Contents lists available at ScienceDirect



Inorganic Chemistry Communications

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/inoche



Short communication Syntheses, crystal structures and properties of self-assembly supramolecular compound based on cucurbit[6]uril



Guoshuai Zhang ^a, Yuekun Zhang ^a, Weibo Ren ^a, Jinpeng Liu ^a, Mei Liu ^{a,b,*}

^a School of Chemistry and Life Science, Changchun University of Technology, Changchun, Jilin 130012, China
^b Advanced Institute of materials Science, Changchun University Of Technology, Changchun 130012, China

ARTICLE INFO

Article history: Received 28 July 2016 Received in revised form 20 September 2016 Accepted 1 October 2016 Available online 6 October 2016

Keywords: Cucurbit[6]uril Solvothermal Supramolecular interactions Sensing property

ABSTRACT

A new cucurbit [6]uril based compound { $[Cd_2Cl_2(INA)_2(HCOO)_2(H_2O)_2](CB [6]) \cdot 2(HCOOH) \cdot 5H_2O}(CCUT-101)$ was synthesized by the solvothermal reaction of cadmium chloride, cucurbit[6]uril (CB[6]), and isonicotinic acid (HINA). X-ray diffraction analysis indicated that coordination of INA⁻ with the Cd²⁺ resulted in the formation of some one-dimensional wave-like chains, which connected with CB[6] by $\pi \cdots \pi$ stacking and hydrogen bonding, and further extended to a 2D layer. The luminescence behaviors and sensing properties of **CCUT-101** in different solvents were carried out.

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Nowadays, coordination polymers have attracted increasing research interest due to their potential applications in sensors, catalysis, molecular separation, storage, photoluminescence, and so on [1,2]. Cucurbit[*n*]urils (CB[*n*]s), a kind of macrocyclic hosts, features a pumpkin-like shape with two identical carbonyl fringed portal and a characteristic rigid hydrophobic cavity, have attracted wide research interest in supramolecular chemistry and coordination chemistry [3–11]. It has been revealed that the outer surface of CB[n]s could provide a balance of various supramolecular driving forces, such as C—H \cdots π interactions, $\pi \cdots \pi$ stacking, and hydrogen-bonding, which could generate some remarkable CB[n]-based supramolecular architectures and functional materials [11–15]. Recently. Tao and co-workers summarized the function of the electrostatically positive outer surface of CB[n]s [16], in particular the interactions of the outer surface of CB[n]s with aromatic compounds via $\pi \cdots \pi$ and/or C—H $\cdots \pi$ interactions, which could present not only novel structural features but also potential applications in catalysis, sensing, and polymer materials [17]. For instance, a novel pH-triggered hydrogel exhibiting guest-induced stimuli-responsive behavior were demonstrated by Kim and co-workers, the driving force for gelation could be attributed to the strong hydrogen-bonding interactions between CB[7] portals and hydronium ions, as well as between CB[7] molecules. Recently, a series of CB[n]-based supramolecular assemblies were obtained using different construction strategies in Kim's group, in particular the interactions of the outer surface of CB[n]s with aromatic compounds via C—H \cdots π and/or π \cdots π interactions [18–22]. Later, Sun.'s

E-mail address: liumei@ccut.edu.cn (M. Liu).

group successfully obtained two novel three-dimensional (3D) supramolecular assemblies with CB[n], which were constructed via the outer-surface interactions of CB[n]s with the polyaromatic compound 4,4',4"-benzene-1,3,5-triyl-tribenzoate as a structure-directing agent [23]. Therefore, understanding these weak interactions is paramount in designing and synthesizing new crystalline architectures and materials. In this work, combination of all of these supramolecular interactions, we selected CB[6] as basic building blocks, the isonicotinic acid (HINA) as a structure-directing agent (Fig. 1), and obtained a CB[6]based supramolecular assemblies in H_2O/DMF solutions under solvothermal condition.

CCUT-101 crystallizes in a monoclinic system with space group C2/c. Single-crystal X-ray diffraction analysis revealed that Cd²⁺ ions are seven-coordinated by five oxygen atoms from one INA⁻ ligand, one ethanoic acid (can be assigned to the decomposition of DMF) in a bidentate mode (Cd-O: 2.29–2.46 Å), one water molecule, one N atom from another INA⁻ connector (Cd-N: 2.331 Å), and one coordinated chloride ion from CdCl₂ (Cd-Cl: 2.534 Å) (Fig. 2a). Each Cd²⁺ ion linked by one INA⁻ ligand and formed some 1D wave-like chains. CB[6]s molecules are sandwiched by these 1D chains through supramolecular interactions (Fig. 2c, d) and further formed 2D layers (Fig. 2b). A close inspection reveals that the chains catch the CB[6]s molecules through interactions between the outer surface of CB[6]s, including (1) $\pi \cdots \pi$ stacking interactions (average distance 3.936 Å) between the pyridine ring of INA⁻ ligands and rings of CB[6]s (Fig. 2c), (2) C—H $\cdots \pi$ interactions between electronegative INA⁻ and the methylene groups on the outer surface of CB[6]s (Fig. 2d). (3) hydrogen-bonding interactions between the portal carbonyl oxygen atoms of CB[6]s and the cooperative H_2O and Cl^- (Fig. 2d). Thus, the combination of these interactions

^{*} Corresponding author at: School of Chemistry and Life Science, Changchun University of Technology, Changchun, Jilin 130012, China.



Fig. 1. The structure of CB[6] (a) and INA⁻ (b).

resulted in the formation of the novel CB[6]-based 2D supramolecular assembly.

The purity of the as-synthesized **CCUT-101** was confirmed by the agreements between simulated and experimental PXRD patterns (Fig. 3a). TG-DSC of compound **CCUT-101** exhibits two-step weight loss in

the range of room temperature to 735 °C (Fig. 3b). The weight loss from room temperature to 205 °C can be assigned to the release of all the lattice solvent molecules (5 water molecules for **CCUT-101**, calc. 4.0%; found: 4.1%). The second step ranging from 205–735 °C can be attributed to the gradual decomposition of the organic components in **CCUT-101**.

The emission spectra of **CCUT-101** in powder form were investigated at room temperature under certain excitation maximum. Compared with that of related carboxylate ligands, emission spectra of **CCUT-101** are slightly red-shifted 32 nm, which may be ascribed to the cooperative effects of intraligand emission and ligand-to-metal charge transfer (LMCT) and the intermolecular interactions (such as $\pi \cdots \pi$ stacking and hydrogen bonding) between the molecules in the solid state (Fig. 4) [24].

To explore the potential application of **CCUT-101** for the sensing of solvents, we investigate the sensitization ability of **CCUT-101** toward different solvents. The samples were dispersed in trichloromethane (CHCl₃), ethyl acetate (EtOAc), ether (Et₂O), ethanol (EtOH), methanol (MeOH), *N*,*N*-dimethylformamide (DMF), tetrahydrofuran (THF),



Fig. 2. X-ray crystal structure of **CCUT-101**: The coordination environment of Cd atoms in **CCUT-101** (a). The supramolecular stacking between CB[6]s and the adjacent chains (b), hydrogen atoms, free solvate water and methanoic acid molecules are omitted for clarity. Outer-surface interactions of CB[6]s with the coordinated water molecules, chloride ions and INA⁻ (c, d), dashed lines: hydrogen bonds, C—H···π or π···π interactions.



Fig. 3. PXRD patterns for CCUT-101and simulated spectra of CCUT-101 from single crystal data (a). TG-DSC curves for as-synthesized compound CCUT-101 (b).

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