

## Asian Society of Gynecologic Oncology (ASGO): a central platform against gynecologic cancers in Asia

Soon-Beom Kang, President of ASGO

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Seoul National University College of Medicine, Seoul, Korea

### 'Who wills, can. Who tries, does. Who loves, lives' -Anne McCaffrey

ASGO was initiated in Seoul on November 27, 2008, aimed at scientific exchange, international collaboration, provision of educational opportunities, deepening friendship between members, and ultimately improvement of Asian women's health.

Historically, ASGO originated from a small regional society; the Japan-Korean Joint Conference of Gynecologic Oncology Group (JKGOG), which was organized at the 9th Biennial International Gynecologic Cancer Society (IGCS) in Seoul.<sup>1</sup> During this annual meeting, gynecologic oncologists from these two countries acknowledged the importance of increased regional cooperation, and envisioned the necessity of a representative society which could encompass the whole of the Asian continent. The time to realize this dream has not taken long.

In fact, Asian women differ from non-Asians with respect to genetic background, disease presentation, and especially, socio-cultural environment. However, most clinical practices have been sourced from the studies in western patients. In addition, a large proportion of global burden of gynecologic cancer still remains across the Asian area. According to the GLOBOCAN 2002, 44.9% of cancer cases occurred and 49.9% of cancer deaths were observed in Asia.<sup>2</sup> For example, with 493,100 new cases per year, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women, and the cause of 273,449 cancer deaths in the world. Among them, 265,744 new cases and 142,679 cancer mortalities were observed in Asia.<sup>3</sup> Epidemiologic and gynecologic reports from Japan, Korea, China, India, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand also have demon-

strated the considerable burden of gynecologic cancers in their own countries.<sup>4-10</sup> However, there is an increasing number of women suffering from cancer, because under-ascertainment of elderly cases is well-known, especially in developing countries.<sup>11</sup>

Because of these reasons and needs, the Asian Society of Gynecologic Oncology plays an essential role in understanding, investigating, and resolving regional health problems like other regional societies such as the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists (SGO) and the European Society of Gynecologic Oncology (ESGO).

At the present time, ASGO has just been initiated with the passionate collaboration and warm friendship between all Asian countries (Fig. 1). We are all convinced that ASGO should be act as a central platform for embarking on the long voyage for the improvement of Asian women's health. I believe in the words of 'Who wills, can. Who tries, does. Who loves, lives'. This is the time of care and love for the healthy growing of ASGO.

### REFERENCES

1. Ryu HS. Asian Society of Gynecologic Oncology (ASGO): a new society for doctors working against gynecologic cancers in Asia. *Gynecol Oncol* 2009; 112: 442-3.
2. Parkin DM, Bray F, Ferlay J, Pisani P. Global cancer statistics, 2002. *CA Cancer J Clin* 2005; 55: 74-108.
3. Kamangar F, Dores GM, Anderson WF. Patterns of cancer incidence, mortality, and prevalence across five continents: defining priorities to reduce cancer disparities in different geographic regions of the world. *J Clin Oncol* 2006; 24: 2137-50.
4. Ushijima K. Current status of gynecologic cancer in Japan. *J Gynecol Oncol* 2009; 20: 67-71.
5. Kim YT. Current status of cervical cancer and HPV infection in Korea. *J Gynecol Oncol* 2009; 20: 1-7.
6. Kim K, Zang R, Choi SC, Ryu SY, Kim JW. Current status of gynecological cancer in China. *J Gynecol Oncol* 2009; 20: 72-76.
7. Uma Devi K. Current status of gynaecological cancer care in India. *J Gynecol Oncol* 2009; 20: 77-80.
8. Aziz MF. Gynecological cancer in Indonesia. *J Gynecol Oncol* 2009; 20: 8-10.
9. Domingo EJ, Dy Echo AV. Epidemiology, prevention and treatment of cervical cancer in the Philippines. *J Gynecol Oncol* 2009; 20: 11-6.

Received June 11, 2009

Address reprint requests to **Soon-Beom Kang**

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Seoul National University College of Medicine, 28, Yeongeong-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul 110-744, Korea

Tel: 82-2-2072-2387, Fax: 82-2-762-3599

E-mail: ksboo308@snu.ac.kr



Fig. 1. Photo from the 1st council meeting of the ASGO, held in Seoul on June 25-26, 2009.

10. Wilailak S. Epidemiologic report of gynecologic cancer in Thailand. J Gynecol Oncol 2009; 20: 81-3.
11. Fallah M, Kharazmi E. Substantial under-estimation in cancer

incidence estimates for developing countries due to under-ascertainment in elderly cancer cases. Cancer Lett 2008; 264: 250-5.