Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI)

Ag Nanocrystal as a Promoter for Carbon Nanotube-based Room-temperature Gas Sensors

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Fig. S1 Schematic setup of SnO$_2$ nanoparticle synthesis system.

Fig. S2 (a) Low magnification TEM image and SAED pattern (inset) of SnO$_2$ nanoparticles synthesized at 950 °C. (b) HRTEM image of SnO$_2$ nanoparticles. 0.335 nm lattice spacing is indexed to (110) plane of rutile SnO$_2$. 
**Fig. S3** Low magnification TEM image (a) and SAED pattern (b) of as-produced Ag NPs. (c), and (d) HRTEM images of Ag NPs, and 0.235 nm lattice spacing is indexed to (111) plane of Ag.

**Fig. S4** (a) $I$-$V$ curve evolution of MWCNTs at different conditions (with and without NP coating). (b) The dependence of current on gate voltage.
Fig. S5 Differential IR absorbance spectra of MWCNT hybrid sensors exposed to 100 ppm NO\textsubscript{2} diluted in Ar.
**Fig. S6** Upper panel: Perspective views of the SnO$_2$ (110) surface with the coordination number of different Sn atoms labeled, (a) planar-reduced surface and (b) oxidized surface with oxygen atoms sitting on the bridge sites. Lower panel: Charge density difference upon NO$_2$ molecule adsorption on the surface. Green and yellow represent electron accumulation and depletion regions, respectively. (c) NO$_2$ is attracted directly to the Sn4 atom with gain of 0.0576 e⁻. (d) NO$_2$ forms NO$_3$ complexes with gain of 0.0069 e⁻. For NH$_3$ adsorption, it prefers the Sn5 site instead of the bridging oxygen. However, this site is preoccupied by O$_2$ at room temperature and leads to the reluctance of sensor to NH$_3$. 

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**Electronic Supplementary Material (ESI) for Nanoscale**

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**Fig. S7** Representative sensing response of Ag/SnO$_2$/MWCNTs hybrid structures to 100 ppm NO$_2$ at room temperature.

**Fig. S8** Differential IR absorbance spectra of MWCNT hybrid sensors exposed to 1% NH$_3$ diluted in Ar. Spectra are scaled and offset for clarity. Features at 2,350 cm$^{-1}$ and 1,400-1,800 cm$^{-1}$ are due to incomplete cancellation of atmospheric CO$_2$ and water vapor, respectively. Gas-phase NH$_3$ rotation-vibration bands are present in the region.
900-1,200 cm\(^{-1}\). The MWCNT and MWCNT/SnO\(_2\) spectra are quite similar, with only small difference between the two in the region 900-1,100 cm\(^{-1}\).

**Fig. S9** (a) SEM image of MWCNTs coated with Ag NPs. Inset is an SEM image showing the hybrid structure bridging two gold electrodes. (b) I-V characteristics of MWCNTs and MWCNTs/Ag. (c) and (d) are sensing responses of bare MWCNTs and MWCNTs/Ag structures to 100 ppm NO\(_2\) and 1% NH\(_3\) at room temperature, respectively.

**Fig. S10** SEM image of MWCNTs with full surface coverage of SnO\(_2\) NPs
**Fig. S11** $I$-$V$ curve evolution of the control sample, which was obtained by first coating MWCNTs with SnO$_2$ NPs at a high coverage followed by additional coating of Ag NPs.