Editorial

When, in 1968, the members of the European Society for Experimental Surgery met for their third congress in Munich, it was felt that the prospering Society would need a scientific platform for the publication of papers presented at the annual congresses as well as for manuscripts addressing current problems and developing fields in experimental surgery. A specially appointed team of the Society investigated the conditions and possibilities of creating a scientific journal and finally founded, together with Karger Publishers in 1969, the first European surgical journal ever: *European Surgical Research*. The editorial board consisted of eleven members and the position of acting Editor-in-Chief rotated until Prof. Walter Brendel and Prof. Konrad Messmer, both from the Institute of Surgical Research at the University of Munich, Germany, were appointed as Editors-in-Chief in 1975.

Since it became apparent that progress of surgical research would be greatly underrepresented by an international journal publishing almost exclusively experimental work, the editors and the publisher decided to include also clinical material on surgical research; as evidenced by the adoption of the journal's subhead *Clinical and Experimental Surgery* in 1975.

At the same time, the editorial board was enlarged with scientists from overseas to demonstrate that there were no restrictions on papers from non-European countries. From then on, *European Surgical Research* was no longer the official journal of the Society; nevertheless, the abstracts of the papers presented at the annual congresses of the Society, meanwhile renamed European Society for Surgical Research (ESSR), have been published by the

journal, mostly in special abstract volumes edited by the congress organizers. These abstract volumes represent a complete reflection of the scientific activities of the participants of the ESSR congresses.

Adapting to the ever-changing interests of surgical research, new members regularly join the editorial board. As a consequence, all manuscripts submitted by the authors are reviewed by at least two experts in the field; the final decision on acceptance and publication resting with the Editor-in-Chief.

Over the years, the journal has attracted a great number of manuscripts from all over the world, including the former Easter Bloc as well as developing countries. Thanks to the great efforts of the editorial board members and many expert surgeons and scientists, the journal has provided assistance and education to a great number of young researchers in many countries.

Hence, *European Surgical Research*, with 37 volumes published so far, represents a well-recognized forum for surgeons and scientists not only in Europe, but on all other continents as well.

Since 1989, I have had the privilege to serve as Editor-in-Chief of *European Surgical Research*. Now it is time for a change, and thus I hand over the position and the responsibility for the journal to Prof. Oliver Kempfski, MD. He is currently the head of the Institute of Neurosurgical Pathophysiology at the University of Mainz, Germany. As a former pupil of the late Prof. Brendel, he is very familiar with surgical pathophysiology, which remains one of the principle interests of the journal.

Serving 30 years as Co-Editor and Editor-in-Chief has been a great privilege, resulting in close professional contacts with surgeons all over the world. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the authors who dared to submit their manuscripts to the scrutiny of our editorial boards – they had to accept a rejection rate of approximately 60% over the years.

My special thanks go to the members of the editorial board and to the outside reviewers; without them, the journal could never have attained the high standing and recognition in the scientific community it now enjoys. Another essential prerequisite to successfully editing a scientific journal and to steer it through the rough waters of the ever-changing world of international publishing is the consistent policy of the publisher. In this respect, *European Surgical Research* has been extremely fortunate in its choice of Karger Publishers in Basel, Switzerland. The collaboration between editor and publisher has always

been very friendly, highly efficient and without any trouble. Dr. Thomas Karger and his son Steven have never lost their personal interest and enthusiasm for our journal. On behalf of the editorial board, the authors of and subscribers to *European Surgical Research*, I would like to commend the owners of the publishing house and the staff involved in the publication of our journal for their untiring efforts. My final thanks go to Ms Nadine Schwald, who has been wonderful in the day-to-day running of the journal and who will be a great help to the new Editor-in-Chief.

I convey my very best wishes to my successor, Prof. Oliver Kempfski, and his new editorial board, for the continuing success of *European Surgical Research* since 2004 again the official journal of the European Society for Surgical Research.

Konrad Messmer, Munich