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Preparation of Halogenated Derivatives of Thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole via Direct Electrophilic Aromatic Substitution

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Chlorination and bromination reactions of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole led to the generation of its mono- and dihalogenated derivatives. These are the first instances of successful direct electrophilic aromatic substitution in the thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole ring system. X-ray analysis demonstrates that both 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole and 2,5-dibromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole are planar structures, with strongly manifested π-stacking in the solid state. Theoretical analysis of the pyridine-catalyzed halogenation (MP2/6-31+G(d) and B3LYP/6-31+G(d) calculations) reveals that introduction of one halogen actually leads to a slightly enhanced reactivity towards further halogenation. Several halogenation mechanisms have been investigated: 1) The direct C-halogenation with N-halopyridine as electrophile; 2) C-halogenation via intermediate N-halogenation, and 3) C-halogenation following an addition – elimination pathway, with intermediate formation of a cyclic halonium ion. The theoretical studies suggest that the direct C-halogenation is the favored mechanism.

Keywords: thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, X-ray analysis, 2-chlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, 2,5-dichlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, 2,5-dibromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, bromination, chlorination, MP2 calculations, DFT calculations


INTRODUCTION

High-carrier mobility organic molecules and polymers are essential for the preparation of efficient flexible solar cells, flexible light-emitting displays and related microelectronic devices. The majority of available polymeric materials with potential use in such devices are of the p-type, generating considerable interest in the design and synthesis of materials with enhanced electron-accepting properties and enhanced charge carrier mobilities. One such compound is thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 (TTZ), a heterocyclic, electron-deficient molecule. TTZ derivatives have been reported recently in works focused on the preparation of soluble electron-transporting copolymers for organic light-emitting diodes (OLED)[1] as well as works on n-type semiconductors for organic field-effect transistors (OFET).[2-4] The incorporation of the TTZ unit has been found advantageous from several different perspectives: 1) X-ray analysis of several derivatives of TTZ demonstrated that these structures tend to stack well, leading to tightly packed arrangements in the solid state and short inter-molecular distances.[2,3,5-7] This should lead to enhanced charge mobility; 2) In addition to π-stacking, the lack of peripheral H-atoms in 2,5-disubstituted TTZ derivatives may very well lead to closer lateral interactions, further improving charge mobility; 3) The tight packing in the solid state should be beneficial for the chemical stability of TTZ-based materials, since it would diminish physical contact between any aggressive reagents and the molecules of the material in the solid state. The absence of H-atoms in the core should enhance stability as well; 4) TTZ and its conjugated derivatives have been shown to exhibit planar or nearly planar geometry[2,3], which would correspond to smaller reorganization energy upon ionization, a fact that would also lead to enhanced charge mobility.

The electron-accepting ability of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole is predicted to dramatically increase upon direct linkage of several TTZ units, according to B3LYP calculations.[8] In light of this, we were interested in the preparation of TTZ oligomers. Our investigation necessitated the synthesis of some mono- and dihalogenated derivatives of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (Compounds 2a,b and 3a,b), which are the first examples of direct electrophilic aromatic substitution in the thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole ring system. The current report describes the synthetic methodology for chlorination and bromination of 1, theoretical mechanistic investigation of these processes,
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Synthesis. The parent thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 was used as a starting material in the preparation of the halogenated derivatives. The synthesis of 1 was optimized by significantly modifying the original procedure of Ketcham et al. [9], to avoid the use of large amounts of pyridine and facilitate the workup process (Scheme 1). Accordingly, pyridine was completely eliminated as a solvent, replaced by a 1:1 mixture of t-BuOH and water, in the presence of phase-transfer catalyst (Aliquat 336). The major difficulty in the isolation of the diacid 5 stems from the poor water solubility of its dipotassium salt, which is therefore not in solution but mixed with the MnO₂ precipitation. Preparations in the past have coped with this issue by repeated extraction of the precipitate with large volumes of boiling water, solubilizing eventually the dipotassium salt [9]. We have replaced this lengthy protocol with a suspension of the oxidation precipitate in an aqueous solution of NaHSO₃, leading to reduction and dissolution of the Mn-containing species. The dipotassium salt is then simply filtered, suspended in water and the mixture acidified with HCl to yield the diacid 5. The latter is subjected to thermal decarboxylation to yield thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1.

The thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole ring system is electron deficient and inert towards electrophiles. In fact earlier studies had concluded that direct electrophilic aromatic substitution reactions, such as halogenation, nitration and sulfonation, were impossible [9]. There is a note in the work of Ketcham et al. on the preparation of 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (2b) and 2,5-dibromo thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (3b) in low yields, based on the Hunsdiecker reaction, but the details of the syntheses have never been published [9]. Our original attempts were focused on indirect introduction of halogen, through the TTZ carbanion. Thus, the preparation of the bromide 2b was attempted by treatment of 1 with n-BuLi, followed by reaction with CBr₄, as described in the literature for several related heterocyclic structures, including benzothiazole and thiazole [10]. The process yielded only trace amounts of compounds 2b and 3b. The results did not improve by the use of alternative bases, such as t-BuLi or LDA.

Further experiments and parallel theoretical studies [11] both suggested that the thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole carbanion was most likely a highly unstable species that readily undergoes ring opening, analogous to the recently reported for the anions of oxazole and benzoxazole [12]. Hence, we decided to seek routes avoiding the use of strongly basic conditions. Following a recommended protocol for highly deactivated substrates, we attempted bromination with NBS in 100% H₂SO₄, which led however to quantitative isolation of unreacted starting material [13]. Also unsuccessful was the attempted chlorination with trichloroisocyanuric acid (TCICA) in 100% H₂SO₄. A plausible explanation for these failures could be based on the protonation of TTZ in the strongly acidic conditions, which would further diminish its reactivity in electrophilic aromatic substitution reactions.

Thus, after several initial attempts, the only viable strategy that remained was to avoid both strongly acidic and strongly basic conditions. Successful bromination was eventually carried out with elemental bromine, in the presence of pyridine (Scheme 2). Both bromide 2b and dibromide 3b were prepared utilizing the same approach, with variation of the relative quantity of bromine and reaction time. Best yields of 2b were obtained using moderate excess of Br₂ and termination of the reaction prior to complete consumption of the starting material 1. Extended reaction times or larger excess of Br₂ drive the process to complete dibromination. Dibromide 3b was obtained in good yield upon reaction with large excess of bromine/pyridine, in refluxing CCl₄.

Successful mono- and dichlorination of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole was accomplished using excess TCICA, in refluxing CCl₄ (Scheme 3). Just as in the case of bromination, described above, it is not possible to selectively monochlorinate thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole in these conditions. Prior to consumption of the starting material, the monochlorinated product 2a starts to undergo further chlorination, yielding 3a, even when the reaction was conducted with one equivalent of TCICA.
In the latter case, after 24 h at reflux, the reaction mixture consisted of approximately 75% TTZ and 25% of 2a (GC – MS results). However, after 48 h the mixture showed approximate composition of 60% TTZ, 35% of 2a and 5% of 3a (GC – MS), and the quantity of the latter continued to grow with prolonged reaction time. However, the reaction could not be brought to completion under these conditions, most likely due to thermal degradation of TCICA over a long period of time at the reflux temperature.

B. X-ray Structural Studies. X-ray crystallographic analysis was carried out on compounds 2b and 3b and ORTEP plots are shown in Figure 1. In the case of 2b there are two molecules per asymmetric unit and no smaller cell could be found. The dibromide 3b is a highly symmetric structure with an inversion center at the middle point of the C(2) – C(2i) bond. Selected structural parameters for both molecules are shown in Table 1, and are compared to the values for thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (1).[14] In structure 2b the asymmetrical substitution at the 2- and 5-positions causes slight differences in the corresponding bond distances and bond angles in the two fused thiazole rings. Similar to other TTZ derivatives, there are differences in the lengths of the two formally single C – S bonds in each of the thiazole rings, e.g. C(1) – S(1) vs. C(2) – S(1).[6,14] Such difference, combined with the fact that the central C(2) – C(3) bond is longer than a typical C = C bond, has been explained on the basis of resonance delocalization.[6,14] Structures 2b and 3b are essentially planar, as evidenced by the values of the dihedral angles in the fused ring system.

Table 1 also lists calculated structural parameters, obtained from B3LYP/6-31+G(d) optimizations. Overall, the theoretical values are in good to excellent agreement with the experimental results.

Plots of the crystal packing for 2b and 3b, along the a-axis, are shown in Figure 2. The individual molecules are arranged in columnar structures, with strongly manifested π-stacking. The distance between the π-stacked molecules in a column is about 3.90 Å in 2b and 3.96 Å in 3b. The stacking is not perfect, neighboring molecules being offset by approximately 0.90 Å in 2b and 1.44 Å in 3b. In the crystal structure of compound 2b there are several short lateral contacts with distances less than the sum of the van der Waals radii: S – N (2.95 Å), N – H (2.52 Å), N – N (3.07 Å), C – N (3.24 Å) and Br – Br (3.62 Å). In the crystal structure of 3b there is a lateral contact Br – N with a value of 3.09 Å.
the monohalogenated derivative, even though bromination showed that the process cannot be stopped at Experimental studies on both chlorination and thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole – a theoretical investigation. Calculations. Transition state searches were IRC employing both second-order perturbation theory (\(\text{B3LYP/6-31+G(d)}\)), or the Berny algorithm (\(\text{B3LYP/6-31+G(d)}\)). We decided, therefore, to investigate the halogenation monohalogenation, a somewhat counterintuitive notion. The reactivity of the parent structure is not reduced upon thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole. This result seems to suggest that Experimental [X-ray analysis, regular text] and theoretical (italicized text) bond lengths (Å), angles (deg) and dihedral angles (deg) for 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole to the chlorinated product. The chlorination mechanism with \(\text{N}-\text{chloropyridinium ion}\) as the electrophile; 2) C-chlorination via N-chloropyridinium ion\[28,29\], which we used as the actual electrophilic agent in our theoretical analysis. Three different mechanisms were investigated: 1) A direct C-chlorination mechanism with N-chloropyridinium ion as the electrophile; 2) C-chlorination via intermediate N-chloropyridinium ion as the electrophile; 3) C-chlorination following an addition elimination mechanism, with a cyclic chloronium ion as the key intermediate. Calculated results for the direct C-chlorination mechanism are shown in Figure 3 (Gibbs free energy profile), Figure 4 (Optimized structures of the stationary points from the \(\text{B3LYP/6-31+G(d)}\) calculations), and Table 2 (relative Gibbs free energy values for the stationary points). The direct C-chlorination mechanism involves the formation of an initial association complex of pyridine and compound 1 (or 2), in which the nitrogen centers are both coordinated to chlorine (Structure 4-H or 4-Cl, Figure 4). This initial complex is converted to a classical \(\sigma\)-complex (6-H or 6-Cl) via transition state 5, in the rate-determining step. The step involves a concerted shift of the N-chloropyridinium unit and its coordination to the carbon center of the TTZ ring. Deprotonation of the \(\sigma\)-complex leads to the chlorinated product 7-H or 7-Cl.

### Table 1
Selected experimental (X-ray analysis, regular text) and theoretical (italicized text) bond lengths (Å), angles (deg) and dihedral angles (deg) for 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, 2,5-dibromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, 2b, thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole and thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (1). Theoretical values from \(\text{B3LYP/6-31+G(d)}\) calculations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Experimental Molecule 1</th>
<th>(\text{B3LYP})</th>
<th>Experimental Molecule 2</th>
<th>(\text{B3LYP})</th>
<th>(\text{B3LYP})</th>
<th>(\text{B3LYP})</th>
<th>(\text{B3LYP})</th>
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<tr>
<td>C(1) – S(1)</td>
<td>1.740(3)</td>
<td>1.769</td>
<td>1.737(3)</td>
<td>1.769</td>
<td>1.736(2)</td>
<td>1.769</td>
<td>1.746</td>
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<tr>
<td>C(2) – S(1)</td>
<td>1.735(3)</td>
<td>1.746</td>
<td>1.732(3)</td>
<td>1.746</td>
<td>1.730(2)</td>
<td>1.746</td>
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<tr>
<td>C(3) – N(1)</td>
<td>1.297(3)</td>
<td>1.297</td>
<td>1.297(4)</td>
<td>1.304(3)</td>
<td>1.298</td>
<td>1.304(3)</td>
<td>1.306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C(3) – C(2)</td>
<td>1.376(4)</td>
<td>1.365</td>
<td>1.376(3)</td>
<td>1.377(3)</td>
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<td>1.363</td>
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<tr>
<td>C(4) – S(2)</td>
<td>1.723(3)</td>
<td>1.741</td>
<td>1.723(3)</td>
<td>1.730(2)</td>
<td>1.746</td>
<td>1.746</td>
<td>1.746</td>
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<tr>
<td>C(4) – C(2)</td>
<td>1.317(4)</td>
<td>1.306</td>
<td>1.304(4)</td>
<td>1.304(3)</td>
<td>1.298</td>
<td>1.298</td>
<td>1.306</td>
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<td>C(1) – Br(1)</td>
<td>1.876(3)</td>
<td>1.878</td>
<td>1.880(3)</td>
<td>1.870(2)</td>
<td>1.877</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>C(4) – H(1)</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>1.372(3)</td>
<td>1.377(3)</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>1.363</td>
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<tr>
<td>C(2) – C(3)</td>
<td>86.97(13)</td>
<td>87.18</td>
<td>86.87(13)</td>
<td>87.23(11)</td>
<td>87.12</td>
<td>87.7(1)</td>
<td>87.66</td>
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<td>C(1) – N(1)</td>
<td>106.6(2)</td>
<td>106.19</td>
<td>106.4(2)</td>
<td>106.7(2)</td>
<td>108.18</td>
<td>108.0(2)</td>
<td>108.55</td>
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<td>C(3) – N(2)</td>
<td>179.7(2)</td>
<td>180.00</td>
<td>179.6(2)</td>
<td>180.00</td>
<td>180.00</td>
<td>180.00</td>
<td>180.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>S(1) – C(2)</td>
<td>179.76(14)</td>
<td>179.69</td>
<td>179.83(13)</td>
<td>179.99</td>
<td>180.00</td>
<td>180.00</td>
<td>180.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| TS(1)[25,26]    | Calculations were conducted with Halogen = Cl.

Previous studies on the mechanism of pyridine-catalyzed halogentation reactions have revealed certain complexity of the process and the involvement of more than one active species\[27\], one of them being the N-halopyridinium ion\[28,29\], which we used as the actual electrophilic agent in our theoretical analysis. Three different mechanisms were investigated: 1) A direct C-chlorination mechanism with N-chloropyridinium ion as the electrophile; 2) C-chlorination via intermediate N-chloropyridinium ion as the electrophile; 3) C-chlorination following an addition elimination mechanism, with a cyclic chloronium ion as the key intermediate. Calculated results for the direct C-chlorination mechanism are shown in Figure 3 (Gibbs free energy profile), Figure 4 (Optimized structures of the stationary points from the \(\text{B3LYP/6-31+G(d)}\) calculations), and Table 2 (relative Gibbs free energy values for the stationary points).
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The relative Gibbs free energy values are listed in Table 2. It is clearly seen that the B3LYP/6-31+G(d) calculations provide unrealistically low values, which would correspond to exceedingly fast conversion rates. Activation barriers are about two times larger at the MP2/6-31+G(d) level. DFT and MP2 predict comparable relative stabilities of the initial complexes 4-H (4-Cl), but the values for the barrier of the subsequent rate-determining step are considerably higher at the MP2 level.

According to both the MP2 and DFT calculations the reactions have considerable negative Gibbs free energy values. Values in Table 2 also demonstrate that the introduction of one chlorine does not affect adversely the reactivity of the thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole ring. On the contrary, according to the calculations the rate-determining step for chlorination of 2a, compared to chlorination of 1, has an activation barrier that is 1.6 kcal/mol or 2.8 kcal/mol lower, at the B3LYP/6-31+G(d) or MP2/6-31+G(d) levels respectively. A rationale for these results can be

Figure 3. Calculated Gibbs free energy profile for the pyridine-catalyzed chlorination of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 (X = H) or 2-chlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 2a (X = Cl), following a mechanism for direct C-chlorination. The B3LYP/6-31+G(d) and MP2/6-31+G(d) profiles contain equal in number and structurally similar stationary points.

Figure 4. Optimized structures of stationary points for the pyridine-catalyzed chlorination of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 and 2-chlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 2a, according to the direct C-chlorination mechanism. Structures shown in the figure are from B3LYP/6-31+G(d) optimizations.
presented, in terms of simple resonance structures, as shown in Figure 5. Some stabilization of the σ-complex 6 and the transition state 5 can be derived by the presence of chlorine in the molecule and can be pictured in terms of conjugation of a lone pair at the chlorine center with the ring π-system. In support of that notion, the calculated C – Cl distances in 6-Cl and 5-Cl are 1.68 Å and 1.70 Å respectively, compared to 1.73 Å in 2a, i.e. some shortening of the C – Cl bond is indeed observed.

For some N-containing heterocycles, such as imidazoles, an alternative pathway for C-halogenation, involving an intermediate N-halogenation, has been suggested in certain cases.[30] Such pathway was identified for 1 and 2a and the results from B3LYP/6-31+G(d) calculations are presented in Figure 6. N-chlorination of the thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole ring by the full transfer of Cl to the N-atom of 1 or 2a, leads to conversion of complex 4-H (4-Cl) to the local minimum structure 9-H (9-Cl), which is about 20 kcal/mol higher in energy. A [1,2]-shift of Cl from nitrogen to the adjacent carbon center, via transition state 10-H (10-Cl), generates the σ-complex 11-H (11-Cl), in a process with an activation barrier of about 30 kcal/mol. Complex 11 undergoes deprotonation to yield the chlorinated product 7-H (7-Cl). The results, however, clearly indicate that such route for C-chlorination, via intermediate N-chlorination, is a much higher energy pathway for both thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazoles.

An addition – elimination mechanism was investigated as a third plausible pathway. A key intermediate, if such mechanism is followed, is the corresponding cyclic chloronium ion. However, our calculations demonstrated that such species could not be identified as a distinct minimum structure, at either the B3LYP/6-31+G(d) or the MP2/6-31+G(d) levels.

**Figure 5.** Resonance stabilization of σ-complex 6-Cl by the chlorine center.

**Figure 6.** Calculated Gibbs free energy profiles for the pyridine-catalyzed chlorination of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 (X = H) and 2-chlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 2a (X = Cl), following a mechanism for C-chlorination via intermediate N-chlorination. Gibbs free energy differences in [kcal/mol]. Data from B3LYP/6-31+G(d) calculations.
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Table 2
Relative Gibbs free energies, in kcal/mol, of the stationary points on the direct C-chlorination pathway (see Figure 3), calculated at the MP2/6-31+G(d) (bold text) or B3LYP/6-31+G(d) (regular text) levels of theory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>$\Delta G_1$ MP2</th>
<th>$\Delta G_1^*$ B3LYP</th>
<th>$\Delta G_2$ MP2</th>
<th>$\Delta G_2$ B3LYP</th>
<th>$\Delta G_3$ MP2</th>
<th>$\Delta G_3$ B3LYP</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-7.7</td>
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<td>+25.6</td>
<td>+14.2</td>
<td>+23.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-4.1</td>
<td>+22.8</td>
<td>+12.6</td>
<td>+19.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>3a,b</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this research project was the preparation and characterization of several halogenated derivatives of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole. Our investigation has led to the development of a more efficient and environmentally sound methodology for the generation of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazoledicarboxylic acid 5 and thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1. In addition, we have successfully conducted the first electrophilic aromatic substitution reactions of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole, resulting in the generation of mono- and dihalogenated derivatives 2a,b and 3a,b.

High-quality X-ray structures of 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (2a) and 2,5-dibromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (3b) have shown both of them to be planar structures, with stacking in the solid phase.

Theoretical analysis of the pyridine-catalyzed chlorination (MP2/6-31+G(d) and B3LYP/6-31+G(d) calculations) has revealed two distinct pathways: 1) A direct C-chlorination, with an N-chloropyridinium cation as the electrophile, and 2) A C-chlorination through intermediate N-chlorination. Calculations indicate that pathway (2) is a much higher energy route. The calculations have demonstrated that introduction of one chlorine actually leads to a slightly enhanced reactivity of the ring system.

EXPERIMENTAL

$^1$H and $^13$C spectra were recorded at 300 MHz and 75 MHz respectively and referenced to the solvent (CDCl$_3$: 7.27 ppm and 77.0 ppm; DMSO-d$_6$: 2.49 ppm and 39.5 ppm). Mass spectrometry measurements were performed on a Hewlett-Packard 5890 instrument. Elemental analysis was provided by Atlantic Microlab, Norcross, GA. X-ray data collection and structure solution were conducted at the X-Ray Crystallographic Laboratory, S146 Kolthoff Hall, Department of Chemistry, University of Minnesota. X-ray structures were obtained on a Siemens SMART Platform CCD diffractometer with graphite monochromator, MoK$_\alpha$ radiation.[31] All quantum mechanical calculations were performed utilizing the Gaussian03-Linda/GaussView software package[15] on a Linux-operated cluster (QuantumCube QS4-2400C by Parallel Quantum Solutions, Fayetteville, AR). The preparation of compounds 1 and 5, although previously reported[9], is described in detail, since the synthetic protocol is substantially different from the one in the literature. Ketcham et al. have mentioned the preparation of both 2b and 3b, in low yields, utilizing the Hunsdiecker reaction[9], but the experimental details have never been published and there aren’t any literature data available on either the mono- or dibromide. The preparation of 2,5-dichlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 3a has been reported before, following a completely different method, form acyclic precursors.[32,33] We report its preparation by direct chlorination of 1, together with previously unavailable NMR and MS data.

X-ray crystallography of 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (2b). A crystal with approximate dimensions 0.20 x 0.20 x 0.10 mm was placed onto the tip of a 0.1 mm diameter glass capillary and mounted on a Siemens SMART Platform CCD diffractometer for a data collection at 173(2) K.[31] A preliminary set of cell constants was calculated from reflections harvested from three sets of 20 frames. These initial sets of frames were oriented such that orthogonal wedges of reciprocal space were surveyed. This produced initial orientation matrices determined from 55 reflections. The data collection was carried out using MoK$_\alpha$ radiation (graphite monochromator) with a frame time of 30 seconds and a detector distance of 4.954 cm. A randomly oriented region of reciprocal space was surveyed to the extent of one sphere and to a resolution of 0.80 Å. Four major sections of frames were collected with 0.50° steps in $\omega$ at four different $\phi$ settings and a detector position of -28° in 20. The intensity data were corrected for absorption and decay (SADABS).[34] Final cell constants were calculated from the xyz centroids of 2266 strong reflections from the actual data collection after integration (SAINT).[35] The structure was solved using SIR97[36] and refined using SHELXL-97.[37] The space group P-1 was determined based on the lack of systematic absences and intensity statistics and had the following dimensions: $a = 3.9026(8)$ Å, $b = 12.389(3)$ Å, $c = 13.827(3)$ Å, $\alpha = 86.769(2)^\circ$, $\beta = 83.580(2)^\circ$, $\gamma = 87.185(2)^\circ$, $V = 662.7(3)$ Å$^3$. For Z = 4 and F.W. = 221.10, the calculated density is 2.216 g/cm$^3$. A direct-methods solution was calculated which provided most non-hydrogen atoms from the E-map. Full-matrix least squares/difference Fourier cycles were performed which located the remaining non-hydrogen atoms. All non-hydrogen atoms were refined with anisotropic displacement parameters. All hydrogen atoms were placed in ideal positions and refined as riding atoms with relative isotropic displacement parameters. The final full matrix least squares refinement converged to $R1 = 0.0311$ and $wR2 = 0.0591$ ($R^2$, all data).

X-ray crystallography of 2,5-dibromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (3b). A crystal with approximate dimensions 0.40 x
0.09 x 0.04 mm² was placed onto the tip of a 0.1 mm diameter glass capillary and mounted on a Siemens SMART Platform CCD diffractometer for a data collection at 173(2) K. A preliminary set of cell constants was calculated from reflections harvested from four sets of 30 frames. These initial sets of frames were oriented such that orthogonal wedges of reciprocal space were surveyed. This produced initial orientation matrices determined from 140 reflections. The data collection was carried out using MoKα radiation (graphite monochromator) with a frame time of 45 seconds and a detector distance of 4.914 cm. A randomly oriented region of reciprocal space was surveyed to the extent of one sphere and to a resolution of 0.77 Å. Three major sections of frames were collected with 0.5° steps in ø at three different φ settings and a detector position of -28° in 20. The intensity data were corrected for absorption and decay (SADABS). Final cell constants were calculated from the xyz centroids of 2265 strong reflections from the actual data collection after integration (SAINT). The structure was solved using SHELXS-97 and refined using SHELXL-97.[37]

The space group P2₁/n was determined based on systematic absences and intensity statistics and had the following dimensions: a = 3.8749(7) Å, b = 8.3961(14) Å, c = 11.3208(19) Å, α = 90°, β = 94.353(2)°, γ = 90°. V = 367.25(11) Å³. For Z = 2 and F.W. = 300.00, the calculated density is 2.713 g/cm³. A Patterson map solution was calculated which provided the positions of the Br and S atoms from the E-map. Full-matrix least squares / difference Fourier cycles were performed which located the remaining non-hydrogen atoms. All non-hydrogen atoms were refined with anisotropic displacement parameters. The final full matrix least squares refinement converged to R1 = 0.0214 and wR2 = 0.0434 (F², all data).

2.5-Thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazolidinedicarboxylic acid (5). 2.5-Bis(2-furyl)thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 4 (3.30 g, 12.03 mmol) was suspended in t-butanol (130 mL) and the mixture heated to reflux. Heating was removed and water (30 mL) was added to the rapidly stirred mixture. Aliquot 336 (1.5 mL) was added followed by a portionwise addition of KMnO₄ (21.78 g, 137.82 mmol) at a rate such as to maintain a temperature of ~ 70 °C, accompanied by addition of water to a total amount of 100 mL. Stirring was continued for 18 h at ambient temperature, the resultant brown solid was filtered through a fine fritted funnel and the filter cake suspended in an aqueous solution of NaHSO₃. The resultant mixture was stirred for 0.5 h, filtered and the white solid washed with water, followed by THF. The solid was then suspended in water (200 mL), the suspension cooled in an ice–water bath while conc. HCl was added to a pH of 0 – 1. The mixture was left standing for 0.5 h, filtered, the white solid washed with small amount of cold water and air-dried for 12 h to yield 2.73 g (85%) of 2.5-thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazolidinedicarboxylic acid 5. Mp 208 – 209 °C (Lit. 212 °C).[9]

Thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (1). 2.5-Thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole dicarboxylic acid 5 (2.73 g, 10.26 mmol) was suspended in 96% ethanol (200 mL) and the resultant mixture stirred at reflux for 24 h. The solution was cooled to ambient temperature and the solvent removed under reduced pressure. The solid residue was dissolved in small amount of CH₂Cl₂ and passed through a short silica gel column (Eluent CH₂Cl₂). The solvent was removed under reduced pressure to yield 1.16 g (79%) of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 as a white solid. Mp 149 – 150 °C (Lit. 150 – 151 °C).[9] 1H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 8.95 (s, 2H).

Chlorination of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole. Thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 (0.20 g, 1.41 mmol) was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (15 mL), Trichloroisocyanuric acid, TCICA (3.27 g, 14.08 mmol) was added in one portion and the resultant mixture stirred at reflux for 7 days. TLC indicated complete conversion of the starting material. The mixture was vacuum filtered and the solid washed with CCl₄ (15 mL). The filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure, the residue was re-dissolved in a small amount of hexane/CH₂Cl₂ mixture (3 : 1), and placed on a short silica gel column. The column was successively eluted with hexane, hexane : CH₂Cl₂ = 1 : 1 (collection of 3a) and CH₂Cl₂ (collection of 2a). Products were isolated after removal of the solvents under reduced pressure.

2-Chlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (2a): Isolated as a white solid (0.10 g, 40% yield). Further purification via recrystallization from methanol at ~ 30 °C yields colorless needles. Mp 57 – 59 °C. 1H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 8.92 (s, 1H); 13C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 150.4, 153.3, 154.0; MS m/e 178 ([M+2]+, 30), 176 (M⁺, 90), 115 (35), 88 (100), 70 (50). Anal. Calcd. for C₄HClN₂S₂: C, 21.73; H, 0.46; N, 12.67. Found: C, 21.94; H, 0.52; N, 15.81.

2,5-Dichlorothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (3a): Isolated as a white solid (0.13 g, 44% yield). Further purification via recrystallization from toluene at ~ 30 °C yields colorless needles. Mp 175 – 177 °C (Lit. 171 – 172 °C).[33] 13C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 145.3, 151.8; MS m/e 214 ([M+4]+, 15), 212 ([M+2]+, 65), 210 (M⁺, 85), 88 (100), 70 (80). Anal. Calcd. for C₄Cl₂N₂S₂: C, 22.76; N, 13.27. Found: C, 22.98; N, 13.02.

Bromination of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole. Thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 (0.65 g, 4.58 mmol) was dissolved in CCl₄ (30 mL). Pyridine (0.54 g, 6.87 mmol, 0.56 mL) was added, followed by bromine (1.10 g, 6.29 mmol, 0.19 mL) and bromine (1.10 g, 6.87 mmol, 0.35 mL), and the stirring was continued at reflux for additional 2 h. The resultant solution was poured into aq. NaH₂SO₄ to quench the excess bromine, the organic layer was separated and the aqueous layer extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (30 mL). The combined organic extract was dried (MgSO₄) and the solvent removed under reduced pressure. The residue was separated on a silica gel column (Eluent CH₂Cl₂) with four major fractions collected. Fraction #1: 2,5-dibromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 3b; Fraction #2: 3,5-dibromopyridine, identified by comparison with literature NMR data; Fraction #3: 2-bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 2b; Fraction #4: thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1, identified by TLC analysis and comparison with authentic NMR data. Substances were isolated after removal of the solvents under reduced pressure.

2-Bromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (2b). Isolated as a colorless solid (0.35 g, 35% yield). Further purification via recrystallization from methanol at ~ 30 °C yields colorless needles. Mp 52 – 53 °C. 1H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 8.94 (s, 1H); 13C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 137.9, 147.7, 152.1, 154.2; MS m/e 222 ([M+2]+, 48), 220 (M⁺, 40), 88 (100), 70 (85). Anal. Calcd. for C₄Br₂N₂S₂: C, 21.73; H, 0.46; N, 12.67. Found: C, 21.94; H, 0.47; N, 12.58.

2,5-Dibromothiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole (3b). Isolated as a bluish solid (0.19 g, 14% yield). Further purification via recrystallization from toluene at ~ 30 °C yields bluish needles. Mp 153 – 154 °C. 1H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 8.92 (s, 1H); 13C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 8.94 (s, 1H); 13C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 137.9, 147.7, 152.1, 154.2; MS m/e 302 ([M+4]+, 30), 300 ([M+2]+, 48), 298 (M⁺, 26), 88 (80), 70 (100). Anal. Calcd. for C₃Br₅N₅S₂: C, 16.01; N, 9.34. Found: C, 16.24; N, 9.31.
Dibromination of thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole. Thiazolo[5,4-d]thiazole 1 (0.46 g, 3.24 mmol) was dissolved in CCl₄ (20 mL). Pyridine (0.51 g, 6.48 mmol, 0.52 mL) was added, followed by bromine (5.18 g, 32.40 mmol, 1.66 mL). The resultant solution was stirred at reflux for 4 h and TLC indicated complete consumption of the starting material. The mixture was poured into aq. NaHSO₃ and stirred until all excess bromine was reacted. The organic layer was separated and the aqueous layer extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (30 mL). The combined organic extract was dried (MgSO₄) and the solvent removed under reduced pressure. The residue was separated on a silica gel column (Eluent CH₂Cl₂) to yield 0.56 g (58%) of 3b as a bluish solid. Physical and spectral characteristics matched those of the sample obtained in the previous experiment.

Acknowledgements. We gratefully acknowledge the DoD High Performance Computing Office for a grant of computer time and resources, for some of the computational results reported herein. Funding for V. Benin was provided by the American Society for Engineering Education, as part of the Air Force Summer Faculty Fellowship program (Summer 2006).

Supporting Information Available. Crystallographic data (excluding structure factors) for the structures in this paper have been deposited with the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre as supplementary publication numbers CCDC 625746 and 625747. Copies of the data can be obtained, free of charge, on application to CCDC, 12 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK (fax: +44-(0)1223-336033 or e-mail: deposit@ccdc.cam.ac.uk).

Calculated energies and thermodynamic parameters of optimized global minimum structures of compounds 2a,b and 3a,b are summarized in Table S1. Calculated energies and thermodynamic parameters of stationary points for the processes of pyridine-catalyzed chlorination of compounds 1 and 2a are summarized in Tables S2 and S3.

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