

**Unsymmetrical donor–acceptor oligothiophenes end-capped with triphenylamine and phenyldicyanovinyl units**

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## 1. Experimental Section

### 1.1 Materials

n-Butyllithium (1.6 M solution in hexane), 2-isopropoxy-4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolane (IPTMDOB), tetrakis(triphenylphosphine)palladium(0) Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>, malononitrile, *p*-toluenesulfonic acid (TsOH), 2,2-dimethylpropane-1,3-diol, 2-bromothiophene, 2-benzoylthiophene **1** were obtained from Sigma–Aldrich Co. and used without further purification. Benzene, toluene, THF pyridine were dried and purified according to the known techniques. 5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-2-[5'-(4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)-2,2'-bithien-5-yl]-1,3-dioxane **4** was prepared as described in reference [S1]. (4-Bromophenyl)diphenylamine was obtained as described in reference [S2]. All reactions, unless stated otherwise, were carried out under an inert atmosphere.

### 1.2 Characterization

<sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra were recorded at a Bruker WP-250 SY spectrometer, working at a frequency of 250.13 MHz and using CDCl<sub>3</sub> signal (7.25 ppm) and DMSO-d<sub>6</sub> (2.50 ppm) as the internal standard. <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra were recorded using a Bruker Avance II 300 spectrometer at 75 MHz. In the case of <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectroscopy, the compounds to be analyzed were taken in the form of 1% solutions in CDCl<sub>3</sub> or DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>. In the case of <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectroscopy, the compounds to be analyzed were taken in the form of 5% solutions in CDCl<sub>3</sub> or DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>. The spectra were then processed on the computer using the ACD Labs software.

Mass-spectra (MALDI) were registered on the Autoflex II Bruker (resolution FWHM 18000), equipped with a nitrogen laser (work wavelength 337 nm) and time-of-flight mass-detector working in reflections mode. The accelerating voltage was 20 kV. Samples were applied to a polished stainless steel substrate. Spectrum was recorded in the positive ion mode. The resulting spectrum was the sum of 300 spectra obtained at different points of sample. 2,5-Dihydroxybenzoic acid (DHB) (Acros, 99%) and  $\alpha$ -cyano-4-hydroxycinnamic acid (HCCA) (Acros, 99%) were used as matrices.

Elemental analysis of C, N and H elements was carried out using CHN automatic analyzer CE 1106 (Italy). The settling titration using BaCl<sub>2</sub> was applied to analyze sulfur. Experimental error for elemental analysis is 0.30-0.50%. The Knövenagel condensation was carried out in the microwave “Discovery”, (CEM corporation, USA), using a standard method with the open vessel option, 50 watts. In the case of column chromatography, silica gel 60 (“Merck”) was taken. Absorption profiles were recorded with a Shimadzu UV 2501 PC absorption spectrometer from

350 to 1100. All measurements were carried out at room temperature in diluted solutions ( $10^{-5}$  M) of THF. Films were cast from THF solutions on quartz substrate.

Cyclic voltammetry measurements were carried out using solid compact layers of the oligomers, which in turn were made by electrostatically rubbing the materials onto a glassy carbon electrode. Measurements were made in MeCN - *o*-Cl<sub>2</sub>C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub> (1:4) solution using 0.1 M Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> as supporting electrolyte and using IPC-Pro M potentiostat. The sweep rate was 200 mV s<sup>-1</sup>. The glassy carbon electrode was used as a working electrode. Potentials were measured relative to a saturated calomel electrode (SCE). The HOMO and LUMO energy levels were calculated using the first standard formal oxidation and reduction potentials obtained from CV experiments in films according to the following equations: LUMO =  $e(\varphi_{\text{red}} + 4.40)$  (eV) and HOMO =  $-e(\varphi_{\text{ox}} + 4.40)$  (eV) [S3,S4].

DSC analysis of the samples was carried out by a DSC-822e (Mettler-Toledo, Switzerland) at a heating rate 10 °C min<sup>-1</sup> in argon. TGA was done by a Derivatograph-C instrument (MOM, Hungary), at a heating rate 10 °C min<sup>-1</sup> in air and argon.

Solubility of oligomers was measured using its saturated solution in ODCB, which was prepared by stirring of an excess of solid material in the solvent. For this purpose, materials were added in small portions to 1 ml of pure solvent. As prepared, the saturated solutions were filtered through 0.25-mm PTFE syringe filters and the solvent was evaporated using a rotary evaporator. Afterwards the residue was dried in vacuum at 130°C until it achieved constant weight, which was used to calculate the exact solubility value.

### 1.3 Synthesis of the oligomers

**5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-2-(2-thienyl)-1,3-dioxane 2.** 2-Benzoylthiophene **1** (7.5 g, 39.8 mmol) was dissolved in dry benzene (150 ml). After complete dissolution, 2,2-dimethylpropane-1,3-diol (20.75 g, 199.2 mmol) and TsOH (1.52 g, 8.0 mmol) were added. Afterwards, the mixture was stirred at reflux for 14 hours using a Dean – Stark water separator. After that, the mixture was extracted with toluene and washed with distilled water. The combined organic phases were dried over sodium sulfate and filtered. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was dried at 1 Torr. This crude product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent hexane) to give pure product (10.93 g, 73%) as a white solid. M.p.: 64-65°C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, δ, ppm): 0.86 (s, 3H), 1.16 (s, 3H), 3.60 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 3.68 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 6.73 (dd, 1H, *J*<sub>1</sub> = 3.4 Hz, *J*<sub>2</sub> = 1.2 Hz), 6.87 (dd, 1H, *J*<sub>1</sub> = 5.2 Hz, *J*<sub>2</sub> = 3.7 Hz), 7.26 (dd, 1H, *J*<sub>1</sub> = 4.9 Hz, *J*<sub>2</sub> = 1.2 Hz), 7.29-7.43 (overlapping peaks, 3H), 7.52-7.61 (overlapping peaks, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz,

CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  [ppm] 22.23, 22.70, 30.05, 72.40, 99.67, 126.01, 126.09, 126.33, 126.97, 128.28, 128.42, 128.48, 140.24, 147.35. Calcd (%) for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S: C, 70.04; H, 6.61; S, 11.69. Found: C, 70.21; H, 6.73; S, 11.47.

**5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-2-[5-(4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)-2-thienyl]-1,3-**

**dioxane 3.** n-Butyllithium (1.6 M hexane solution, 17.54 ml, 28.0 mmol) was added dropwise to a solution of compound **2** (7.70 g, 28.0 mmol) in dry THF (154 ml) at -78°C. The reaction mixture was stirred for 60 min at -78°C, and then 2-isopropoxy-4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolane (IPTMDOB, 5.38 g, 29.0 mmol) was added in one portion. The mixture was stirred for 1 h at -78°C, then the cooling bath was removed, and the stirring was continued for 1 h. After completion of the reaction, freshly distilled diethyl ether (300 ml), distilled water (100 ml) and 1 M HCl (28 ml) were added. The organic phase was separated, washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate, and filtered. The solvent was evaporated to give 10.4 g (93%) of pure product as a pale pink solid. M.p.: 141-143°C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>,  $\delta$ , ppm): 0.91 (s, 3H), 1.06 (s, 3H), 1.30 (s, 12H), 3.58 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 3.69 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 6.91 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 7.26-7.39 (overlapping peaks, 3H), 7.41 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 7.52-7.59 (overlapping peaks, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  [ppm] 22.33, 22.57, 24.71, 30.04, 72.38, 84.04, 99.58, 126.60, 127.29, 128.20, 128.41, 136.69, 140.88, 154.08. Calcd (%) for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>29</sub>BO<sub>4</sub>S: C, 66.00; H, 7.30; S, 8.01. Found: C, 66.41; H, 7.53; S, 7.72.

**5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-2-(2,2':5',2''-terthien-5-yl)-1,3-dioxane 5.** In an inert atmosphere, deaerated solutions of 2-bromothiopene (3.16 g, 19 mmol) and compound **4** (7.2 g, 15 mmol) in toluene/ethanol mixture (105 and 11 ml correspondingly) and 2 M aqueous solution of Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (10 ml) were added to Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (430 mg, 0.4 mmol). The mixture was stirred under reflux for 19 h, and then it was cooled to room temperature and poured into water (100 ml) and toluene (100 ml). The organic phase was separated, washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate and filtered. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was dried at 1 Torr. The product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent toluene) to give pure compound **5** (4.72 g, 72%) as yellow solid. M.p.: 206-207°C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>,  $\delta$ , ppm): 0.87 (s, 3H), 1.17 (s, 3H), 3.60 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 3.70 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 6.64 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 6.92 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 6.96-7.10 (overlapping peaks, 3H), 7.11-7.21 (overlapping peaks, 2H), 7.30-7.45 (overlapping peaks, 3H), 7.53-7.63 (overlapping peaks, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  [ppm] 22.24, 22.69, 30.04, 72.46, 99.60, 122.98, 123.66, 124.25, 124.29, 124.39, 126.63, 126.86, 127.77, 128.30, 128.45, 136.34, 136.35, 137.19, 137.64, 140.29, 146.51. Calcd (%) for C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>22</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub>: C, 65.72; H, 5.06; S, 21.93. Found: C, 65.31; H, 5.27; S, 21.42. MALDI-MS: found *m/z* 437.93; calculated for [M]<sup>+</sup> 438.63

**5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-2-[5'-(4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)-2,2':5',2''-terthien-5-yl]-1,3-dioxane 6.** Compound **6** was obtained analogously to the procedure described above for compound **3** using **5** (4.70 g, 11.0 mmol), 1.6 M hexane solution of *n*-butyllithium (6.70 ml, 11 mmol), IPTMDOB (2.00 g, 11 mmol) to give 5.62 g (93%) of the product as a green viscous substance. The product was used in the subsequent synthesis without further purification. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, δ, ppm): 0.87 (s, 3H), 1.17 (s, 3H), 1.34 (s, 12H), 3.61 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 3.70 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 6.65 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 6.94 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.8 Hz), 7.03 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.8 Hz), 7.10 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.8 Hz), 7.20 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 7.31–7.43 (overlapping peaks, 3H), 7.51 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 7.57–7.61 (overlapping peaks, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 22.17, 22.65, 24.70, 30.01, 72.40, 84.14, 99.49, 123.09, 124.38, 124.76, 124.88, 124.95, 126.72, 126.83, 128.36, 128.51, 136.03, 136.78, 137.48, 137.92, 139.85, 143.71, 146.44. Calcd (%) for C<sub>30</sub>H<sub>33</sub>BO<sub>4</sub>S<sub>3</sub>: C, 63.82; H, 5.89; S, 17.04. Found: C, 63.95; H, 5.99; S, 16.87.

**2-(5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-1,3-dioxan-2-yl)-5-(4-diphenylaminophenyl)thiophene 8a.** In an inert atmosphere, deaerated solutions of (4-bromophenyl)diphenylamine **7** (2.20 g, 7.00 mmol) and compound **3** (4.08 g, 10.00 mmol) in toluene/ethanol mixture (120 and 12 ml correspondingly) and 2 M aqueous solution of Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (6.6 ml) were added to Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (294 mg, 0.25 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred under reflux for 11 h, and then it was cooled to room temperature and poured into water (100 ml) and toluene (50 ml). The organic phase was separated, washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate and filtered. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was dried at 1 Torr. The product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent toluene : hexane = 1 : 2) to give pure compound **8a** (2.46 g, 70%) as yellow solid. M.p.: 239-241°C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 0.88 (s, 3H), 1.16 (s, 3H), 3.60 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 3.71 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 6.67 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.70 Hz), 6.94-6.14 (overlapping peaks, 9H), 7.19-7.25 (overlapping peaks, 3H), 7.26-7.46 (overlapping peaks, 6H), 7.54-7.63 (overlapping peaks, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 22.17, 22.70, 30.06, 72.45, 99.70, 121.50, 123.02, 123.60, 124.45, 126.57, 126.94, 127.02, 128.31, 128.49, 129.28, 140.17, 144.81, 145.53, 147.22, 147.47. Calcd (%) for C<sub>34</sub>H<sub>31</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>S: C, 78.88; H, 6.04; N, 2.71; S, 6.19. Found: C, 79.09; H, 6.14; N, 2.59; S, 5.98. MALDI-MS: found *m/z* 517.14; calculated for [M]<sup>+</sup> 517.70.

**2-(5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-1,3-dioxan-2-yl)-5'-(4-diphenylaminophenyl)-2,2'-bithiophene 8b** was obtained analogously to the procedure described above for compound **8a** using **4** (2.3 g, 4.77 mmol), **7** (1.29 g, 3.98 mmol), 2 M aqueous solution of Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (3.1 ml), Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (138 mg, 0.12 mmol) to give a crude product. It was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent toluene : hexane = 1:1) to give pure product **8b** (1.62 g, 68%) as a yellow solid. M.p.: 285-286°C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 0.89 (s, 3H), 1.17 (s, 3H), 3.62 (d, 2H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 3.72

(d, 2H,  $J = 11.0$  Hz), 6.66 (d, 1H,  $J = 3.70$  Hz), 6.94 (d, 1H,  $J = 3.70$  Hz), 7.00-7.15 (overlapping peaks, 10H), 7.21-7.48 (overlapping peaks, 10H), 7.57-7.64 (overlapping peaks, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  [ppm] 22.28, 22.73, 30.09, 72.48, 99.61, 122.69, 122.82, 123.15, 123.63, 124.55, 124.63, 126.37, 126.79, 126.90, 128.07, 128.40, 128.56, 129.34, 135.80, 138.17, 140.08, 143.14, 145.87, 147.33, 147.44. Calcd (%) for  $\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{33}\text{NO}_2\text{S}_2$ : C, 76.09; H, 5.55; N, 2.34; S, 10.69. Found: C, 76.31; H, 5.73; N, 2.19; S, 10.52. MALDI-MS: found  $m/z$  599.02; calculated for  $[\text{M}]^+$  599.80.

**2-(5,5-Dimethyl-2-phenyl-1,3-dioxan-2-yl)-5''-(4-diphenylaminophenyl)-2,2':5',2''-**

**terthiophene 8c** was obtained analogously to the procedure described above for compound **8a** using **6** (2.3 g, 4.07 mmol), **7** (1.1 g, 3.39 mmol), 2 M aqueous solution of  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  (2.6 ml),  $\text{Pd}(\text{PPh}_3)_4$  (118 mg, 0.10 mmol) to give a crude product. It was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent toluene : hexane = 1:1) to give pure compound **8c** (1.49 g, 65%) as a yellow solid. M.p.: 132-133°C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (250 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ,  $\delta$ , ppm): 0.91 (s, 3H), 1.16 (s, 3H), 3.62 (d, 2H,  $J = 11.0$  Hz), 3.72 (d, 2H,  $J = 11.0$  Hz), 6.71 (d, 1H,  $J = 3.7$  Hz), 6.92–7.24 (overlapping peaks, 14H), 7.26–7.49 (overlapping peaks, 8H), 7.60 (d, 2H,  $J = 7.4$  Hz).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  [ppm] 22.24, 22.65, 30.02, 72.45, 99.63, 122.84, 122.95, 123.19, 123.56, 123.92, 124.28, 124.51, 124.59, 124.64, 125.22, 126.45, 126.55, 126.82, 128.13, 128.19, 128.35, 128.93, 129.24, 135.66, 136.21, 136.59, 137.68, 140.54, 143.43, 146.60, 147.57, 147.59. Calcd (%) for  $\text{C}_{42}\text{H}_{35}\text{NO}_2\text{S}_3$ : C, 73.97; H, 5.17; N, 2.05; S, 14.11. Found: C, 74.15; H, 5.22; N, 1.98; S, 13.89. MALDI-MS: found  $m/z$  681.94; calculated for  $[\text{M}]^+$  681.93.

**[5-(4-Diphenylaminophenyl)-2-thienyl](phenyl)methanone 9a**. Hydrochloric acid (1 M, 9.0 ml) was added to a solution of ketal **8a** (2.35 g, 4.54 mmol) in THF (60 ml) and the mixture was stirred for 4 hours at reflux, cooled to room temperature and poured into water (150 ml) and toluene (100 ml). The organic phase was separated, washed with water. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was dried at 1 Torr. The product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent dichloromethane) to give pure ketone **9a** (1.86 g, 95%) as a yellow solid. M.p.: 99-100 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (250 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ,  $\delta$ , ppm): 7.01-7.17 (overlapping peaks, 8H), 7.22-7.25 (overlapping peaks, 1H), 7.25-7.34 (overlapping peaks, 4H), 7.43-7.62 (overlapping peaks, 6H), 7.83-7.89 (overlapping peaks, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 122.55, 122.72, 123.70, 125.03, 126.51, 127.10, 128.37, 129.03, 129.43, 132.02, 136.31, 138.20, 141.11, 147.01, 148.77, 153.50, 187.95. Calcd. (%) for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{21}\text{NOS}$ : C, 80.71; H, 4.90; N, 3.25; S, 7.43. Found: C, 80.89; H, 5.08; N, 3.17; S, 7.52. MALDI-MS: found  $m/z$  431.21; calculated for  $[\text{M}^+]$  431.54.

**[5'-(4-diphenylaminophenyl)-2,2'-bithien-5-yl](phenyl)methanone 9b** was obtained by similarly to compound **9a** using 1 M HCl (7.5 ml), ketal **8b** (1.50 g, 2.5 mmol) to give pure ketone **9b** (0.96 g, 75%) as orange powder. M.p.: 272-273°C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 7.00–7.21 (overlapping peaks, 10H), 7.24–7.32 (overlapping peaks, 5H), 7.44–7.62 (overlapping peaks, 6H), 7.82–7.88 (overlapping peaks, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 123.23, 123.43, 123.67, 124.78, 126.58, 126.86, 127.32, 128.47, 129.04, 129.40, 132.16, 135.98, 138.13, 141.21, 145.70, 146.51, 147.29, 147.90, 187.73. Calcd (%) for C<sub>33</sub>H<sub>23</sub>NOS<sub>2</sub>: C, 77.16; H, 4.51; N, 2.73; S, 12.48. Found: C, 77.31; H, 4.65; N, 2.58; S, 12.27. MALDI-MS: found m/z 513.03; calculated for [M]<sup>+</sup> 513.66.

**[5''-(4-Diphenylaminophenyl)-2,2':5',2''-terthien-5-yl](phenyl)methanone** was obtained similarly to compound **9a** using 1 M HCl (6.1 ml), ketal **8c** (1.39 g, 2.04 mmol) to give pure ketone **9c** (1.01 g, 83%) as orange solid. M.p.: 295-297°C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 7.00–7.22 (overlapped peaks, 12H), 7.23–7.25 (overlapped peaks, 1H), 7.25–7.33 (overlapped peaks, 4H), 7.42–7.63 (overlapped peaks, 6H), 7.81–7.90 (overlapped peaks, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 122.94, 123.30, 123.42, 123.77, 124.20, 124.73, 125.22, 126.39, 126.52, 127.85, 128.31, 128.89, 129.27, 131.93, 135.34, 138.36, 138.92, 141.73, 144.34, 145.78, 147.51, 147.83, 187.25. Calcd (%) for C<sub>37</sub>H<sub>25</sub>NOS<sub>3</sub>: C, 74.59; H, 4.23; N, 2.35; S, 16.15. Found: C, 74.88; H, 4.41; N, 2.30; S, 16.02. MALDI-MS: found m/z 595.96; calculated for [M] + 595.80.

**2-(4-Diphenylaminophenyl)-5-(1-phenyl-2,2-dicyanoethenyl)thiophene 10a.** Ketone **9a** (0.87 g, 2.0 mmol), malononitrile (0.27 g, 4.0 mmol) and dry pyridine (10.0 ml) were placed in a reaction vessel and stirred under argon for 22 hours at reflux using the microwave heating. After completeness of the reaction, pyridine was evaporated and the residue was dried at 1 Torr. The crude material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent dichloromethane). Further purification included precipitation of the product from its THF solution with toluene and hexane to give pure product as a red solid (0.71 g, 76%). M.p.: 224 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 6.99 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.9 Hz), 7.04 - 7.16 (overlapping peaks, 6H), 7.25 - 7.34 (overlapping peaks, 5H), 7.42 - 7.62 (overlapping peaks, 7H), 7.63 (d, 1H, *J* = 4.3 Hz). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 75.24, 114.35, 114.97, 121.88, 123.56, 124.12, 125.11, 125.31, 127.32, 128.69, 129.34, 129.50, 131.41, 135.92, 136.11, 138.77, 146.67, 149.54, 156.26, 164.03. Calcd. (%) for C<sub>32</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>3</sub>S: C, 80.14; H, 4.41; N, 8.76; S, 6.69. Found: C, 80.23; H, 4.42; N, 8.75; S, 6.64. MALDI-MS: found m/z 479.11; calculated for [M<sup>+</sup>] 479.56.

**2-(4-Diphenylaminophenyl)-5'-(1-phenyl-2,2-dicyanoethenyl)-2,2'-bithiophene 10b** was obtained similarly to compound **10a** from ketone **9b** (0.87 g, 0.8 mmol), malononitrile (0.33 g, 5.1 mmol) and pyridine (13 ml). The crude product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent dichloromethane). Further purification included precipitation of the product from its

THF solution with toluene and hexane to give pure product as black solid (0.72 g, 76%). M.p. = 183 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>): δ [ppm] 6.92 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.9 Hz), 7.02–7.14 (overlapping peaks, 6H), 7.28–7.37 (overlapping peaks, 4H), 7.46 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 7.55–7.70 (overlapping peaks, 10H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>): δ [ppm] 75.36, 113.90, 114.52, 122.06, 123.43, 124.05, 124.33, 125.14, 125.99, 126.38, 128.38, 128.46, 128.90, 129.25, 131.12, 132.23, 135.32, 135.54, 138.29, 145.88, 146.36, 147.32, 147.47, 162.97. Calcd (%) for C<sub>36</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>3</sub>S<sub>2</sub>: C, 76.98; H, 4.13; N, 7.48; S, 11.42. Found: C, 76.79; H, 4.30; N, 7.38; S, 11.37. MALDI-MS: found *m/z* 561.62; calculated for [M]<sup>+</sup> 561.72.

**2-(4-Diphenylaminophenyl)-5''-(1-phenyl-2,2-dicyanoethenyl)-2,2':5',2''-terthiophene 10c** was obtained similarly to compound **10a** from ketone **9c** (0.9 g, 1.5 mmol) and malononitrile (0.299 g, 4.5 mmol). The crude product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent dichloromethane). Further purification included precipitation of the product from its THF solution with toluene and hexane to give pure product as a black solid (0.71 g, 73%). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (250 MHz, DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>): δ [ppm] 6.93 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.7 Hz), 7.00–7.13 (overlapped peaks, 6H), 7.28–7.42 (overlapped peaks, 7H), 7.50–7.68 (overlapped peaks, 10H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ [ppm] 113.82, 114.86, 122.94, 123.20, 123.32, 124.30, 124.52, 124.71, 125.59, 126.45, 127.42, 127.45, 128.70, 129.18, 129.25, 131.36, 133.35, 134.40, 136.08, 136.42, 137.94, 140.29, 144.81, 147.34, 147.87, 148.24, 163.42. Calcd (%) for C<sub>40</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>3</sub>S<sub>3</sub>: C, 74.62; H, 3.91; N, 6.53; S, 14.94. Found: C, 74.58; H, 4.06; N, 6.36; S, 15.01. MALDI-MS: found *m/z* 643.91; calculated for [M]<sup>+</sup> 643.84.

## 2. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C NMR Spectra

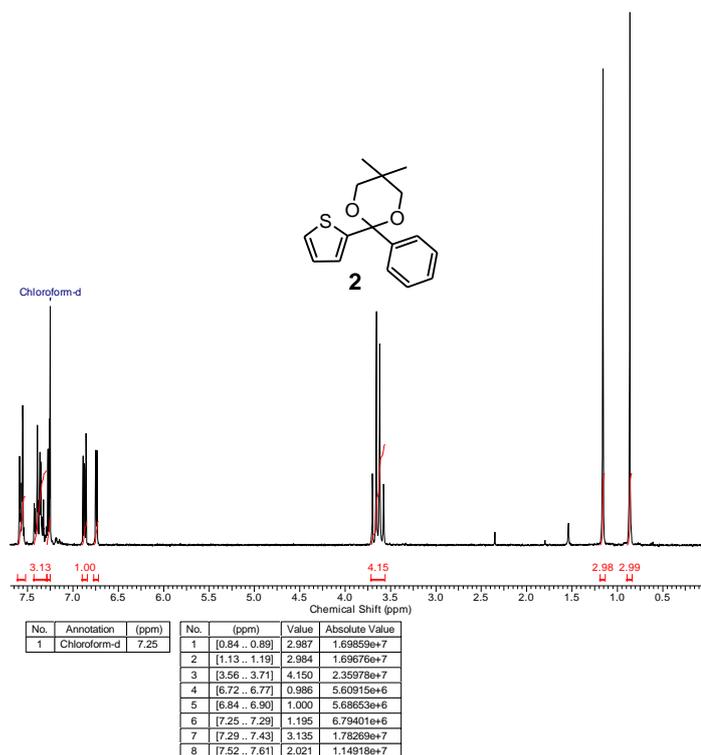


Figure S1. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of compound **2** in CDCl<sub>3</sub>.

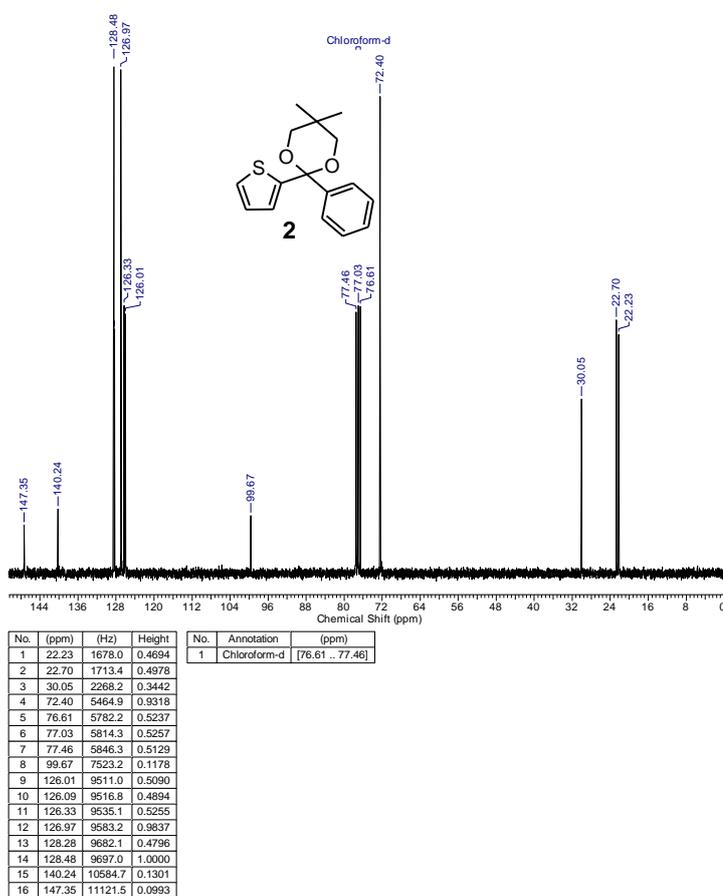
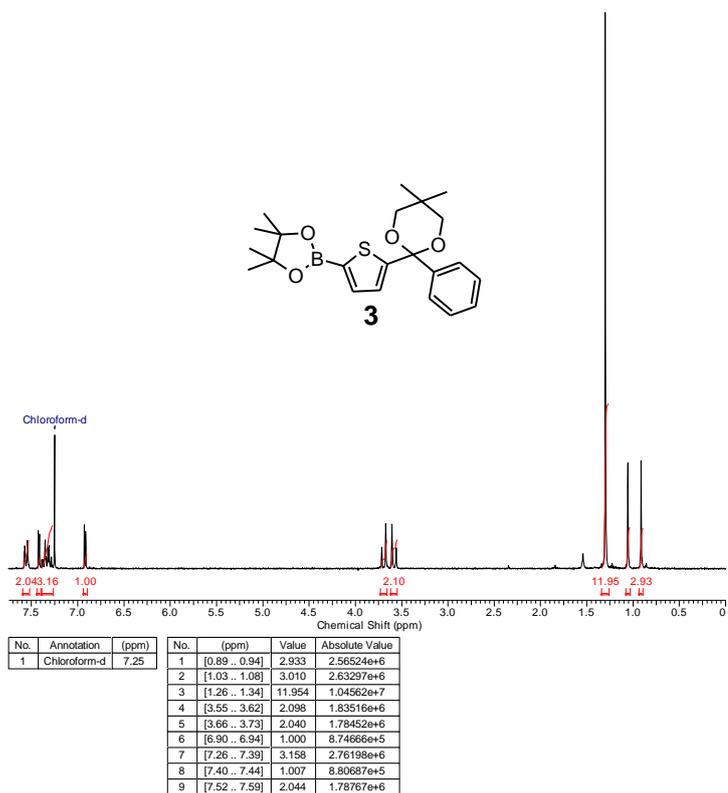
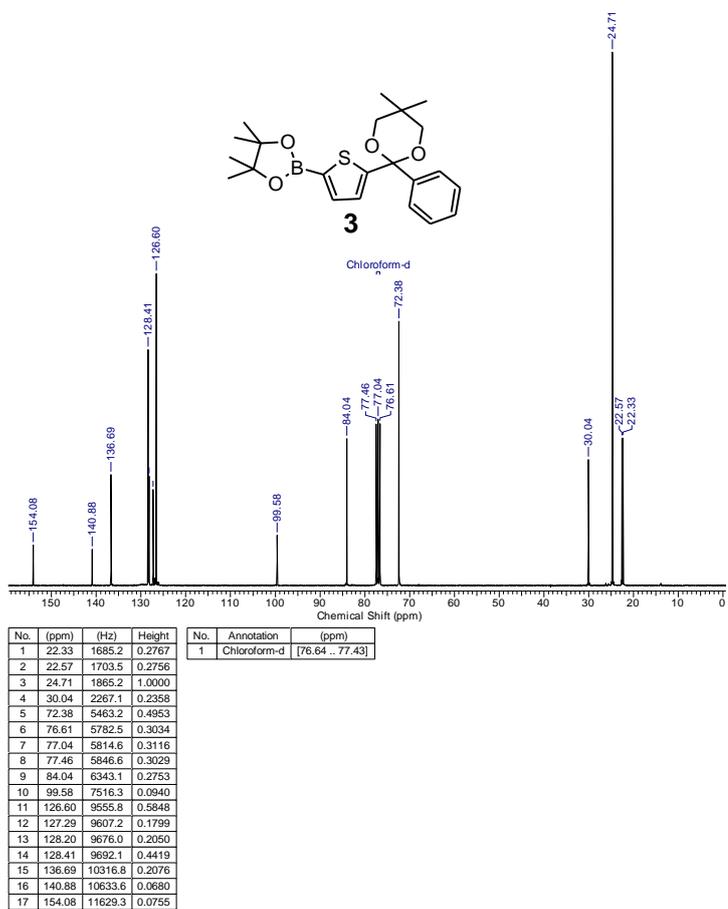


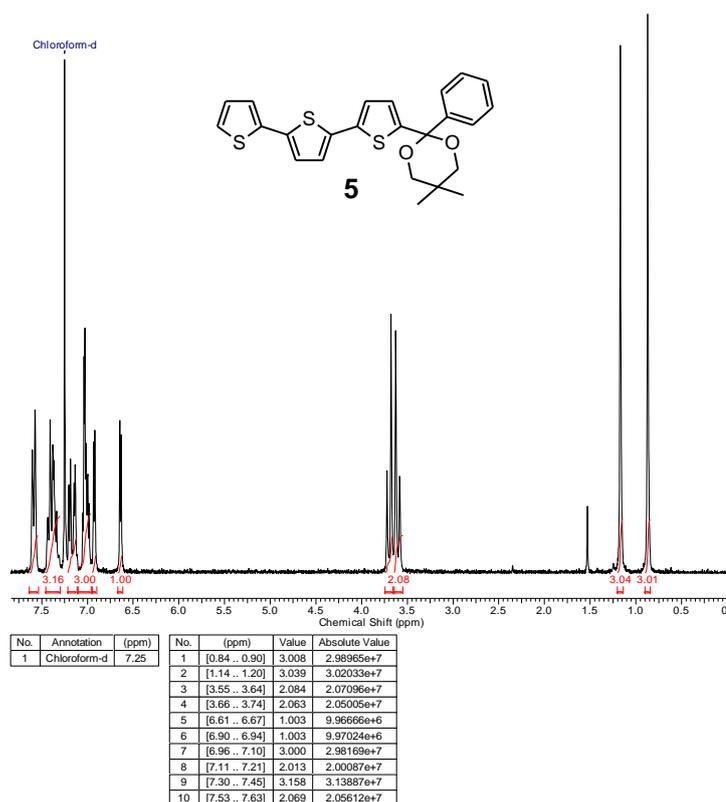
Figure S2. <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum of compound **2** in CDCl<sub>3</sub>.



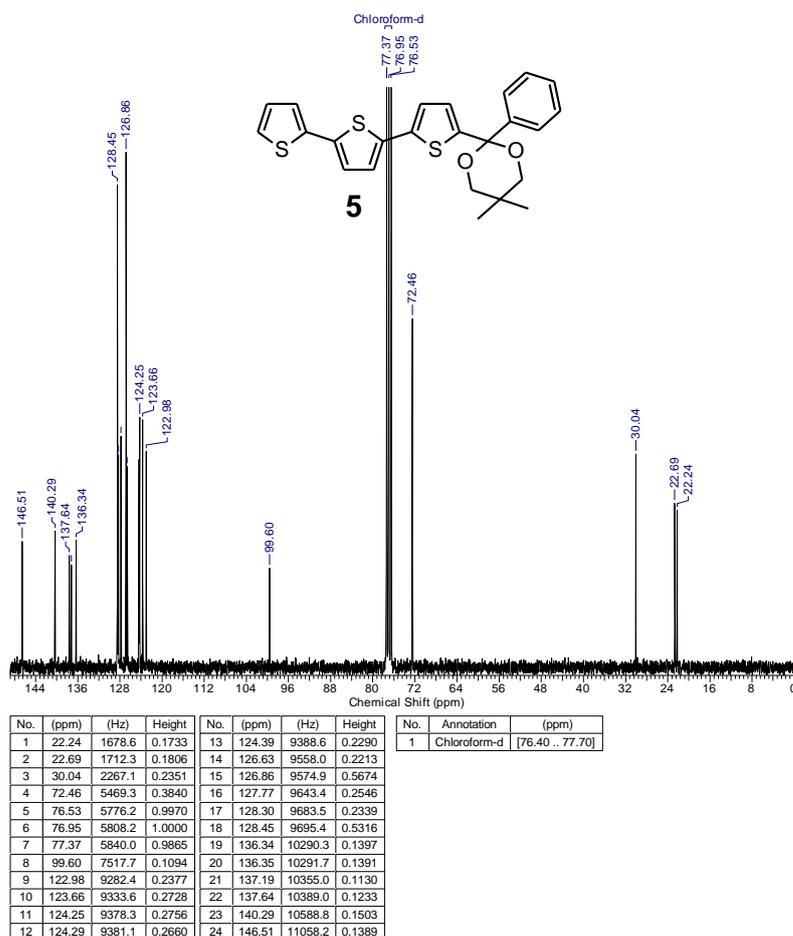
**Figure S3.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **3** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$



**Figure S4.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **3** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



**Figure S5.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **5** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



**Figure S6.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **5** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

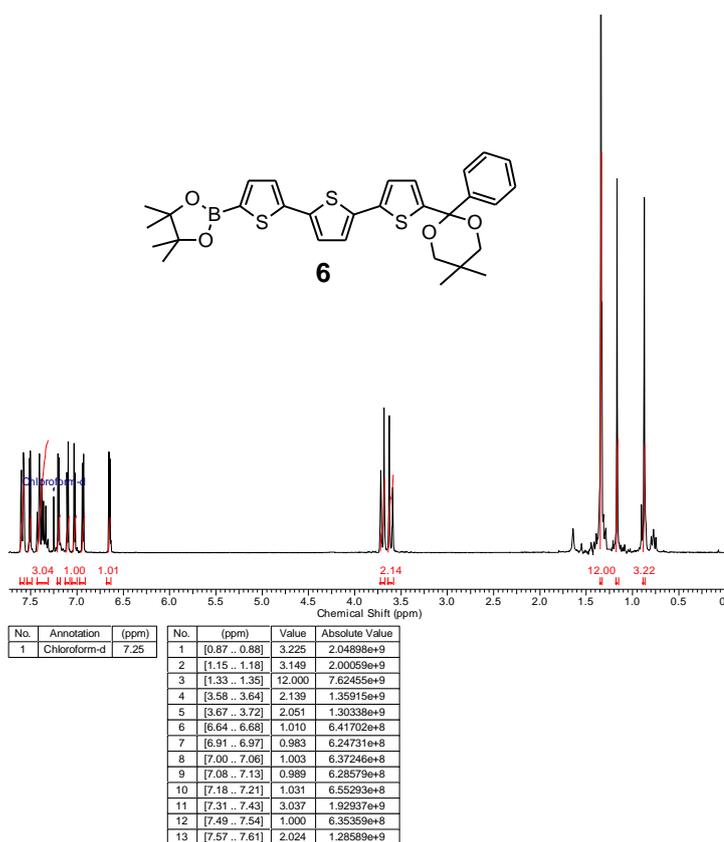


Figure S7.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **6** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

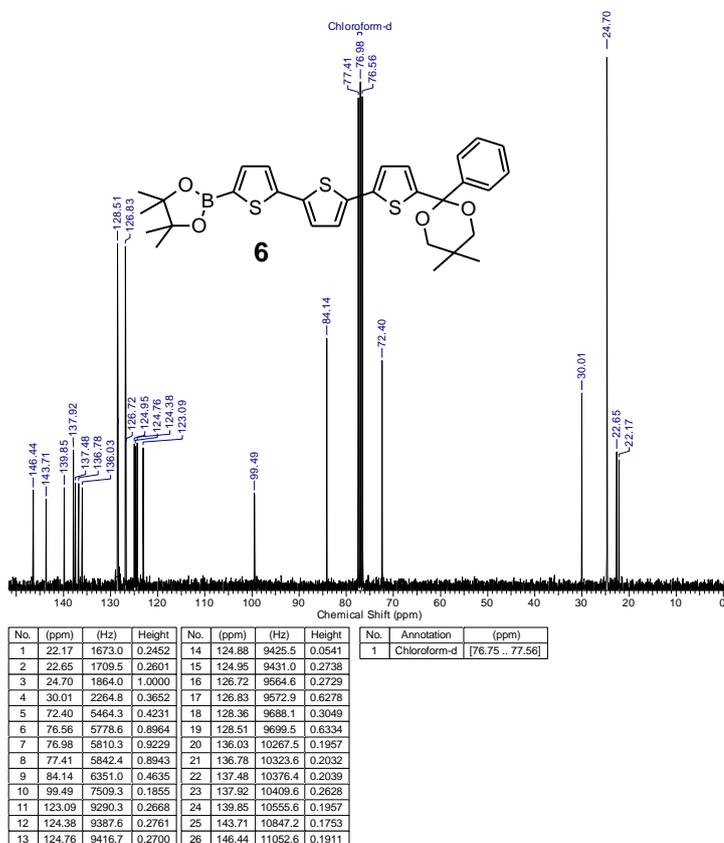
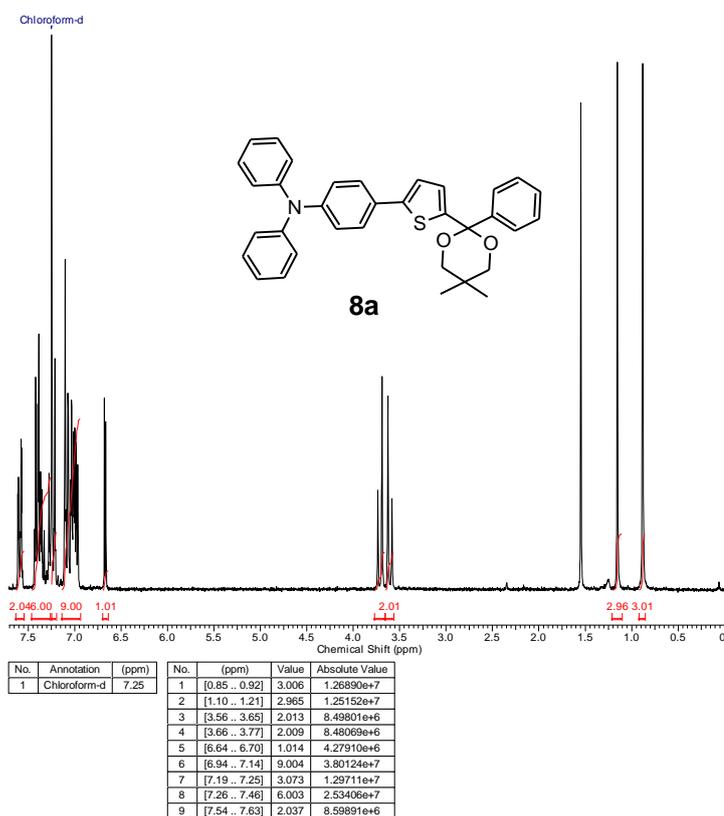
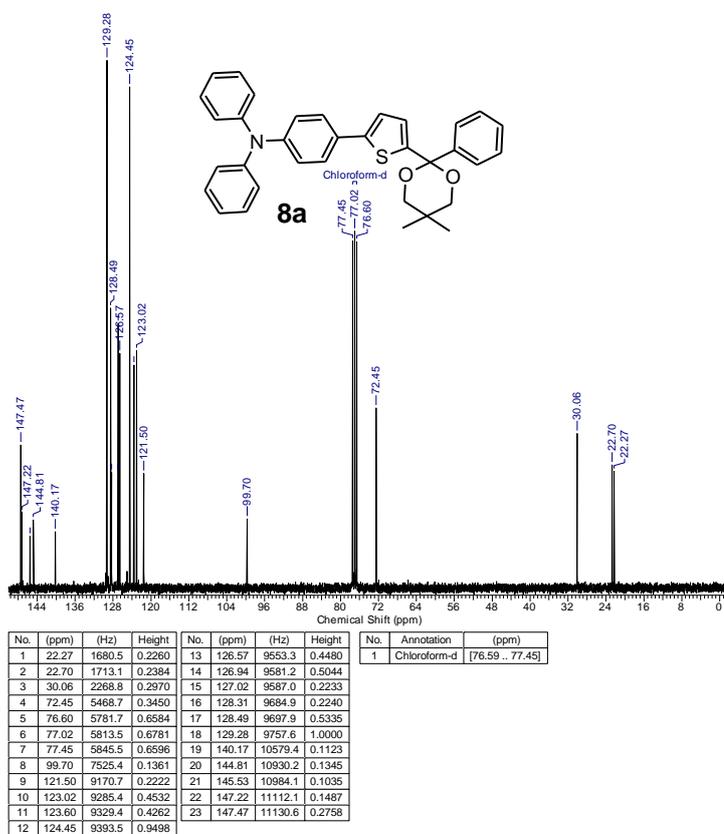


Figure S8.  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **6** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



**Figure S9.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **8a** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



**Figure S10.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **8a** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

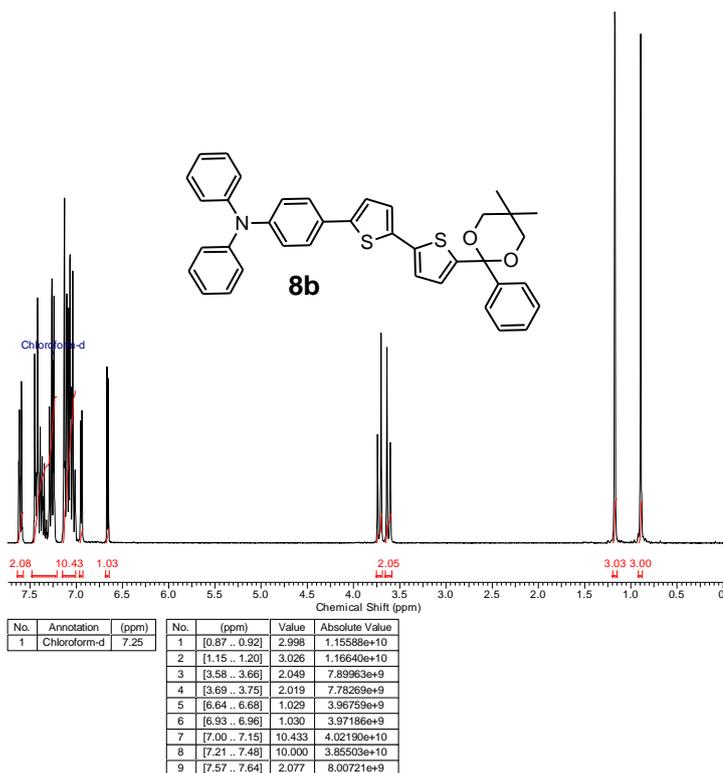


Figure S11.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **8b** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

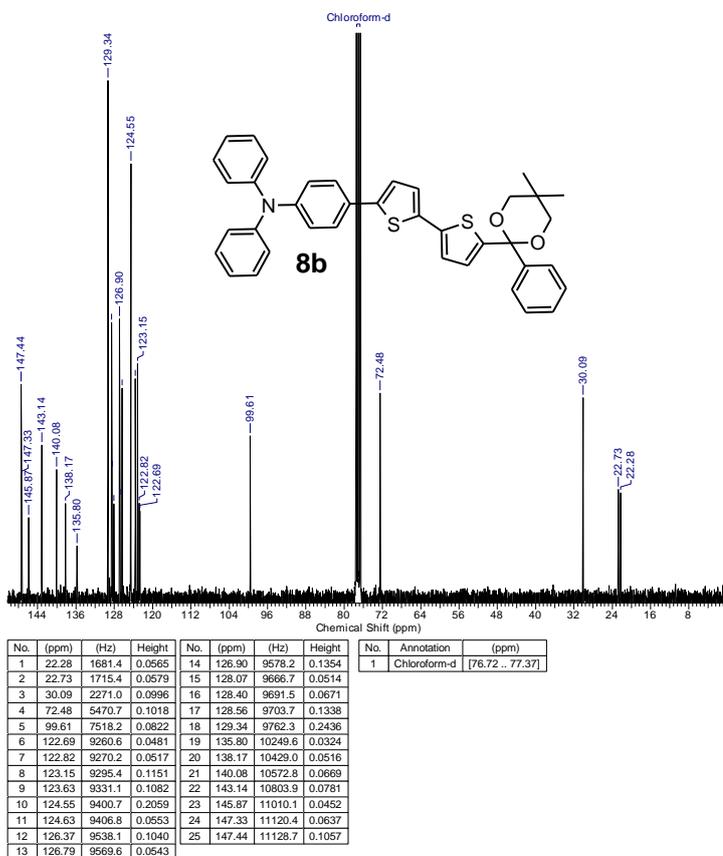


Figure S12.  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **8b** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

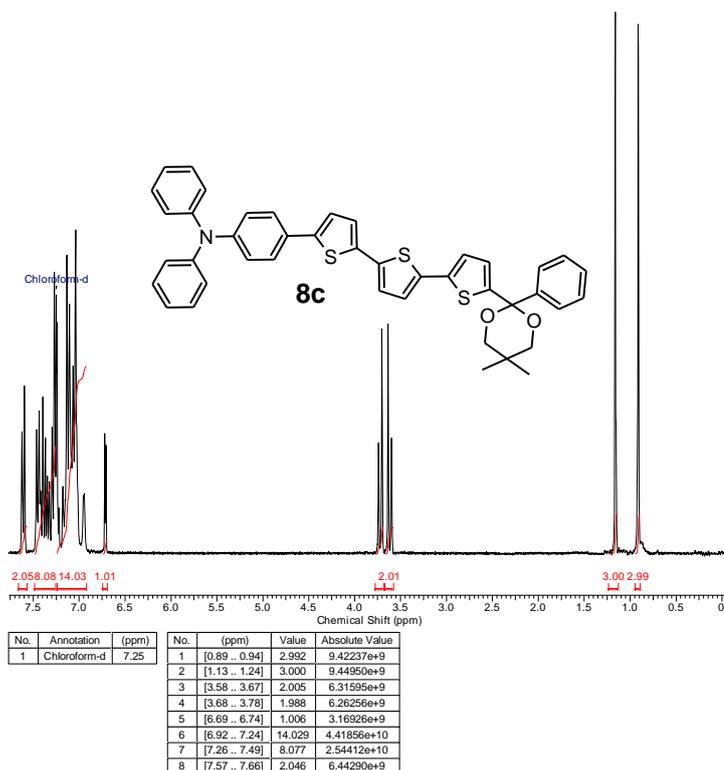


Figure S13. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of compound **8c** in CDCl<sub>3</sub>.

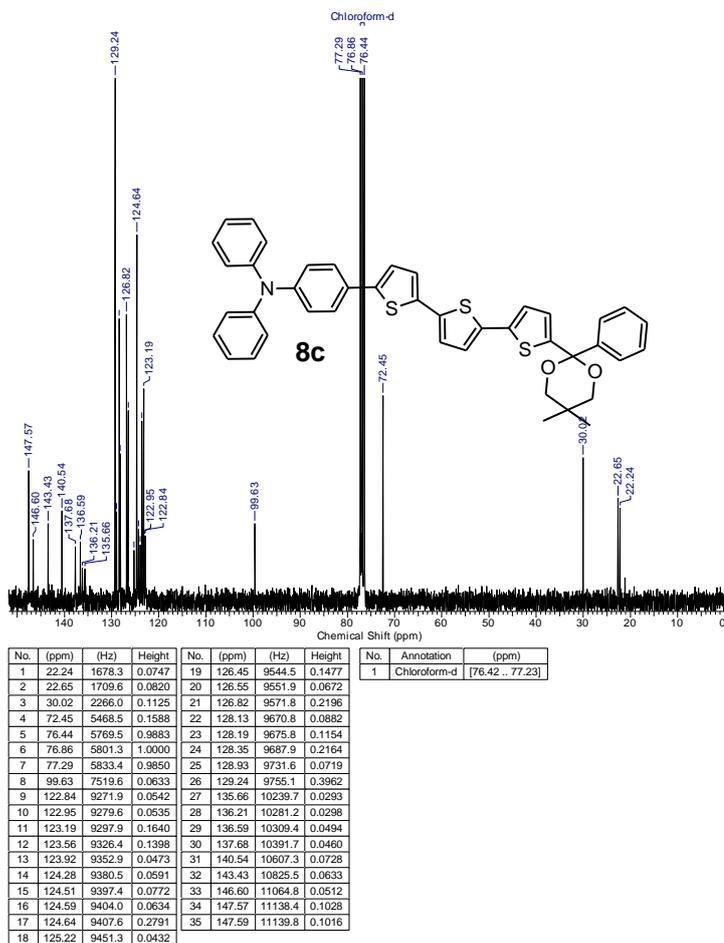


Figure S14. <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum of compound **8c** in CDCl<sub>3</sub>.

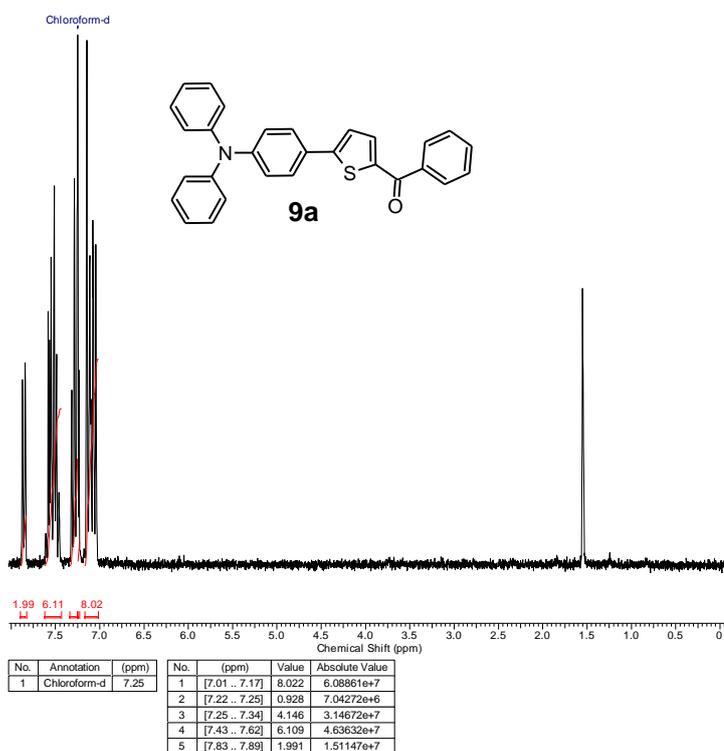


Figure S15.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **9a** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

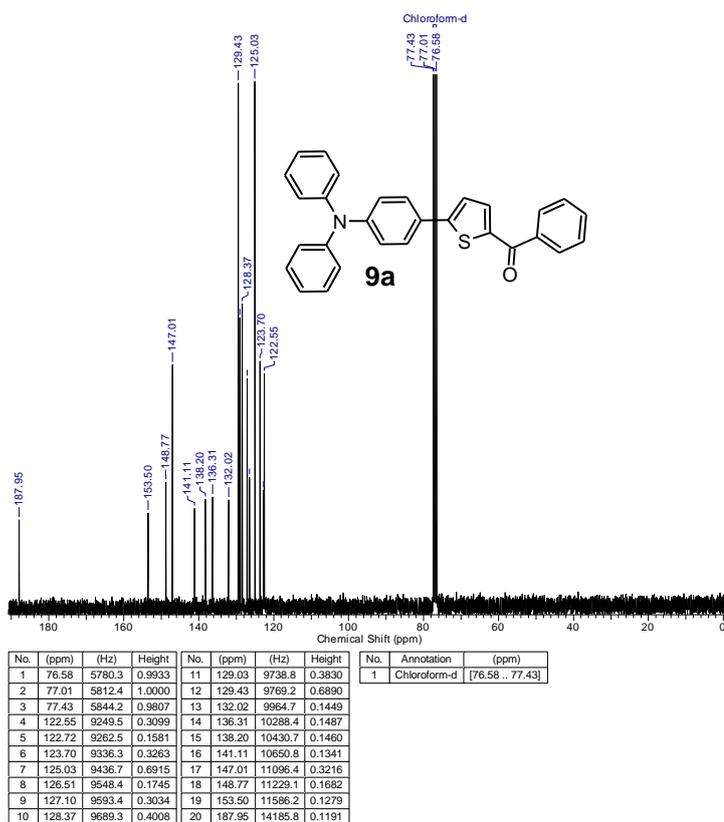


Figure S16.  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **9a** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

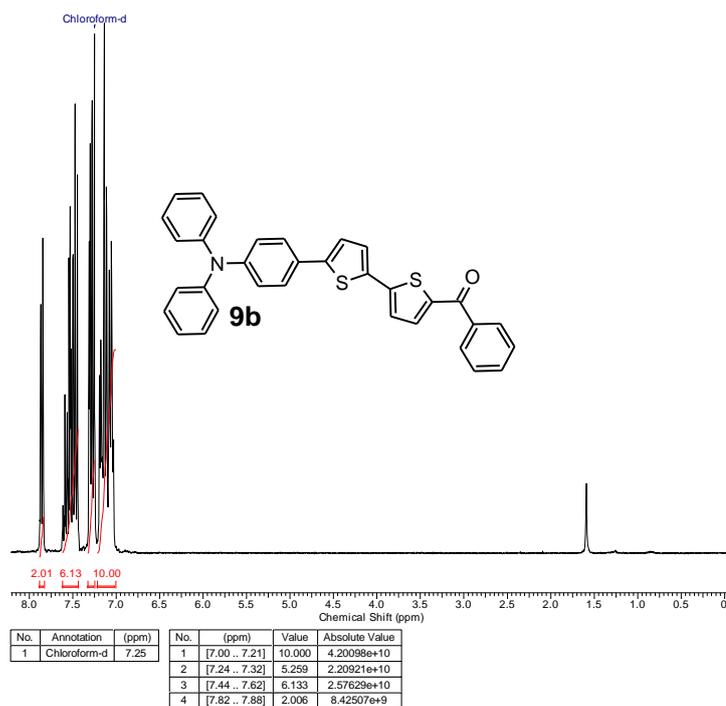


Figure S17.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **9b** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

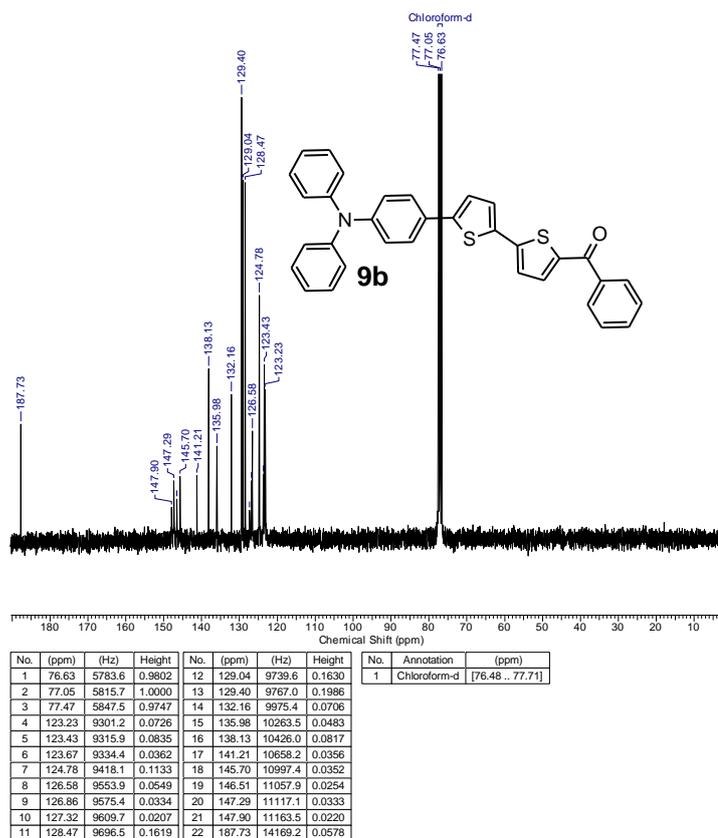
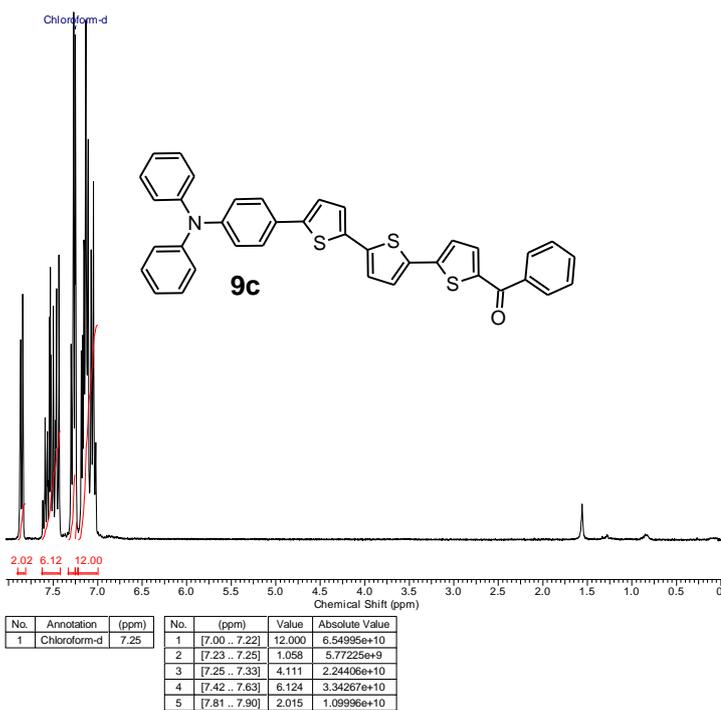
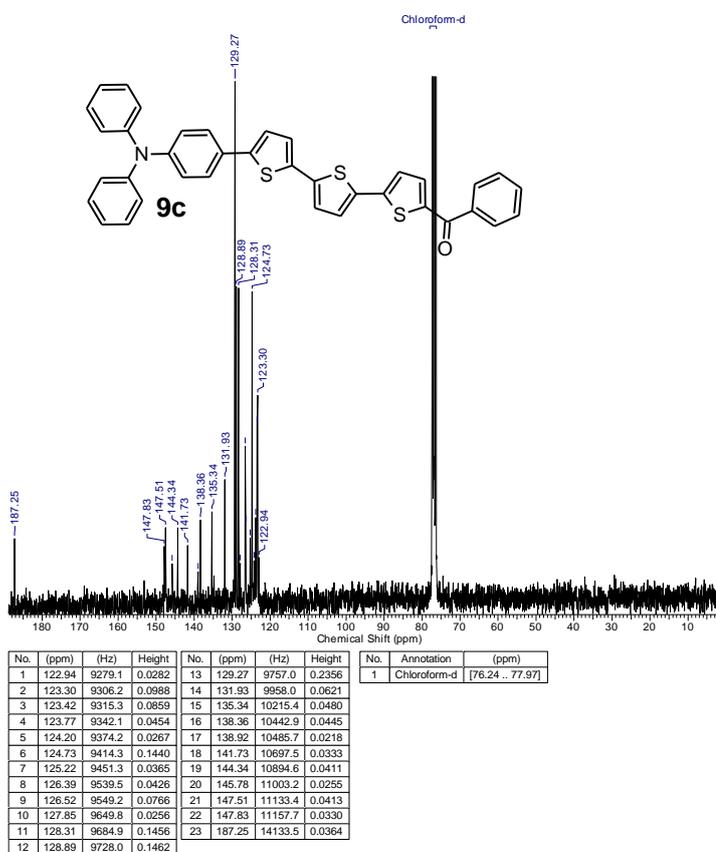


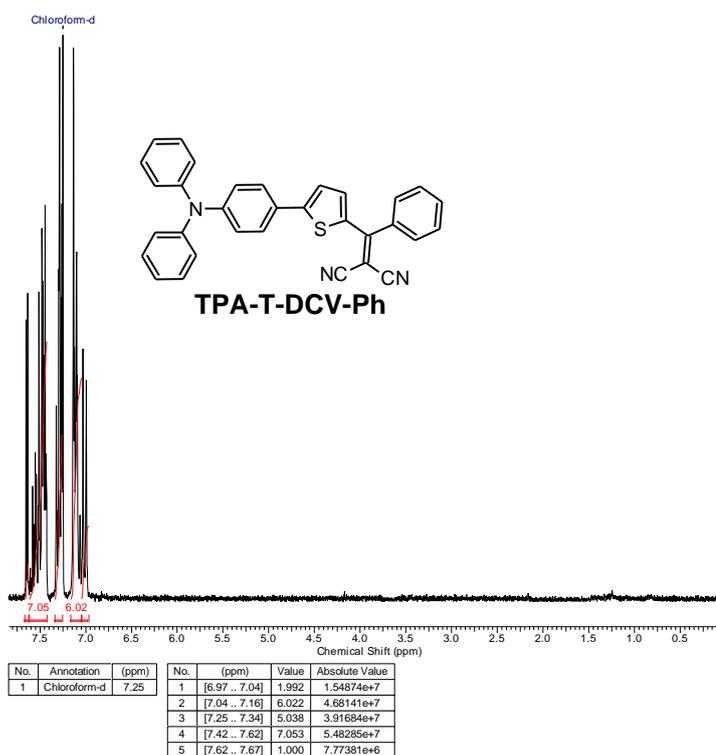
Figure S18.  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **9b** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



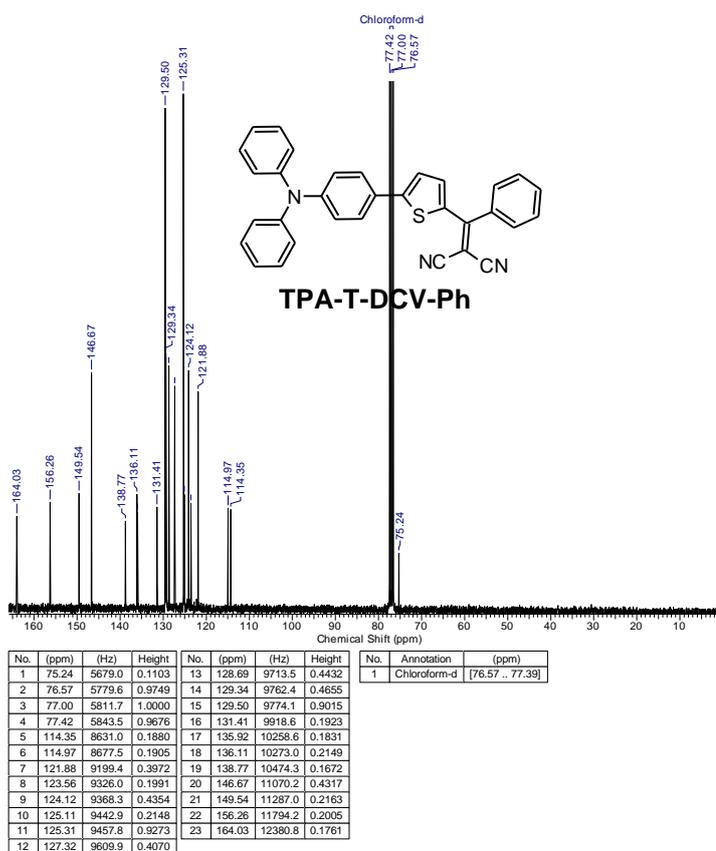
**Figure S19.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **9c** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



**Figure S20.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **9c** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



**Figure S21.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound **TPA-T-DCV-Ph (10a)** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .



**Figure S22.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound **TPA-T-DCV-Ph (10a)** in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

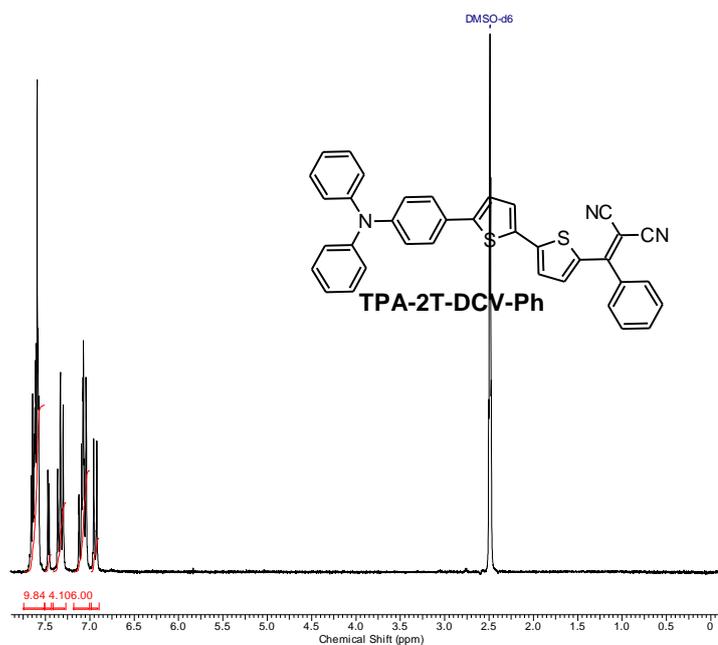


Figure S23. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of compound TPA-2T-DCV-Ph (10b) in DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>.

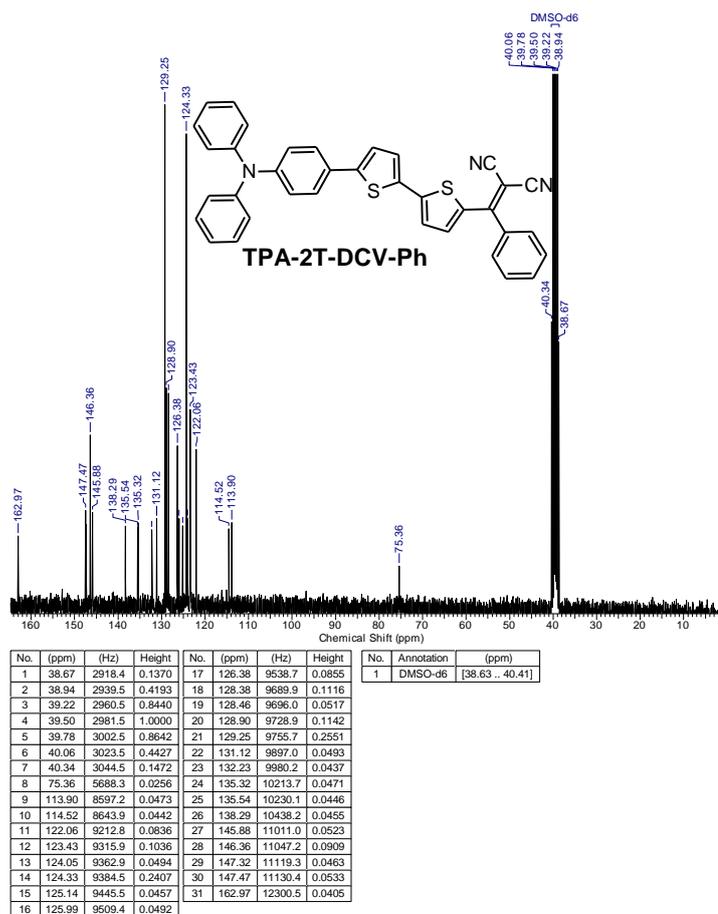


Figure S24. <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum of compound TPA-2T-DCV-Ph (10b) in DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>.

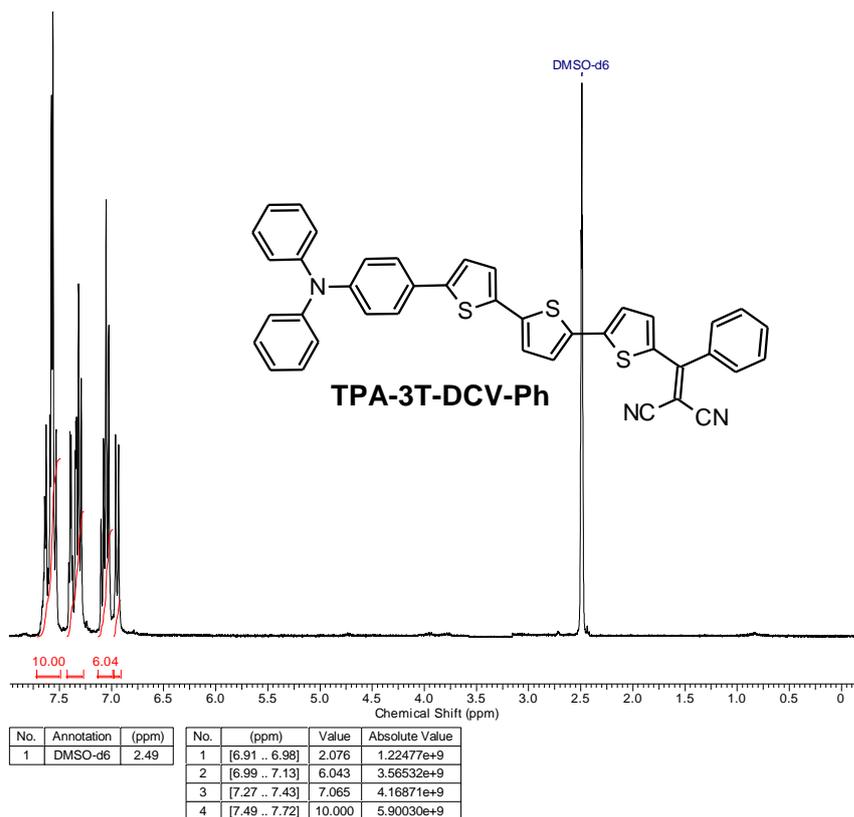


Figure S25.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of compound TPA-3T-DCV-Ph (10c) in DMSO- $d_6$ .

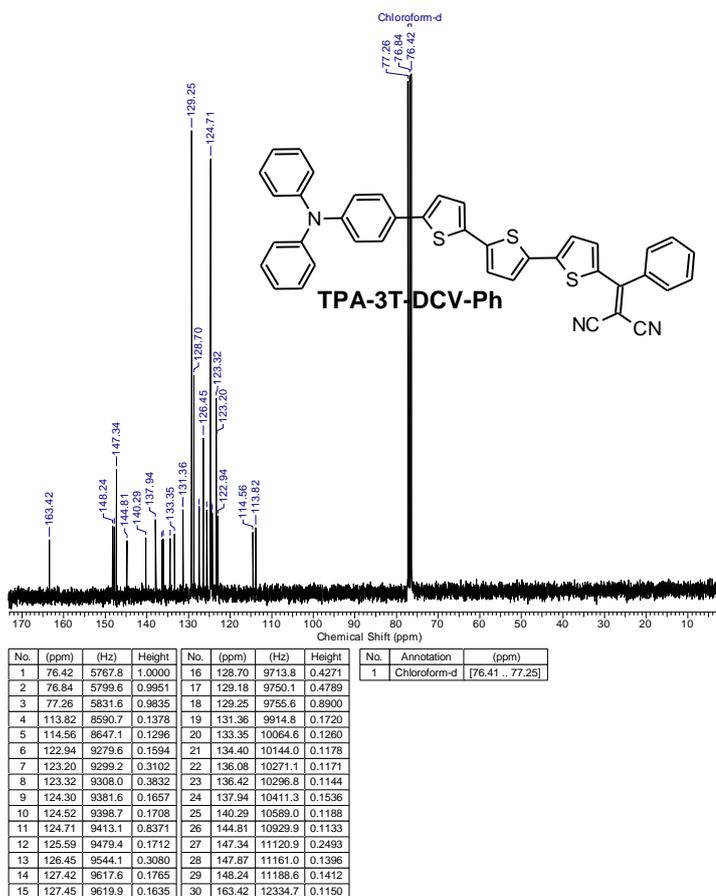
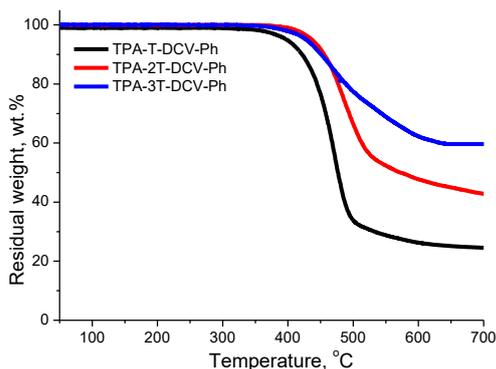
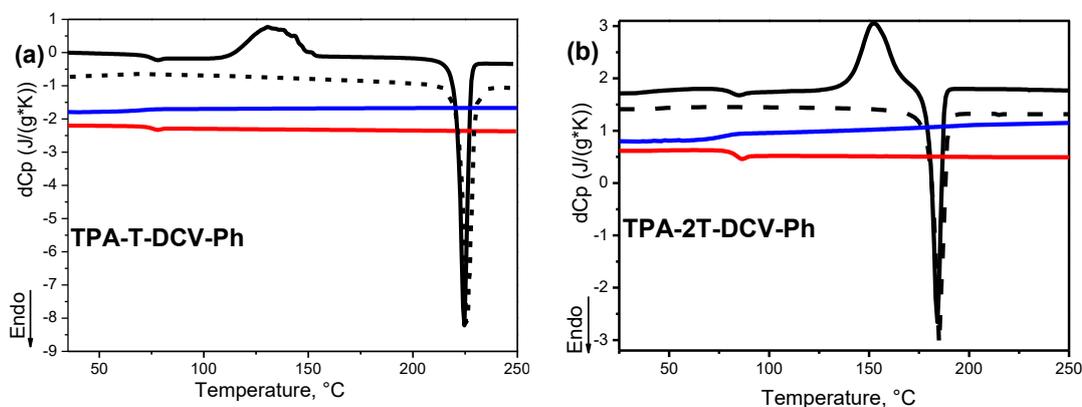


Figure S26.  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of compound TPA-3T-DCV-Ph (10c) in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ .

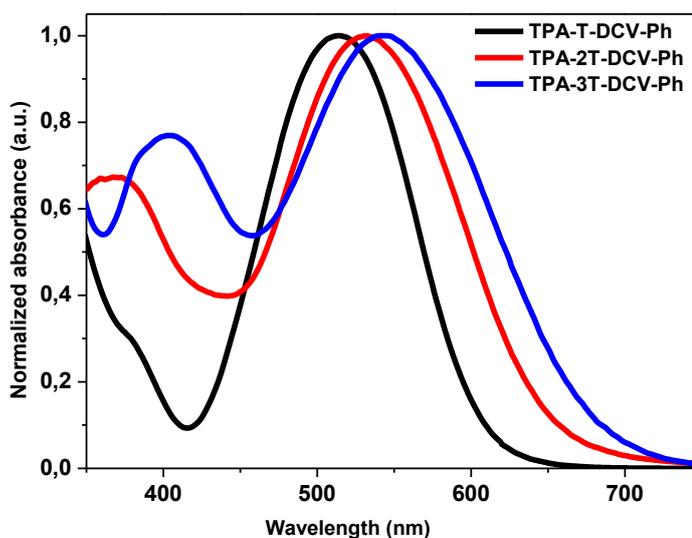
### 3. Thermal and optical properties



**Figure S27.** TGA curves of TPA-T-DCV-Ph (black), TPA-2T-DCV-Ph (red) and TPA-3T-DCV-Ph (blue) under argon



**Figure S28.** DSC scans of TPA-T-DCV-Ph 10a (a), TPA-2T-DCV-Ph 10b (b) at the first heating (black), cooling (blue), second heating (red), and heating of the preliminary annealed sample at 115°C (a) and 170°C (b) (black dashed)



**Figure S29.** UV-vis absorption spectra of TPA-T-DCV-Ph 10a (black), TPA-2T-DCV-Ph 10b (red) and TPA-3T-DCV-Ph 10c (blue) in film cast from THF

## References

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- [S3] S. A. Ponomarenko, S. Kirchmeyer, A. Elschner, N. M. Alpatova, M. Halik, H. Klauk, U. Zschieschang and G. Schmid, *Chem. Mater.*, 2006, **18**, 579.
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