

## FOREWORD

It was a great pleasure to receive so many distinguished guests and participants at the 6th International Symposium on Schistosomiasis and the 6th National Meeting on Schistosomiasis organized by the Schistosomiasis Programme, of the Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz).

About 300 researchers and other professionals from Brazil and abroad who work with this important endemic disease gave their collaboration and prestige to this Symposium which is held every two years. This year the focus was on epidemiology and control, but other topics related to schistosomiasis were also discussed: immunology, diagnosis, biology of the gene, vaccines, malacology, clinical and anatomical forms, phylogeny and mathematical model. Also, an special day was dedicated to papers dealing with other helminthic parasites.

The knowledge on schistosomiasis has been updated and discussed in 4 conferences, 9 round tables, 33 oral presentations and/or posters, and 3 courses.

This Symposium happened on the 99th anniversary of the first report of *Schistosoma mansoni* in Brazil by the important Brazilian physician and scientist Pirajá da Silva. His contribution was a very important support for the proposition of Leiper, Manson, and others, that the *Schistosoma* species, were two and not only one, as argued, at that time, by Loos. This was the first important contribution of a Brazilian scientist to the field of schistosomiasis, a path that was followed by a large number of investigations in the field of diagnosis, malacology, treatment, control, etc.

Three awards were offered: "Pirajá da Silva" for the best abstract, "José Pellegrino" for the best doctorate thesis, and "Amaury Coutinho" for the best master thesis defended in the last two years.

We would like to thank Dr Eloi Garcia and Dr Renato Balão Cordeiro, President and Vice-President of Fiocruz for their support and important financial help, as well as the National Research Council (CNPq), Fapemig, Prefeitura Municipal de Sabará, Prefeitura Municipal de Contagem, Lablaser, Copasa, Centro de Pesquisas René Rachou-Fiocruz, and also, the scientific and social committees, administrative employees, students and all collaborations received before, during and after the Symposium.

We believe the tools and methodologies to eliminate schistosomiasis as a disease, in the XXI Century are already available, and we are willing to contribute to this desideratum. If we wish, it will not be only a dream. Let us take it as our goal to the benefit of mankind.

Naftale Katz  
President

Omar dos Santos Carvalho  
Secretary

