**Captions to figures**

Fig.1

Specimen preparation.

Fig. 2

Graph showing means and standard deviations of surface roughness (Ra) for all surface treatments tested. Different superscript letters indicate statistically significant differences.

Fig.3

Graph showing means and standard deviations of micro-tensile bond strength (µTBS) for all experimental groups. Different gray scale colors refer to the different strategy of dealing with pretesting failures (ptf). Overlapping bars indicate values that are not significantly different.

Fig.4

Analysis of failure (light microscopy). A prevalence of mixed failures was observed in all experimental groups.

Fig. 5

Feg-SEM photomicrographs showing a typical mixed failure at the zirconia-veneering ceramic interface (left side) and inner defects as voids into the ceramic layer (right side).

Fig. 6

Feg-SEM photomicrographs of specimens sandblasted with Al2O3 particles beforesintering. A. Pre-S-30 B. Pre-S-50 C. Pre-S-110.

Fig. 7

Feg-SEM photomicrographs of specimens sandblasted with 30µm particles of Cojet after sintering (Post-S-30) and its EDS spectrum corresponding to the contact area, that revealed the presence of a large amount of Zr, Si and elements of the veneering ceramic layer.