Foreword

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This special issue of Hormone Research contains the abstracts of the lectures and poster presentations of the 33rd Annual Meeting of the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology, held in Maastricht, The Netherlands, from 22 to 25 June 1994.

On behalf of the local organizing committee and the ESPE programme organizing committee (POC), I want to express our appreciation to the authors for the quality of the abstracts. The sharp increase in the number of abstracts submitted since our last 'stand-alone' ESPE meeting (1992, Zaragoza), reflects the growth of our society and an intensified involvement on the part of our membership in pediatric endocrine science. More importantly, the significant shift of interest towards the molecular basis of endocrine disorders indicates that many pediatric endocrine laboratories have now included molecular biology and cell biology in their arsenal of research methods. In many instances, collaboration with basic science departments has been established. Both are important developments, indeed!

It is important that we continue to focus on careful clinical observation and meticulous preparation and execution of diagnostic and therapeutic protocols that lend themselves to scientific analysis. Fortunately, many of the contributions will provide us with insight into the clinical issues currently being debated.

The abstracts give basic information on a number of studies, many of which, when published in full, will be major contributions to the advancement of pediatric endocrinology.