



Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals

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Guest Editor's Foreword

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GUEST EDITOR'S FOREWORD

This special issue contains the selected papers presented at the Seventh International Conference on “Frontiers of Polymers and Advanced Materials” held in Bucharest, Romania, June 10–14, 2003. They represent the state of the art in research on advanced materials and emerging new technologies. The conference in Bucharest was a sequel to the very successful series of international meetings held in Pernambuco (Brazil, 2001), Poznan (Poland, 1999), Cairo (Egypt, 1997), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia, 1995), Jakarta (Indonesia, 1993) and in New Delhi (India, 1991).

The conferences focused on the most recent and important progress in the field of advanced materials, their science and technology and in new business opportunities resulting from the recent technological developments. Similarly to the preceding meetings the conference held in Bucharest benefited of a wide international attendance, gathering around 300 participants coming from 35 countries and representing all continents. In the alphabetical order the following countries were represented: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Italy, Iran, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, USA, and Venezuela.

In parallel a NATO Advanced Research Workshop on “Smart and Functional Organic Materials” was also organized.

The main conference objectives were:

- To highlight advances and new findings in polymers and advanced materials and their impact on new technologies;
- To facilitate technology transfer and new business opportunities by bringing together representatives from academia, research centers, industries and business;
- To foster international collaborations and joint ventures;
- To facilitate the growth of private sector business in Romania and in Eastern Europe;
- To promote the growth of scientific and technical infrastructure in the field of polymers and advanced materials technologies.

The topics of the conference were discussed in four parallel sessions:

- General and tutorial lectures on new materials for electronics, photonics, and for advanced technologies – dedicated to professor Frank Karasz for celebration of his 70-th anniversary;
- New generation nanostructured materials, hybrid materials, exotic materials;
- Natural fibres, composites and environmental friendly materials;
- Biomaterials and biotechnologies.

In addition to the papers presented during the oral sessions (total of 121 papers keynote, invited and contributed papers) and posters presented during two poster sessions (total of 64 papers), invited plenary lectures on interdisciplinary topics were given by distinguished scientists and representatives of U.S. Air Force, European Nanotechnology Network, and speakers representing industry.

This book is a collection of selected and refereed papers presented at the conference. The typical presentation is multidisciplinary, containing a blend of chemistry, physics, materials processing and technology applications. The result is a comprehensive overview of polymer-related topics including innovative synthetic techniques, nanostructured materials for photonics and optics, multi-functional polymers, new composite, exotic, hybrid materials, sol-gels, device applications and environmental friendly materials and technologies. Both review and research papers are included. The review papers should assist in the cross-fertilization of different areas and training of young researchers, while the research papers will serve as useful reference materials summarizing the current status of individual topics and projecting future developments and future trends.

We wish to thank various institutions, agencies and corporations which provided substantial support for the conference: CEA – Direction de la Recherche Technologique LIST/DECS, France, CEA – Direction des Sciences des Matériaux, France, POLITEHNICA University of Bucharest–National Consultancy Centre for Environmental Protection UPB-CNC, Romania, United States Air Force Wright Patterson Laboratories, GRUND-FOS – Denmark, Institute of Hybrid Materials for Information and Biotechnology, Hannam University, Korea, TOYOTA Motor Corporation, Jasco International Co., Japan.

We would like to thank President of Romania, Ion Iliescu, for kindly accepting to be the Honorary Chair of the conference. A special contribution to the success of conference was offered by Dr. Dan Ioan Popescu, Romanian Minister of Industries and Resources as well as various national corporations: S.C. HIDROELECTRICA, DISTRIGAZ SUD and NORD, SNGN ROMGAZ and TRANSGAZ Medias, ROMELECTRO, BANCA COMERCIALA

ROMANA, PRO AUTO INDUSTRIES, LUXTEN LIGHTING COMPANY, S.C. OF SYSTEMS. We express also our thanks to the National Organizing Committee, coordinated by Prof. E. Pincovski from University Politehnica of Bucharest for the wonderful work done in organizing and putting the meeting together. Thanks are also due to the conference Honorary Chair Prof. Paras N. Prasad from University of Buffalo, USA, who started this series of conferences and organized previous very successful meetings, co-chairs: Prof. R. Kozlowski, Institute of Natural Fibers, Poznan, Poland, Prof. K.-S. Lee, Hannam University, Taejon, Korea and Prof. J. E. Mark, Univ. of Cincinnati, USA, International Coordinator Dr. J. Grote from Wright Patterson Labs, USA and the members of the International Program Committee, chaired by Prof. R. Rowell, USDA Forest Service, USA and the International Advisory Committee, chaired by Prof. F. E. Karasz, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA, for all helpful suggestions, selection of keynote and invited speakers as well as oral and poster contributions. The next conference will take place in April 2005, in Cancun, Mexico.

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