Claude Kordon (1934–2008)

Claude Kordon passed away on June 2, 2008 in Paris, France, at the age of 74. He was an outstanding individual and a leading figure in neuroendocrinology.

What was immediately striking on meeting Claude Kordon was the impressive range of his gifts, abilities and human qualities. Not only was he a great scientist, but he was also a humanist, a polyglot (probably because he was born and raised in Switzerland), and an extremely cultured and caring citizen who was involved in political and social causes and who was always attentive to others.

His scientific achievements were closely linked to his open and communicative mind. Thus in the past three decades, he managed to adapt his research in neuroendocrinology to the major political changes that occurred in Europe and the rest of the world. He paved the way in developing scientific collaborations with Mexico, Chile, India and Eastern European countries.

For Claude Kordon, every cell in an organism was the center of a complex network, each speaking with chemical messengers and listening with receptors to integrate brain functions with the immune and endocrine systems.

Claude Kordon's name is associated with many discoveries in neuroendocrine research. His role in this field was outstanding. Among the areas in which his participation was essential were studies on hypophysiotropic

neuropeptides, the implication of steroid hormones in brain functions, the interaction between the immune and cerebral systems, and the role of monoamines and neuropeptides in pituitary functions, reproductive behavior, regulation of growth and in stress responses.

He was research director at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and director of the Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale Unit 159 in Paris for 24 years. He also participated in the promotion of neuroendocrinology, which culminated in his tenure as Editor-in-Chief of *Neuroendocrinology*, a position he held for two decades. In one of his books, *The Language of Cells*, his scientific philosophy is illustrated by the phrase: 'The essential condition to all innovating activity: the liberty of creation'.

As scientists, we share with artists the privilege that our work remains after us. For Claude Kordon, this souvenir will continue with his family, his wonderful wife Monique, his children, grandchildren and his numerous friends and former students.

Claude Kordon was an inventive, curious and open-minded mentor. Science has lost one of the great masters of neuroendocrinology.

William Rostene
Secretary of the International Neuroendocrine Federation