50th Anniversary of the EAGEN

The European Association for Gastroenterology, Endoscopy and Nutrition (EAGEN) celebrates its 50th anniversary. The society was founded in 1970 in Germany by the Japanese Prof. Hiroshi Oshima. Back then it was the “European Society for Gastrocamera Diagnosis.” The gastrocamera was a new flexible instrument that was blindly inserted and maneuvered. It took pictures in the stomach which after developing showed, if lucky, various gastric lesions. We have come a long way, and by today’s standards, the gastrocamera was stone age! From being a mainly German society at first, the EAGEN grew into an international society with large annual meetings. The EAGEN started a pan-European multi-society meeting called “European Digestive Disease Week” in Vienna in 1990 (1,000 participants); the second European Digestive Disease Week took place in Amsterdam in 1991 (2,500

participants). The meeting was renamed “United European Gastroenterology Week” in 1992 in Athens, and the EAGEN was 1 of the 7 founding sister societies of the UEG. When EAGEN’s annual meeting was integrated into the United European Gastroenterology Week, the society focused on postgraduate education with multiple courses and postgraduate programs every year in different countries, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe. Progress has been enormous in these 50 years, and the EAGEN continues to provide latest updates on the progress in GI with its education programs. We strongly feel that this is our mission to be perpetuated also in the future, and the EAGEN remains an important flagship in postgraduate education in gastroenterology.

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