

The editors

Giuseppe Palumbo (GP) was born in Naples, Italy in 1945. He was educated in physical chemistry at the local University, obtaining the “Laurea” in 1969. His education continued at the Clinical Endocrinology Branch of the NIAMDD, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, USA, initially as postdoctoral fellow in the Laboratory of Dr Harold Hedeloch, (1973–1975) and successively as Visiting Scientist (1985–1986 and 1989) in the Laboratory of Dr Jan Wolff. Between 1975 and 1986 he held a permanent position as researcher at the Italian national research Council (CNR). His academic career begun in 1986 when he first became Professor of Physiological Chemistry (1977–1990) at the University of Reggio Calabria (Italy) and then (1990–to date) Professor of General Pathology at the University of Naples Federico II (Italy). The research contributions of GP have been various and embrace numerous studies on of the fluorescent properties of HD and LD lipoproteins (1974–1990), on the structure–function relationship of iodoproteins, on T4 biosynthesis (1980–1990) and, more recently (1990–to date), on the application of photobiology to the study of malignant cells and therapy of human tumors. Professor Palumbo has been Coordinator of a national PhD program in Photobiology (1998–2002), and is currently Coordinator of a multi-centric research project on photodynamic therapy that includes studies at cellular, animal and human levels. His scientific production is testified by more than 75 international peer-reviewed publications in these fields. He is an active member of national and European scientific Societies of Photobiology.

Riccardo Pratesi (RP) was born in Florence, Italy in 1936. He was educated in physics at the local University, obtaining the “Laurea” in 1961 and the “Libera Docenza” in *Quantum Electronics* in 1969. Career: Assistant at the University of Florence (1963–1979); Director of the *Institute of Quantum Electronics* of CNR (National Council of Research) (1970–1990); Director of the SubProject on *Medical applications of lasers* of the CNR, *Finalized Project LASER* (1978–1982); Full Professor of *Structure of Matter* at the University of Florence (1980–to the present); Director of the SubProject on *Biomedical applications of lasers* of the CNR *Finalized Project on Electrooptical Technologies* (1989–1993); President of the *Area of Research of CNR*, Florence, (1990–2000); Director of the *Laser Medical*

Centre (CLAM) of the Optronic Consortium (CEO), Florence (1994–to date); Member of the Board of the Quantum Electronic Division of EPS (1976–1979); Member of the Italian and European Societies for Photobiology (1987–to date). Editor of the volumes *Lasers in Photomedicine and Photobiology* (with C.A. Sacchi, Springer-Verlag (1980), *Lasers in Biology and Medicine* (with F. Hillenkamp and C.A. Sacchi, Plenum Press, 1980), *Optronic Techniques in Diagnostic & Therapeutic Medicine* (Plenum, 1991). The research of RP has focused initially on laser physics and technology, and optical spectroscopy, and on to the photophysics of biomolecules, in particular bilirubin, with application to the phototherapy of neonatal jaundice; and more recently on fluorescence techniques for biomedical applications. His scientific production is testified by about 95 international peer-reviewed publications. RP has greatly contributed, since 1962, to the development of laser technology in Italy and to the birth and fast growth of the local laser industry, with continuous cooperation among research institutions, public administrations and industries. From the very beginning, RP promoted the applications of lasers and optical techniques to biology and medicine.