



From the Editor

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New Year, New Team, New Plan, & New Goals for IUPAC—despite all of the new, we must open 2016 with the hope of shifting away from the tumultuous transitions of the past few years. In several ways, the new year will be special. A few features in this issue of *Chemistry International* allude to these points.

One reason why 2016 is special is that we will not only welcome a new President and Vice President, but also a new Secretary General and a new Treasurer. This is somewhat unique, because in recent years the Secretary General and Treasurer terms were such that elections were held alternately every four years. The last simultaneous elections happened 25 years ago in 1991, when Gerrit den Boef (Netherlands) and John Ward (UK), respectively Secretary General and Treasurer, succeeded Guy Ourisson (France) and Wilhem Graulick (FRG). Gerrit den Boef remained Secretary General for one 4-year term, and was succeeded by Edwin Becker (USA) in 1996. Concurrently, John Ward held his position as Treasurer for two 4-year terms. This set an alternating sequence of successions, ensuring an overlap of four years between both officers. Fast-forwarding to today, Richard Hartshorn (New Zealand) and Colin Humphris (UK) are both stepping up simultaneously, as new Secretary General and Treasurer, and become part of full new team of officers.

The year is also special in that IUPAC will see the implementation of its new strategic plan, the review of which was coordinated last biennium by the past president, Mark Cesa. The new plan was presented and approved by the Council in August 2015 (see page 4) and will allow the Union to focus on its unique role and its capacity to articulate global consensus.

For the scientific community at large, the new year is special as well, as it follows the recent adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015. The 17 SDGs, and the 169 targets outlined within, constitute a robust framework that goes beyond pure science and includes economic, social, and environmental dimensions, all intertwined around concepts of sustainable development. The chemistry enterprise is no stranger to the SDGs framework and it will play a key role in delivering solutions, while also contributing to a better understanding of our planetary boundaries. IUPAC President, Natalia Tarasova, has several times before voiced her interest in the evolution and development of these goals. As she expresses in her latest column (page 2), she welcomes the challenge of ensuring that IUPAC is on the right path to contribute to achieving these goals.

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Cover: *Opium poppies—Morphine extracted from opium poppies was used extensively as a painkiller in the First World War. See How Chemistry Underpinned the Great War (page 8); feature and photos by Michael Freemantle.*