Over 200 ophthalmologists attended the Second Annual Nidek Excimer Laser Users Meeting in Aswan, Egypt. The ophthalmologists from countries across the globe gathered to attend over 80 presentations and wet labs on photorefractive keratectomy (PRK), photoastigmatic keratectomy (PARK), laser in situ keratomileusis (LASIK), phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK), and the treatment of hyperopia. The meeting was highlighted by intense discussions of refinements of refractive surgical techniques using the Nidek EC-5000 excimer laser. The meeting site was the historic Old Cataract Hotel, a beautiful site located eight miles north of the High Dam of Aswan, which controls water for all of Egypt’s Nile Valley.

The meeting covered a wide range of topics, including the effects of pregnancy, astigmatism, retreatments, and larger clear zones on PRK. There was also intense interest in the advantages and disadvantages of LASIK and a detailed discussion on the technical aspects of performing LASIK.

The early reports using hyperopic software treatment with the Nidek laser were encouraging. Updates on the US Nidek-sponsored FDA trials for PRK and PARK were also presented.

One of the social highlights of the meeting was a moonlit boat trip to the island of Philae, where we experienced a mystic light and sound show at the Temple of Isis. After the excursion, a gala dinner was held at the 1902 Room. The Room has opulent Turkish-style architecture with huge stained glass windows and an elevated balcony that surrounds the main floor. On the second night of the meeting, participants and their families were treated to a Nubian dance group—inspiring many meeting attendees to join in the dancing. Mr. Hideo Ozawa, President of Nidek, was coaxed onto the dance floor where his energetic dancing brought cheers from the audience.

The meeting was hosted by Nidek Technologies, and emphasized the great international enthusiasm that physicians have for treating myopia with the excimer laser. Many presenters emphasized the subtle refinements that contribute to improved outcomes.

There was a strong atmosphere of openness and cooperation among participants—sharing nomenclatures and open discussions—both at scientific sessions and poolside luncheons overlooking the Nile River. The meeting emphasized communication between the ophthalmologists and the laser manufacturer. Most participants departed the meeting highly energized by new information about this exciting technology.

After the meeting, many of the physicians and their families took advantage of the wonderful location to visit Abu Simbel, a magnificent temple built by Ramses II, while others went to Luxor to visit the Temple of Karnak and the Valley of the Kings. The Nidek International Excimer Users meeting not only provided a superb scientific program but a wonderful opportunity to visit one of the most fascinating cultures in the world.

The next Nidek International Excimer Users meeting will be held December 6-8, 1997, at the Acadia Hotel in Phuket, Thailand.

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