



Cornell University

Roald Hoffmann
Department of Chemistry
222 Baker Laboratory
Ithaca, NY 14853-1301
USA

Tel: (607) 255-3419
Fax: (607) 255-5707

e-mail: rh34@cornell.edu

June 8, 2011

Prof. Luis Oro
President of EuCheMS
Instituto Universitario de Catálisis Homogénea
Department of Inorganic Chemistry
I.C.M.A.- Faculty of Science
University of Zaragoza-CSIC
Zaragoza-50009. SPAIN

Dear Luis,

I write to EuChemMS to voice my strong support of the application of Dr. Hartmut Frank and colleagues for developing a European Working Group on Aspects of Ethics in Science.

On the importance of the subject: People are concerned about science, and specifically about our chemistry. Their concerns are ecological and moral, and they are very real. Our profession needs to convince the public that we, who create new compounds so beautifully, also care about the uses to which these molecules are put.

Ethical questions also arise in our micro-society, chemistry. Ours is a fragile community of spirit as well as a profession. It is important that ethical concerns on intellectual property, publication, grants, and promotion be voiced and discussed. I believe sincerely that in this millennium chemistry will change, so as to put the ethical and ecological concerns, ones that were always there, up front.

From my own experience, I know that ethical and environmental concerns are important to the young people entering our profession. I also feel that these young people feel empowered in ethical discussions, they feel free to speak, and in this way ethical discussions bring research groups together.

So it makes perfect sense for the European chemical community to have a working group on just this subject, ethics. Many of the colleagues in the group of people who write to you are known to me – for instance Frank, Schmidt (one of the world's best polymer chemists), Dondi and Wolfram Koch. They are first class people, some with important Chemical Society management experience. They have clearly shown their commitment by organizing a couple of workshops on ethics and the environment.

I would respectfully urge you to approve this working group, and offer it the support it deserves. The subject of ethics in our profession is very important.

Cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roald Hoffmann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Roald Hoffmann
Frank H.T. Rhodes Professor of Humane Letters Emeritus
Professor of Chemistry Emeritus