I would like to start my second report as President by thanking all ERA-EDTA members for their confidence and support, the ERA-EDTA Officers, Adrian Covic, Rosanna Coppo, Norbert Lameire and Carmine Zoccali for their help in running the Association, as well as all the Ordinary Council Members and our Administrative Office for their hard work and dedication.

As I forwarded in my previous report, the ERA-EDTA has started many new initiatives to attract young nephrologists towards the scientific activities of our Society. Among them, I would like to highlight several advantages and grants specifically created with this purpose, such as the special Membership fee for early-career nephrologists; the low Congress Registration fee for students; the travel grants for CME Courses for nephrologists; the grants for the best presentations in National Congresses; the Travel grants for the Best Abstracts submitted to the ERA-EDTA and finally, our recent enterprise, the Fellowship Programme.

We launched the ERA-EDTA Fellowship Program in 2006, with the objective of supporting basic and clinical research in the field of Nephrology in Europe, mainly among young investigators. This programme also aims to facilitate scientific exchange and collaboration between European Research Institutions. There are two modalities of the Programme, the Long-Term Fellowships that are awarded up to 2 years in forefront research, and the Short-Term fellowships, established to visit other institutions to learn about new techniques and also to facilitate research links between institutions. So far, since last July 2006, we have awarded 10 Long-Term Fellowships and 6 Short-Term Fellowships.

In clear connection with the Fellowship Programme is the ERA-EDTA Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). The activities of this Body started in 2006 and they play an important role not only in the selection process of the Fellowship Programme but also in the discussion of future topics for our research meetings. On behalf of the ERA-EDTA, I want to congratulate all our Fellows and to thank the SAB, the grants reviewers and EMBO for their help in this successful programme. The ERA-EDTA is looking forward to receiving new and interesting candidacies for the future editions. I would like to encourage the young scientists to apply for this outstanding ERA-EDTA Programme.

Another important and positive news in 2007 come from the ERA-EDTA Registry. In 2005, the Registry launched the QUEST initiative in Toledo. One year later, in 2006, the European Union approved economical support from 2007 to one of the QUEST Projects. This success has been possible thanks to the efforts of the ERA-EDTA Registry and its Manager, Kitty Jager and the Scientific Committee led by Carmine Zoccali.

Other important news is that the Nephrological community has started to work together in a new challenge, the European Kidney Health Alliance (EKHA), a common project with the International Society of Nephrology (ISN), the European Dialysis & Transplant Nurses Association – European Renal Care Association (EDTNA/ERCA), the European Kidney Patients’ Federation (CEAPIR) and International Federation of Kidney Foundations.
(IFKF) to sensitize the European Union about the importance of establishing European programmes related to kidney disease.

Apart from the EKHA, the ERA-EDTA will soon share other important commitments with the ISN, such as the World Congress of Nephrology, in Milan 2009, under the Presidency of Francesco Locatelli and also, our common Basic and Advanced Courses in Nephrology Programme coordinated by Rosanna Coppo (ERA-EDTA) and Norbert Lameire (ISN).

The ERA-EDTA Courses are one of the most successful and important activities of our Association. These activities, together with the “ERA-EDTA Highlights”, the “ERA-EDTA Lectures” and the meetings with the Presidents of the National Societies of Nephrology are some of the recent initiatives launched to increase the interaction between the ERA-EDTA and the European Societies of Nephrology and also to increase the visibility of our activities throughout Europe. This is not an easy task, and despite the communications have experienced great advances, we still believe that a more personal “face to face” contact between ERA-EDTA Officers and the European National Societies Presidents is necessary. On behalf of ERA-EDTA also this year, as we did in 2006 (Glasgow), it will be my pleasure to invite all the National Presidents to the “National Societies Dinner” that will be held after the Opening Ceremony in the ERA-EDTA Congress in Barcelona 2007.

All these recent ERA-EDTA challenges are growing with the complement and partnership of previous and well established ERA-EDTA projects such as the NDT Journal under the direction of Norbert Lameire and Jürgen Floege and David Wheeler, as co-Editors; NDT-Educational directed by Carmine Zoccali and “Follow us”, under the direction of Adrian Covic with the collaboration of Cengiz Utaa and Joao Frazao as co-Editors. My sincere thanks to all of them for making these activities a success, as well as to all the ERA-EDTA administrative staff, working in different countries and regions throughout Europe, helping the progress of our Association.

Finally, I want to warmly encourage all ERA-EDTA members and all the Nephrology Community to attend the XLIV ERA-EDTA Congress in Barcelona the coming month of June. The main representatives of the Meeting, Luis Piera, local President of the Congress, Carmine Zoccali, Chairman of the Scientific Committee, David Goldsmith, Chairman of the Paper Selection Committee, the Scientific Committee, the whole ERA-EDTA Council and myself are looking forward to seeing you all then.

Prof. Jorge B. Cannata-Andía
ERA-EDTA President