Dear Members and Friends,
Cher Membres et Amis,
Liebe Mitglieder und Freunde,

The principal objective of the Collegium ORLAS is to create a forum for the discussion of scientific problems related to the whole field of otorhinolaryngology-head and neck surgery, in the spirit of friendship among members. This purpose will be attained mainly by means of our annual scientific meetings. This year it was held in Seoul, Korea, on 26-29 August, Professor Chong Sun Kim as President and Professor Keehuyn Park as Vice-president. During our 81 years of existence, this was our first meeting in Korea, now becoming the 30th country where this Society has held its meetings. Members’ great interest in our meetings and in its present host country reflected in the number of participants: regardless of relatively long travellings altogether 199 registered attendants, accompanying persons included, from 35 countries, gathered to the impressive Seoul Lotte Hotel, the venue of the meeting, in the heart of this great metropol, the capital of Korea for more than 600 years.

The Opening Ceremony on Monday morning in the Crystal Ballroom of the Lotte hotel began with a traditional Buddhist monk’s dance performance “Flight of White Crane”, given by Buddhist Nun Donghee, “legendary maestro in Buddhist art”, and her pupil Monk Duckrim. The Society and the attendants were welcomed by our President Chong Sun Kim and your General Secretary. The Mayor of the City of Seoul, Mr Se-hoon, honoured the occasion with his presence, and also welcomed our Society to his magnificent city. Thereafter, Matti Anniko, our Editorial Secretary and Editor-in-Chief of Acta Oto-Laryngologica forwarded the Acta Prize 2007 to Dr James F Battey Jr, Director of NIDCD, for his outstanding scientific contributions to the advancement of ENT-related research. Dr Battey thanked for the Prize by giving, after the Opening Ceremony, a lecture on “Stem cells: Current challenges and future promise”. We all thought that this all had been a fine beginning for the coming days together.
We had revised the scientific program of the meeting a bit by including a keynote lecture (Jim Battey) and by adding the number of minisymposia to four, on “The Aging Ear” (moderated by David Lim), “The Pathogenesis of Chronic Rhinosinusitis” (by Valerie J Lund), “Neck Dissection in the New Era” (by Alfio Ferlito), and “Otoprotection and Restorative Therapies” (by Thomas R Van De Water). They brought us to the edge of knowledge in these important fields of the present-day ENT-related research. In addition to these we had 6 free paper sessions. A guided poster tour, chaired by Reidar Grenman and moderated by Milan Profant, Mamoru Suzuki and Hans Scherer was very successful, discussions in the poster area continuing even after the time allotted. Altogether we had 88 presentations, given by experts from 23 countries. 24 of them came from the US, 22 from Asia and 20 from Europe, among others—maybe this at least partly reflects the scientific ENT-related dynamism in the different parts of the world today, however this time probably biased by the geographical localization of the present congress venue. The scientific level of the presentations was, in my opinion, generally high. Although the balance of different subfields of otorhinolaryngology-head and neck surgery, with some dominance by the inner ear-related research, may still need some improvement, the present situation probably reflects the distribution of expertise within our Society. However, the balance can only be improved through the national groups: they should take this aspect sufficiently into account when considering new member candidates. Anyhow, comments by the members on the contents of our programme are more than welcome.

Both the oral and poster reports will be published as before, after regular peer review, in the Acta Oto-Laryngologica.

The Benjamin Prize to a young scientist, member or guest, preferably younger than 40 but not older than 45 years, for a high-quality paper to be presented in the meeting was, due to the lack of applicants, not given this year. If this happens again, may be we must reconsider the rules for this Prize.

The Business Meeting was held on Monday afternoon, 27th August:

1. President Chong Sun Kim welcomed the members.

2. The president commemorated the members who had passed away since the last meeting in Moscow: Hugh Barber (Canada), Walter Johnson (Canada), Merle Lawrence (USA), Gerhard
Salomon (Israel) and Mohamed El Kahky (Egypt). The members honoured the memory of these respected Honorary Members standing and with a moment of silence.

3. The Annual Report 2006 was approved without any comments or alterations.

4. The following candidates, proposed by the respective national groups, and reviewed by the Credentials Committee, were unanimously accepted as new members: Robert Baatenburg de Jong (the Netherlands), Manuel Bernal-Sprekelsen (Spain), Jose Fayad (our first member from Lebanon), Johan Frijns (the Netherlands), Marcelo Hueb (Brazil), Kari Kvaerner (Norway), Antti Mäkitie (Finland), Cherie-Ann Nathan (USA), Seung Ha Oh (Korea), Bert O’Malley (USA), Giorgio Peretti (Italy), and Michael Tong (Hong Kong). The new members will introduce themselves at our next meeting in Berlin.

5. The Financial report for the year 2006-2007, presented by our Treasurer René Dauman, was approved. The financial situation showed a positive balance and the annual subscription fee was decided to be unchanged, € 50.

6. During the next year the Board and the Credentials Committee will be the following:

**Board**

Chong Sun Kim, President
Keehuyn Park, Vice-President
Pekka Karma, General Secretary
René Dauman, Treasurer
Hans Scherer, President-elect
Karl-Bernd Hüttlenbrink, Vice-President-elect

Marcos Goycoolea, Councillor
Wolfgang Arnold, Councillor
Mamoru Suzuki, Councillor
Matti Anniko, Editorial Secretary
Bryan Neel, Second Secretary

**Credentials Committee**
The social program followed the traditions of our Society, in the spirit of friendship among members and partners. On Sunday, 26 August, we had a Family Tour to the Korean Folk Village to view the traditional life style and dwelling culture in the old days of Korea during the late Chosun Dynasty. In the afternoon we visited the famous Leeum Museum, on the slopes of Mt Namsan and overlooking the Han River. The museum, designed by famous European architects, gave us the opportunity to view and appreciate Korean traditional, modern and contemporary art and culture as well as works by those leading the international art world. In the evening during the President’s Reception at the Lotte Hotel we became initiated into traditional Korean Shamanism through a ritual dance, presented by a nationally well-known Shaman, Hae Kyung Lee and her group. She distributed the “Lucky Bag”, a symbol of wellbeing and long life to the CORLAS members.

On Monday our accompanying persons visited “Gyeongbok” (Shining Happiness) Palace, built in 1395 to tribute the permanent happiness and prosperity of Korea’s kings, their children and the people of the nation. In the evening our President had organized for us an invitation to a Dinner and Special Performance at the Universal Arts Center, hosted by Bo Hi Pak, Chairman and President of the Korean Cultural Foundation. The performance given by the world famous Korean little girls’ group with 31 dancing and singing “Little Angels” was something you certainly had not experienced anywhere before—some members told me that this performance alone made their travel to Korea worthwhile.
On Tuesday, during the scientific sessions, our partners went to the National Museum of Korea, holding a collection of approximately 150,000 works of arts, especially ancient, historical and other Asian cultural artifacts. They also visited “Insadong”, been at the heart of historical downtown Seoul for 600 years. And in the evening we had our traditional Members’ Dinner at the beautiful Schoenbrunn Restaurant on top of the Lotte Hotel. After a delicious 8-course dinner more than 20 new members introduced themselves, our Vice-President Keehuyn Park forwarded them the Collegium History-books, and our Honorary Member Michael Paparella told them and us all some wise words about scientific work and the Collegium. The atmosphere of the evening was friendly and unconstrained, ending in some singing by Yasuo Harada and Co. At the same time our President’s wife, Pauline, hosted our accompanying persons in another restaurant of the same hotel. I have been told that she also gave our partners an interesting presentation on the Korean ways of life, while President-elect’s wife, Amaryll, introduced the plans for the 2008 Berlin meeting from the viewpoint of accompanying persons.

The Gala Dinner on Wednesday evening was again one of the highlights of the meeting. Our partners after the daytime traditional Cooking Class and the members after the last full day of scientific presentations gathered to the Crystal Ballroom of the Lotte Hotel to have a fantastic dinner after a Korean Classical Music performance. During the dinner your General Secretary thanked, on behalf of the Society, our hosts Chong and Keehuyn, and their charming wives Pauline and Yoonhee as well as all their coworkers, especially Seung Ha Oh, for their superb work to guarantee us unforgettable days in Seoul and in Korea. These days will certainly remain very special in our memories. We also congratulated Chong for his birthday today, and served him and some other members born this same time a big birthday cake which they all cut together. I also thanked our retiring President George Tavartkiladze and his wife Natasha and Vice-President Teimuraz (Tim) Gvelesiani, once again, for the fine days in Moscow one year before. As a token of gratitude for his work for the success of the Collegium, your General Secretary forwarded George the Collegium Banner.

When coming to Seoul, our hosts greeted us with a motto: “I want to make you happy because seeing you smiling makes me happy”. When leaving the venue our hosts certainly saw us smiling. The meeting could not have been better organized, both scientifically and socially.

After the meeting almost 70 of us travelled together to Gyeongju, a living historical capital of the Shilla Dynasty for more than 900 years, one of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritages, almost 300 km southeast from Seoul. During the two days there we probably learnt to understand a bit more of the long history of this country with old own culture and traditions. Just like we in our Society, the Koreans honour their old ways and traditions. Even the Korean national psyche, with concern for family, respect for education and obedience towards seniors, is not too far from that of the many members of our maybe a bit conservative Society. Anyhow, our experiences in Seoul and in Korea, “the land of the morning calm”, were unforgettable, astonishing and exciting. Once again, I would like to thank our hosts for all that.

Dear Colleagues, some time ago I was in contact with Charles van Santem. He is the grandson of the founder and the first General Secretary of this Society, Charles Emile Benjamins. He had heard that the Collegium had established the Benjamins Prize, which was awarded the first time last year in Moscow. Dr Charles van Santem is living and working now as an agricultural researcher and expert in Indonesia and before that in many other parts of the world, for instance in Tunisia, Surinam, Venezuela, Tanzania, and many countries in the Pacific area, in addition to the US and Europe. Charles van Santem has recently completed a biography on his grandfather. I had the privilege to get myself acquainted with this work, describing many very interesting features and achievements of this extraordinary man. In addition to a medical scientist, he was a musical man, composing a number of compositions, of which an Elegy for Piano was played during his cremation in February 1940. He also published a textbook on swimming. He raised anti-noise campaigns even at that time. He was a skilful photographer, and his biography is annexed with about 150 very high-quality and interesting
photographs, mainly from Java in the beginning of the last century but also from the Netherlands, and even some pictures from the first meeting of our Society in Groningen. But above all, from all I read it became clear that Charles Emile Benjamins was an exceptionally fine and gifted man and is remembered as a witty and polite and helpful personality with a great interest in his fellow man. His grandson sent his best greetings to the Collegium, and gave the biography available through our website. So, on www.corlas.org please click Meetings or History, and you will find links to Dr van Santem’s homepage, where you can find the biography of our founder.

Dear members, it is again my duty to remind you to pay your annual subscription fee € 50, as well as the earlier fees, if unpaid. In addition to your fees, you can use the enclosed payment form to buy different Collegium items, among others the silver cuff links prepared and generously donated by the Korean Collegium Group. As the General Assembly urged, we are checking the payment situation, and if needed, proceeding to further actions as written in our rules. Enclosed you will also find a practical information leaflet, and a personal data sheet for your checking. To facilitate communication, please check especially your Email-address. And please remember our website www.corlas.org to find essentials of the Society and its activities.

The other main duty of the members is to attend our meetings. You cannot contribute without attending. Next time we will meet on 24-27 August 2008 in Berlin, Germany. Hans Scherer, Karl-Bernd Hüttenbrink and their associates are working hard to serve you memorable days in their great capital, one of the otorhinolaryngological centers even long ago. You will receive the registration booklet by the end of January, and you will find all the information soon on the Collegium website.

And finally, I and my wife Anni, would like to wish you and your loved ones all the best for the coming year, both professionally and privately. See you in Berlin.

Pekka Karma