

## Electronic Supplementary Information

### Phase transfer-based synthesis of HgS nanocrystals

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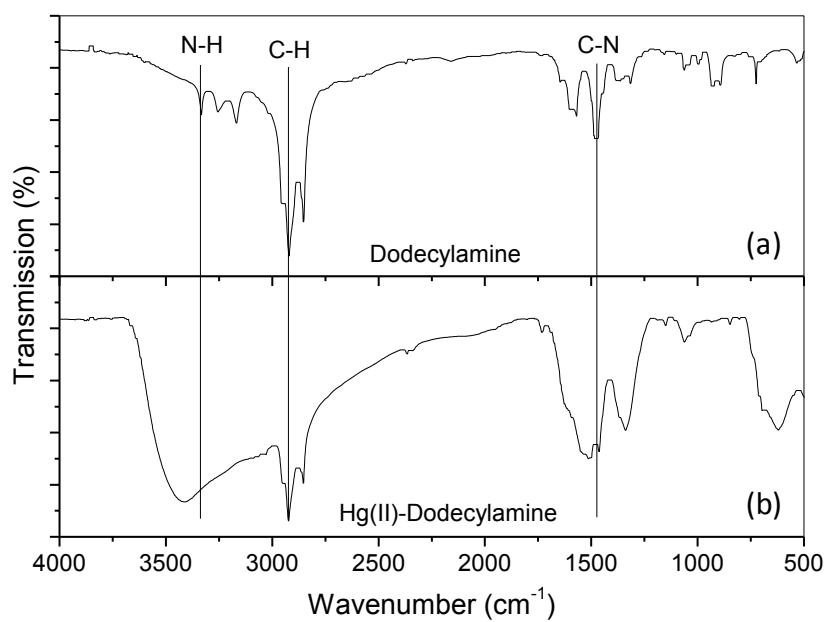
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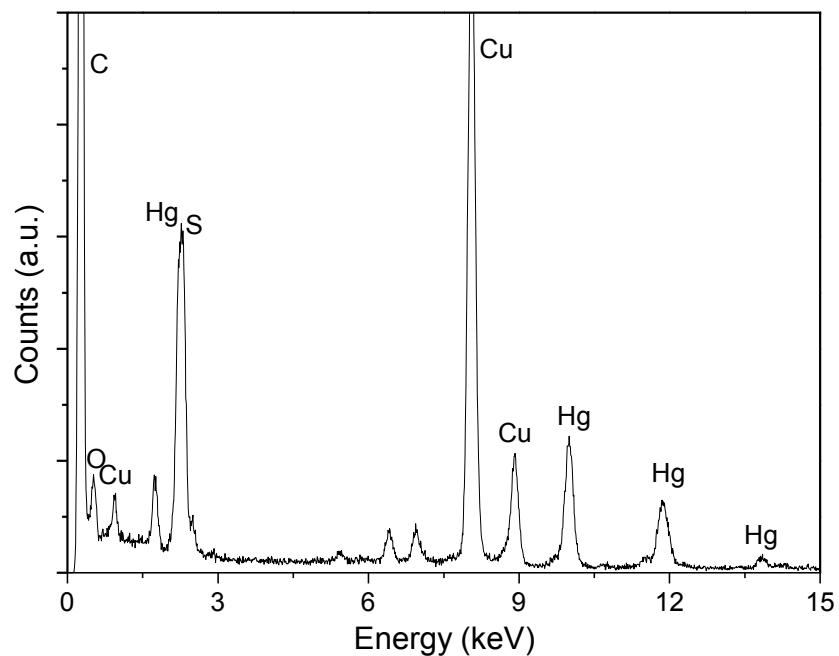
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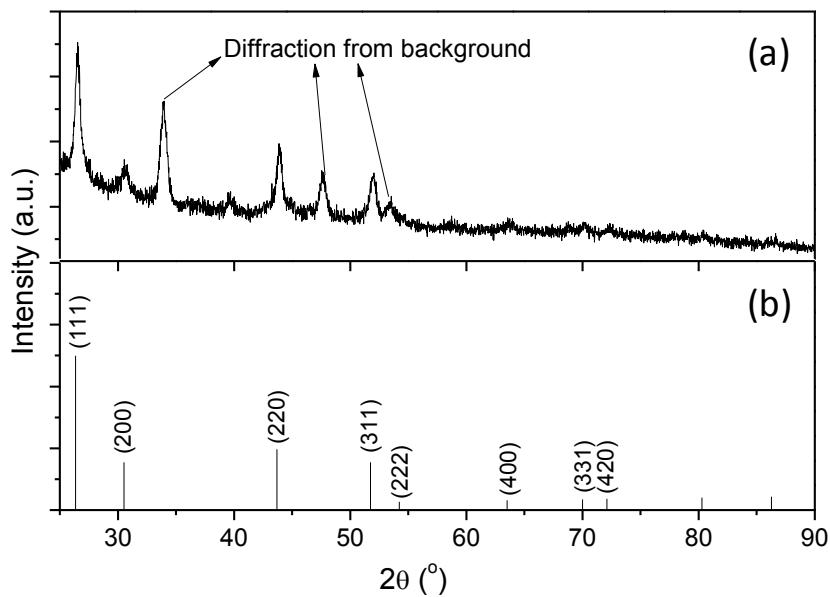
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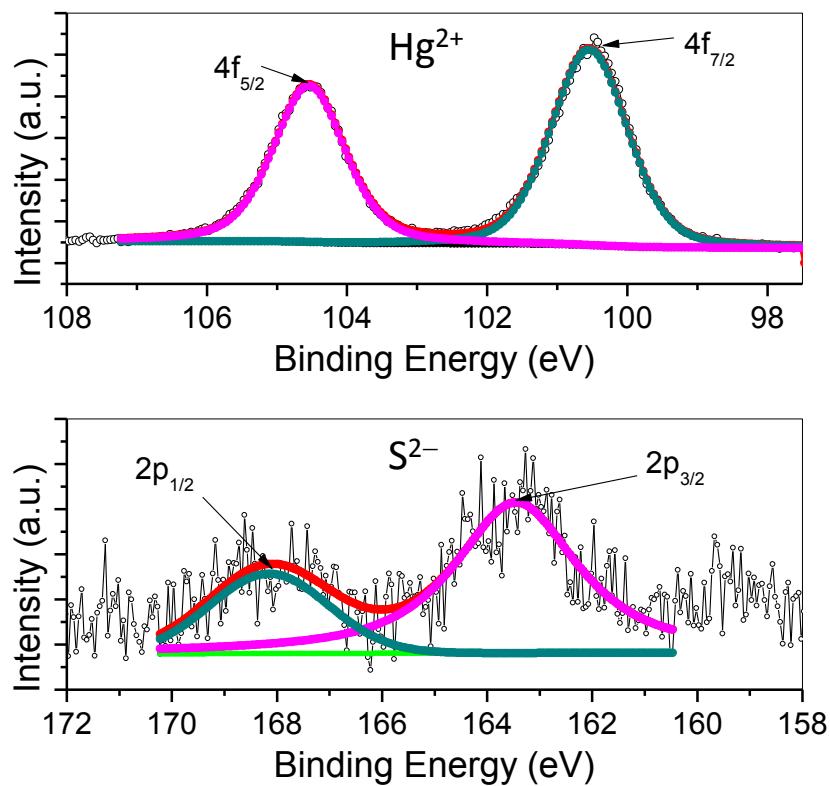
**Fig. S1** FTIR spectra of pure DDT (a) and Hg(II)-DDT complexes (b) recovered from toluene after phase transfer of Hg(II) ions.



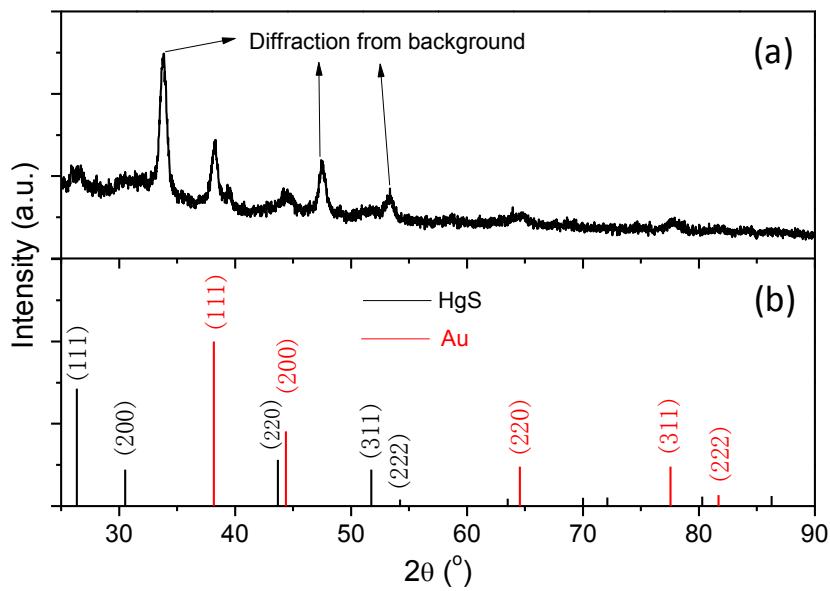
**Fig. S2** EDX analysis of HgS nanocrystals as-prepared in toluene at room temperature using phase transfer technique.



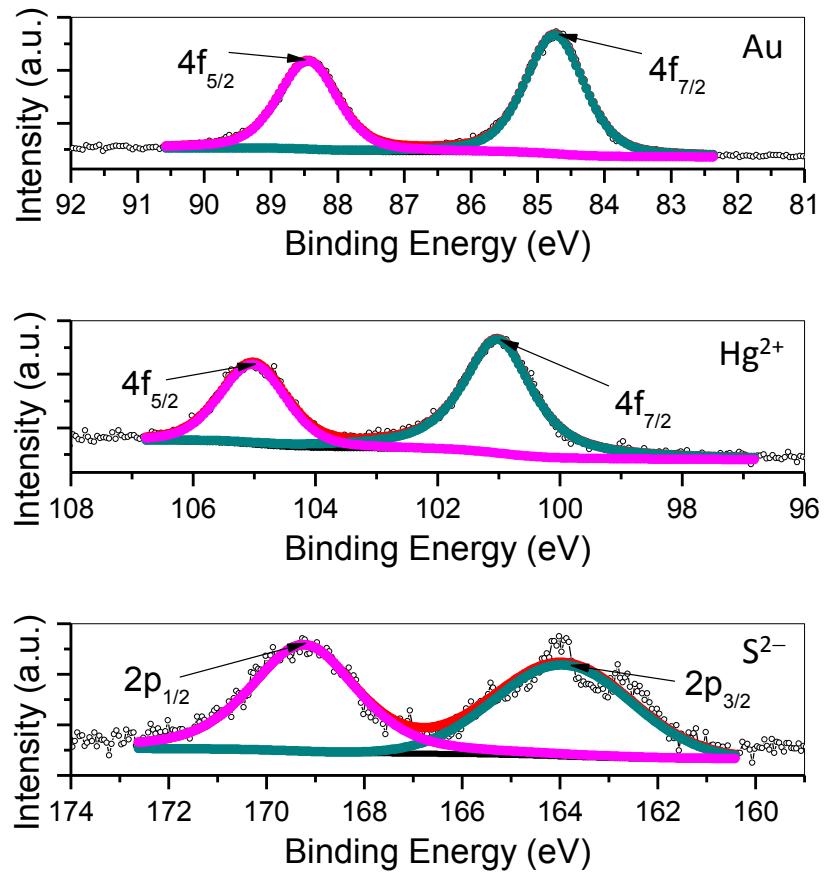
**Fig. S3** X-ray diffraction (XRD) pattern of the HgS nanocrystals as-prepared in toluene at room temperature (a) and the reference (b, JCPDS Card File 890432).



**Fig. S4** Hg 4f and S sp XPS spectra of the HgS nanocrystals as-prepared in toluene at room temperature.



**Fig. S5** X-ray diffraction (XRD) pattern of the HgS-Au nanocomposites as-prepared in toluene at room temperature (a) and the reference (b, JCPDS Card File 893697 for Au and JCPDS Card File 890422 for HgS, respectively).



**Fig. S6** Au 4f, Hg 4f, and S sp XPS spectra of the HgS-Au nanocomposites as-prepared in toluene at room temperature.