

Electronic Supporting Information (ESI†)

for

Novel mitochondria targeted copper(II) complexes of ferrocenyl terpyridine and anticancer active 8-hydroxyquinolines showing remarkable cytotoxicity, DNA and protein binding affinity

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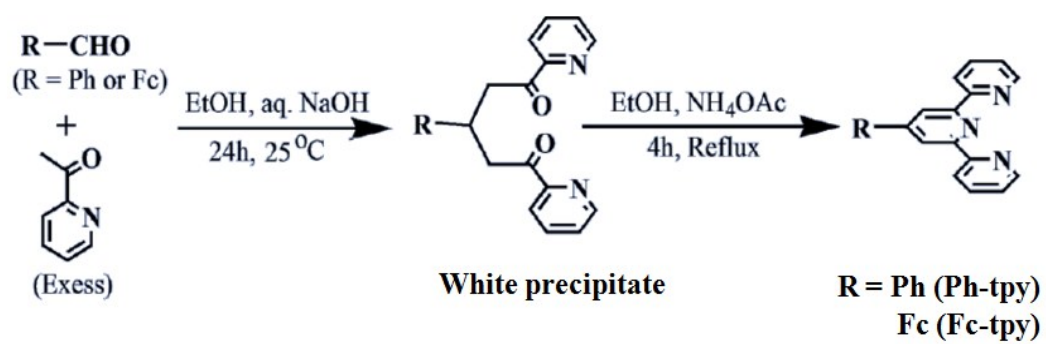


Fig. S1: Synthetic scheme for the preparation of Ph-tpy and Fc-tpy ligands.

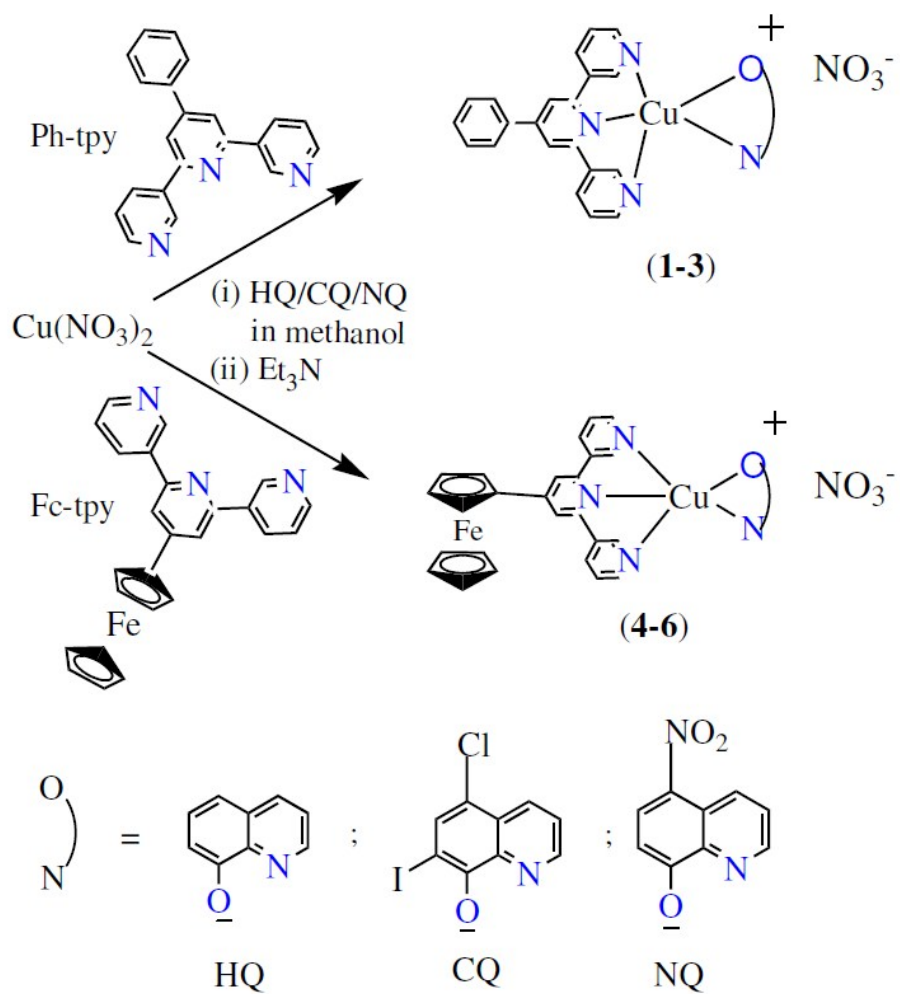


Fig. S2: Synthetic scheme for the preparation of the complexes **1-6**.

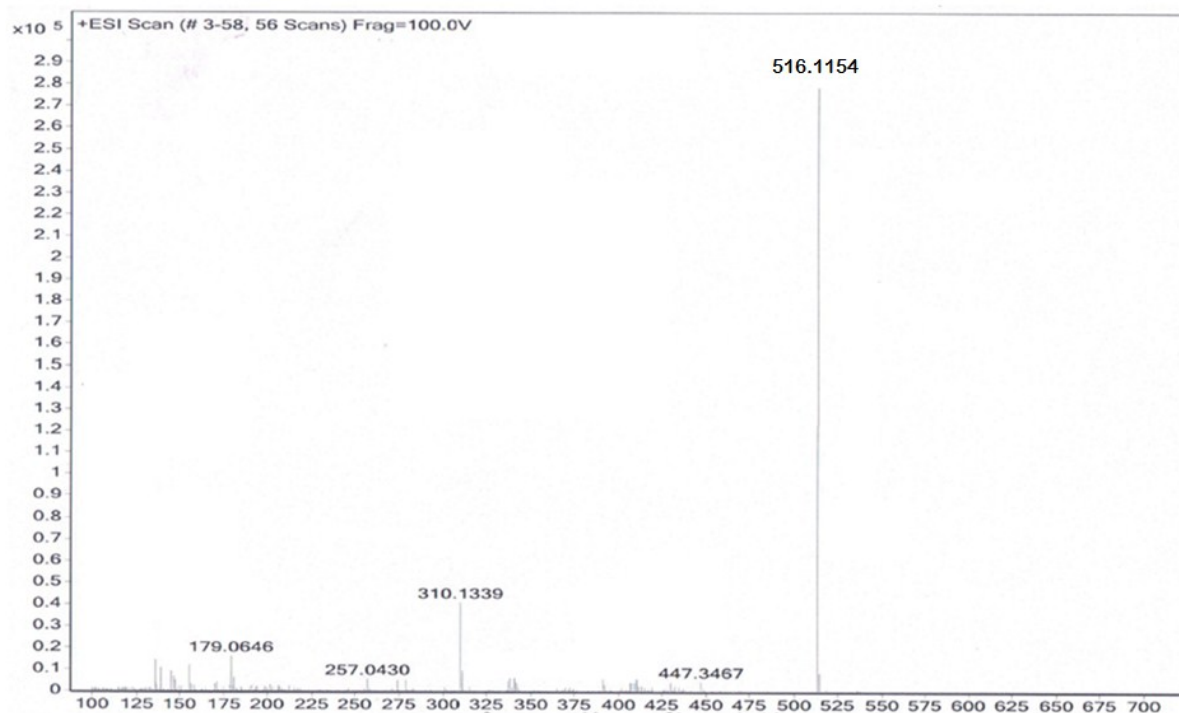


Fig. S3. The ESI-MS spectrum of complex $[\text{Cu}(\text{Ph-tpy})(\text{HQ})]\text{NO}_3$ (**1**) showing the prominent $[\text{M}-(\text{NO}_3^-)]^+$ peak at $m/z = 516.1154$. The peak at 310.1339 corresponds to $\text{M} + 1$ species for the Ph-tpy ligand.

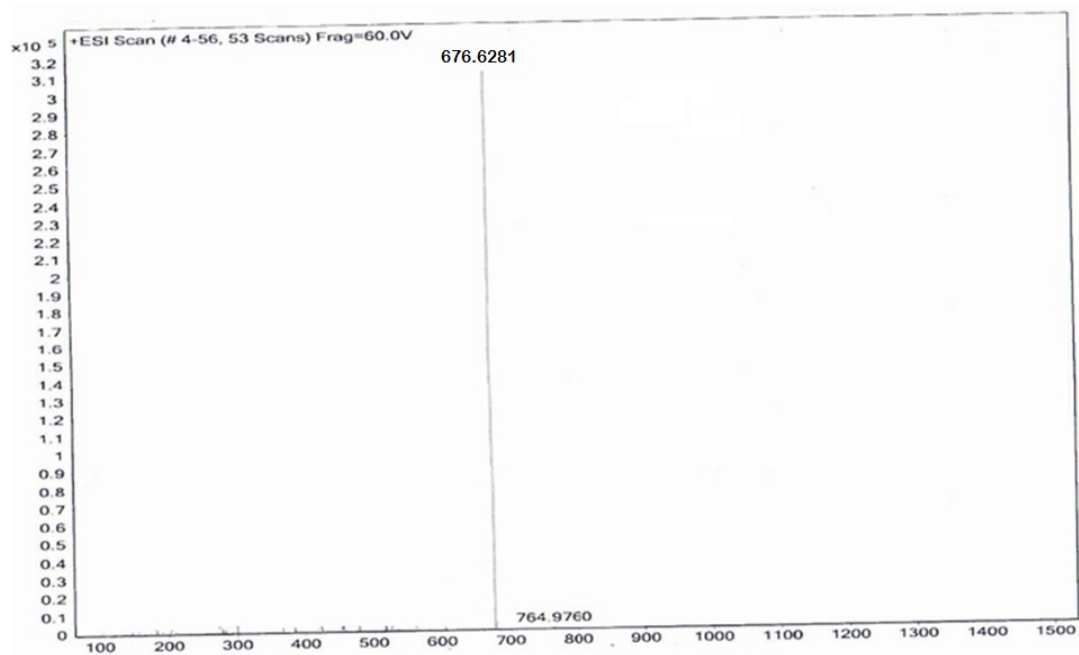


Fig. S4. The ESI-MS spectrum of the complex $[\text{Cu}(\text{Ph-tpy})(\text{CQ})]\text{NO}_3$ (**2**) showing the prominent $[\text{M}-(\text{NO}_3^-)]^+$ peak at $m/z = 676.6281$

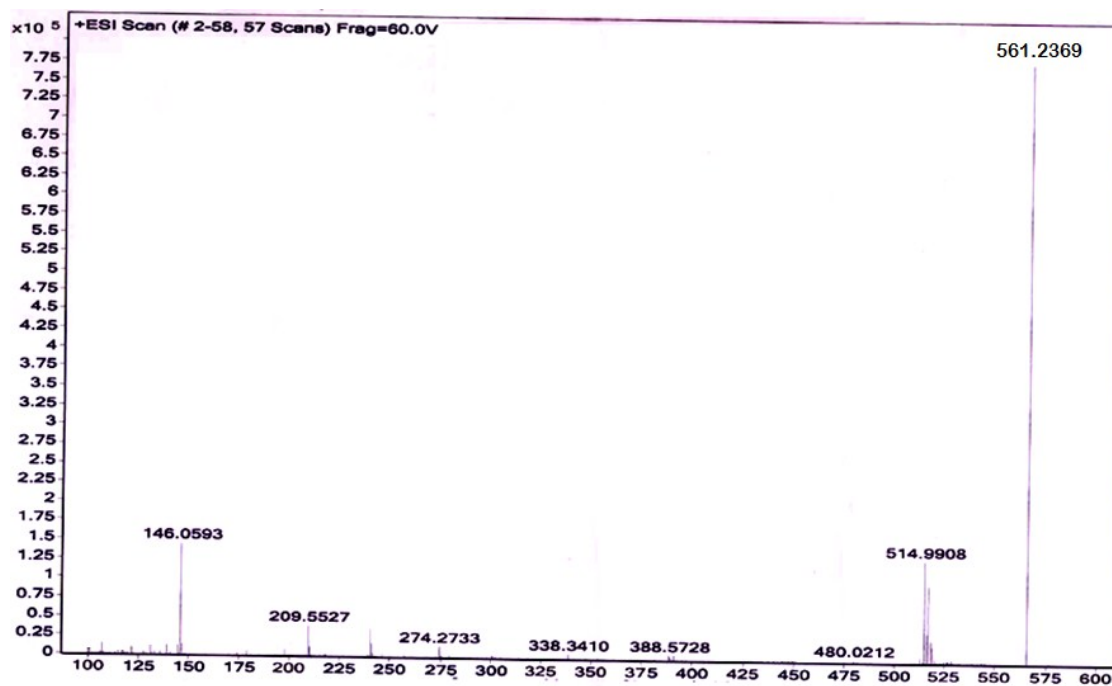


Fig. S5. The ESI-MS spectrum of the complex $[\text{Cu}(\text{Ph-tpy})(\text{NQ})]\text{NO}_3$ (**3**) showing the prominent $[\text{M}-(\text{NO}_3^-)]^+$ peak at $m/z = 561.2369$.

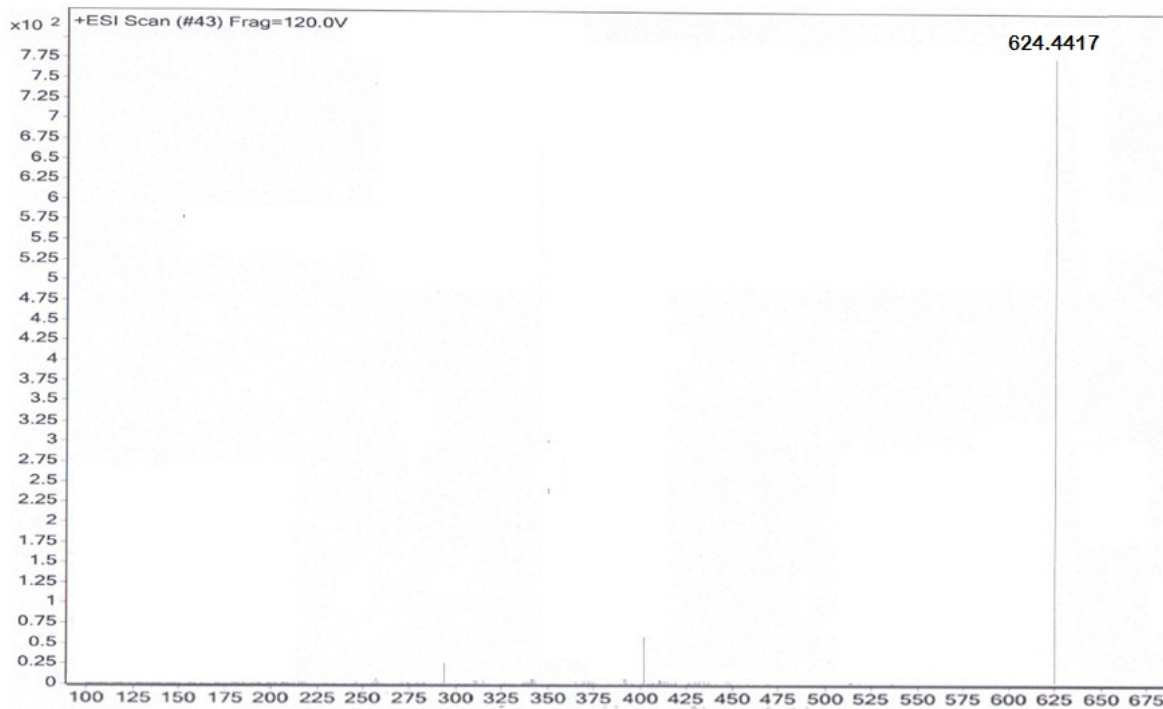


Fig. S6. The ESI-MS spectrum of the complex $[\text{Cu}(\text{Fc-tpy})(\text{HQ})]\text{NO}_3$ (**4**) showing the prominent $[\text{M}-(\text{NO}_3^-)]^+$ peak at $m/z = 624.4417$.

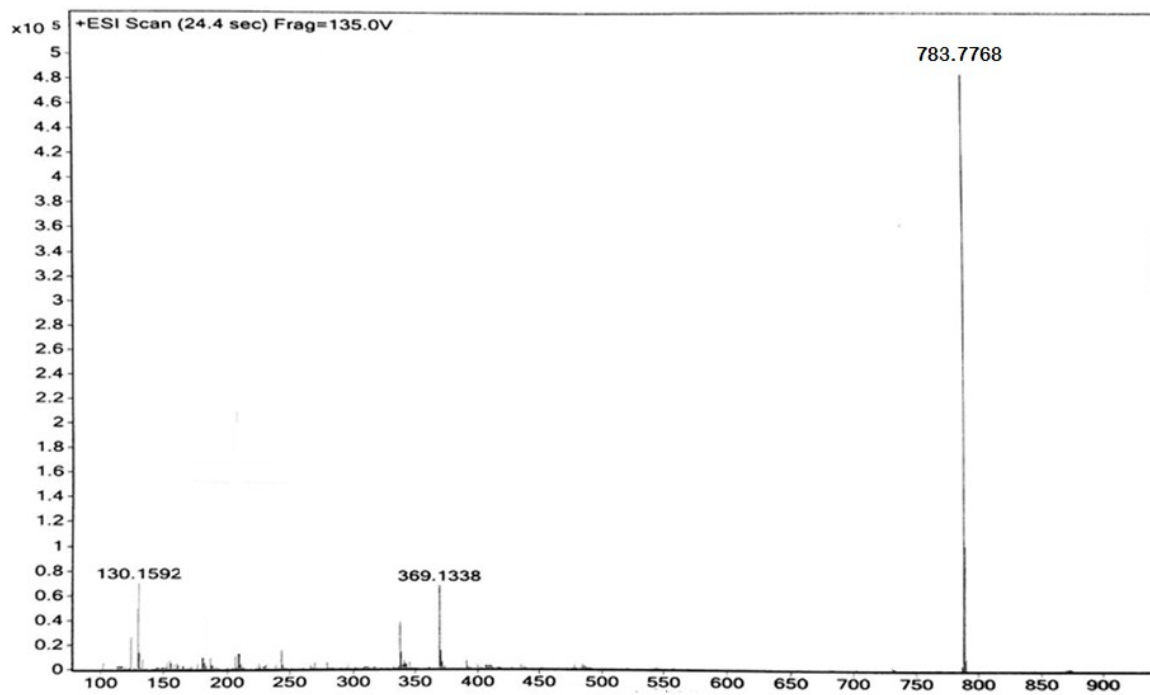


Fig. S7. The ESI-MS spectrum of the complex $[\text{Cu}(\text{Fc-tpy})(\text{CQ})]\text{NO}_3$ (**5**) showing the prominent $[\text{M}-(\text{NO}_3^-)]^+$ peak at $m/z = 783.7768$.

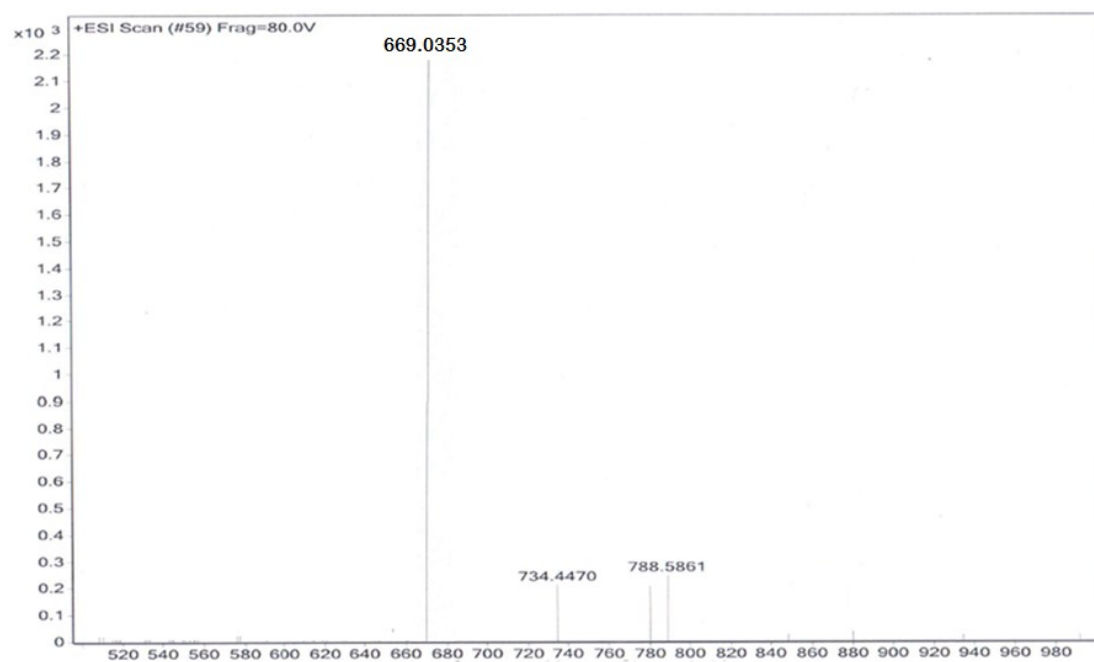


Fig. S8. The ESI-MS spectrum of the complex $[\text{Cu}(\text{Fc-tpy})(\text{NQ})]\text{NO}_3$ (**6**) showing the prominent $[\text{M}-(\text{NO}_3^-)]^+$ peak at $m/z = 669.0353$.

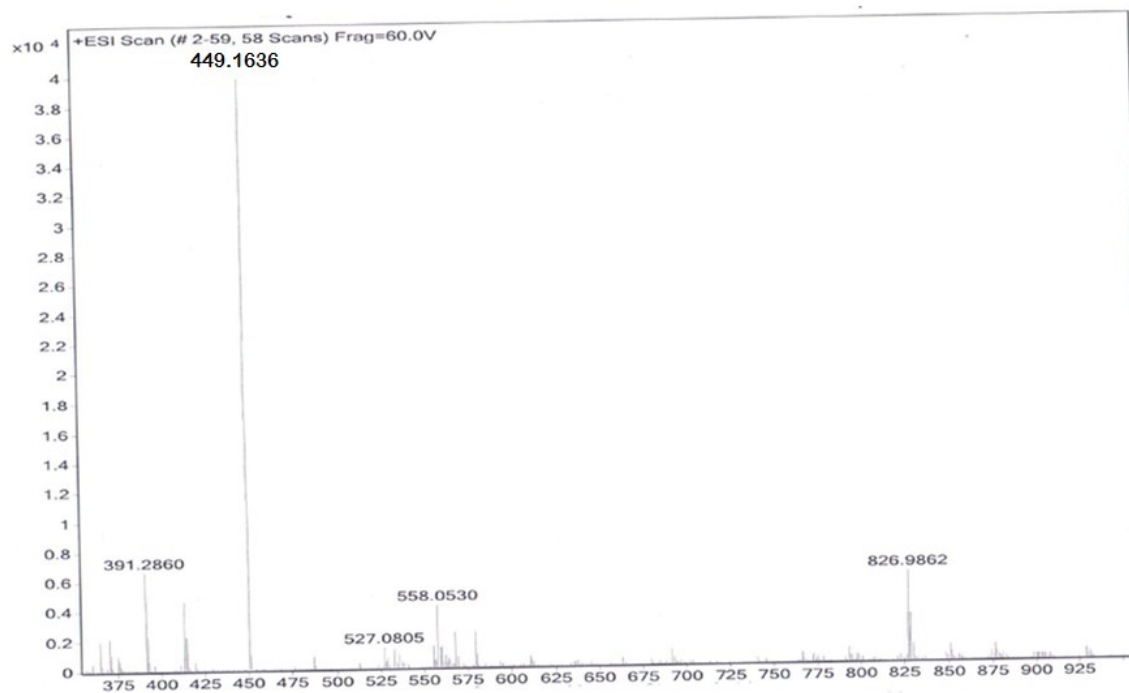


Fig. S9. The ESI-MS spectrum of the complex $[\text{Cu}(\text{Fc-tpy})_2](\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (**7**) showing the prominent $[\text{M}-2(\text{ClO}_4^-)]^{2+}$ peak at $m/z = 449.1636$.

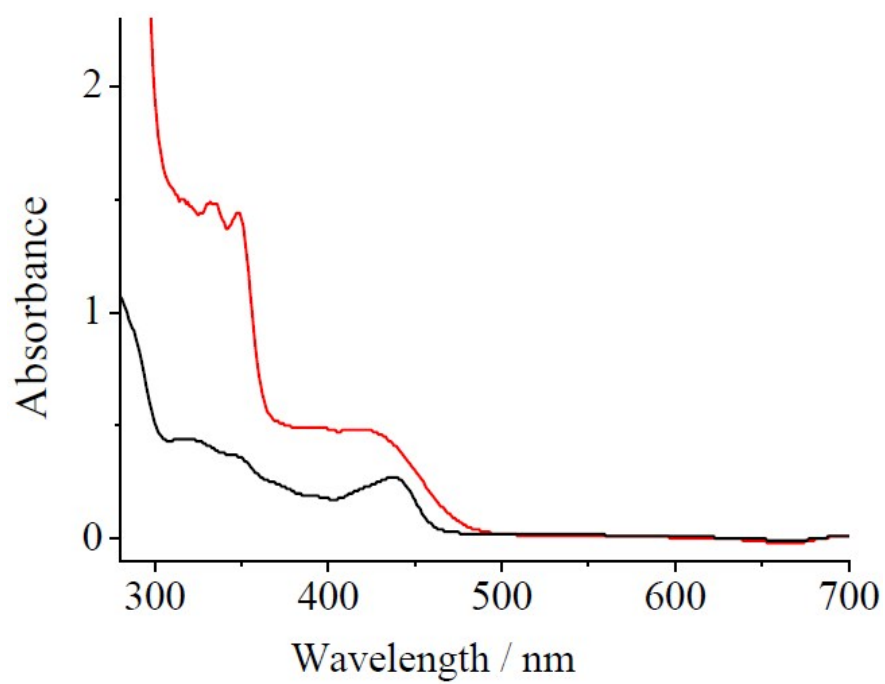


Fig. S10. The electronic absorption spectra of complexes **2** (red) and **3** (black) recorded in DMF.

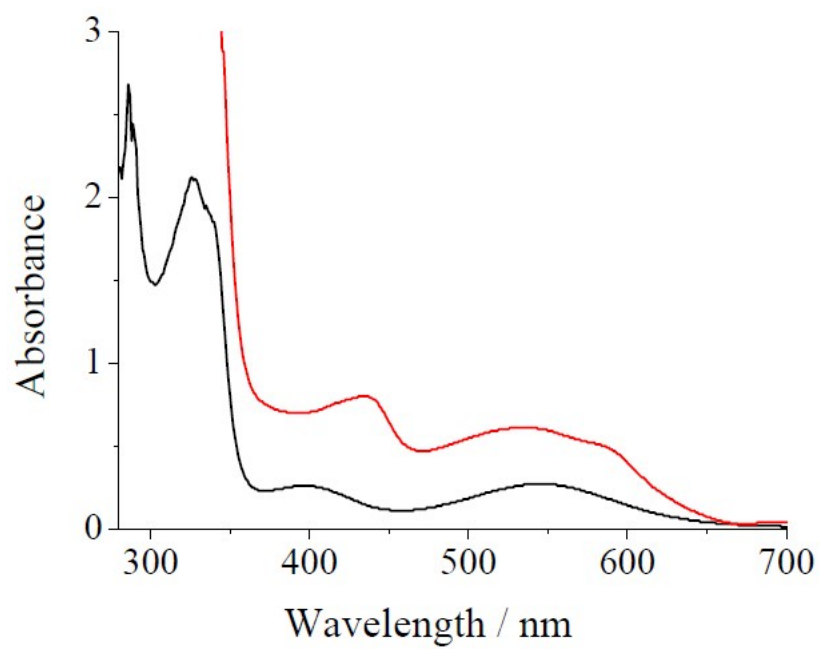


Fig. S11. The electronic absorption spectra of complexes **4** (black) and **6** (red) recorded in DMF.

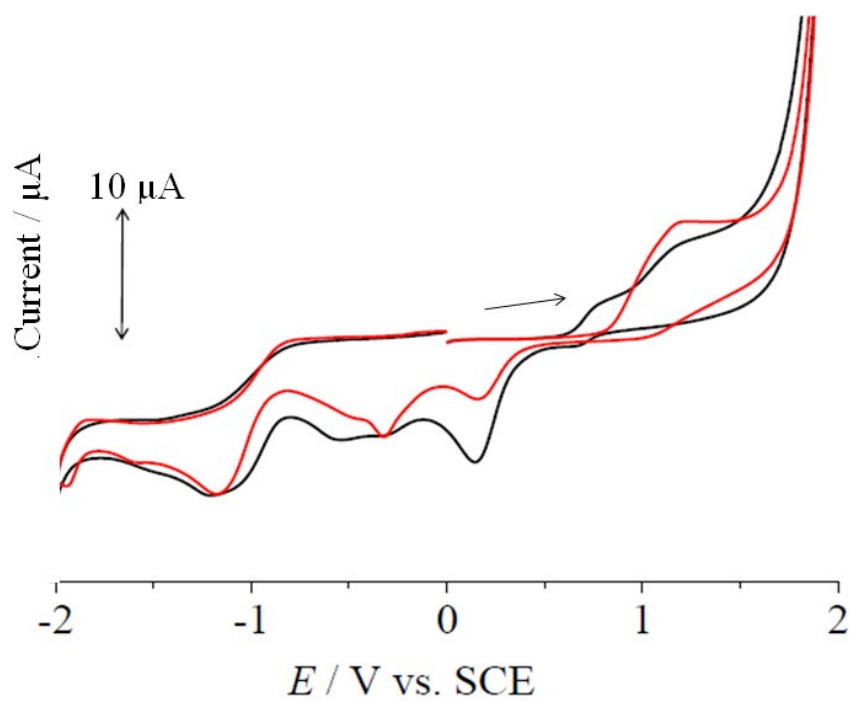


Fig. S12. Cyclic voltammograms of complexes **1** (red) and **4** (black) recorded in DMF in the presence of 0.1 M TBAP as supporting electrolyte.

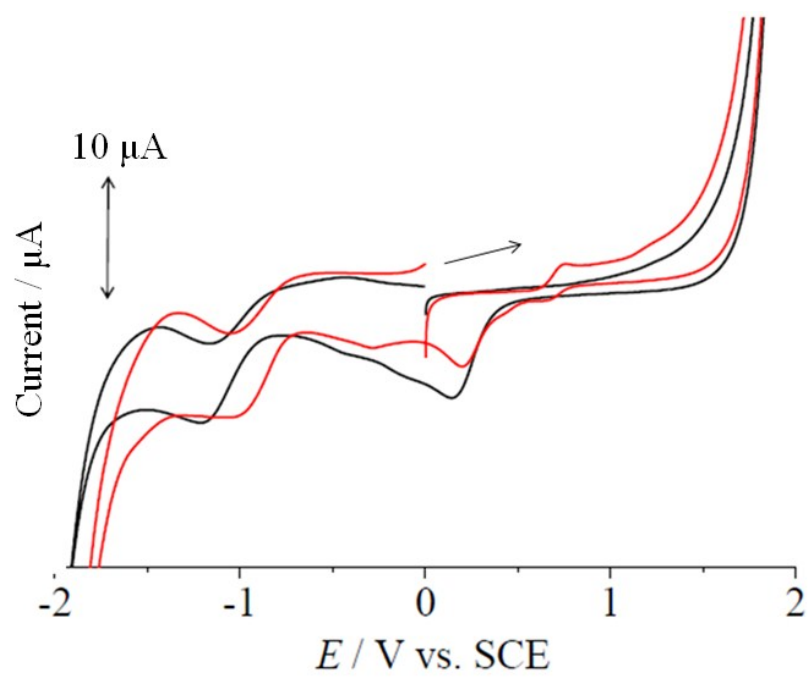


Fig. S13. Cyclic voltammograms of complexes **3** (black) and **6** (red curve) recorded in DMF in the presence of 0.1 M TBAP as supporting electrolyte.

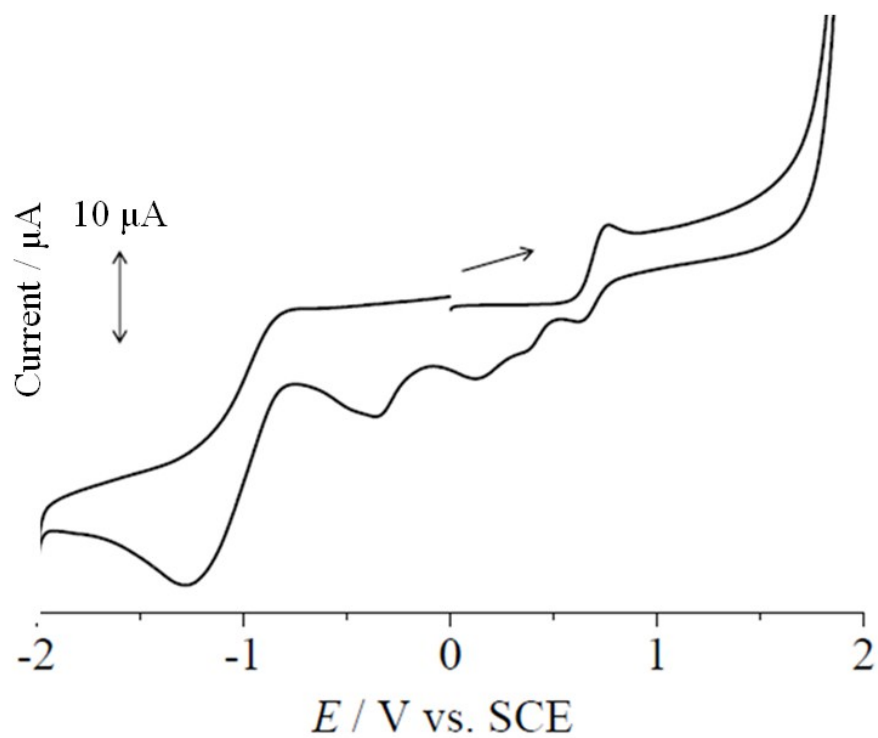


Fig. S14. Cyclic voltammograms of complex 7 recorded in DMF in the presence of 0.1 M TBAP as supporting electrolyte.

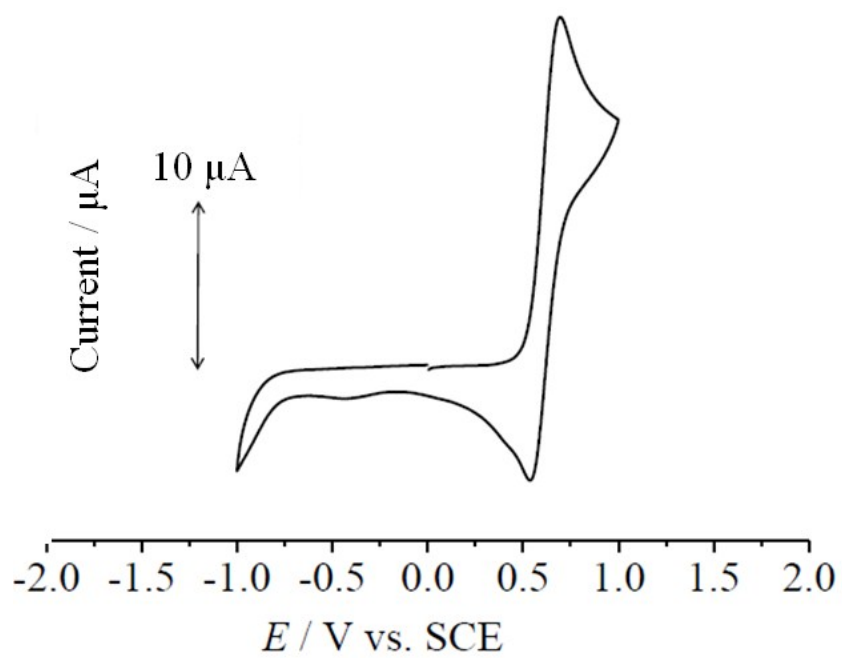


Fig. S15. Cyclic voltammograms of the free Fc-tpy ligand recorded in DMF in the presence of 0.1 M TBAP as supporting electrolyte.

Table S1. Selected bond distances (Å) and angles (°) for the complex [Fe(Fc-tpy)₂](NO₃)(PF₆).2H₂O (**7** as NO₃⁻PF₆⁻ salt) with estimated standard deviations (esd) in the parentheses.

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Cu(1)-N(1A) | 2.180(3) | N(2A)-Cu(1)-N(2B) | 175.11(15) |
| Cu(1)-N(1B) | 2.180(3) | N(2A)-Cu(1)-N(3B) | 99.51(10) |
| Cu(1)-N(2A) | 1.973(3) | N(1B)-Cu(1)-N(3A) | 93.87(11) |
| Cu(1)-N(2B) | 1.973(3) | N(2B)-Cu(1)-N(3A) | 99.51(10) |
| Cu(1)-N(3A) | 2.182(3) | N(3B)-Cu(1)-N(3A) | 95.63(15) |
| Cu(1)-N(3B) | 2.182(3) | N(1A)-Cu(1)-N(2A) | 77.60(10) |
| N(1A)-Cu(1)-N(1B) | 87.84(16) | N(1A)-Cu(1)-N(3A) | 154.15(10) |
| N(1A)-Cu(1)-N(2B) | 106.03(11) | N(2A)-Cu(1)-N(3A) | 77.14(10) |
| N(1A)-Cu(1)-N(3B) | 93.87(11) | N(1B)-Cu(1)-N(2B) | 77.60(10) |
| N(2A)-Cu(1)-N(1B) | 106.03(11) | N(1B)-Cu(1)-N(3B) | 154.15(10) |
| | | N(2B)-Cu(1)-N(3B) | 77.14(10) |

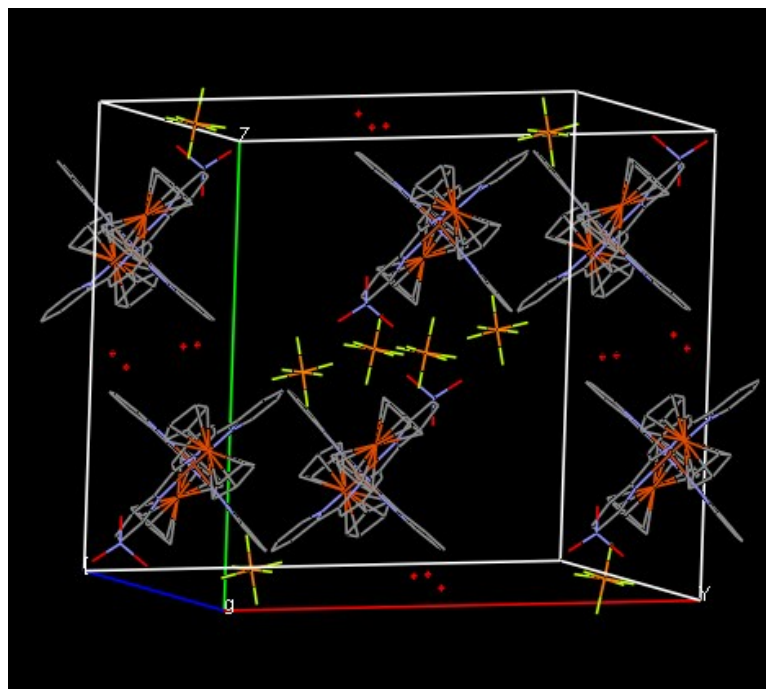


Fig. S16. The unit cell packing diagram for complex **7** (as NO₃⁻PF₆⁻ salt) in the solid state.

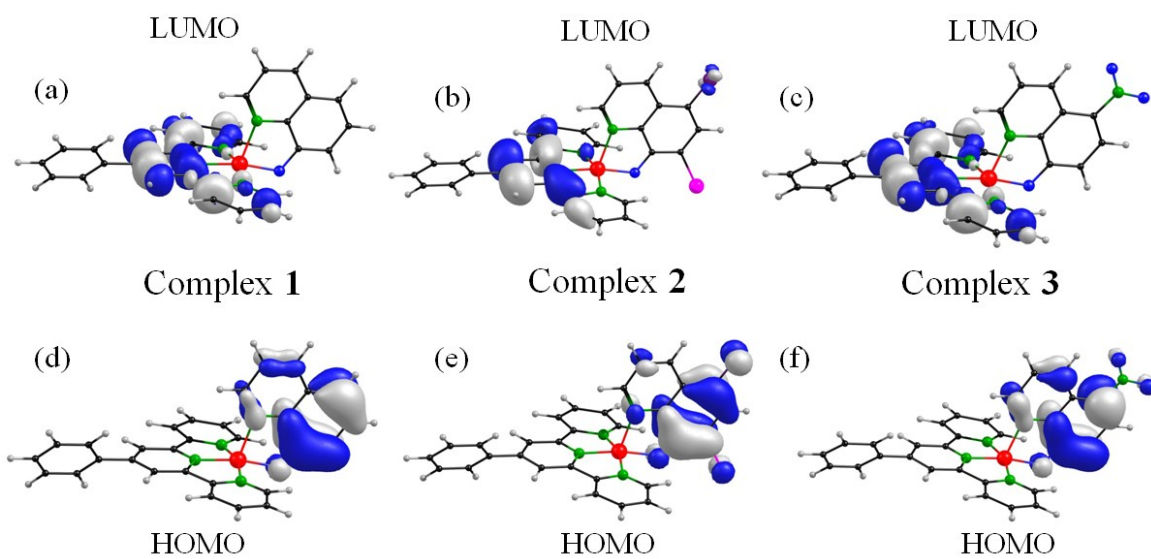


Fig. S17. The HOMOs and LUMOs of the complexes **1-3** corresponding to their DFT optimized structures.

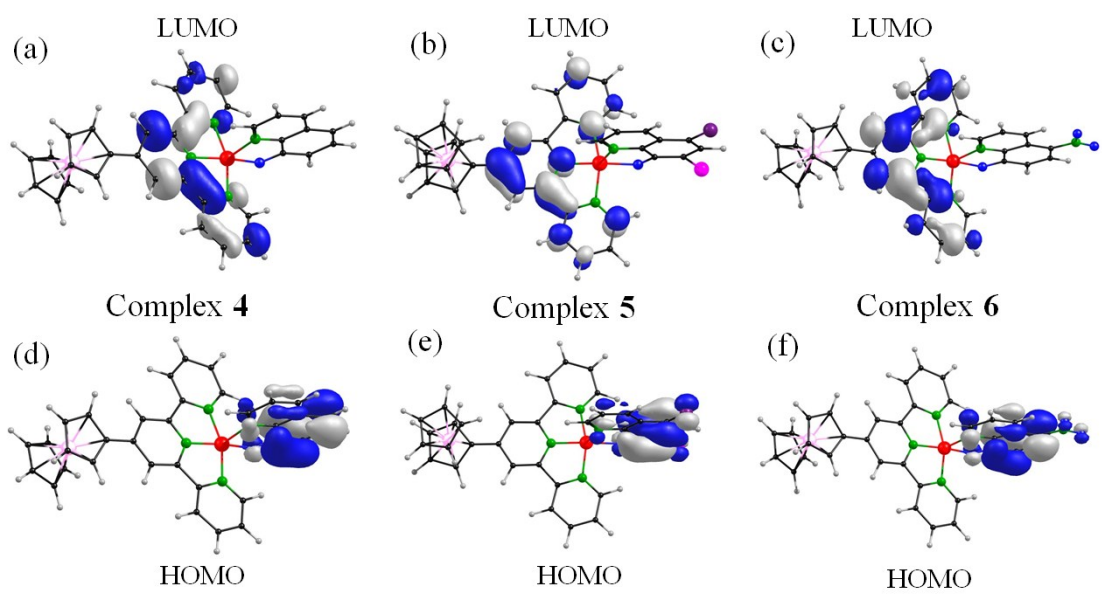


Fig. S18. The HOMOs and LUMOs of the complexes **4-6** corresponding to their DFT optimized structures.

Table S2. The DFT coordinates used for energy optimization of complex **1**.

| Centre No. | Atomic No. | Atomic Type | Coordinates (Angstroms) | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | X | Y | Z |
| 1 | 6 | 0 | 0.053684 | -4.632261 | -0.981229 |
| 2 | 6 | 0 | -0.917142 | -3.660626 | -0.667237 |
| 3 | 6 | 0 | -0.544738 | -2.318603 | -0.677071 |
| 4 | 7 | 0 | 0.752526 | -1.910206 | -0.979804 |
| 5 | 6 | 0 | 1.669377 | -2.859011 | -1.283378 |
| 6 | 6 | 0 | 1.348146 | -4.234580 | -1.293599 |
| 7 | 6 | 0 | -3.532526 | -0.008604 | 0.062614 |
| 8 | 6 | 0 | -2.844841 | 1.219731 | -0.041925 |
| 9 | 6 | 0 | -1.473685 | 1.202618 | -0.313871 |
| 10 | 7 | 0 | -0.808648 | 0.014846 | -0.467688 |
| 11 | 6 | 0 | -1.469188 | -1.183329 | -0.396277 |
| 12 | 6 | 0 | -2.839416 | -1.224434 | -0.122700 |
| 13 | 6 | 0 | -0.926607 | 3.694573 | -0.393171 |
| 14 | 6 | 0 | 0.042048 | 4.689394 | -0.632358 |
| 15 | 6 | 0 | 1.336653 | 4.319489 | -0.976616 |
| 16 | 6 | 0 | 1.660590 | 2.947843 | -1.072262 |
| 17 | 7 | 0 | 0.745961 | 1.976677 | -0.841437 |
| 18 | 6 | 0 | -0.551913 | 2.358067 | -0.507677 |
| 19 | 6 | 0 | 5.099383 | 0.041111 | -0.931791 |
| 20 | 6 | 0 | 3.744733 | 0.027480 | -0.590771 |
| 21 | 6 | 0 | 3.372771 | -0.021587 | 0.814293 |
| 22 | 6 | 0 | 4.385200 | -0.054703 | 1.813541 |
| 23 | 6 | 0 | 5.746761 | -0.039317 | 1.421612 |
| 24 | 6 | 0 | 6.080961 | 0.007601 | 0.076458 |
| 25 | 7 | 0 | 2.010508 | -0.033301 | 1.103155 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 26 | 6 | 0 | 1.653888 | -0.078042 | 2.391451 |
| 27 | 6 | 0 | 2.604316 | -0.113770 | 3.463437 |
| 28 | 6 | 0 | 3.946965 | -0.102356 | 3.180119 |
| 29 | 8 | 0 | 2.795951 | 0.057556 | -1.495659 |
| 30 | 29 | 0 | 1.057035 | 0.030344 | -0.819630 |
| 31 | 6 | 0 | -4.979200 | -0.022033 | 0.356695 |
| 32 | 6 | 0 | -5.469216 | -0.777173 | 1.434981 |
| 33 | 6 | 0 | -6.838178 | -0.783756 | 1.712522 |
| 34 | 6 | 0 | -7.721070 | -0.048221 | 0.914294 |
| 35 | 6 | 0 | -7.233757 | 0.700086 | -0.162737 |
| 36 | 6 | 0 | -5.865197 | 0.719495 | -0.442065 |
| 37 | 1 | 0 | -0.219295 | -5.692691 | -0.979188 |
| 38 | 1 | 0 | -1.937203 | -3.964106 | -0.425275 |
| 39 | 1 | 0 | 2.688882 | -2.502496 | -1.529472 |
| 40 | 1 | 0 | 2.119195 | -4.968393 | -1.546223 |
| 41 | 1 | 0 | -3.383998 | 2.160042 | 0.094312 |
| 42 | 1 | 0 | -3.378241 | -2.173083 | -0.065903 |
| 43 | 1 | 0 | -1.946192 | 3.976434 | -0.124523 |
| 44 | 1 | 0 | -0.232589 | 5.745967 | -0.547193 |
| 45 | 1 | 0 | 2.105950 | 5.072083 | -1.173089 |
| 46 | 1 | 0 | 2.680616 | 2.613319 | -1.345572 |
| 47 | 1 | 0 | 5.384717 | 0.077793 | -1.980428 |
| 48 | 1 | 0 | 6.522633 | -0.064485 | 2.183213 |
| 49 | 1 | 0 | 7.133124 | 0.019352 | -0.219870 |
| 50 | 1 | 0 | 0.583992 | -0.086927 | 2.623027 |
| 51 | 1 | 0 | 2.240067 | -0.149365 | 4.489742 |
| 52 | 1 | 0 | 4.696522 | -0.128668 | 3.973439 |
| 53 | 1 | 0 | -4.786367 | -1.347683 | 2.063452 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 54 | 1 | 0 | -7.220142 | -1.364421 | 2.554025 |
| 55 | 1 | 0 | -8.791067 | -0.058448 | 1.131847 |
| 56 | 1 | 0 | -7.924633 | 1.269996 | -0.786637 |
| 57 | 1 | 0 | -5.492820 | 1.298780 | -1.286417 |

Table S3. The DFT coordinates used for energy optimization of complex **2**.

| Centre No. | Atomic No. | Atomic Type | Coordinates (Angstroms) | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | X | Y | Z |
| 1 | 6 | 0 | -1.100717 | -4.530578 | -1.268121 |
| 2 | 6 | 0 | -2.095654 | -3.588481 | -0.937633 |
| 3 | 6 | 0 | -1.722827 | -2.258423 | -0.763509 |
| 4 | 7 | 0 | -0.401036 | -1.835111 | -0.896407 |
| 5 | 6 | 0 | 0.538521 | -2.753393 | -1.223456 |
| 6 | 6 | 0 | 0.216930 | -4.115440 | -1.416974 |
| 7 | 6 | 0 | -4.759782 | 0.004869 | -0.071756 |
| 8 | 6 | 0 | -4.061058 | 1.229806 | 0.002242 |
| 9 | 6 | 0 | -2.671463 | 1.222520 | -0.147130 |
| 10 | 7 | 0 | -2.001383 | 0.045140 | -0.352048 |
| 11 | 6 | 0 | -2.668189 | -1.147476 | -0.454894 |
| 12 | 6 | 0 | -4.057246 | -1.196931 | -0.309382 |
| 13 | 6 | 0 | -2.103338 | 3.705528 | 0.030085 |
| 14 | 6 | 0 | -1.110296 | 4.703221 | -0.041332 |
| 15 | 6 | 0 | 0.207714 | 4.344425 | -0.295955 |
| 16 | 6 | 0 | 0.531733 | 2.980048 | -0.467770 |
| 17 | 7 | 0 | -0.405935 | 2.006294 | -0.393323 |
| 18 | 6 | 0 | -1.728326 | 2.377343 | -0.153473 |
| 19 | 6 | 0 | 3.925381 | 0.022718 | -0.167624 |
| 20 | 6 | 0 | 2.538209 | 0.001170 | 0.013056 |
| 21 | 6 | 0 | 2.023507 | -0.172092 | 1.367617 |
| 22 | 6 | 0 | 2.913104 | -0.313305 | 2.467842 |
| 23 | 6 | 0 | 4.310181 | -0.280492 | 2.202347 |
| 24 | 6 | 0 | 4.806363 | -0.116763 | 0.917362 |
| 25 | 7 | 0 | 0.638460 | -0.188210 | 1.498505 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---|------------|-----------|-----------|
| 26 | 6 | 0 | 0.137510 | -0.345050 | 2.731352 |
| 27 | 6 | 0 | 0.959618 | -0.493612 | 3.892216 |
| 28 | 6 | 0 | 2.328800 | -0.478390 | 3.764662 |
| 29 | 8 | 0 | 1.694863 | 0.128284 | -0.969687 |
| 30 | 29 | 0 | -0.116699 | 0.068193 | -0.511652 |
| 31 | 6 | 0 | -6.226715 | -0.018639 | 0.089812 |
| 32 | 6 | 0 | -6.815146 | -0.872742 | 1.037285 |
| 33 | 6 | 0 | -8.203440 | -0.888805 | 1.190004 |
| 34 | 6 | 0 | -9.007855 | -0.064048 | 0.395976 |
| 35 | 6 | 0 | -8.422483 | 0.783077 | -0.551238 |
| 36 | 6 | 0 | -7.034352 | 0.812174 | -0.704366 |
| 37 | 1 | 0 | -1.374314 | -5.581716 | -1.408986 |
| 38 | 1 | 0 | -3.134283 | -3.905629 | -0.826908 |
| 39 | 1 | 0 | 1.577304 | -2.383150 | -1.341035 |
| 40 | 1 | 0 | 1.007168 | -4.824902 | -1.681871 |
| 41 | 1 | 0 | -4.607620 | 2.159385 | 0.178423 |
| 42 | 1 | 0 | -4.603104 | -2.139928 | -0.391680 |
| 43 | 1 | 0 | -3.141865 | 3.980090 | 0.224138 |
| 44 | 1 | 0 | -1.385513 | 5.753742 | 0.100932 |
| 45 | 1 | 0 | 0.996474 | 5.100076 | -0.365373 |
| 46 | 1 | 0 | 1.571044 | 2.655723 | -0.678590 |
| 47 | 1 | 0 | 5.889905 | -0.095876 | 0.745973 |
| 48 | 1 | 0 | -0.952772 | -0.357560 | 2.837087 |
| 49 | 1 | 0 | 0.484263 | -0.617209 | 4.865917 |
| 50 | 1 | 0 | 2.978561 | -0.590293 | 4.638168 |
| 51 | 1 | 0 | -6.194257 | -1.513391 | 1.662438 |
| 52 | 1 | 0 | -8.662137 | -1.546701 | 1.930379 |
| 53 | 1 | 0 | -10.093212 | -0.081827 | 0.515414 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 54 | 1 | 0 | -9.052106 | 1.422717 | -1.172537 |
| 55 | 1 | 0 | -6.585434 | 1.468920 | -1.448973 |
| 56 | 53 | 0 | 4.687751 | 0.267975 | -2.097839 |
| 57 | 17 | 0 | 5.409036 | -0.448191 | 3.508082 |

Table S4. The DFT coordinates used for energy optimization of complex **3**.

| Centre No. | Atomic No. | Atomic Type | Coordinates (Angstroms) | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | X | Y | Z |
| 1 | 6 | 0 | -0.591927 | -4.618519 | -1.164998 |
| 2 | 6 | 0 | -1.533422 | -3.654211 | -0.753388 |
| 3 | 6 | 0 | -1.169518 | -2.310548 | -0.783909 |
| 4 | 7 | 0 | 0.093260 | -1.891426 | -1.200724 |
| 5 | 6 | 0 | 0.980994 | -2.833826 | -1.598582 |
| 6 | 6 | 0 | 0.665929 | -4.210631 | -1.592390 |
| 7 | 6 | 0 | -4.082212 | -0.019105 | 0.258319 |
| 8 | 6 | 0 | -3.411204 | 1.212949 | 0.094426 |
| 9 | 6 | 0 | -2.074272 | 1.204330 | -0.311298 |
| 10 | 7 | 0 | -1.423829 | 0.019430 | -0.538866 |
| 11 | 6 | 0 | -2.068992 | -1.183067 | -0.408955 |
| 12 | 6 | 0 | -3.404648 | -1.230870 | -0.002017 |
| 13 | 6 | 0 | -1.543152 | 3.697423 | -0.432009 |
| 14 | 6 | 0 | -0.603724 | 4.696521 | -0.756026 |
| 15 | 6 | 0 | 0.654121 | 4.330989 | -1.220207 |
| 16 | 6 | 0 | 0.971705 | 2.960879 | -1.349972 |
| 17 | 7 | 0 | 0.086089 | 1.984916 | -1.037470 |
| 18 | 6 | 0 | -1.177286 | 2.362624 | -0.584484 |
| 19 | 6 | 0 | 4.434894 | 0.071181 | -1.581803 |
| 20 | 6 | 0 | 3.113619 | 0.050658 | -1.104142 |
| 21 | 6 | 0 | 2.894611 | -0.007526 | 0.342010 |
| 22 | 6 | 0 | 3.988580 | -0.042256 | 1.244213 |
| 23 | 6 | 0 | 5.307666 | -0.019318 | 0.700552 |
| 24 | 6 | 0 | 5.501291 | 0.036604 | -0.691545 |
| 25 | 7 | 0 | 1.560176 | -0.024872 | 0.739634 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 26 | 6 | 0 | 1.306174 | -0.076777 | 2.049201 |
| 27 | 6 | 0 | 2.344851 | -0.114657 | 3.035227 |
| 28 | 6 | 0 | 3.656702 | -0.097920 | 2.642067 |
| 29 | 8 | 0 | 2.087257 | 0.081016 | -1.886830 |
| 30 | 29 | 0 | 0.388813 | 0.044490 | -1.057437 |
| 31 | 6 | 0 | -5.491829 | -0.040454 | 0.693229 |
| 32 | 6 | 0 | -5.874651 | -0.821701 | 1.796484 |
| 33 | 6 | 0 | -7.209298 | -0.835435 | 2.207904 |
| 34 | 6 | 0 | -8.165504 | -0.081444 | 1.518638 |
| 35 | 6 | 0 | -7.785715 | 0.692728 | 0.416770 |
| 36 | 6 | 0 | -6.451573 | 0.719751 | 0.004123 |
| 37 | 1 | 0 | -0.858982 | -5.681029 | -1.147583 |
| 38 | 1 | 0 | -2.526171 | -3.965539 | -0.421528 |
| 39 | 1 | 0 | 1.971515 | -2.474711 | -1.937496 |
| 40 | 1 | 0 | 1.413949 | -4.938583 | -1.922972 |
| 41 | 1 | 0 | -3.938112 | 2.150301 | 0.290793 |
| 42 | 1 | 0 | -3.932197 | -2.182585 | 0.102019 |
| 43 | 1 | 0 | -2.535076 | 3.975784 | -0.069779 |
| 44 | 1 | 0 | -0.872163 | 5.752662 | -0.641796 |
| 45 | 1 | 0 | 1.400472 | 5.087068 | -1.484846 |
| 46 | 1 | 0 | 1.962730 | 2.635495 | -1.719952 |
| 47 | 1 | 0 | 6.532927 | 0.053200 | -1.080183 |
| 48 | 1 | 0 | 0.258672 | -0.090165 | 2.368605 |
| 49 | 1 | 0 | 2.072057 | -0.156410 | 4.091451 |
| 50 | 1 | 0 | 4.473645 | -0.126448 | 3.383279 |
| 51 | 1 | 0 | -5.134450 | -1.406390 | 2.341597 |
| 52 | 1 | 0 | -7.507462 | -1.436107 | 3.069358 |
| 53 | 1 | 0 | -9.209055 | -0.097435 | 1.840830 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 54 | 1 | 0 | -8.534205 | 1.276991 | -0.122030 |
| 55 | 1 | 0 | -6.164367 | 1.319026 | -0.859392 |
| 56 | 7 | 0 | 6.505308 | -0.051888 | 1.540083 |
| 57 | 8 | 0 | 6.377105 | -0.101245 | 2.755819 |
| 58 | 8 | 0 | 7.586025 | -0.027676 | 0.970901 |
| 59 | 1 | 0 | 4.607304 | 0.114551 | -2.657047 |

Table S5. The DFT coordinates used for energy optimization of complex **4**.

| Centre No. | Atomic No. | Atomic Type | Coordinates (Angstroms) | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | X | Y | Z |
| 1 | 6 | 0 | 0.465194 | 4.179854 | -2.559430 |
| 2 | 6 | 0 | -0.344025 | 3.355405 | -1.753764 |
| 3 | 6 | 0 | 0.263066 | 2.585661 | -0.763972 |
| 4 | 7 | 0 | 1.639750 | 2.602053 | -0.553226 |
| 5 | 6 | 0 | 2.400013 | 3.405059 | -1.334866 |
| 6 | 6 | 0 | 1.839035 | 4.210371 | -2.350162 |
| 7 | 6 | 0 | -2.336298 | 0.606641 | 1.292581 |
| 8 | 6 | 0 | -1.407847 | -0.022106 | 2.170006 |
| 9 | 6 | 0 | -0.048071 | 0.227308 | 2.016228 |
| 10 | 7 | 0 | 0.409294 | 1.055227 | 1.021465 |
| 11 | 6 | 0 | -0.467999 | 1.689905 | 0.179474 |
| 12 | 6 | 0 | -1.839850 | 1.479528 | 0.284500 |
| 13 | 6 | 0 | 0.951149 | -1.148981 | 3.921920 |
| 14 | 6 | 0 | 2.106300 | -1.527858 | 4.632961 |
| 15 | 6 | 0 | 3.345215 | -1.028690 | 4.247938 |
| 16 | 6 | 0 | 3.422873 | -0.153339 | 3.142656 |
| 17 | 7 | 0 | 2.324700 | 0.218900 | 2.443108 |
| 18 | 6 | 0 | 1.086788 | -0.279652 | 2.841769 |
| 19 | 6 | 0 | 6.233322 | 1.455544 | 0.006320 |
| 20 | 6 | 0 | 4.867027 | 1.178730 | 0.099518 |
| 21 | 6 | 0 | 4.322630 | 0.064778 | -0.662721 |
| 22 | 6 | 0 | 5.180419 | -0.718459 | -1.483305 |
| 23 | 6 | 0 | 6.559468 | -0.400685 | -1.546837 |
| 24 | 6 | 0 | 7.059498 | 0.664538 | -0.813243 |
| 25 | 7 | 0 | 2.956156 | -0.171535 | -0.537229 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 26 | 6 | 0 | 2.440362 | -1.191105 | -1.230621 |
| 27 | 6 | 0 | 3.228553 | -2.033360 | -2.082170 |
| 28 | 6 | 0 | 4.574655 | -1.801615 | -2.206677 |
| 29 | 8 | 0 | 4.058332 | 1.885326 | 0.847816 |
| 30 | 29 | 0 | 2.267636 | 1.342071 | 0.825819 |
| 31 | 1 | 0 | 0.006880 | 4.791569 | -3.342787 |
| 32 | 1 | 0 | -1.423548 | 3.326984 | -1.908259 |
| 33 | 1 | 0 | 3.489417 | 3.402817 | -1.135580 |
| 34 | 1 | 0 | 2.489149 | 4.845418 | -2.958251 |
| 35 | 1 | 0 | -1.766651 | -0.673667 | 2.968610 |
| 36 | 1 | 0 | -2.531779 | 1.981532 | -0.391796 |
| 37 | 1 | 0 | -0.026487 | -1.531667 | 4.219237 |
| 38 | 1 | 0 | 2.020258 | -2.210441 | 5.484211 |
| 39 | 1 | 0 | 4.256775 | -1.303209 | 4.785870 |
| 40 | 1 | 0 | 4.390411 | 0.267868 | 2.806693 |
| 41 | 1 | 0 | 6.647813 | 2.285770 | 0.572515 |
| 42 | 1 | 0 | 7.217513 | -0.997637 | -2.173250 |
| 43 | 1 | 0 | 8.124450 | 0.905001 | -0.866158 |
| 44 | 1 | 0 | 1.366199 | -1.380149 | -1.134520 |
| 45 | 1 | 0 | 2.739171 | -2.846419 | -2.617147 |
| 46 | 1 | 0 | 5.203062 | -2.423883 | -2.846383 |
| 47 | 6 | 0 | -3.746249 | 0.348756 | 1.412874 |
| 48 | 26 | 0 | -5.049637 | 1.125380 | 2.727362 |
| 49 | 6 | 0 | -4.357004 | -0.717661 | 2.210334 |
| 50 | 6 | 0 | -4.820693 | 1.010034 | 0.687831 |
| 51 | 6 | 0 | -6.042006 | 0.368905 | 1.044041 |
| 52 | 6 | 0 | -5.753044 | -0.702981 | 1.966221 |
| 53 | 6 | 0 | -5.125108 | 1.747330 | 4.669693 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 54 | 6 | 0 | -4.630599 | 2.807395 | 3.816418 |
| 55 | 6 | 0 | -5.644035 | 3.110800 | 2.857936 |
| 56 | 6 | 0 | -6.756101 | 2.222911 | 3.094903 |
| 57 | 6 | 0 | -6.445174 | 1.408620 | 4.239086 |
| 58 | 1 | 0 | -3.808506 | -1.510410 | 2.710365 |
| 59 | 1 | 0 | -4.691228 | 1.751283 | -0.092019 |
| 60 | 1 | 0 | -7.009394 | 0.547958 | 0.585707 |
| 61 | 1 | 0 | -6.472301 | -1.438175 | 2.316912 |
| 62 | 1 | 0 | -4.669348 | 1.442699 | 5.608428 |
| 63 | 1 | 0 | -3.750378 | 3.408719 | 4.023805 |
| 64 | 1 | 0 | -5.643531 | 3.950588 | 2.172602 |
| 65 | 1 | 0 | -7.735422 | 2.311796 | 2.637378 |
| 66 | 1 | 0 | -7.136328 | 0.752914 | 4.759656 |

Table S6. The DFT coordinates used for energy optimization of complex **5**.

| Centre No. | Atomic No. | Atomic Type | Coordinates (Angstroms) | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | X | Y | Z |
| 1 | 6 | 0 | -0.040703 | -4.616052 | -1.039533 |
| 2 | 6 | 0 | -0.990556 | -3.636479 | -0.688806 |
| 3 | 6 | 0 | -0.611988 | -2.296649 | -0.722578 |
| 4 | 7 | 0 | 0.675420 | -1.900220 | -1.080124 |
| 5 | 6 | 0 | 1.571658 | -2.855871 | -1.422968 |
| 6 | 6 | 0 | 1.240823 | -4.228735 | -1.412984 |
| 7 | 6 | 0 | -3.564087 | 0.049568 | 0.113284 |
| 8 | 6 | 0 | -2.851831 | 1.271802 | -0.047850 |
| 9 | 6 | 0 | -1.499907 | 1.235864 | -0.374388 |
| 10 | 7 | 0 | -0.847242 | 0.039902 | -0.536233 |
| 11 | 6 | 0 | -1.519455 | -1.151363 | -0.419181 |
| 12 | 6 | 0 | -2.871269 | -1.177642 | -0.094202 |
| 13 | 6 | 0 | -0.932749 | 3.720651 | -0.560580 |
| 14 | 6 | 0 | 0.032526 | 4.696605 | -0.877880 |
| 15 | 6 | 0 | 1.308313 | 4.302266 | -1.263319 |
| 16 | 6 | 0 | 1.617769 | 2.925511 | -1.319471 |
| 17 | 7 | 0 | 0.706499 | 1.973007 | -1.009102 |
| 18 | 6 | 0 | -0.574863 | 2.377015 | -0.638541 |
| 19 | 6 | 0 | 5.050023 | 0.010766 | -1.163565 |
| 20 | 6 | 0 | 3.700307 | 0.010565 | -0.795070 |
| 21 | 6 | 0 | 3.379044 | -0.018218 | 0.629960 |
| 22 | 6 | 0 | 4.411316 | -0.046276 | 1.605870 |
| 23 | 6 | 0 | 5.758246 | -0.044763 | 1.149526 |
| 24 | 6 | 0 | 6.071986 | -0.016863 | -0.200527 |
| 25 | 7 | 0 | 2.025209 | -0.016102 | 0.949811 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 26 | 6 | 0 | 1.698102 | -0.042604 | 2.247748 |
| 27 | 6 | 0 | 2.672766 | -0.072207 | 3.295121 |
| 28 | 6 | 0 | 4.010721 | -0.073993 | 2.980935 |
| 29 | 8 | 0 | 2.728773 | 0.034928 | -1.655602 |
| 30 | 29 | 0 | 0.990008 | 0.032321 | -0.951755 |
| 31 | 1 | 0 | -0.319685 | -5.674484 | -1.018957 |
| 32 | 1 | 0 | -2.000908 | -3.930791 | -0.399693 |
| 33 | 1 | 0 | 2.580997 | -2.507610 | -1.721130 |
| 34 | 1 | 0 | 1.994504 | -4.968480 | -1.698669 |
| 35 | 1 | 0 | -3.366831 | 2.224065 | 0.080731 |
| 36 | 1 | 0 | -3.398855 | -2.127069 | 0.011895 |
| 37 | 1 | 0 | -1.938877 | 4.020815 | -0.263832 |
| 38 | 1 | 0 | -0.230124 | 5.757931 | -0.822421 |
| 39 | 1 | 0 | 2.073684 | 5.039378 | -1.523690 |
| 40 | 1 | 0 | 2.621739 | 2.571580 | -1.629428 |
| 41 | 1 | 0 | 7.121544 | -0.016311 | -0.520111 |
| 42 | 1 | 0 | 0.632204 | -0.041269 | 2.501464 |
| 43 | 1 | 0 | 2.335349 | -0.093054 | 4.331604 |
| 44 | 1 | 0 | 4.775110 | -0.096287 | 3.763516 |
| 45 | 53 | 0 | 5.542690 | 0.053565 | -3.193809 |
| 46 | 17 | 0 | 7.027590 | -0.078310 | 2.303493 |
| 47 | 6 | 0 | -4.963382 | 0.053071 | 0.442362 |
| 48 | 26 | 0 | -5.838254 | -0.230245 | 2.226548 |
| 49 | 6 | 0 | -5.859898 | -1.104946 | 0.388725 |
| 50 | 6 | 0 | -5.782251 | 1.212903 | 0.765701 |
| 51 | 6 | 0 | -7.127168 | 0.766742 | 0.909183 |
| 52 | 6 | 0 | -7.175367 | -0.654495 | 0.661011 |
| 53 | 6 | 0 | -5.585570 | -1.311924 | 3.938896 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 54 | 6 | 0 | -4.807159 | -0.092072 | 3.989796 |
| 55 | 6 | 0 | -5.708189 | 1.010478 | 3.886665 |
| 56 | 6 | 0 | -7.041611 | 0.479031 | 3.743651 |
| 57 | 6 | 0 | -6.963851 | -0.955527 | 3.814537 |
| 58 | 1 | 0 | -5.592924 | -2.078560 | -0.011954 |
| 59 | 1 | 0 | -5.449177 | 2.244042 | 0.744750 |
| 60 | 1 | 0 | -7.997537 | 1.404156 | 1.029489 |
| 61 | 1 | 0 | -8.083768 | -1.246262 | 0.584620 |
| 62 | 1 | 0 | -5.209465 | -2.299731 | 4.193234 |
| 63 | 1 | 0 | -3.764866 | -0.035893 | 4.287569 |
| 64 | 1 | 0 | -5.459394 | 2.054699 | 4.037263 |
| 65 | 1 | 0 | -7.955795 | 1.059931 | 3.802390 |
| 66 | 1 | 0 | -7.807071 | -1.635160 | 3.892758 |

Table S7. The DFT coordinates used for energy optimization of complex **6**.

| Centre No. | Atomic No. | Atomic Type | Coordinates (Angstroms) | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | X | Y | Z |
| 1 | 6 | 0 | -0.952236 | -4.509950 | -1.393445 |
| 2 | 6 | 0 | -1.957739 | -3.569043 | -1.097834 |
| 3 | 6 | 0 | -1.591262 | -2.241328 | -0.890485 |
| 4 | 7 | 0 | -0.265127 | -1.818579 | -0.959633 |
| 5 | 6 | 0 | 0.686109 | -2.737960 | -1.252011 |
| 6 | 6 | 0 | 0.372287 | -4.096106 | -1.475599 |
| 7 | 6 | 0 | -4.667982 | 0.004694 | -0.252900 |
| 8 | 6 | 0 | -3.949214 | 1.227417 | -0.110872 |
| 9 | 6 | 0 | -2.563544 | 1.221642 | -0.215912 |
| 10 | 7 | 0 | -1.878035 | 0.051970 | -0.437054 |
| 11 | 6 | 0 | -2.548521 | -1.135015 | -0.598278 |
| 12 | 6 | 0 | -3.934623 | -1.190650 | -0.503777 |
| 13 | 6 | 0 | -2.004825 | 3.696968 | 0.069687 |
| 14 | 6 | 0 | -1.011973 | 4.695799 | 0.085242 |
| 15 | 6 | 0 | 0.317759 | 4.344979 | -0.117727 |
| 16 | 6 | 0 | 0.649447 | 2.989042 | -0.328438 |
| 17 | 7 | 0 | -0.289452 | 2.012312 | -0.340284 |
| 18 | 6 | 0 | -1.620798 | 2.375515 | -0.145853 |
| 19 | 6 | 0 | 4.065755 | 0.040028 | -0.123082 |
| 20 | 6 | 0 | 2.669165 | 0.004488 | 0.038906 |
| 21 | 6 | 0 | 2.129485 | -0.218278 | 1.382326 |
| 22 | 6 | 0 | 2.990510 | -0.394169 | 2.495328 |
| 23 | 6 | 0 | 4.398776 | -0.348124 | 2.268442 |
| 24 | 6 | 0 | 4.902060 | -0.133191 | 0.971798 |
| 25 | 7 | 0 | 0.740160 | -0.240836 | 1.465085 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 26 | 6 | 0 | 0.195326 | -0.440321 | 2.667263 |
| 27 | 6 | 0 | 0.983535 | -0.627751 | 3.848903 |
| 28 | 6 | 0 | 2.350502 | -0.605274 | 3.765206 |
| 29 | 8 | 0 | 1.846825 | 0.158985 | -0.941014 |
| 30 | 29 | 0 | -0.002406 | 0.079080 | -0.526214 |
| 31 | 1 | 0 | -1.220384 | -5.558899 | -1.558164 |
| 32 | 1 | 0 | -3.001258 | -3.882981 | -1.035274 |
| 33 | 1 | 0 | 1.729001 | -2.373630 | -1.313545 |
| 34 | 1 | 0 | 1.172248 | -4.805417 | -1.709031 |
| 35 | 1 | 0 | -4.490143 | 2.160695 | 0.057161 |
| 36 | 1 | 0 | -4.462212 | -2.136970 | -0.627646 |
| 37 | 1 | 0 | -3.052729 | 3.962613 | 0.222347 |
| 38 | 1 | 0 | -1.294046 | 5.740370 | 0.254651 |
| 39 | 1 | 0 | 1.108164 | 5.101793 | -0.115754 |
| 40 | 1 | 0 | 1.696835 | 2.675490 | -0.498052 |
| 41 | 1 | 0 | 5.994798 | -0.102888 | 0.829859 |
| 42 | 1 | 0 | -0.897622 | -0.458974 | 2.738206 |
| 43 | 1 | 0 | 0.478351 | -0.786494 | 4.803282 |
| 44 | 1 | 0 | 2.978137 | -0.747204 | 4.661158 |
| 45 | 7 | 0 | 5.374374 | -0.517327 | 3.343064 |
| 46 | 8 | 0 | 4.975868 | -0.706565 | 4.484658 |
| 47 | 8 | 0 | 6.556724 | -0.459829 | 3.038608 |
| 48 | 1 | 0 | 4.476574 | 0.205232 | -1.118570 |
| 49 | 6 | 0 | -6.097142 | -0.022956 | -0.123635 |
| 50 | 26 | 0 | -7.474895 | 0.447891 | -1.503011 |
| 51 | 6 | 0 | -6.937750 | 1.078736 | 0.355706 |
| 52 | 6 | 0 | -6.973868 | -1.167058 | -0.337895 |
| 53 | 6 | 0 | -8.298171 | -0.765407 | -0.003947 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 54 | 6 | 0 | -8.271525 | 0.609233 | 0.436889 |
| 55 | 6 | 0 | -7.753516 | 1.746456 | -3.051934 |
| 56 | 6 | 0 | -7.028886 | 0.574502 | -3.497407 |
| 57 | 6 | 0 | -7.856814 | -0.566575 | -3.274339 |
| 58 | 6 | 0 | -9.083084 | -0.110555 | -2.665674 |
| 59 | 6 | 0 | -9.029331 | 1.323311 | -2.566340 |
| 60 | 1 | 0 | -6.563378 | 2.003684 | 0.784667 |
| 61 | 1 | 0 | -6.647603 | -2.176891 | -0.558049 |
| 62 | 1 | 0 | -9.162762 | -1.419010 | 0.059596 |
| 63 | 1 | 0 | -9.115022 | 1.145746 | 0.863911 |
| 64 | 1 | 0 | -7.472399 | 2.772506 | -3.276835 |
| 65 | 1 | 0 | -6.126663 | 0.598079 | -4.101565 |
| 66 | 1 | 0 | -7.667791 | -1.572452 | -3.631712 |
| 67 | 1 | 0 | -9.972845 | -0.714871 | -2.523903 |
| 68 | 1 | 0 | -9.856155 | 1.973817 | -2.296935 |

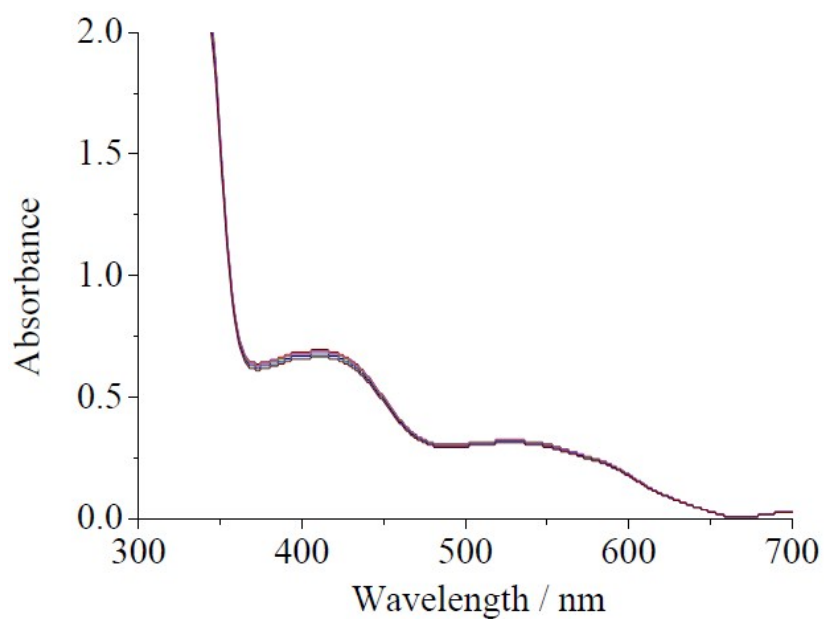


Fig. S19. Absorption spectral plots of complex **5** in DMSO–10% DMEM medium (1:99 v/v, pH = 7.4, 37 °C). The spectra were recorded after keeping the solution at 37 °C and recorded at different time intervals. The spectral data indicate the stability of the complex in the cellular medium up to 48 hours.

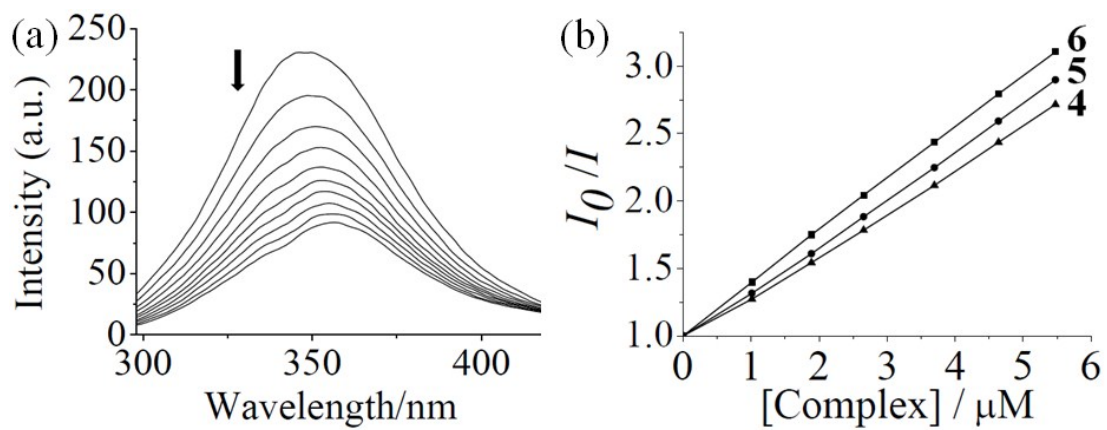


Fig. S20. Emission spectral traces of human serum albumin (2 μM) in the presence of complex 5. The inset shows the plots of (I_0/I) vs [complex] for 4 (▲), 5 (●) and 6 (■).

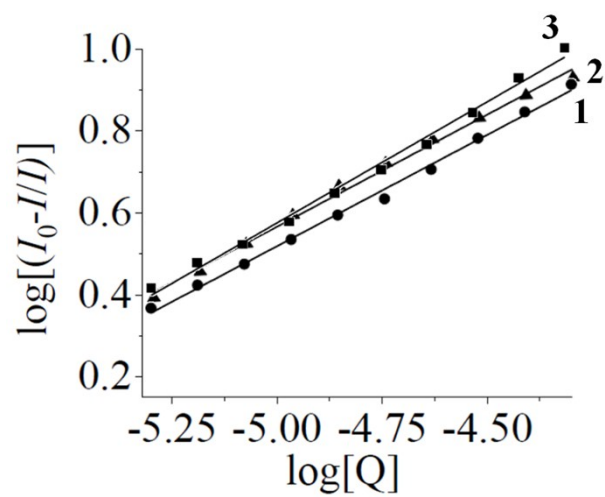


Fig. S21: Scatchard plots of $\log[(I_0 - I)/I]$ against $\log[Q]$ for **1** (●), **2** (▲) and **3** (■) to determine the binding constant (K_{HSA}) for HSA–complex interaction.

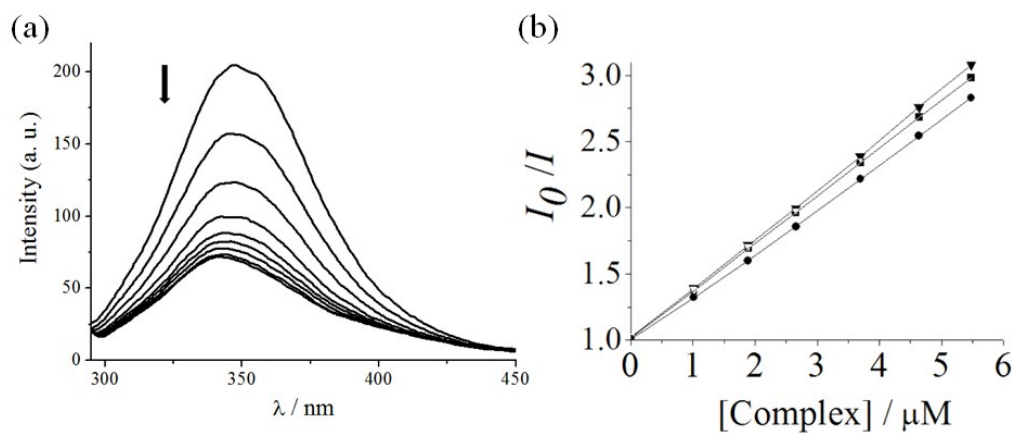


Fig. S22. Emission spectral traces of human serum albumin (2 μ M) in the presence of complex **3**. The inset shows the plots of (I_0/I) vs [complex] for **1** (●), **2** (■) and **3** (▼).