PROCEEDINGS OF SPIE

Chemical and Biological Sensing VIII

Augustus W. Fountain III Editor

11–12 April 2007 Orlando, Florida, USA

Sponsored and Published by SPIE—The International Society for Optical Engineering



Volume 6554

The International Society for Optical Engineering

Proceedings of SPIE—The International Society for Optical Engineering, 9780819466761, v. 6554

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Author(s), 'Title of Paper," in Chemical and Biological Sensing VIII, edited by Augustus W. Fountain III, Proceedings of SPIE Vol. 6554 (SPIE, Bellingham, WA, 2007) Article CID Number.

ISSN 0277-786X ISBN 9780819466761

Published by **SPIE—The International Society for Optical Engineering** P.O. Box 10, Bellingham, Washington 98227-0010 USA Telephone 1 360/676-3290 (Pacific Time) · Fax 1 360/647-1445 http://www.spie.org

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Printed in the United States of America.

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Introduction

This year we experienced the natural evolution of the conference by expanding our interest in chemical sensing of explosives in defense and security applications. The detection of explosives, as well as their precursor and residual chemicals, is a critical technology that allows us to identify threats and from where or whom they emanate. Further development of this technology will benefit not only our troops abroad, but our security and law enforcement forces at home.

Of particular interest to members of SPIE and attendees of this conference is that the underlying science and technology involved in sensing explosives and energetic chemicals is similarly applicable to the detection of chemical and biological warfare agents, toxic industrial chemicals or materials (TICs/TIMs), or other potential environmental hazards. Therein lies the strength and importance of the SPIE's Defense and Security Symposium. This symposium and particularly this conference provide an unprecedented forum for authors from government, industry, and academia to gather and address a wide variety of sensing issues and technologies. The authors presented in this conference represent nearly an equal one-third partition amongst those groups.

I want to take this time to particularly thank the members of the program committee for helping me plan, organize, and orchestrate this year's conference. They each work behind scenes all year long to make this conference not only possible, but truly a first-rate affair. Whether they come from government laboratories, industry, or academia they bring a tremendous amount of energy and professionalism to help me pull this conference off.

I learned a tremendous amount by reading and editing each of these papers, as well as attending each of their presentations. I hope that you, the reader, find value as well in these proceedings from this year's conference.

Augustus W. Fountain III