STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof., PhD Tsveta Todorova Markova

Veliko Tarnovo University “St. Cyril and St. Methodius”

on the materials submitted for participation in the competition

for appointment to the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the higher education field 9. “Security and Defence”, professional field 9.1 “National Security”, scientific speciality “Management, Criminology and Security”

In the competition for appointment to the academic position of “Associate Professor”, announced in the State Gazette, No. 115 of 12/30/2025, and on the website of VUARR – Plovdiv for the needs of the Department of “Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism” in the Department of Economics and Management, the candidate participating is Assistant Professor Dr. Stefcho Marinov Bankov.

Short biographical data

I do not know the candidate personally, but I had the opportunity to acquaint myself with his very extensive professional biography. He obtained an educational and qualification degree Master of Laws in the period 2010–2015 at South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Blagoevgrad. From 1999 to 2001 at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Master in Philosophy. From 1994 to 1999 at South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Blagoevgrad, Master in Public Relations.

In 2017 he obtained the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” at the National Military University “Vasil Levski” in the higher education field 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.1 Administration and Management, scientific speciality “Organization and Management outside the Sphere of Material Production (Security and Defence)”. Dissertation: “Possibilities for improving the anti-corruption response through management of the ‘Security’ sector.”

In 2024 he obtained [a degree] at AMR Sofia, in the higher education field 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.6 Law, scientific speciality “Criminology”. Dissertation: “Criminological Characteristic of Corruption in the Ministry of Interior.”

Held positions: 03/02/2004–02/15/2022 Ministry of Interior; 02/15/2022–03/05/2024 Supreme Prosecutor’s Office; 05/03/2024–present Ministry of Interior.

Academic positions: 03/01/2024–06/01/2024 University of National and World Economy, Sofia, adjunct lecturer; 10/30/2019–10/01/2024 South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Blagoevgrad, Assistant Professor, PhD; 02/01/2026–present VUARR, Plovdiv, Assistant Professor, PhD.

General description of submitted materials

The candidate, Assistant Professor Dr. Stefcho Marinov Bankov, participates in the competition with:

Monographs – 2;

Conference papers – 11;

Articles – 2;

Studies – 0;

Books – 1.

Impact of the candidate’s scholarly publications in the literature (known citations) Citations in scholarly publications indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases or in monographs and collective volumes – 2: Cited paper: Terziev, V., Bankov, S., Georgiev, M., “The Stability and Growth Pact: striving for stable public finances and coordination of fiscal policies in EU Member States,” Journal of Innovation and Sustainability, Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 4, 2018, 3, pp. 53–68, ISSN 2367-8127 (CD-ROM), ISSN 2367-8151 (online). A. Petrov, Zhivo “Contemporary Trends in the Organization of Pan-European Defence Studies,” Proceedings of ADVED (Advances in Education and Social Sciences) 2019 – Fifth International Conference Advances in Education and Social Sciences, October 21–23, 2019, International Organizational Center for Academic Research, Istanbul, Turkey 2019, pp. 493–505, ISBN: 978-605-82433-7-8. B. Petrova, T., Petrov, Zh., “Economic Factors in the Development and Application of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Firefighting,” Proceedings of INTCESS 2020 – Seventh International Conference on Education and Social Sciences, January 2020 – Dubai, International Organizational Center for Academic Research, Istanbul, Turkey, 2020, pp. 811–817, ISBN 978-605-82433-8-5.

Citations in peer-reviewed monographs and collective volumes – 4.

General characterization of the candidate's activity The candidate's overall activity is dedicated to work in the Ministry of Interior (since 2004 to present) and the Supreme Prosecutor's Office (2022–2024), and to academic work from 2019 to present.

4.1 Teaching and pedagogical activity (work with students and doctoral candidates)

The candidate teaches the following courses: "Countering Corruption and Organized Crime," "Intelligence and Counterintelligence," "Financing National and Regional Projects," "Corruption in the Financing of National and Regional Projects," "Theory of National Security," "Criminology."

4.2 Scientific and applied-research activity

The candidate has in-depth interests in countering corruption, criminological aspects of corruption in the Ministry of Interior, studies specific aspects of the practice of the Court of Justice of the European Union (Case Ullens de Schooten and Rezabek v. Belgium), transparency as an anti-corruption mechanism in procurement in the security and defence sectors, current issues of migration pressure in the context of national security of the Republic of Bulgaria, interception of communications and the choice to use special intelligence means for intelligence or in criminal proceedings, comparing practices in Bulgaria and the United Kingdom, criminal and intelligence analysis as part of the security sector, principles of equality when restricting subjective rights of citizens under a state of emergency with regard to national security, strategic management of corruption risk in the Ministry of Interior as part of the security sector, large-scale information systems in the area of freedom and justice, models for preventing security threats in globalization conditions applied to alternative financial systems such as "Hawala" for money laundering and other crimes, cybersecurity and mitochondrial targeting: a new horizon for bioterrorism and national security.

4.3 Implementation activity

4.4 Contributions (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)

An interdisciplinary scientific concept for institutional integrity as a key factor for the resilience and effectiveness of institutions in the "Security" sector has been developed, integrating legal, criminological and managerial approaches to the prevention of corruption and abuse of power; a theoretical link between institutional integrity and the rule of law has been substantiated, demonstrating that institutional integrity is an essential element of effective public administration and ensures the resilience of the national

security system; a conceptual model for security governance has been developed, integrating legal, organizational and managerial mechanisms for preventing corruption and abuse of power in the public sector; criminological analysis of corruption in security institutions has been conducted, identifying the main social, institutional and managerial factors generating corruption risk; a typology of institutional risks affecting the effectiveness of security sector institutions has been developed, including regulatory, personnel, managerial and organizational risks; the role of personnel policy as a strategic factor for institutional resilience has been substantiated, showing that instability in human resource management can create preconditions for corrupt practices and institutional instability; a criminological model for preventing corruption in security institutions has been developed, incorporating a system of institutional, legal and managerial mechanisms to limit corrupt practices; the role of transparency as an anti-corruption mechanism in public procurement management in the “Security” and “Defence” sectors has been examined, with key principles and mechanisms to limit corruption risk proposed; criminological characteristics of organized crime in Bulgaria have been analyzed and the need for more effective institutional cooperation among law enforcement agencies has been identified; the impact of migration pressure on national security has been studied, analyzing institutional and managerial challenges faced by state bodies; a concept for strategic management of corruption risk in the Ministry of Interior has been developed, aimed at integrating managerial and analytical prevention mechanisms; legal and managerial aspects of using special intelligence means have been analyzed, including comparative analysis between practices in Bulgaria and other European countries; the role of criminal and intelligence analysis as a tool for security management has been examined, with emphasis on institutional analytical capacity; the relationship between national security and the protection of fundamental citizen rights has been studied, especially under emergency conditions; the role of information and communication systems in security management has been analyzed, including their importance for information exchange among institutions; models for countering financial crimes and money laundering have been developed, including analysis of alternative financial systems such as “Hawala”; new security risks in globalization conditions have been investigated, including transnational crime and technological threats; new scientific directions in cyber-biosecurity have been proposed, including analysis of potential bioterrorism threats and technological risks to national security.

Assessment of the candidate’s personal contribution

A model for improving the anti-corruption system in the “Security” sector has been proposed, comprising a set of managerial, organizational and regulatory mechanisms; practical guidelines have been developed to improve institutional control within the Ministry of Interior aimed at increasing transparency and accountability; mechanisms for

managing corruption risk in law enforcement institutions have been proposed, including monitoring and risk analysis systems; recommendations for optimizing cooperation among law enforcement agencies in combating organized crime have been formulated; measures to increase transparency in public procurement in the “Security” and “Defence” sectors have been proposed; guidelines for improving management of migration processes in the context of national security have been developed; a model for using criminal and intelligence analysis in security management has been proposed; recommendations for development of information systems in the “Security” sector have been formulated; managerial solutions for countering financial crimes and money laundering have been proposed; approaches for integrating new policies in cybersecurity and biosafety into the national security system have been developed; measures to enhance institutional resilience of security bodies through improved management practices have been proposed; strategic guidelines for strengthening public trust in security institutions have been formulated.

Critical remarks

I have no critical remarks. The entire scholarly output represents the candidate’s unique achievement — I am not aware of any information regarding doubts related to authorship.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, I propose that Assistant Professor Dr. Stefcho Marinov Bankov be elected to the rank of “Associate Professor” in the higher education field 9. “Security and Defence”, professional field 9.1 “National Security”, scientific speciality “Management, Criminology and Security” for the needs of the Department of “Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism” in the Department of Economics and Management.

03/31/2026

Member of the Jury:

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