The 14th annual symposium entitled “Basic and Clinical Aspects of Endothelial Dysfunction” organized by Jagiellonian Medical Research Centre took place in Kraków between 18th and 20th May 2006.

The meeting was attended by 26 invited speakers from Australia, Brazil, various European countries and USA, and around 150 participants. Opening remarks presenting a personal memory of the early days of prostaglandin research were given by the Overseas Honorary President of JMRC, Jack McGiff (USA). Opening lecture was delivered by David Celermajer (Australia) – the pioneer in the functional assessment of endothelial function in child and adult patients. Symposium then consisted of 8 sessions with 24 lectures addressing various aspects of endothelial function and dysfunction. In accordance with the tradition of previous JMRC symposia, lecturers represented various disciplines of basic research as well as clinical sciences, allowing to construct a really interdisciplinary programme. The symposium was held in the conference hall of the International Cultural Centre in Kraków which – together with its spacious foyer and stylish gothic cellars – provided an excellent and attractive venue enabling scientific entertainment in the very centre of the Old City of Kraków.

The special issue of the Pharmacological Reports presented here contains 20 papers related to the topics the 14th JMRC Symposium. They are arranged following the order of the symposium sessions:

1) Assessment of endothelial dysfunction (David Celermajer, Bruno Fink, Andrzej Szuba, Katarzyna Mizia-Stec, Jaroslaw Kasprzak, Lars Lind)
2) Mechanisms of endothelial dysfunction (John McGiff, Zsolt Bagi, Pietro Minuz, Lucilla Poston, Hans Vink, Jerzy Chudek)
3) Pharmacology of mitochondria in vascular wall (Adam Szewczyk, Vilma Borutaite)
4) Pharmacology of endothelium (Stefan Chłopicki, Rainer de Martin, Tomasz Smoleński, Włodzimierz Buczko, Roberto Motterlini, Bruno Podesser & Seth Halstroem)
5) Dysfunction of pulmonary endothelium (Sheila Haworth)

More information on 14th JMRC symposium, on previous and planned symposia and their programmes, related publications as well as photos are to be found in our web page at www.jmrc.org.pl.

Last but not least, on behalf of JMRC council and myself, I take here an opportunity to express our gratitude to all invited speakers for their excellent contribution to the symposium and for sharing with us their valuable own expertise, opinions and views on the role of endothelium in cardiovascular system. We also thank all the participants for their engagement in the interesting discussions that marked the last symposium. This meeting, continuing quite a long tradition of JMRC symposia proves again how fascinating still is endothelial research and confirms the idea that pharmacology of endothelium opens up a novel approach for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases.

Stefan Chłopicki
Guest Editor
President of the JMRC Foundation Council
Kraków, December 2006