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Publisher: Taylor & Francis
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Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals Science and Technology. Section A. Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/gmcl19>

Guest Editor's Preface

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Version of record first published: 24 Sep 2006

To cite this article: Fouad M. Aliev (2001): Guest Editor's Preface, Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals Science and Technology. Section A. Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals, 358:1, vii-viii

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10587250108028265>

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GUEST EDITOR'S PREFACE

This volume contains material presented at the VIII International Topical Meeting on Optics of Liquid Crystals (OLC'99). The conference was held at Hotel Wyndham Palmas del Mar Resort and Villas in Humacao, Puerto Rico, USA, September 27 - October 01, 1999.

Over the past fifteen years the International Topical Conference on Optics of Liquid Crystals (OLC) has provided a stimulating and interdisciplinary forum for the presentation of the best new work in the field of liquid crystals and related materials. 85 scientists from 17 different countries located all over the globe (Asia, Europe, North and South America) came to Puerto Rico to present their scientific work and to discuss all the modern aspects of Optics of Liquid Crystals. As result 21 invited talks, 32 contributive oral presentations and 51 posters were presented. Leading experts in the field presented new results at the forefront of research in the optics of liquid crystals. Invited talks covered different important topics such as chiral interactions, surface vibrational spectroscopy, time resolved FTIR, holograms in PDLS, lasing in liquid crystals, quadropolar molecular nonlinear optics, organic photorefractive systems, optical solitons, properties and applications of chiral smectic liquid crystals, photoinitiated reorientational dynamics, electrooptic effects in LC films, wave generation in two dimensional LC and others.

Besides its high scientific level, the OLC-meetings are famous for their informal atmosphere, stimulating discussions and exchange of ideas. OLC'99 was a continuation of this tradition. An excellent location of OLC'99 in Palmas del Mar Resort, which is known as a paradise on the east coast of Puerto Rico located right on the Caribbean sea, was encouraging for both science and leisure. The facilities, cultural and social events and overall organization of the conference were exemplary. All this taken together made OLC'99 a very useful and enjoyable meeting. The Advisory Board has decided to continue the OLC that has successfully been established as the most important conference on Optics of Liquid Crystals. The next OLC meeting will be held 2001 in the Naples area, organized by Prof. G. Abbate from the University of Naples.

Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, International Liquid Crystal Society, National Science Foundation (USA), Optical Society of America (USA), Puerto Rico EPSCOR and University of Puerto Rico supported OLC'99.

Finally I would like to thank the conference coordinator, Ms. Evelyn Rivera and all members of her group from Puerto Rico-EPSCOR for their precious work helping me to organize the OLC'99.

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