



September 8, 2006

To: Members of the Executive Committee and Council of Delegates

Re: ACTRIMS-ECTRIMS-LACTRIMS Joint Meetings

Dear friends,

It is my pleasure to inform you that LACTRIMS has just achieved one of its most important goals, through the relentless efforts and enthusiasm of many of you.

As all of you are aware one of the objectives of LACTRIMS, as it Bylaws establishes, is to advance the integration of the Latin American scientific community involved in MS research and education with similar communities in North America and Europe.

In order to making LACTRIMS reach this objective we have started talks with ACTRIMS and ECTRIMS leaders since LACTRIMS Third Meeting in Iguassu Falls, in 2004. At that time we met with American and European Officers to discuss ways for better integration of our Committees. One of the suggestions at that time was to start preparations to organize ACTRIMS-ECTRIMS-LACTRIMS joint meetings. This would provide LACTRIMS investigators with a good opportunity to present their observations and studies to a worldwide audience. Other steps for integration including cooperative studies and educational initiatives for training of young Latin American researchers in more advanced MS centers in North America and Europe would follow.

Many other negotiations have followed the Iguassu talks, and as a result of our intensive efforts, CMSC officers have already agreeded to provide us with an increasing and more active participation at the CMSC meetings. In 2007 ACTRIMS will join the CMSC Meeting in Washington and so our annual Symposium will even reach a broader North American audience.

The culmination, however, of one of our suggestions for integration with ACTRIMS and ECTRIMS has just been reached. We have just learned that ACTRIMS and ECTRIMS officers have accepted our proposal for periodic ACTRIMS-ECTRIMS-LACTRIMS Joint Meetings! This agreement has just been announced and made us tremendously excited and jubilant!

Our friend Jerry Wolinsky who is the current ACTRIMS President has announced that marvellous opportunity. LACTRIMS, ACTRIMS and ECTRIMS will from now on

organize joint meetings every three or four years; and in between each one will have its individual congresses. This also means that Latin American countries will be hosting such Joint Meetings in the near future. We are glad as this fact clearly demonstrates that we have fulfilled one of the most important LACTRIMS goals.

This historic conquest is to be credited to the efforts of many of our investigators, in many countries, who have been making brilliant presentations at international meetings and publishing original papers in specialized journals with high impact factor. No doubt these contributions have demonstrated to our North American and European colleagues that LACTRIMS has already reached scientific respectability and Latin American research in MS is to be seriously taken into account. In addition to that LACTRIMS has also shown that it is well prepared to organize superb Meetings, since its first and seminal one in Buenos Aires, which was followed by those in Monterrey, Iguassu Falls and Margarita Island.

At this very special landmark in LACTRIMS history I would like to congratulate with all our colleagues who have made it to happen. Let us continue pursuing the achievement of our goals through our hard work, independent minds and resilient faith.

Marco Lana-Peixoto
LACTRIMS, President