

Preface

International Symposium on Advances in Hydroprocessing of Oil Fractions (ISAHOF 2004)

Significant changes have occurred over the past 10 years in the petroleum industry. The evolution towards heavier crudes, the growing importance of middle distillates and social demands for cleaner production policies and environment-friendly products have led refineries all over the world to adapt their processes and revamp their units.

Since heavy crudes exhibit high contents of asphaltenes and contaminants such as sulfur, nitrogen and metals, some refining operations require substantial adaptations with regard to catalysts and technology. In Mexico, about 60% of the crude oil production consists of a heavy crude called “Maya”. For this reason, Instituto Mexicano del Petróleo (The Mexican Institute of Petroleum) has launched a Research Program (Programa Tratamiento de Crudo Maya) dedicated to improve the Management and Refining of Maya Crude.

Within this context IMP organized the “International Symposium on Advances in Hydroprocessing of Oil Fractions (ISAHOF 2004)” from April 18 to 22 in Oaxaca, capital of the Mexican state bearing the same name. Various issues relevant to hydroprocessing were discussed but the primary focus of the symposium was deep hydrodesulfurization (HDS). This reflected concerns expressed by the refining industry which has to comply with the stringent regulations imposed by national governments.

During the symposium each day started with two plenary lectures presented by world authorities in the field. Fifty oral presentations given in two parallel sessions dealt with various topics relevant to hydroprocessing. A number of papers reported on collaborative projects between IMP-scientists and colleagues in France, but also in Japan, the USA and South America. A half-day poster session with 44

contributions was held under exotic trees and plants in the garden of hotel Victoria. In this special issue, 5 plenary lectures and 33 papers are presented, involving 35 research institutions from 12 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, México, Morocco, Spain, USA).

The guest editors would like to acknowledge the contributors to this special issue and the referees who carefully reviewed the manuscripts. They are grateful to “Catalysis Today” for offering the possibility of disseminating records of this fruitful meeting to a wider community.

We believe there is a need for periodical ISAHOF meetings and envisage a next edition in 2006, again in Mexico.

Further information about the ISAHOF organization can be obtained by E-mail at the following address: jancheyt@imp.mx.

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