

The Dawn of a Refractive Era

This special issue of *CRST Europe*, which coincides with the XXV Congress of the ESCRS in Stockholm, Sweden, celebrates the dawn and rapid growth of refractive surgery. We are honored to have so many pioneers of refractive surgery contribute as authors to this issue. Reading first-hand accounts of what took place and why will be of tremendous interest to both established refractive and cataract surgeons as well as those surgeons just starting their ophthalmic practices.

The historical perspectives of each author are excellent and factual. In the authors' humility, however, they did not indicate some of the personal emotions that were encountered during the process of such discoveries, including the elation—and at times anguish—of investigating and applying new procedures and devices. We take so many techniques for granted. We must not forget that we benefit from innovators who have spent great time and effort in developing and refining the procedures that we so readily perform today.

The growth of refractive surgery has required a constant process of investigation, validation, and education. Until recently, refractive surgery was not a component of any educational curriculum, and surgeons were left to acquire their own education after formal training. In Europe, the European Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons (ESCRS) has been vital in providing a forum for refractive education. In this issue, Emanuel Rosen, BSc, MD, FRCS(Ed), FRCOphth, of the United Kingdom, gives a good synopsis of the history of the ESCRS. His article demonstrates the progressive thinking of European leaders who both embraced refractive surgery and worked on cooperative alliances with US



organizations to develop a first class publication, the *Journal of Cataract and Refractive Surgery*. As the number of countries entering the European Union increases, there is a parallel increase in ESCRS membership and interest. Additionally, post-September 11, 2001 travel difficulties that many international members encounter, have increased interest in European

meetings. The main ESCRS meeting has now become highly international and the attendance is huge. This demonstrates remarkable cooperation among colleagues of great diversity. We truly are all motivated by the common goals of exchanging knowledge and ideas.

In reading the perspective of Jorge L. Alió, MD, PhD, in his article, it is interesting to learn of

Europe's contributions to refractive surgery as well as its contributions to the ophthalmic industry. Successes and accomplishments celebrated in this issue could not have been attained without close participation with the industry. Growth and success require many components, and in the case of refractive surgery, these components include innovators, the ophthalmic industry (which is catalysed by potential revenue streams), and most importantly, patients who entrust us with their care. To all of the above, I would like to give a big thank you on behalf of refractive surgeons worldwide! ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sheraz Daya". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Sheraz M. Daya, MD,
FACP, FACS, FRCS(Ed)
Chief Medical Editor