### Accepted Manuscript

Title: MgCl<sub>2</sub> activation of CdS films: an alternative for CdCl<sub>2</sub>

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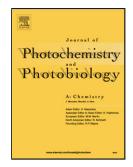
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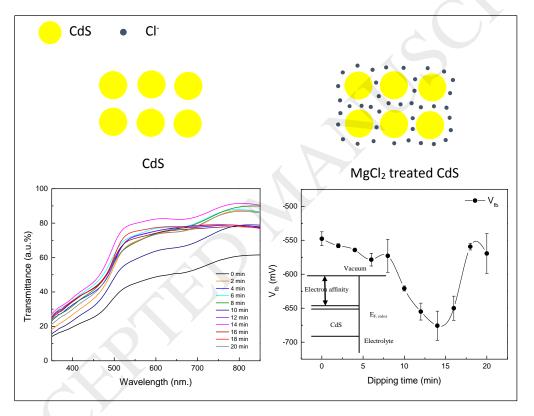
## ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

## MgCl<sub>2</sub> activation of CdS films: an alternative for CdCl<sub>2</sub>

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#### **Graphical abstract**



#### **Highlights**

- Environmental friendly, non-toxic Cl activation using MgCl<sub>2</sub> on CdS thin films is reported.
- MgCl<sub>2</sub> treatment passivates grain boundaries and improves the carrier concentration and effective surface area of CdS.
- Increasing duration of MgCl<sub>2</sub> treatment leads to formation of large and densely packed grain surfaces.
- PEC cell parameters; V<sub>OC</sub> and I<sub>SC</sub> of MgCl<sub>2</sub> treated films were higher than untreated CdS films.

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