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### Guest Editor's Foreward

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## GUEST EDITOR'S FOREWORD

This issue compiles papers presented at the 3rd International Symposium on Organic Photochromism (ISOP99) that was held in Fukuoka, Japan, November 14-18, 1999. Previous ISOP Symposia were held in Iles des Embiez, France in September 1993, and in Florida, USA, in September 1996. The objective of the symposium was to bring together academic and industrial scientists to promote discussions on photochromism, both fundamental aspects and practical applications.

The symposium was attended by 210 persons from 17 countries, including 16 from France and 12 from Germany with 145 from the host country Japan. Four plenary and 9 invited lectures, 32 oral and 106 poster papers were presented. This issue contains most of them.

In addition to fundamental mechanistic researches on photochromism and development of various new photochromic compounds for the application to ophthalmic lenses, optical neural networks using photochromic memory media, applications to 3-D and near-field optical memory media, photo-optical switching devices using photochromic hybrid organic-inorganic materials, and liquid crystalline photochromic systems for memories and switches were among the most active topics in the symposium. We believe that these new trends largely contribute to "Era of Photonics", which is just coming very close. We hope that the present compilation provides a preview of future development of this field.

We are grateful to sponsor organizations for their financial support. Thanks also due to the members of the International Scientific Committee for many valuable suggestions. We extend our special thanks to those who have contributed to this special issue.

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