in the disaster;
to be a nephrologist in the disaster field; acute
renal failure in the crush syndrome and nephro-
logy in the intensive care unit were well accep-
ted by the participants in the Congress. The
Congress was a further success of the Associa-
tion. Sharing of personal experiences and prob-
lems, mutual contacts improved friendship bet-
ween nephrologists from the Balkan countries.

Participants of the IV Congress of BANTAO in Izmir

Ch. P. Stathakis (Athens) was the President of the Congress, and J. N. Boletis (Athens) and N. Dombros (Thessaloniki) were the secretaries. The Congress was a great success. Seventy-two lectures were presented, 59 of which were published in a special supplement to Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation: Official Publication of ERA/EDTA [6]. In total 250 abstracts were submitted and approximately 600 participants attended the Congress. The aim of the scientific programme of the congress was two-fold. Firstly, to meet the needs for continuing education, and secondly, to up-date the participants on current trends and future progress in the fields of adult and pediatric clinical nephrology, dialysis, transplantation, hypertension, therapeutic apheresis and urinary tract infections.
Ch. Stathkis (Athens) and M. Mydlik (Kosice)
THE VI CONGRESS OF BANTAO WAS HELD FOR THE SECOND TIME IN VARNA FROM 6TH TO 9TH OCTOBER 2003 UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF PROF. DR. D. NENOVA (VARNA).

More than 400 medical doctors from 72 Balkan cities participated in the work of the congress presenting 343 abstracts. For the first time there were published two issues of the BANTAO Journal with the abstracts, extended abstracts and invited lectures (Proceedings) of the Congress (7, 8). The publication BANTAO Journal is very important for the growth of the Association. This Congress was also very successful.
Appearance of the BANTAO journal

September 2003

BANTAO Journal

Journal of the Italian Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs

Volume 1
Issue 1
September 2003

Published for the Association by the Kidney Foundation, Bulgaria

6th Congress BANTAO 6–9 October, 2003 VARNA, Bulgaria

6th Congress BANTAO 6–9 October, 2003 VARNA, Bulgaria
Participants of the VI Congress of BANTAO in Varna, 2003
VI Congress of BANTAO in Varna, 2003
20 years since the establishment of the BANTAO association...

S. Bogdanovka, (Skopje) B. Kiperova, (Sofia) M. Polenakovic, (Skopje)
M. Milovancheva, (Skopje) D. Monova, (Sofia)

V. Lezaic, (Belgrade) M. Polenakovic, (Skopje) Lj. Djukanovic, (Belgrade) V. Djordjevic (Nis)
Despite the difficulties imposed by major events, such as devastating wars and catastrophic earthquakes in many countries of the Balkan Peninsula BANTAO has made considerable progress. Following the first six successful congresses: Varna (1995), Struga (1997), Belgrade (1998), Izmir (1996), Thessaloniki (2001), and Varna (2003), the BANTAO Congress was established as the major scientific and institutional forum for Balkan nephrologists, with its own journal, indicating our will to communicate, to collaborate, to get to know each other and to share our difficulties.

VII CONGRESS OF BANTAO, 8–11 SEPTEMBER, 2005, OHRID

270 abstracts have been accepted, 43 for oral presentation (free communications) and the remaining 227 for poster presentations. President of the congress was M. Polenakovic and Secretary General was G. Spasovski. At this 7th BANTAO Congress there will be for the first time a CME Course organized by ERA/EDTA and ISN/COMGAN entitled Frontiers in Nephrology with seven distinguished speakers. Goce Spasovski contributed very much in the organization of CME courses with colleagues from ERA EDTA. The uremic toxicity group EUTox, under the umbrella of ESAO, will contribute to the congress with a round table entitled: An update on uremic toxicity. [9]
The congress is focused on several topics, as for example: How to improve the Balkan renal registry? Prevention in nephrology; Prevention of progression of renal disease; Understanding renal fibrosis; and Kidney transplantation on the Balkan Peninsula.
Official Publication of the Balkan Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs

ABSTRACT BOOK

Volume 3
Issue 1
July 2005

7-th BANTAO Congress of the Balkan Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs, September 8-11, 2005, Ohrid

Published by Macedonian Society of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs
From left: Ch. P. Stathakis, (Thessaloniki), Lj. Djukanovic (Belgrade), M. Polenakovic (Skopje), D. Nenov (Varna), A. Basci (Izmir)

From left to right – sitting: J. Floege (Achen), A. Wiecek (Katowice), J. Mann (Munich)
Standing: O. Malenko (Ohrid), G. Spasovski (Skopje), E. Masin Spasovska (Skopje), M. Polenakovic (Skopje)
VIII BANTAO CONGRESS WAS HELD IN BELGRADE, 16–19 SEPTEMBER 2007
The President of the Congress was Vida Nesic (Belgrade). At the Congress were submit-
ted 184 abstracts and were presented 47 Oral presentations and 137 posters, as well as 60 guest lecturers.

IX BANTAO CONGRESS WAS HELD IN ANTALYA, 18–22 NOVEMBER 2009
President of the Congress was A. Basci (Izmir) and Secretary General was Cengiz Utas (Kayseri).

The Congress was held together with the 26 National Congress of Nephrology, hypertension, dialysis and transplantation – Turkey and the 19 national congress of renal diseases, dialysis and transplantation nursing – Turkey. 220 abstracts were submitted, 50 guest lecturers were presented, 52 for Oral and 168 posters.
X BANTAO CONGRESS WAS HELD FROM 13 TO 15 OCTOBER 2011 IN CHALKIDIKI

It was jointly organized with the 82 Scientific meeting of the Hellenic Society of Nephrology. Also, an ERA-EDTA CME Course "Vasculitides" was held. President of the Congress was D. Tsakiris and Secretary General was I. Boletis. 245 abstracts were submitted, 56 guest lecturers were held and 41 oral presentations and 204 posters.
President of ISN, J. Feehally (Leicester)

President of ERA-EDTA, R. Vanolder (Ghent)

Participants of the X BANTAO Congress 2011 In Chalkidiki
BANTAO journal

Very important event in the existence of BANTAO is the appearance of BANTAO journal in 2003.

BANTAO journal has been published biannually since 2003. In the past 10 years, 20 regular issues; 2 supplements (Antalia and Chalkidiki congresses) have been published. Editors of the journal were as follows: 2003–2005 – Dimitar Nenov Editor – Veselin Nenov Deputy; 2005–2009 – Ali Basci Editor – Goce Spasovski Deputy; 2009 – Goce Spasovski Editor – Veselin Nenov Deputy. Until now 332 papers have been published. BANTAO journal is on EBSCO, DOAJ, SCOPUS.

BANTAO journal as a biannual publication it conveys the gathered messages from and between our congresses and helps sharing our experience in prevention and treatment of kidney diseases. The journal is a "glue" between the nephrologists from Balkan cities. Finally, in the light of the European tradition, the mission of BANTAO and of BANTAO journal is to contribute to the future of Europe and its unity by promoting knowledge, cooperation and tolerance.
XI BANTAO CONGRESS IS BEING HELD ON 26–29 SEPTEMBER 2013 IN TIMISOARA

President of the Congress is A. Schiller, and Secretary General is O. Schiller. The Congress is a further success of the BANTAO association. ERA-EDTA CME course is devoted to the "Improving the patient and graft survival in kidney transplantation – an update".
What should be our aims for the future?
To improve further cooperation between the nephrologists and doctors from other related medical specialties from the Balkan cities as well as with colleagues from Europe and the world.
To improve basic and clinical education and research in nephrology, as well as research equipment and facilities.
To discover, treat and register patients with CKD, as well as accomplish registers for renal biopsy, rare renal diseases, etc.
To perform an early diagnosis of diabetes mellitus and hypertension, to stop or postpone renal tissue damage and/or progression and prevent the end stage renal disease development.
To improve renal transplantation, establish Balkan transplant network and to join the other renal transplant networks in Europe.
To improve fight against infections (especially against hepatitis C).
To organize mutual clinical trial.
To improve the psycho- and psychical rehabilitation of patients with kidney disease especially those treated with maintenance dialysis and renal transplantation.

Finally, we need further improvement of our BANTAO journal, as most important glue between the nephrologists of the Balkan cities and get the journal available on the Medline and to obtain an impact factor as a respected journal in the field of nephrology.

REFERENCES
5. Polenakovic M, Berthoux F. BANTAO – Second Congress of the Balkan Association of Nephrology,
Резиме

20 ГОДИНИ ОД ОСНОВАЊЕТО НА АСОЦИЈАЦИЈАТА БАНТАО (АСОЦИЈАЦИЈА НА ГРАДОВИТЕ ОД БАЛКАНОТ ОД ОБЛАСТА НА НЕФРОЛОГИЈАТА, ДИЈАЛИЗА, ТРАНСПЛАНТАЦИЈА И ВЕШТАЧКИТЕ ОРГАНИ) ЕДИНАЕСЕТ КОНГРЕСИ НА БАНТАО

Момир Поленаковиќ (Скопје), Димитар Ненов (Варна), Али Вацичи (Измир), Љубица Гукаловиќ (Белград), Димитриј Цакирис (Солун), Вида Нешиќ (Белград), Адалберт Шилер (Темишвар), Гоце Спасовски (Скопје), Хорст Клиникман (Росток), Јорг Финек (Бал Хомбург), Дилер Фалекенхаген (Кремс), Петар Ивановиќ (Чикаго)

Асоцијацијата на градовите од Балканот од областа на нефрологијата, трансплантацијата и вештачките органи (БАНТАО) е формирана на 9 октомври 1993 година во Охрид. Војната во поранешна Југославија негативно влијаеше на развојот на нефрологијата а, исто така, и на врските меѓу нефрологите од Балканот. Сепак, постоела подготовеност за натамошна мегусебна соработка на нефрологите од Балканот. Војната во Југославија создаде омраза меѓу луѓето, меѓу новоформирани земји, и имаше проблеми со изразување на имињата на новите земји, затоа нефрологите одлучија да се примени античкиот принцип на користење на имиња на градовите, наместо на земјите, како основачи на Асоцијацијата. Главната цел на БАНТАО е да се промовира научната и техничката соработка во областа на бубресните заболевања и вештачките органи помеѓу регионите на Балканското Полуостров и на светот, да се даде можност за размена на искуства и знаења меѓу експерти во областа и да се ангажираат во заеднички проекти со цео дека се покаже дека соработката е можно дури и на турурдентинот Балкански Полуостров.


Европска медицинска асоцијација ги надминува политичките пречки". И покрај тешкотните на- метнати од страна на големите настани, како што се разорните војни и катастрофалните зем- јотреси во многу земји на Балканскиот Полу- остров, БАНТАО има направено значителен напредок. Конгресот на БАНТАО е основан како голем научен и институционален форум за балканските нефролози, со своје списание, пока- жувајќи ја нашата волја да комуницираат, да соработуваат, да се запознаат един со други и да ги споделуваат нашите тешкотии. Сега, ние очекуваме натамошна успешна работа на БАНТАО.

Ключни зборови: Асоцијација на градовите од Балканот од областа на нефрологијата, трансплантаци- јата и вештачките органи, годишнина.