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Liquid Crystals

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Foreword

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Foreword

The papers appearing in this special issue of *Liquid Crystals* represent some of the communications presented at the Eighth Specialized Colloque Ampère, devoted to the subject of Liquid Crystals and Liquid Crystalline Polymers as Studied by Magnetic Resonance and Related Techniques, held in Lisbon from 14 to 18 September 1987. Over 100 contributions, divided into 13 invited lectures, 31 oral presentations and 58 poster communications, were accepted to be given at the Colloque. This was broadly international since scientists from 23 different countries from all over the world were present, representing almost all research groups actively interested in the field.

The past 20 years have seen a rapid growth in the use of magnetic resonance techniques to study liquid crystals and it has become apparent that this method of investigation is unrivalled as a means for probing the molecular behaviour of mesophases. This activity continues to grow and the needs of the corresponding scientific community to share its ideas are now evident.

The purpose of this Colloque Ampère was to bring experts up to date on the latest developments in the field, to analyse the significance of these, and to provoke suggestions for future research. This purpose has been achieved. In addition, the Colloque has been a very stimulating experience and, I think, a valuable forum for the development and extension of international cooperation.

We were fortunate to have the premises of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation as a site for the Colloque. It provided a peaceful and self-contained environment which contributed very much to the unusually high and constant level of participation observed during the entire duration of the meeting.

The Colloque was sponsored by the Groupement Ampère and The European Physical Society. Essential financial support was provided by two Portuguese state research agencies, namely, Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica and Junta Nacional de Investigação Científica e Tecnológica. Further support was given by Universidade Nova de Lisboa, *Liquid Crystals* (Taylor & Francis Ltd), Banco Espírito Santo e Comercial de Lisboa, TAP-Air Portugal, The Portuguese National Tourist Office (DGT), Caixa Geral de Depósitos, Oporto Wine Institute, and the Lisbon Municipality.

I wish to record here my appreciation of the support given by these organizations, and would like to thank my colleagues of the Organizing Committee, the International Advisory Board, and all the participants for their invaluable contributions to the success of the meeting.

A. F. MARTINS
Colloque Chairman