

Electronic Supplementary information

Summary tables of calculated energies.

Table 1. Relative energies of the trans and cis tautomers as well as barriers to trans-to-cis tautomerization (in kJ/mol) for molecule **1** in the electronic ground state S_0 and in the first electronic excited state S_1 .

	ΔE (B3LYP/6-311G*) ^a	ΔE (TD-B3LYP/6-311G*) ^b
trans tautomer	0.0	0.0
cis tautomer	+40.2	+40.9
barrier to trans-to-cis tautomerization	+58.6	+61.6

^a: Electronic ground state S_0 .

^b: Electronic excited state S_1 time dependent density functional theory.

Table 2. Relative energies (in kJ/mol) of the various conformers and tautomers of molecule **2** (electronic ground state S_0) as obtained at the B3LYP/6-311G* level of theory.

Trans tautomers	ΔE^a	Cis tautomers	ΔE^a
up-down-up-down (udud) ^c	0.0		
		udud-cis ¹	+35.2
		udud-cis ²	+39.8
		udud-cis ³	+39.9
		udud-cis ⁴	+52.3
uduu ^c	+0.2		
		udud-cis ¹	+36.4
		udud-cis ²	+39.4
		udud-cis ³	+40.4
		udud-cis ⁴	+55.1
uudd ^c	+4.5		
		udud-cis ¹	+34.8
		udud-cis ²	+39.0
		udud-cis ³	+40.5
		udud-cis ⁴	+54.9
uuuu ^{c,d}	+4.7		
duud ^{c,d}	+8.2		
uuud ^{c,d}	+11.7		

^a: Relative energies of the 6 trans tautomers (different conformations, see text).

^b: Relative energies with respect to the corresponding trans form.

^c: See main text for further details of the various conformers.

^d: No cis tautomers calculated.

Table 3. Relative energies of the trans and cis tautomers as well as barriers to trans-to-cis tautomerization (in kJ/mol) for molecule **3** in the electronic ground state S_0 .

	ΔE (B3LYP/6-311G*) ^a
trans tautomer	0.0
cis tautomer	+37.6
barrier to trans-to-cis tautomerization	+55.2