

## Electronic Supplementary Information

### **Tetrahydro[5]helicene-based imide dyes with intense fluorescence in both solution and solid state**

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## 1. General Information

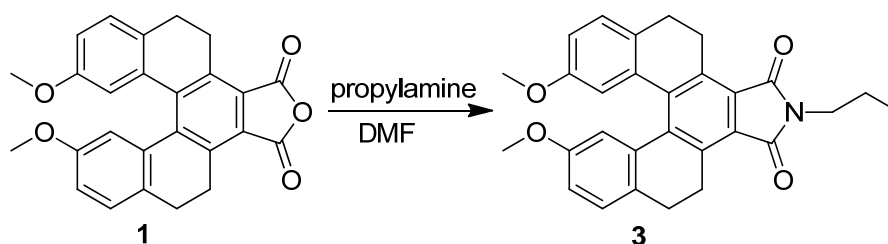
All reactants were commercial and used without further purification excepted as noted. Melting points are uncorrected.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra were recorded with a DMX300 NMR at 298 K. MALDI-TOF mass spectra were determined with a BIFLEXIII mass spectrometer. HRMS mass spectra were measured in the ESI mode. The single crystal data of **3** was collected on Rigaku Saturn diffractometer with CCD area detector. All calculations were performed using the SHELXL97 and crystal structure crystallographic software packages. Absolute fluorescence quantum yields were measured by Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaaurus QY at room temperature. Fluorescence lifetimes were measured based on the time resolved PL experiments.

The quantum yields of **3** and **5** are theoretically studied. The molecular fluorescence quantum yield  $\eta$  is defined as  $\eta = k_r / (k_r + k_{nr})$ , where  $k_r$  and  $k_{nr}$  are the molecular radiative (emission) and non-radiative rates. The main contribution to  $k_{nr}$  comes from internal conversion (IC) process.<sup>1</sup> We calculated the radiative rate  $k_r$  and IC rate  $k_{ic}$  applying the “thermal vibration correlation function” method.<sup>2-5</sup> The quantum chemistry calculations of **3** and **5** were carried out with the TURBOMOLE 6.4 program package.<sup>6</sup> The geometries of the ground and excited states were optimized with density functional theory (DFT)<sup>7</sup> and time-dependent density functional theory (TDDFT),<sup>8</sup> respectively. The B3LYP functional<sup>9, 10</sup> and 6-31G\*\* basis sets<sup>11, 12</sup> were used. Then the normal modes and frequencies of the ground and excited states and nonadiabatic coupling matrix elements (NACMEs) were calculated. The correlation function of absorption, emission, and IC were calculated with home-built programs. The Fourier transformation of the correlation functions were carried out with the FFT routines of the FFTW LIBRARY (version 3.1.2).

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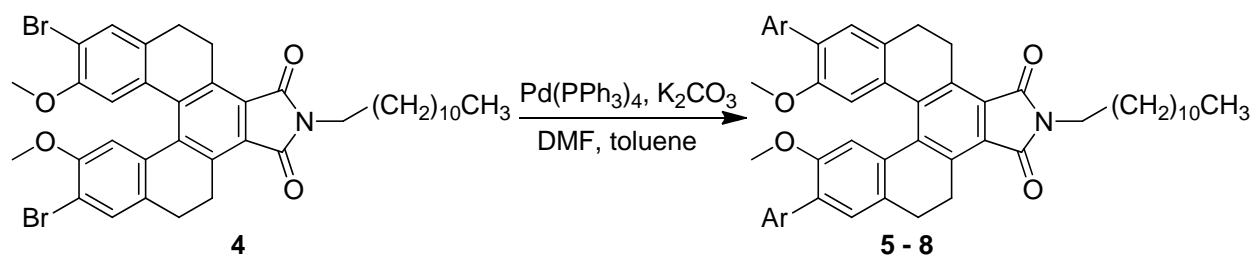
2. Y. Niu, Q. Peng, C. Deng, X. Gao and Z. Shuai, *J. Phys. Chem. A*, 2010, **114**, 7817-7831.
3. Y. Niu, Q. Peng and Z. Shuai, *Sci. China Ser. B-Chem.*, 2008, **51**, 1153-1158.
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7. O. Treutler and R. Ahlrichs, *J. Chem. Phys.*, 1995, **102**, 346-354.
8. F. Furche and R. Ahlrichs, *J. Chem. Phys.*, 2002, **117**, 7433-7447.
9. A. D. Becke, *J. Chem. Phys.*, 1993, **98**, 5648-5652.
10. P. J. Stephens, F. J. Devlin, C. F. Chabalowski and M. J. Frisch, *J. Phys. Chem.*, 1994, **98**, 11623-11627.
11. W. J. Hehre, R. Ditchfield and J. A. Pople, *J. Chem. Phys.*, 1972, **56**, 2257-2261.
12. P. C. Hariharan and J. A. Pople, *Theoret. chim. Acta (Berl.)*, 1973, **28**, 213-222
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## 2. Experimental procedures and characterization of new compounds



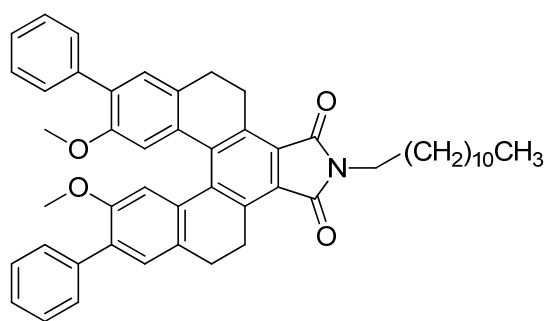
**Compound 3.** A mixture of **1** (412 mg, 1 mmol) and *n*-propylamine (295 mg, 5 mmol) in DMF (20 mL) was heated at 70 °C for 24 hours. After cooled to room temperature, ethyl acetate (40 mL) was added. The organic phase was washed with saturated brine (3×20 mL), dried over anhydrous MgSO<sub>4</sub>. The solvent was removed in *vacuo*, and the residue was submitted to column chromatography with





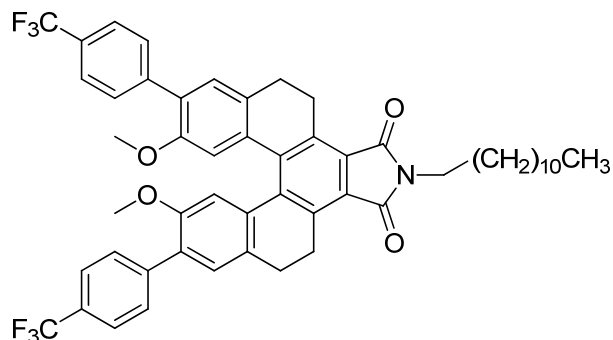
### General procedure of Suzuki-Miyaura cross coupling:

To a mixture of compound **4** (700 mg, 0.95 mmol), K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (1.31 g, 9.9 mmol), and arylboronic acid (2.85 mmol) in DMF (30 mL) and toluene (20 mL) under argon atmosphere was added catalytic amount of Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (5% mol). The resulting mixture was stirred for 12 hours at 90°C under argon atmosphere, cooled to room temperature and then poured into ethyl acetate (100 mL). The organic layer was washed with saturated brine (3×100 mL), dried over anhydrous MgSO<sub>4</sub> and then concentrated in *vacuo*. The residue was purified by column chromatography with ethyl acetate and petroleum ether (1:5, v/v) as eluent to give the pure product.

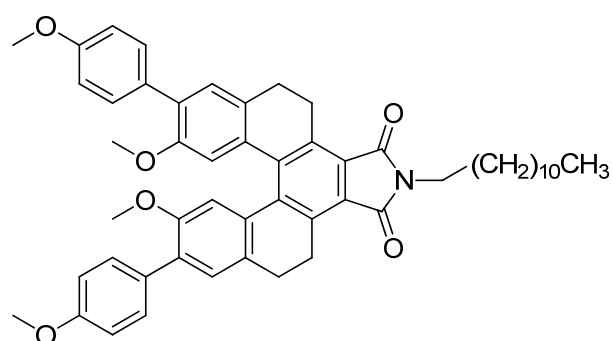


**Compound 5.** According to the general method, **5** (639 mg, 92%) was obtained ( $R_f = 0.71$ ) as yellow powder. m. p.: 120-121 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.56–7.49 (m, 4H), 7.44–7.38 (m, 4H), 7.37–7.27 (m, 4H), 6.86 (s, 2H), 4.19–4.14 (m, 2H), 3.74–3.63 (m, 2H), 3.33 (s, 6H), 2.97–2.82 (m, 4H), 2.64–2.51 (m, 2H), 1.75–1.64 (m, 2H), 1.34–1.26 (m, 18H), 0.88 (t,  $J = 6.7$  Hz, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 169.2, 154.2, 138.7, 138.4, 138.0, 133.2, 132.0, 130.9, 130.1, 129.4, 128.3, 127.4, 126.3, 114.1, 55.3, 38.0, 32.1, 29.77, 29.75, 29.66, 29.5, 29.4, 28.8, 27.7, 27.1, 24.5,

22.8, 14.3. MALDI-TOF MS:  $m/z$  731.4  $[M]^+$ . HRMS (ESI):  $m/z$  calcd for  $C_{50}H_{54}NO_4$   $[M + H]^+$  732.4047, found 732.4038.



**Compound 6.** According to the general method, **6** (577 mg, 70%) was obtained ( $R_f$  = 0.61) as yellow powder. m. p.: 160-161 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (300 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.69–7.61 (m, 8H), 7.30 (s, 2H), 6.86 (s, 2H), 4.21–4.16 (m, 2H), 3.72–3.66 (m, 2H), 3.33 (s, 6H), 2.98–2.83 (m, 4H), 2.64–2.52 (m, 2H), 1.76–1.63 (m, 2H), 1.34–1.26 (m, 18H), 0.88 (t,  $J$  = 6.7 Hz, 3H).  $^{13}C$  NMR (75 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  169.0, 154.2, 141.5, 138.7, 138.3, 134.0, 132.3, 130.1, 129.7, 129.4, 129.2, 126.5, 125.2, 125.14, 125.10, 114.1, 55.3, 38.1, 32.1, 29.8, 29.74, 29.66, 29.5, 29.4, 28.8, 27.7, 27.1, 24.4, 22.8, 14.3. MALDI-TOF MS:  $m/z$  867.2  $[M]^+$ . HRMS (ESI):  $m/z$  calcd for  $C_{52}H_{52}NO_4F_6$   $[M + H]^+$  868.3795, found 868.3786.



**Compound 7.** According to the general method, **7** (676 mg, 90%) was obtained ( $R_f$  = 0.43) as yellow powder. m. p.: 97-99 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (300 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.49–7.46 (m, 4H), 7.26 (s, 2H), 6.96–6.93 (m, 4H), 6.85 (s, 2H), 4.18–4.13 (m, 2H), 3.85 (s, 6H), 3.70–3.66 (m, 2H), 3.32 (s, 6H),

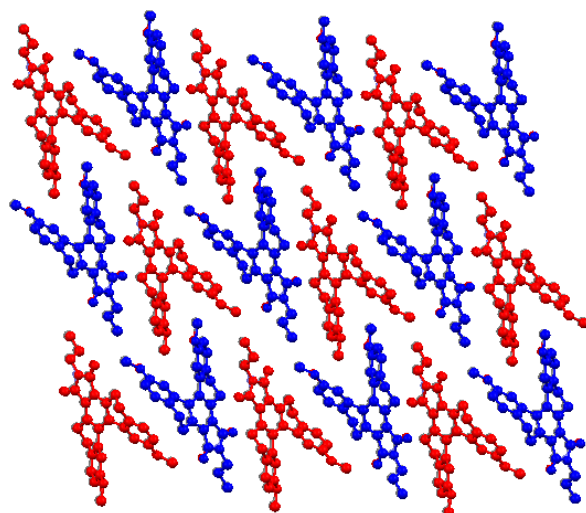


### 3. X-ray crystallographic data and packing structure

**Table S1.** X-ray crystallographic data of **3**

Name	<b>3</b>
Empirical formula	C <sub>29</sub> H <sub>27</sub> NO <sub>4</sub>
Formula weight	453.52
Temperature	173(2) K
Crystal system	Monoclinic
Space group	P2(1)/n
<i>a</i> , Å	15.388(6)
<i>b</i> , Å	6.680(3)
<i>c</i> , Å	22.363(9)
alpha, deg	90
beta, deg	93.69(3)
gamma, deg	90
Volume, Å <sup>3</sup>	2293.9(16)
<i>Z</i>	4
Calculated density, Mg/m <sup>3</sup>	1.313
Absorption coefficient, mm <sup>-1</sup>	0.087
F(000)	960
Crystal size, mm	0.71 x 0.65 x 0.36
Theta range for data collection, deg	3.12 to 27.50
Limiting indices	-19<= <i>h</i> <=19, -8<= <i>k</i> <=8, -28<= <i>l</i> <=28
Reflections collected / unique	16753 / 5220 [R(int) = 0.0436]
Completeness to theta = 27.49	99.0 %
Absorption correction	Semi-empirical from equivalents
Max. and min. transmission	1.0000 and 0.5317
Refinement method	Full-matrix least-squares on F <sup>2</sup>
Data / restraints / parameters	5220 / 0 / 310
Goodness-of-fit on F <sup>2</sup>	1.169
Final R indices [I>2sigma(I)]	R1 = 0.0702, wR2 = 0.1671
R indices (all data)	R1 = 0.0753, wR2 = 0.1710
Largest diff. peak and hole, e.Å <sup>-3</sup>	0.576 and -0.266





**Figure S1.** Packing of alternate *M*-helical and *P*-helical configurations of **3** in the racemic crystal structure.

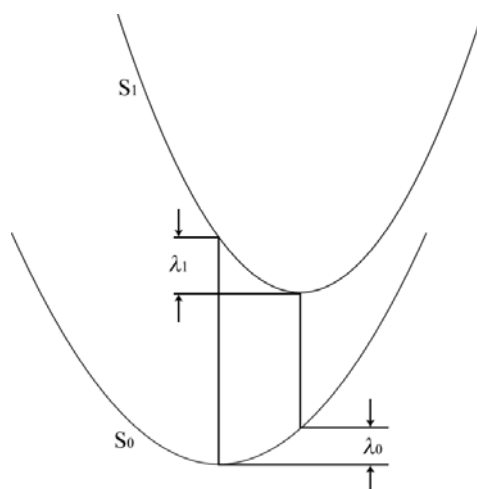
#### 4. Photophysical properties of **3** and **5**

**Table S2.** Photophysical properties of **3** and **5**

Compound	absorption <sup>a</sup>		fluorescence <sup>a</sup>			
	$\lambda_{\text{abs}}/\text{nm}$	$\log \epsilon/\text{M}^{-1}\text{cm}^{-1}$	$\lambda_{\text{em}}/\text{nm}$	$\Phi_{\text{f}}^b/\%$	$\tau/\text{ns}$	Stokes shift /nm
<b>3</b>	374	4.30	474	4.9	0.87	100
<b>5</b>	385	4.31	502	70.3	7.53	115

<sup>a</sup>All spectra were recorded in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  ( $c = 1.0 \times 10^{-5}$  M). <sup>b</sup>Absolute fluorescence quantum yield, measured by Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaurus QY. Stokes shift =  $\lambda_{\text{em, max}} - \lambda_{\text{abs, max}}$

## 5. Theoretical calculations

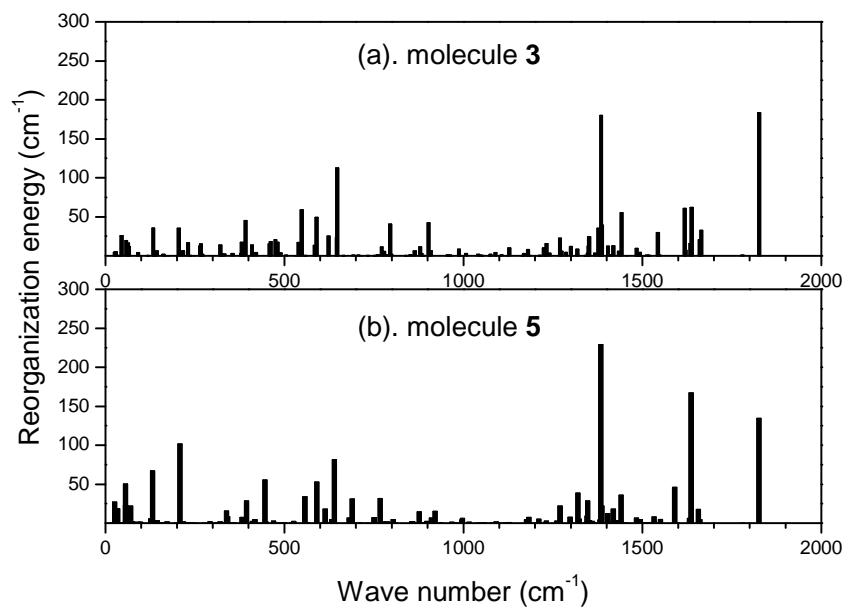


**Figure S2.** The schematic diagrams of molecular potential energy surfaces  $S_0$  and  $S_1$ , and the corresponding reorganization energies  $\lambda_0$  and  $\lambda_1$ .

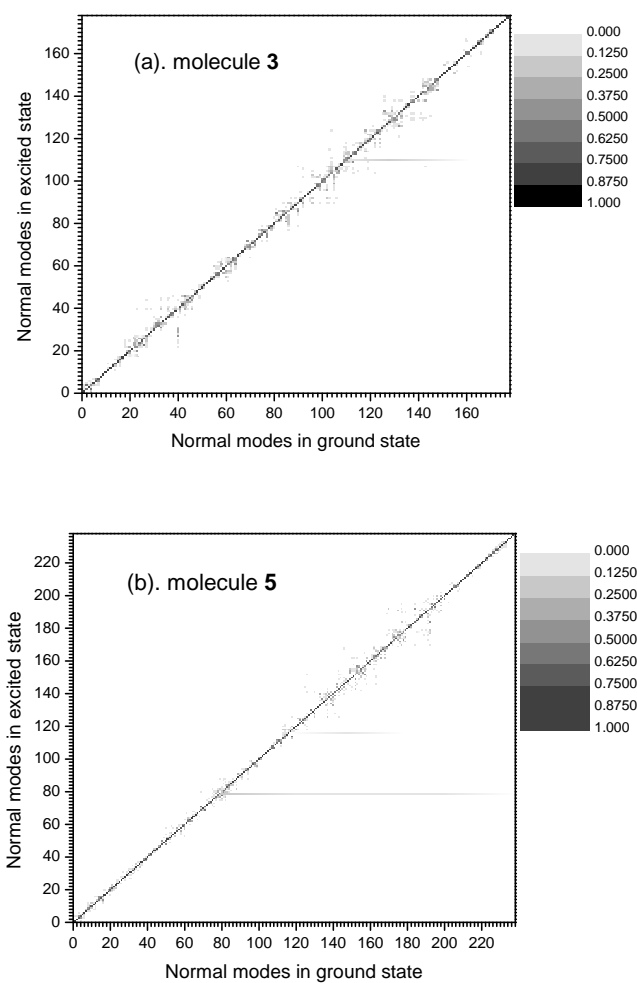
The reorganization energies  $\lambda_0$  and  $\lambda_1$  can be evaluated either based on adiabatic potential energy surfaces (AP), or approximately from a normal-mode (NM) analysis.<sup>13</sup>  $\lambda_0$  and  $\lambda_1$  calculated in both ways were listed in Table S3. The reorganization energy characterizes the geometry relaxation after electronically vertical transition from the equilibrium position. The reorganization  $\lambda_0$  which related to the emission and IC process from  $S_1$ , decrease in molecule **5** compared to molecule **3** due to introducing the phenyl groups.

**Table S3.** The reorganization energy from DFT and TDDFT calculation and projection to the internal coordinates<sup>13</sup>

molecule	AP		NM	
	$\lambda_0$ (cm <sup>-1</sup> )	$\lambda_1$ (cm <sup>-1</sup> )	$\lambda_0$ (cm <sup>-1</sup> )	$\lambda_1$ (cm <sup>-1</sup> )
<b>3</b>	1787	1673	1808	1730
<b>5</b>	1670	1747	1678	1772



**Figure S3.** Reorganization energy decomposition in normal modes of molecules **3** (a) and **5** (b).



**Figure S4.** Duschinsky rotation matrix of molecules **3** (a) and **5** (b).

The Duschinsky rotation (mode mixing) matrix **S** and mode displacement **D** defined in Eq. S1 related the normal coordinates **Q<sub>i</sub>** in the initial electronic state and **Q<sub>f</sub>** in the final electronic state. In general, the normal mode mixing can broaden the spectra and enhance the IC rate. To assess the mixing level, we define the mixing parameter  $\chi$  in Eq. S2.  $\chi = 0$  means there is no any mixing between initial and final electronic states. Table S4 shows that the mixing parameter  $\chi$  in molecule **5** is smaller than **3**, which makes the IC rate of **3** ( $3.13 \times 10^9 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) lower than **5** ( $4.82 \times 10^8 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ).

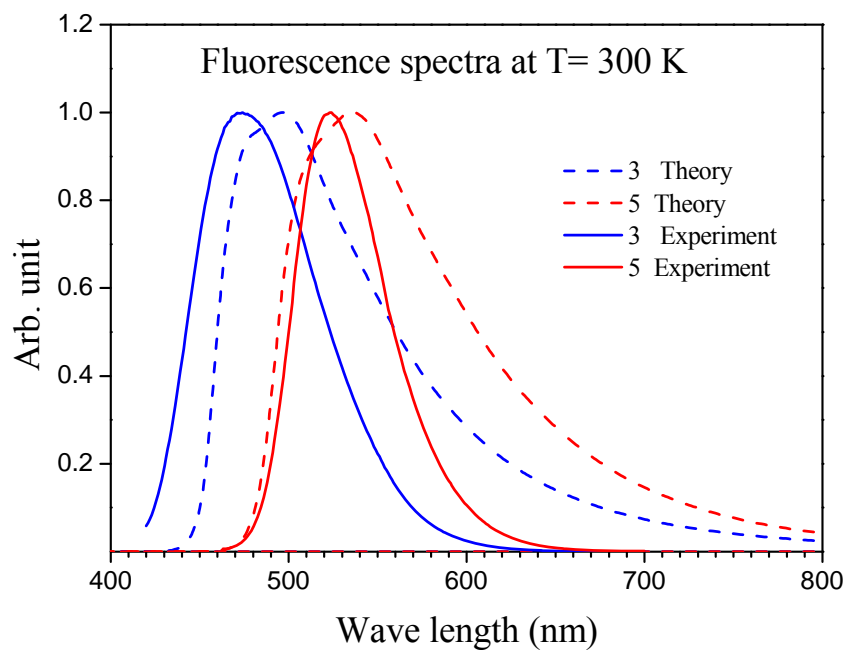
$$\mathbf{Q}_f = \mathbf{S}\mathbf{Q}_i + \mathbf{D} \quad (\text{S1})$$

$$\chi = 1 - \frac{\sum_{k=1}^N |S_{kk}|}{N} \quad (\text{S2})$$

**Table S4.** The normal mode mixing parameter of molecules **3** and **5**

	molecule <b>3</b>	molecule <b>5</b>
mixing parameter $\chi$ (%)	21.12	16.88

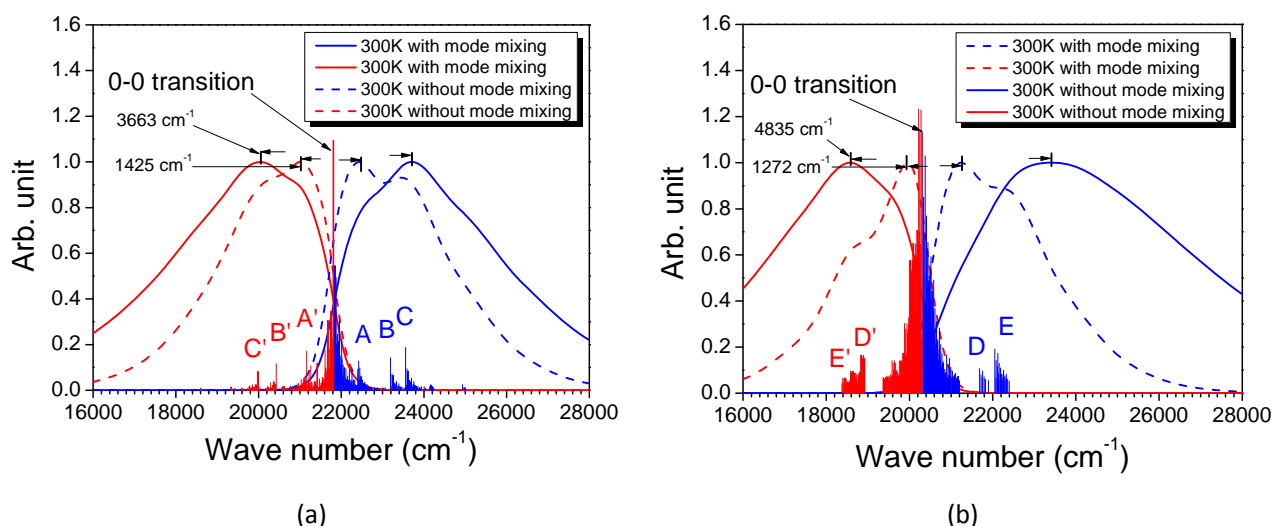
The Fluorescence spectra of **3** and **5** at T=300K are represented in Figure 5. The peaks of the spectra of **3** and **5** in experiment locate at 473nm and 502nm, and in theory the peaks locate at 495nm and 536nm, respectively.



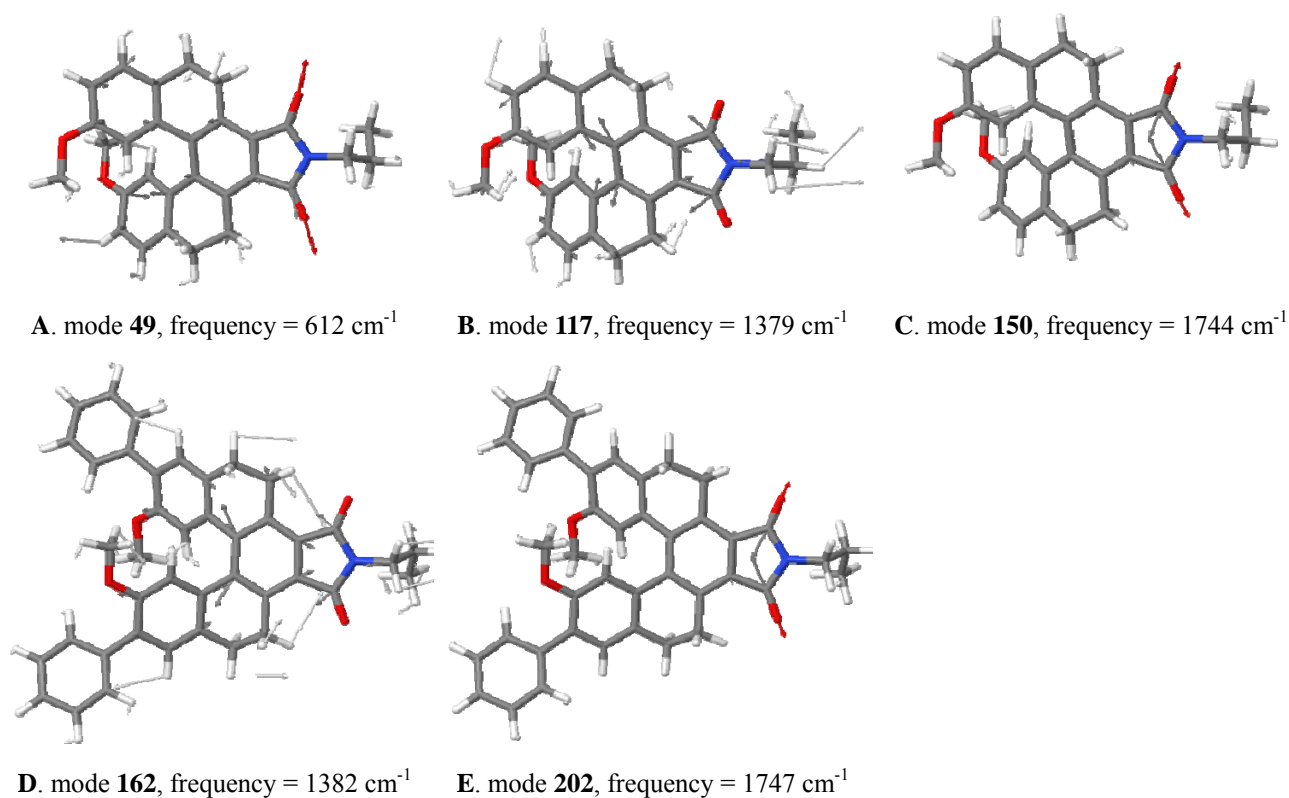
**Figure S5.** The experimental (solid line) and theoretical (dashed line) fluorescence spectra of **3** and **5** at 300K.

**Table S5.** The calculated transition dipole moments, emission rates, IC rates and quantum yields of **3** and **5**

compound	$\mu_f$ (Debye)	$k_r(s^{-1})$	$k_{ic}(s^{-1})$	$\Phi_f\%$ (Theor.)	$\Phi_f\%$ (Exp.)
<b>3</b>	3.07	$1.74 \times 10^7$	$3.13 \times 10^9$	0.553	4.9
<b>5</b>	5.12	$4.04 \times 10^7$	$4.82 \times 10^8$	7.73	70.3

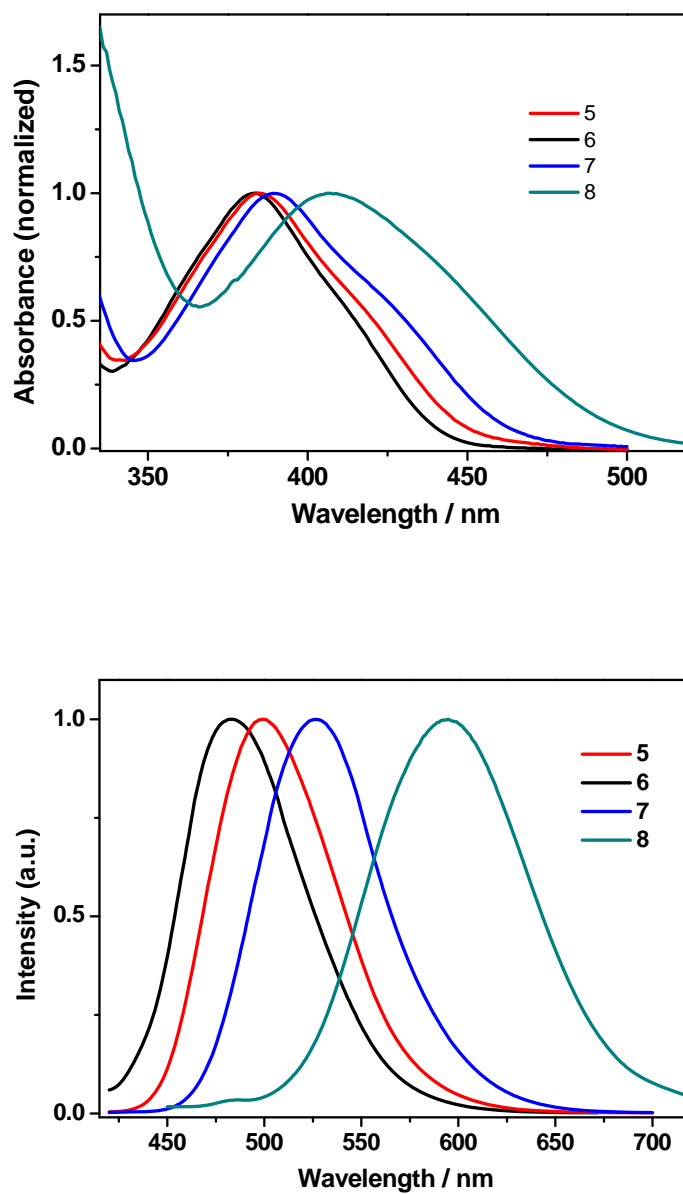


**Figure S6.** The absorption and fluorescence spectra with (solid line) and without (dashed line) Duschinsky rotation effect (DRE) of molecule **3** (a) and **5** (b) at 300K, respectively.

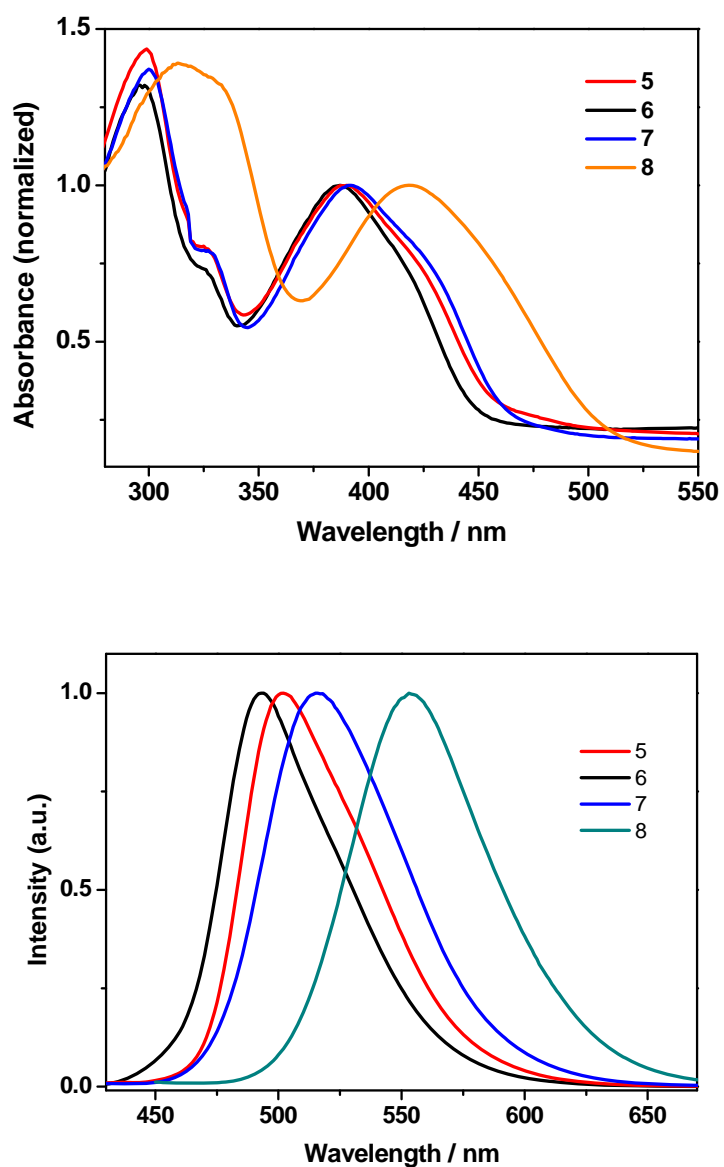


**Figure S7.** The normal mode assigned in the spectra in Figure S6.

## 6. UV/Vis and fluorescence spectra of 5-8



**Figure S8.** UV/Vis (up) and fluorescence (down) spectra of **5-8** in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> at room temperature ( $c = 1.0 \times 10^{-5}$  M).



**Figure S9.** UV/Vis (up) and fluorescence (down) spectra of **5-8** in the solid state (spin-coated film).



**Figure S10.** The pictures of the spin-coated films of **6**, **5**, **7** and **8** under irradiation of a black light at 365 nm.

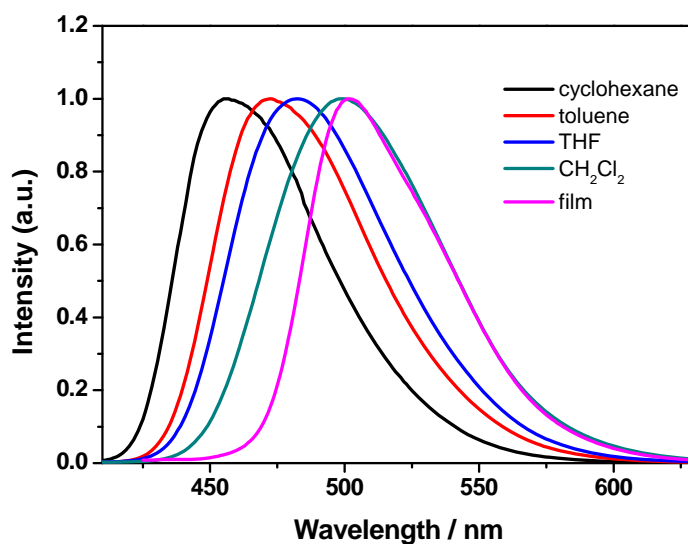


## 7. Photophysical data of 5-8 in various solvents and solid state

**Table S6.** Photophysical data of **5** in various solvents and in the solid state

	$\lambda_{\text{abs}}/\text{nm}$	$\lambda_{\text{em}}/\text{nm}$	$\Phi_{\text{f}}^a/\%$
Cyclohexane	380	456	43.5
Toluene	385	474	52.9
Dichloromethane	385	500	70.3
THF	382	483	60.1
Film	390	502	51.0

<sup>a</sup> Absolute fluorescence quantum yield, measured by Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaaurus QY

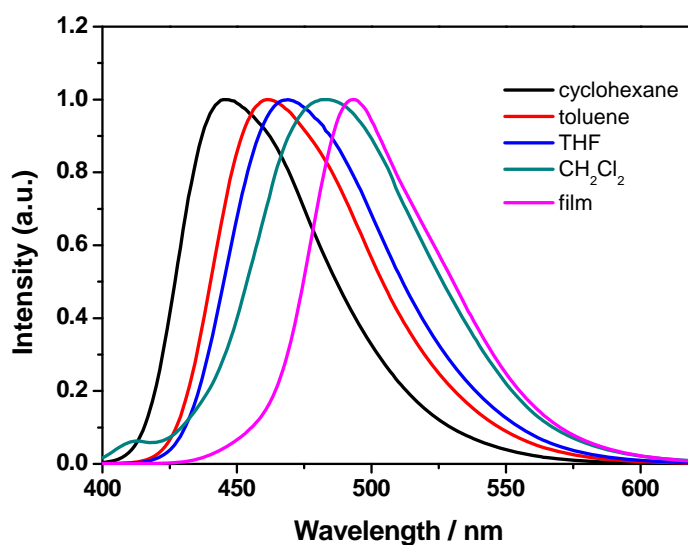


**Figure S11.** Fluorescence spectra of **5** in various solvents and solid state (spin-coated film).

**Table S7.** Photophysical data of **6** in various solvents and in the solid state

	$\lambda_{\text{abs}}/\text{nm}$	$\lambda_{\text{em}}/\text{nm}$	$\Phi_{\text{f}}^a/\%$
Cyclohexane	376	446	39.3
Toluene	385	470	43.9
Dichloromethane	384	483	46.3
THF	381	468	60.8
Film	387	493	50.9

<sup>a</sup>Absolute fluorescence quantum yield, measured by Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaury QY

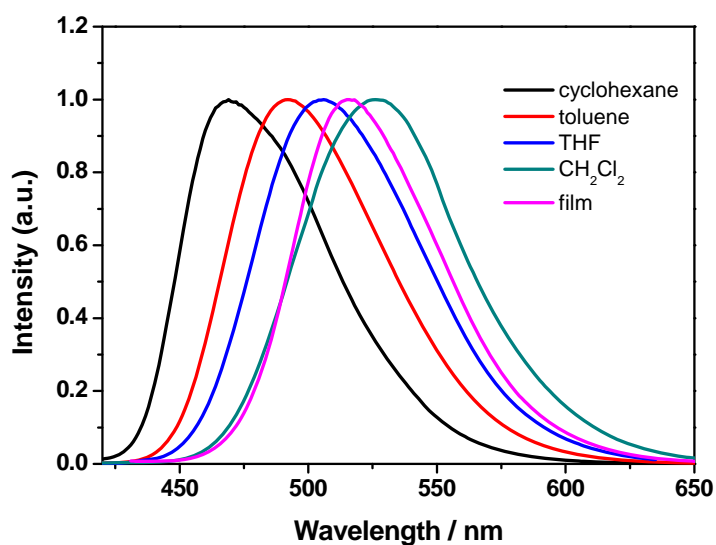


**Figure S12.** Fluorescence spectra of **6** in various solvents and solid state (spin-coated film).

**Table S8.** Photophysical data of **7** in various solvents and in the solid state

	$\lambda_{\text{abs}}/\text{nm}$	$\lambda_{\text{em}}/\text{nm}$	$\Phi_{\text{f}}^a/\%$
Cyclohexane	385	469	63.7
Toluene	391	491	76.0
Dichloromethane	390	526	85.1
THF	387	506	90.3
Film	394	516	61.8

<sup>a</sup> Absolute fluorescence quantum yield, measured by Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaaurus QY

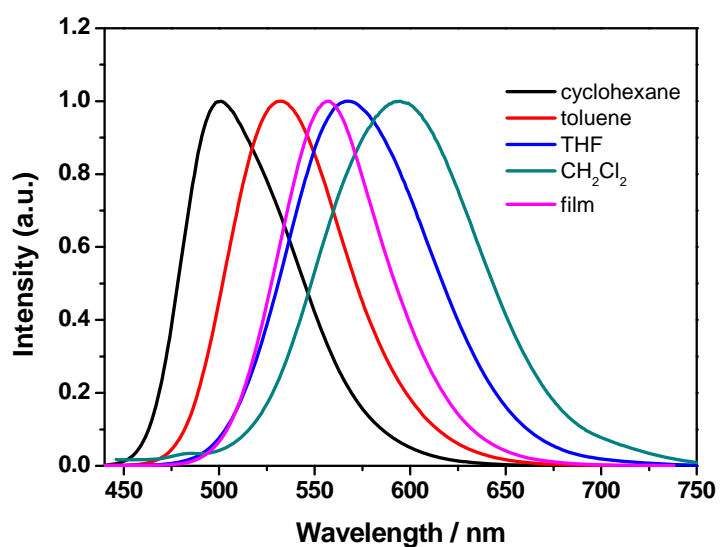


**Figure S13.** Fluorescence spectra of **7** in various solvents and solid state (spin-coated film).

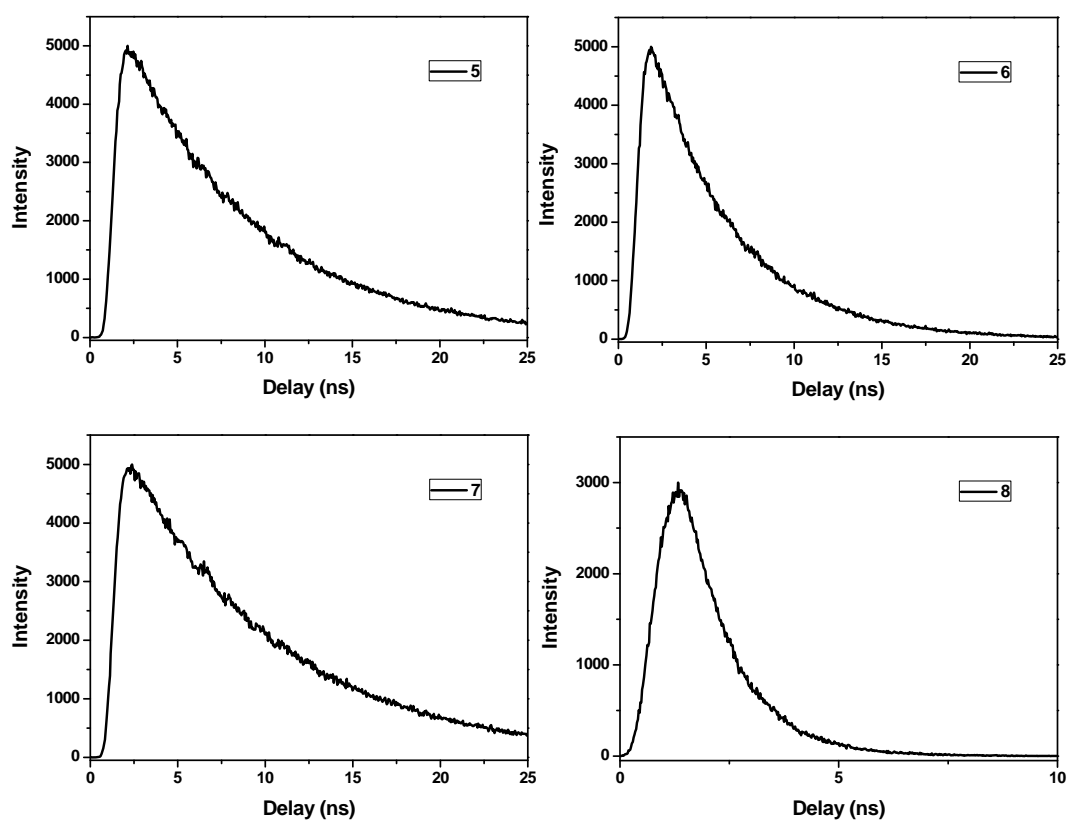
**Table S9.** Photophysical data of **8** in various solvents and in the solid state

	$\lambda_{\text{abs}}/\text{nm}$	$\lambda_{\text{em}}/\text{nm}$	$\Phi_{\text{f}}^a/\%$
Cyclohexane	405	501	76.6
Toluene	411	533	68.5
Dichloromethane	407	595	7.1
THF	404	568	43.9
Film	420	568	67.3

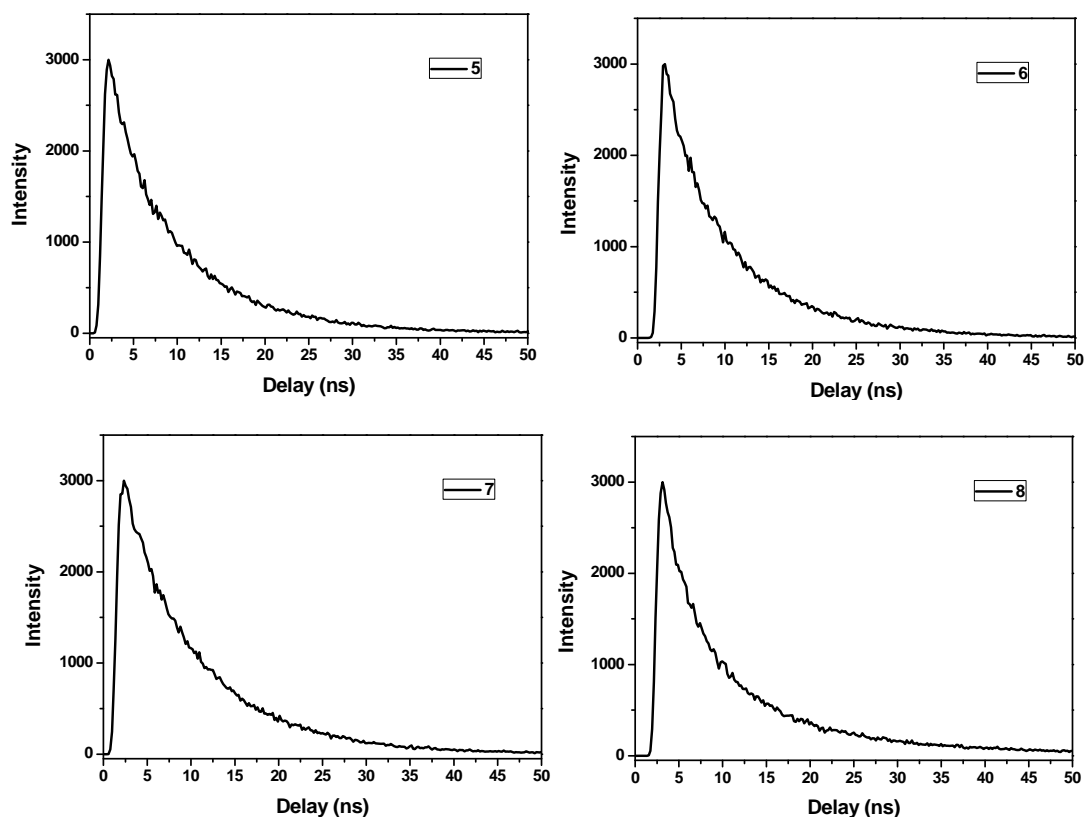
<sup>a</sup>Absolute fluorescence quantum yield, measured by Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaurus QY



**Figure S14.** Fluorescence spectra of **8** in various solvents and solid state (spin-coated film).

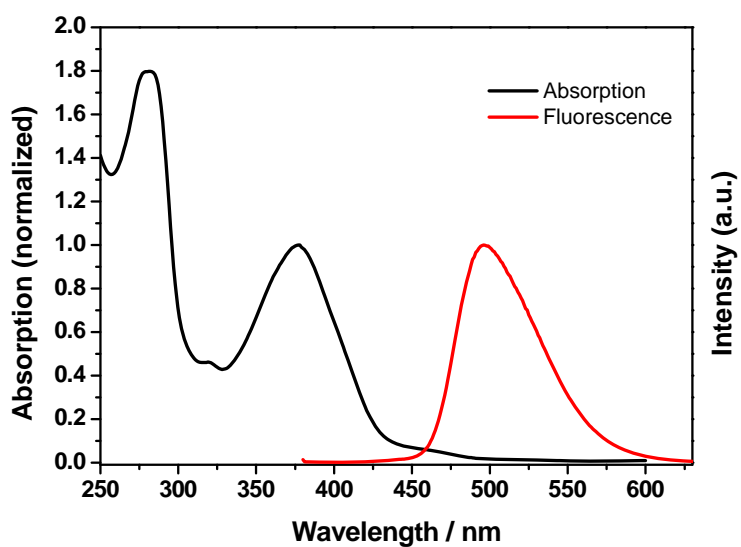


**Figure S15.** Fluorescence lifetime of **5-8** in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  at room temperature.



**Figure S16.** Fluorescence lifetime of **5-8** in the solid state (spin-coated film).

## 8. Photophysical data of **3** in solid state



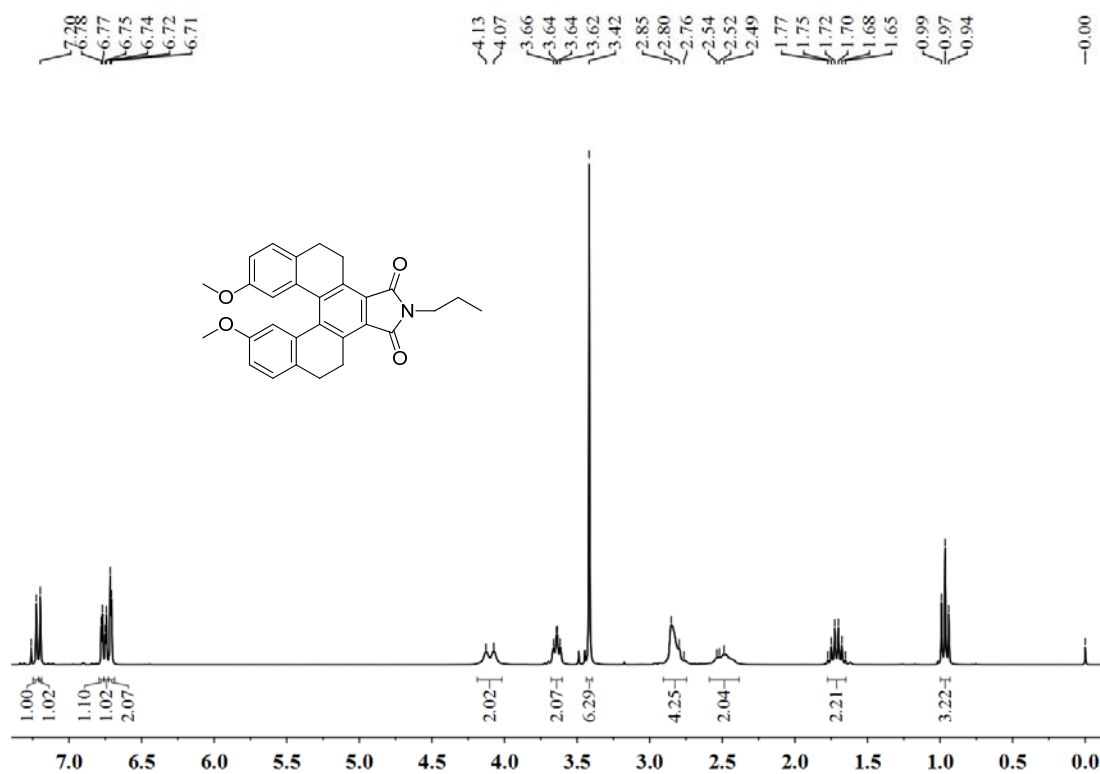
**Figure S17.** UV-Vis absorption and fluorescence spectra of **3** in the solid state (spin-coated film).

**Table S10.** Photophysical data of **3** in the solid state

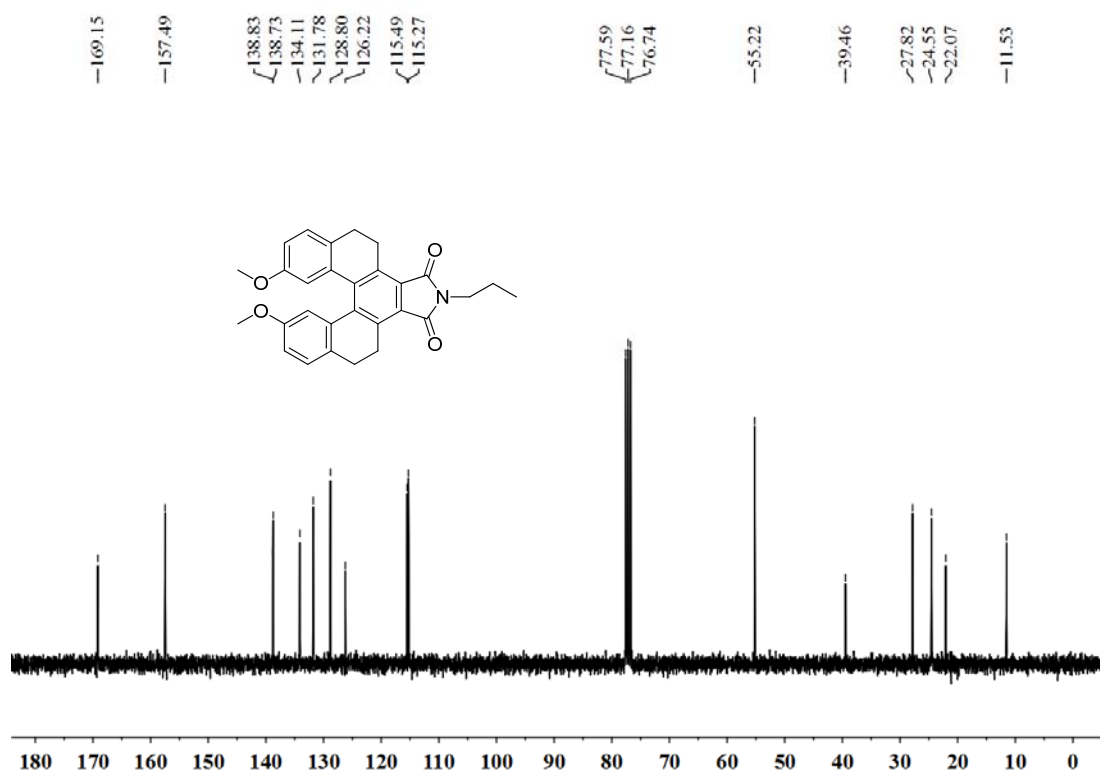
Compound	$\lambda_{\text{abs}}/\text{nm}$	$\lambda_{\text{em}}/\text{nm}$	$\Phi_{\text{f}}^a/\%$	$\tau/\text{ns}$	Stokes shift /nm
<b>3</b>	377	496	25.5	10.56	119

<sup>a</sup>Absolute fluorescence quantum yield, measured by Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaaurus QY

## 9. $^1\text{H}$ NMR and $^{13}\text{C}$ NMR spectra of new compounds



**Figure S18.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum (300 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) of **3**.



**Figure S19.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) of **3**.

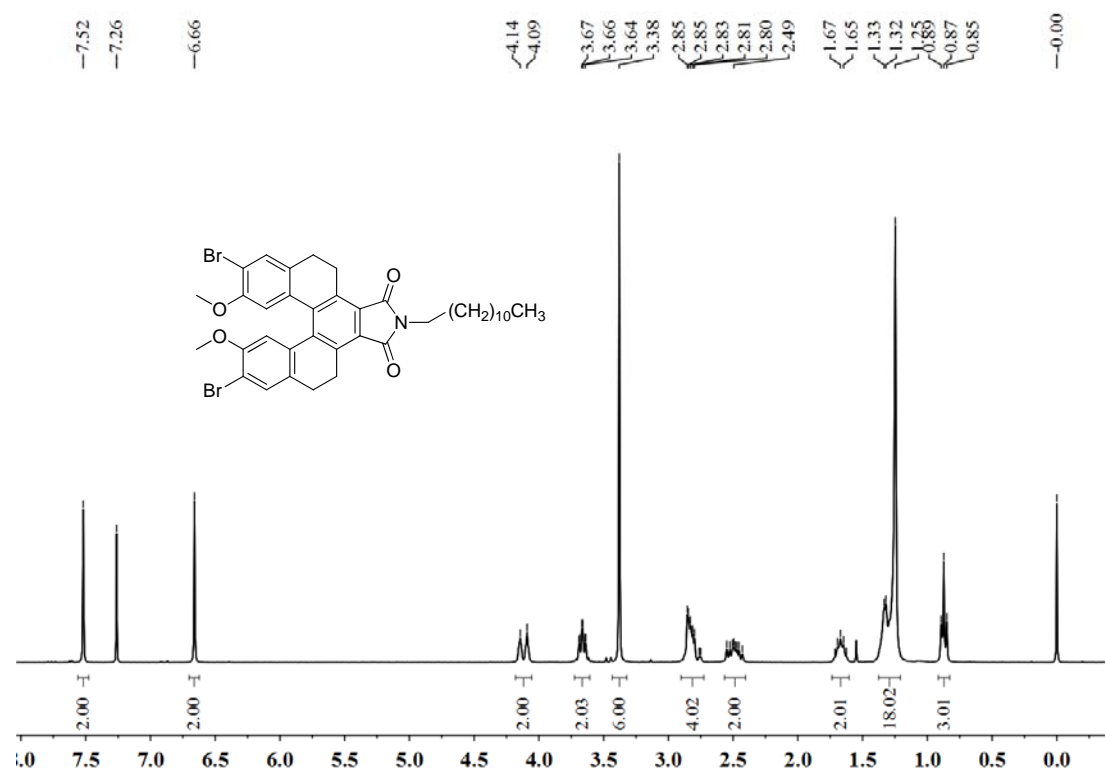


Figure S20. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of 4.

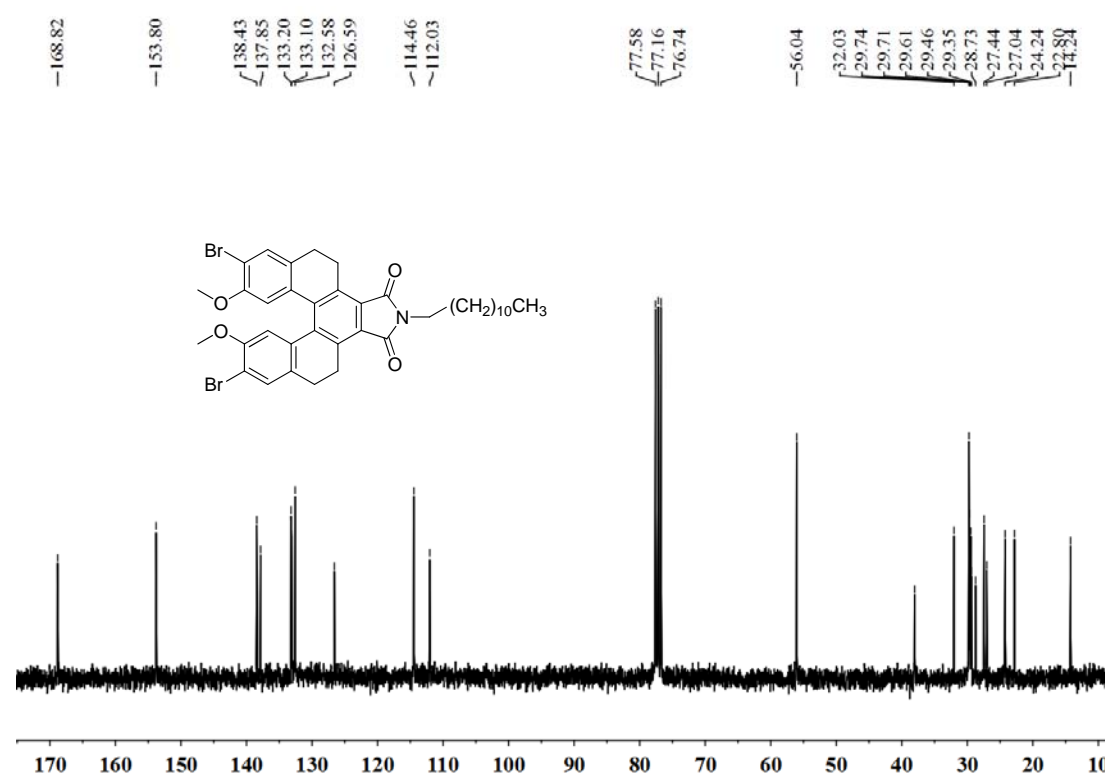
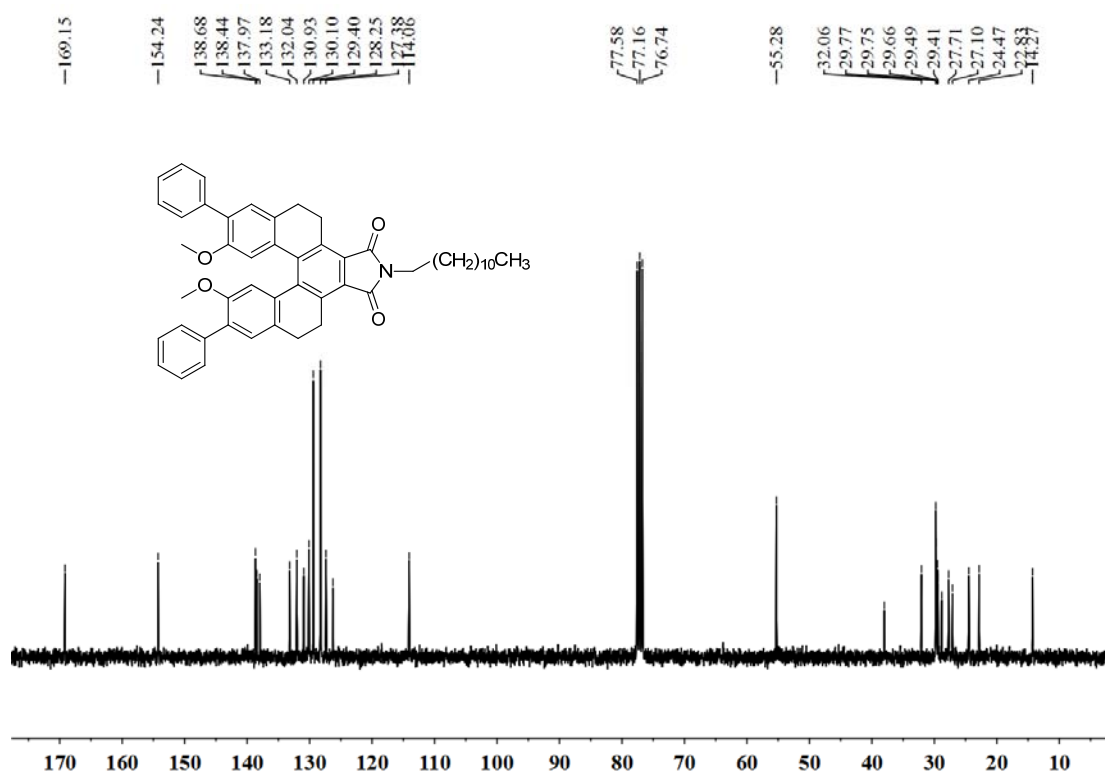
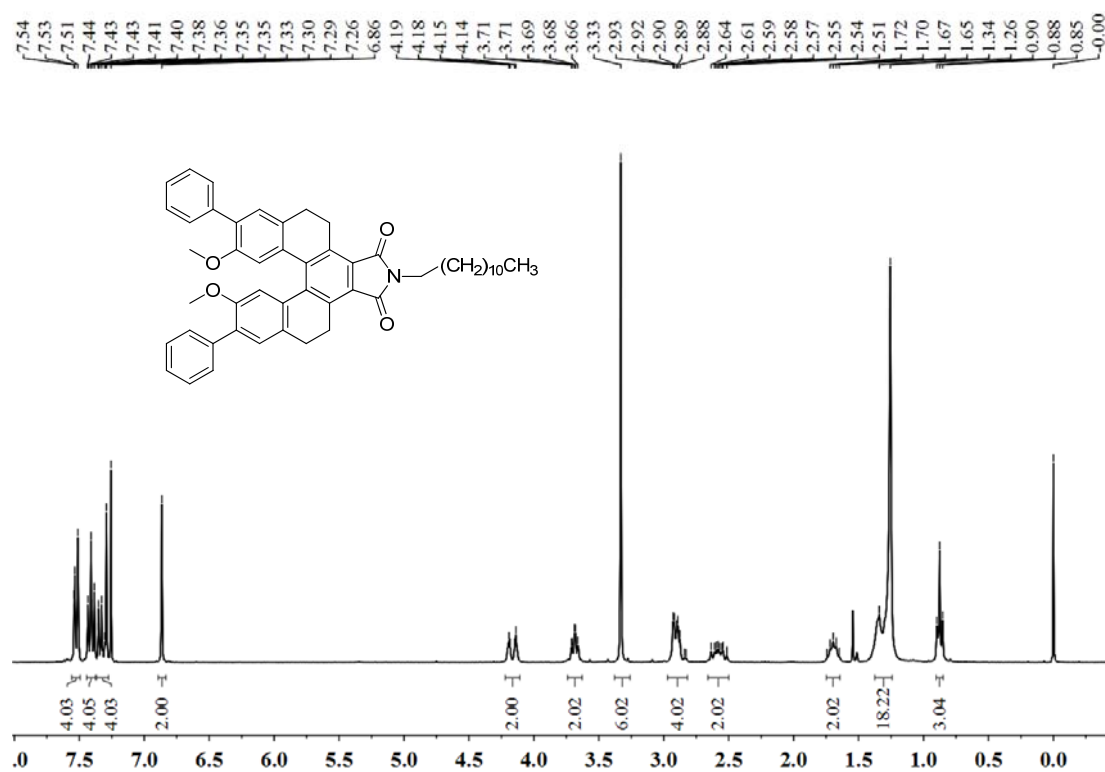
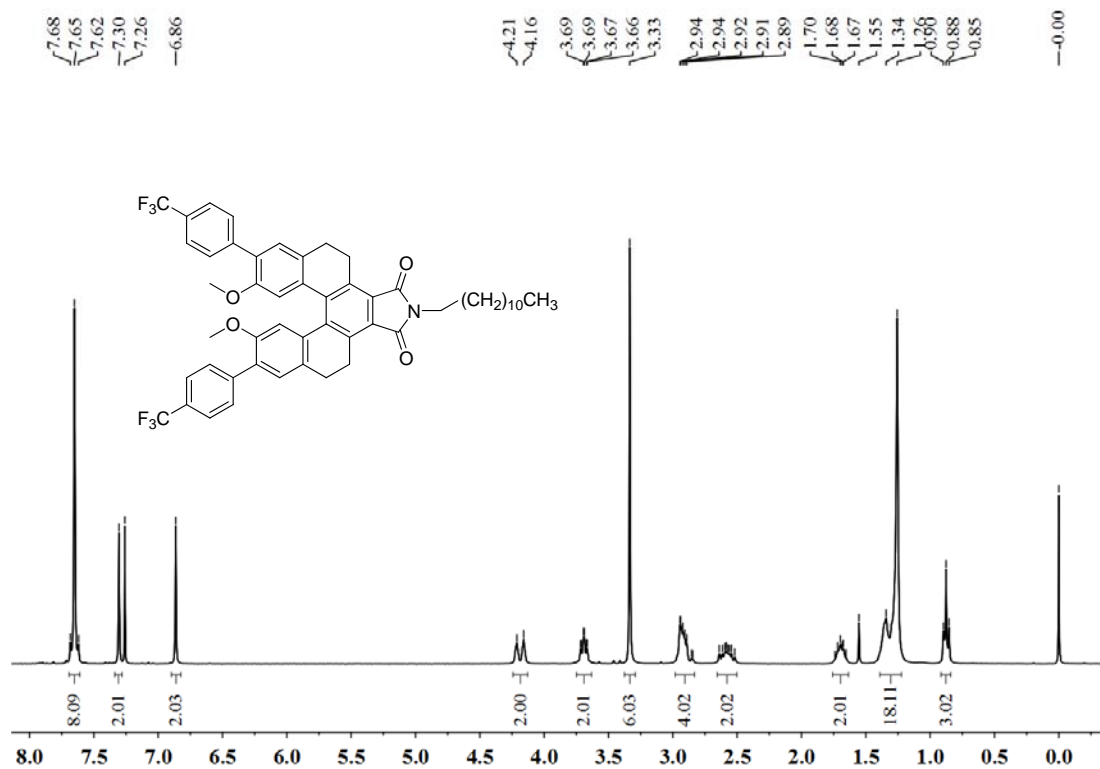


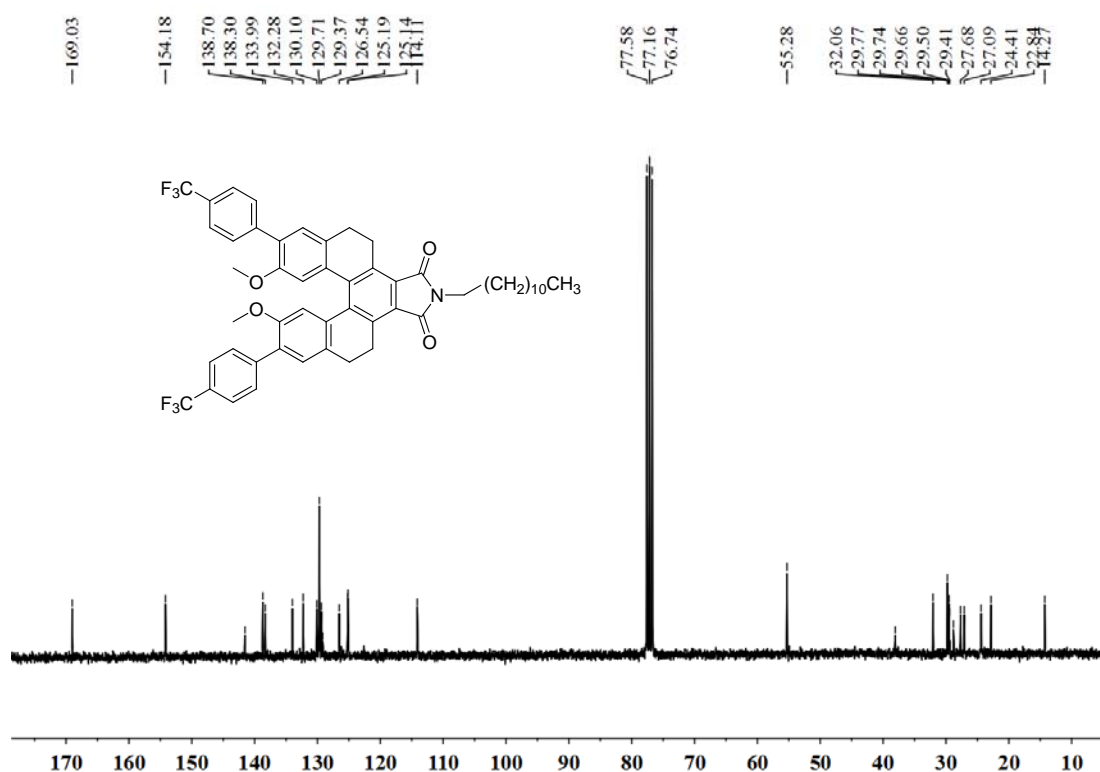
Figure S21. <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of 4.



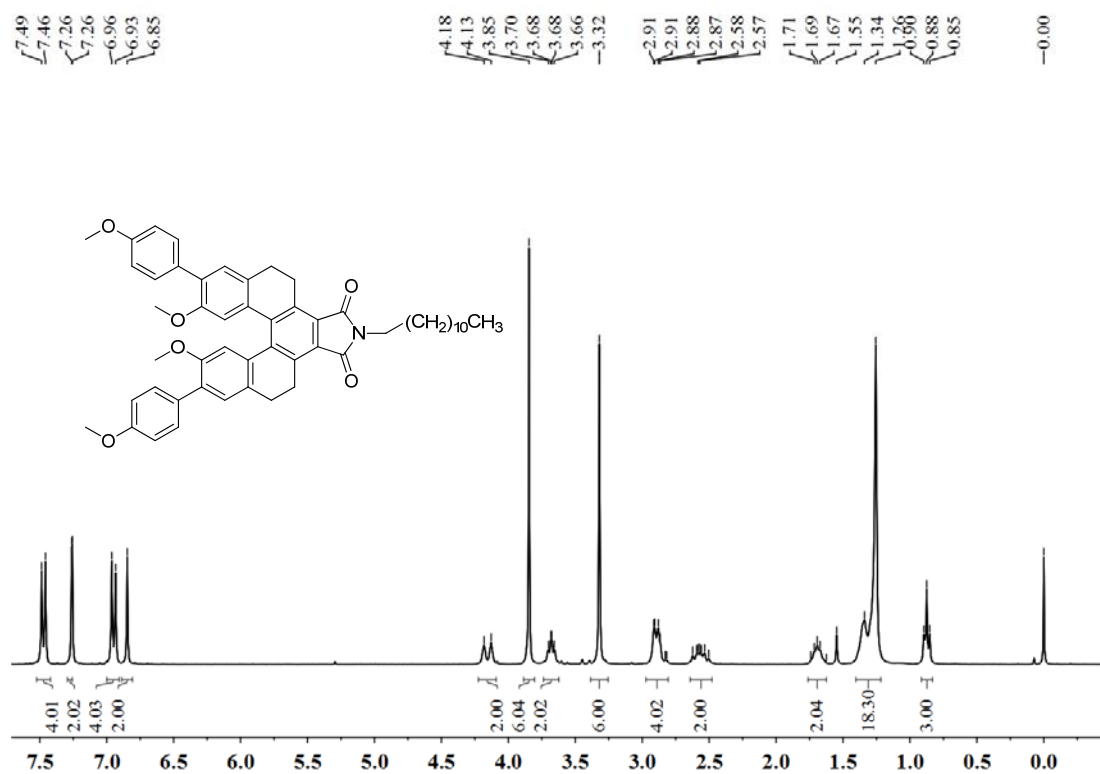




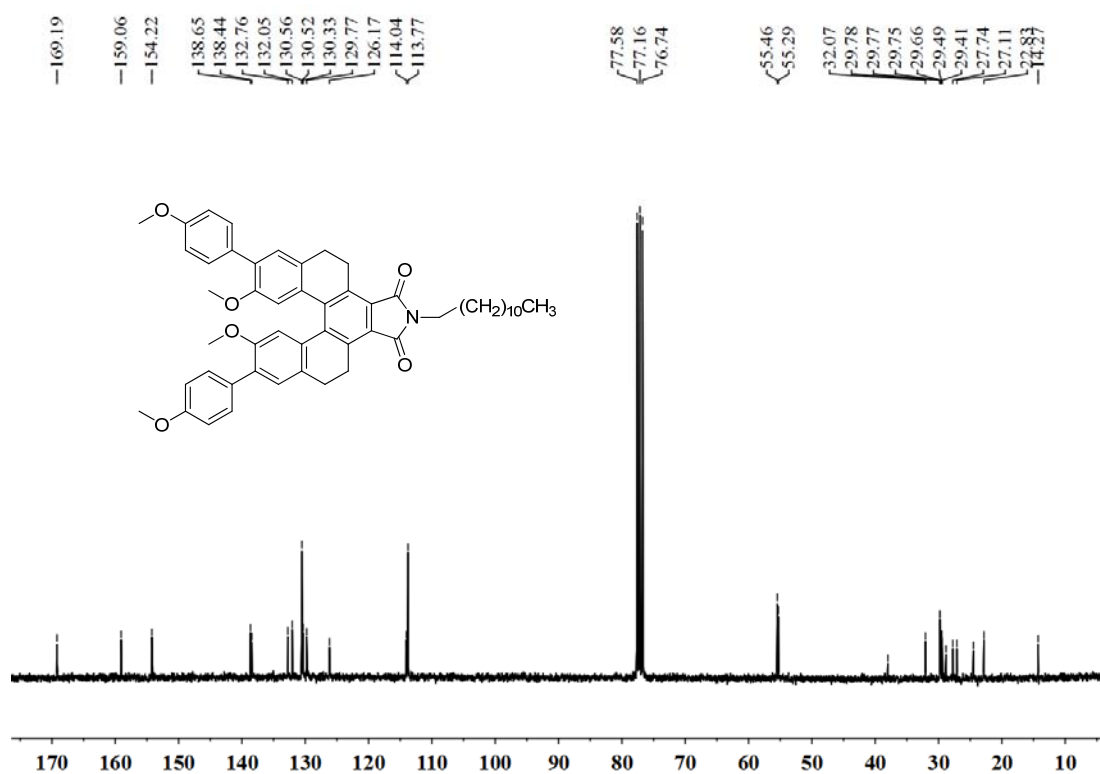
**Figure S24.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of **6**.



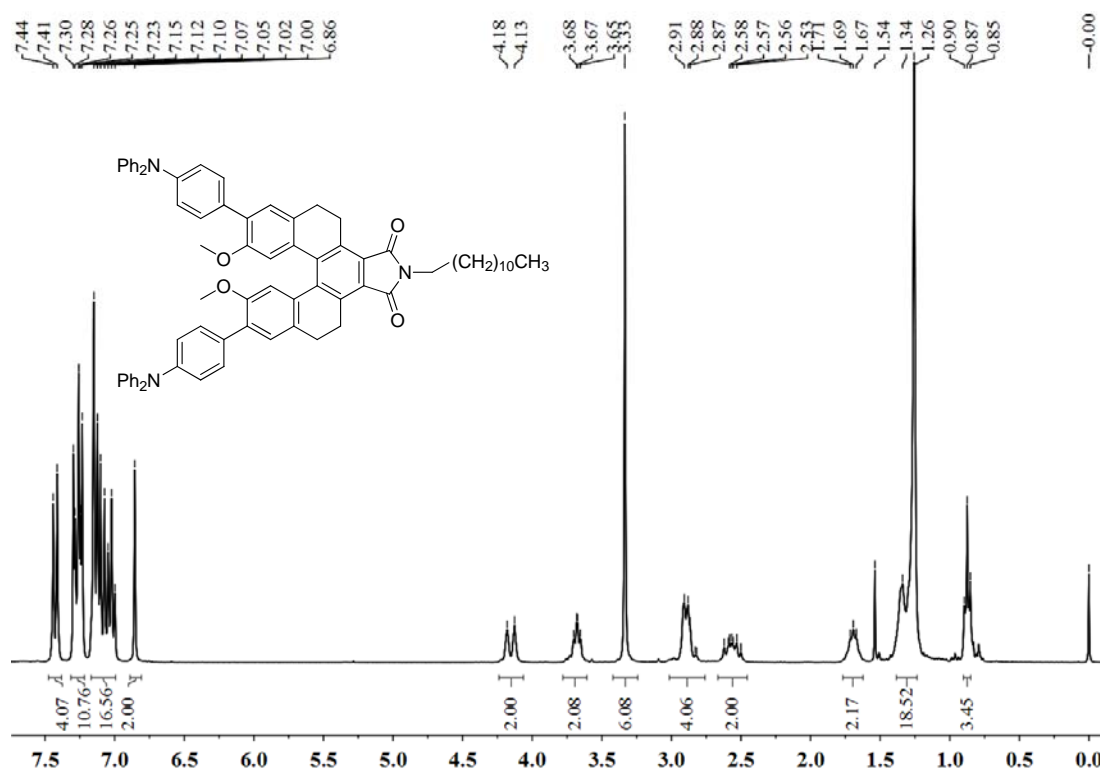
**Figure S25.** <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of **6**.



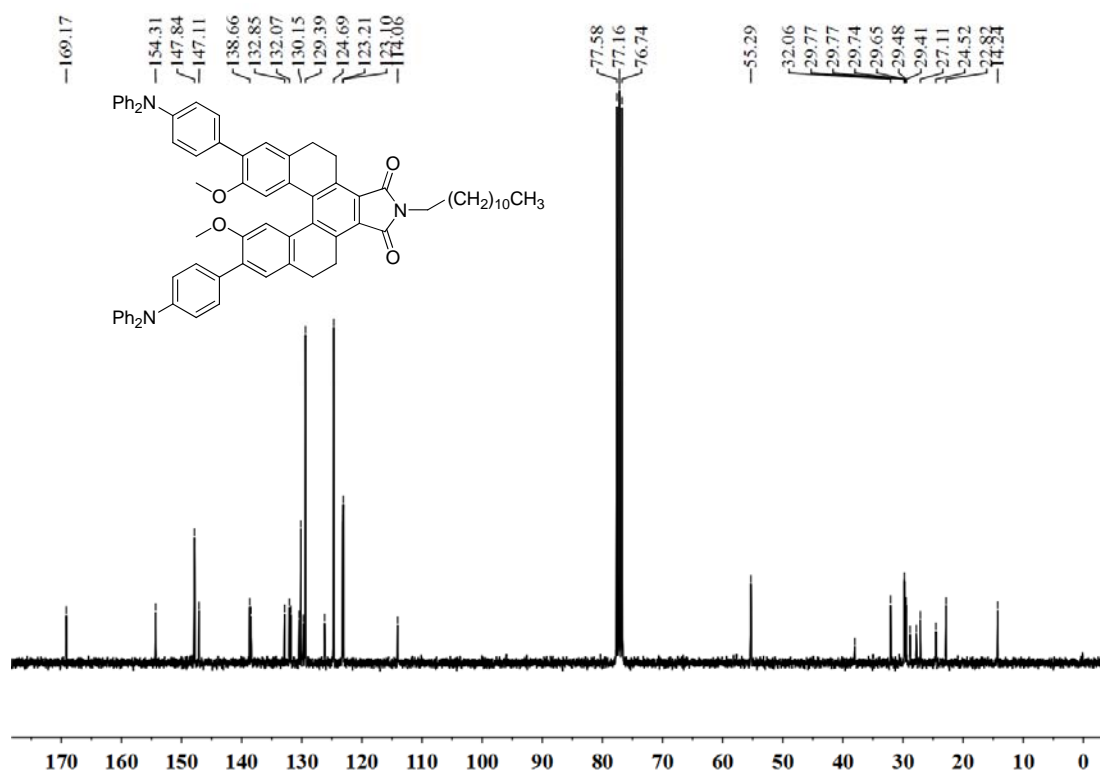
**Figure S26.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of 7.



**Figure S27.** <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of 7.



**Figure S28.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum (300MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of **8**.



**Figure S29.** <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) of **8**.