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H. Pasch

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Preface

UNESCO Chemistry for Life Division in Paris has awarded 13 Associated Centres for research in chemical science and education. One of these is the UNESCO Associated Centre for Macromolecules & Materials, which is part of the Chemistry Department of the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

As part of its activities, UNESCO encourages and sponsors UNESCO Schools and scientific conferences in collaboration with scientific associations such as the International Union for Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). The UNESCO School and Conference on Macromolecules & Materials Science is held annually at different locations in South Africa ([website: http://www.sun.ac.za/unesco/unesco.htm](http://www.sun.ac.za/unesco/unesco.htm)). World authorities in various fields of macromolecular science are invited to give tutorials at the UNESCO School and informative plenaries at the conference. The exposure to new ideas and advanced concepts in macromolecular science is of great importance for South African students and senior staff alike coming from different universities and research institutions. It is particularly valuable that with the support of UNESCO generous concessions can be made for attendees from disadvantaged communities and from countries with emerging technologies. The 7th UNESCO/IUPAC Conference focused on polymers in medicine, nanotechnology, degradation and stabilization. Abridged versions of a number of papers are compiled to create the present volume of Macromolecular Symposia. The content of the papers is also available in the Virtual Teaching Encyclopaedia, which contains papers from previous UNESCO conferences as well ([website: http://www.sun.ac.za/unesco/unesco.htm](http://www.sun.ac.za/unesco/unesco.htm)).

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