

Preface

Extending a long history of successful conferences, the XXIInd IUPAC Symposium on Photochemistry was held in Göteborg, Sweden, from 28 July to 1 August 2008. It was attended by participants from 51 countries. The Symposium featured 7 plenary lectures, 12 invited lectures, 96 selected oral presentations, and 414 posters given by attendees. One of the highlights was the presentation of the Porter Medal to Prof. Michael R. Wasielewski of Northwestern University, USA. The title of his lecture was “Photodriven charge and spin dynamics in molecules and materials: From photosynthesis to spintronics.”

A featured theme of the Symposium was solar energy conversion in the context of global climate change and the energy crisis. However, a large variety of subjects were covered, including spectroscopy of single molecules and of nanostructures, molecular photochemistry in solution and in microheterogeneous media, photochemistry of pharmaceuticals, fluorescent markers and sensors, photochemically based molecular logic, supramolecular units mimicking photosynthetic antennas and reaction centers, photopolymerizations and photochemistry in solid state, theoretical considerations and calculations of excited states, and spectroscopic studies of biological photosensors and biomedically important materials. Many of the topics were of both fundamental scientific interest and practical and technological importance. The next Symposium will be held in Ferrara, Italy in 2010.

This issue of *Pure and Applied Chemistry* contains a collection of papers based on plenary and invited lectures given at the Symposium and kindly supplied by the speakers. They cover a variety of modern photochemical topics and appear in the order of their presentation at the Symposium. They help illustrate the vital place of modern photochemistry in promoting the health and welfare of humanity, and indeed of all life on the planet.

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