

**X Encuentro Latinoamericano de Fotoquímica (X ELAFOT) -
X Latin-American Encounter on Photochemistry
La Serena, Chile, October 10-14, 2010**

The Conference was scheduled for April 2010, but due to the consequences of the devastating February earthquake and tsunami, the Conference was postponed. The Chilean colleagues (especially Elsa Abuin and Antonio Zanoeco) should be strongly congratulated, because they managed to put together an excellent program and to reschedule the meeting for October in the same place as originally planned.

There were 182 participants (some, but not all, are in the picture below), from which 85 were students. The participants were mainly from Chile, Brasil, and Argentina, as well as some from Colombia, 4 from Russia and three from Germany. Due to the rescheduling, there were very few “gringos”. Prominent among them were Ana Moore, Gonzalo Cosa, Susana Sánchez, and myself. It is always a great pleasure for those Latin-Americans working abroad to go back to our lands and witness the enthusiasm and engagement of the young people in our home Countries, as well as to establish working ties with the research groups.

The plenary lectures by Ana Moore (Arizona State Univ.), René Nome (Univ. São Carlos and UNICAMP), Susana Sánchez (Univ. California, Irvine), Pedro Aramendía (Univ. Buenos Aires), Teresa Atvars (UNICAMP), Gonzalo Cosa (Univ. Montreal), Andrés Thomas (INIFTA, La Plata), and Silvia Braslavsky (Max-Planck-Inst. for Bioinorg. Chem., Mülheim an der Ruhr) handled a variety of subjects, from the mimicking of natural photosynthesis for solar energy use, single-molecule spectroscopy, photopolymerization, calculations and complexes spectroscopies, to photo-sensitizations and the solvent influence in photoreactions. The invited lectures were mostly given by very engaged younger researchers. The discussions were very lively, as well as the poster sessions in which 160 posters were wonderfully presented in two afternoon sessions.

There was a session dedicated to Carlos Previtali, leader of the photochemistry group at the University of Rio Cuarto (Argentina) and teacher of several generations of photochemists and another dedicated to Eduardo Silva (Universidad Católica de Chile) who has established an internationally recognized research group on flavins and their photoexcited chemistry.

The venue was excellent and we could only complain about the weather, which was rather cold (bad luck !). The Conference excursion was to the very picturesque Elqui Valley, including a visit to a Pisco-making Cellar with the corresponding vineyards, and to the town where Gabriela Mistral (1945 Chilean Literature Nobel Prize) was born. We all shared the happiness of the Chilean colleagues for the rescue of the 33 miners, which happened during the Conference and we also shared the Thursday after-dinner dancing, which, as is a habit in these Conferences, was very lively.

The next ELAFOT will most probably be in Argentina in 2012, and we hope to meet again earlier, during the Inter-American Photochemistry meeting to be held in Mendoza in May 2011.

Silvia E. Braslavsky