

STATEMENT

**of Assoc. Prof. Rusalena Veselinova Pendzhekova-Hristeva Ph.D.
Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”**

on the materials, provided for participation in a competition
of taking of the academic position **Professor**
of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

in the field of higher education 2. *Humanitarian sciences*
professional direction 2.4. *Religion and theology (Church law, Structure and
Management of Bulgarian Orthodox Church)*

In the completion for **Profession**, announced in *State Gazette, issue 57 of 26 June 2020* and on the web page of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, for the needs of the Faculty of Theology, Assoc. Prof. Doctor of Sciences Dilyan Nikolaev Nikolchev participates as single candidate. All legislative time frames and procedural requirements have been met in the relevant case.

The set of materials, provided by the candidate, meet the requirements of the the *Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Rules for application of ADASRB and the Rules for conditions and methods for acquisition of academic degrees and taking of academic positions in Sofia University* and includes all required documents, with their relevant annexes, containing evidence for the teaching, scientific and professional experience of the candidate.

Dilyan Nikolchev has started his academic career at Sofia University as part-time lecturer in *Church Law and Structure and management of Bulgarian Orthodox Church* in year 1994 and in year 1995 he as assigned as *assistant* at the Faculty of Theology at Sofia University. As of year 2006, he is at the academic position of *Associate Professor* at the Faculty of Theology at the same University. In year 2015, he was awarded with the educational and scientific degree of *Doctor* and in year 2018, he was awarded with the scientific degree *Doctor of Science*, where both degrees as in the professional direction 2.4. *Religion and Theology (Church Law)*.

Assoc. Prof. DoS D. Nikolchev leads many specialized lectures courses in the subject of the competition, and namely: *Church Law, Structure and Management of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Church Marital Law, Introduction in Church Marital Law, Principles and institutions in Roman Law in the Regulation of Church Law*. Also, for the period between 2012 - 2015, he was attracted as part-time lecturer in Church Law at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology at Veliko Tarnovo University “St. St. Cyril and Methodius“. In year 2010, he was reading lectures, as per *Erasmus* Program at University of Trnava (Slovak Republic). The above provided facts unequivocally show, that the candidate is a university teacher with great authority, with solid professional experience in working with students. An excellent testimonial to his teaching skills is also the fact that the prepared three doctoral students, who successfully defended their theses.

Therefore, my general evaluation of the teaching and educational activities of Assoc. Prof. DoS D. Nikolchev is at high level and is completely in compliance with the specifics of the completion of taking of the academic position *Professor* in professional direction 2.4. *Religion and theology (Church law, Structure and Management of Bulgarian Orthodox Church)*.

The research activities and the scientific production of Assoc. Prof. DoC D. Nikolchev is also in direct relation to the subject of the announced completion. The total number of his publication, so far, includes: 4 own monographs; 4 studios (2 of which with co-authors); 84 articles (9 of which with co-authors); 1 compilation of a book in co-authorship; 1 review; 3 introductions; 1 scientifically specialized translation from Russian language. The applicant participates in the completion of taking of the academic position *Professor* with 16 individual scientific works in total: 2 monograph and 15 studia and articles, which were not included by him in previous procedures for taking of academic position and for acquisition of academic degrees, respectively, they were not subject to review.

The content analysis of the main scientific and scientific and application contributions of the matters, examined by the applicant, can be related to the subject fields of *Church Law* and *Structure and Management of Bulgarian Orthodox Church*, and more specifically, to subject areas, like: history, structure, contemporary state and church-legal issues of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, presented in source and archive retrospective; historical and current canonical matters with various matter; theological and canonical terminology, etc.

Especially within the framework of those areas of problems, Assoc. Prof. DoS D. Nikolchev has developed his ideas of the peculiar path of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in the various historical periods since its establishment, with special focus and piety on XX century.

In relation to the announced completion, the monograph *History, structure and management of the Strumica-Drama diocese (Aegean divide, 1941–1942)* and the *Drama diocese (1943–1944)* through the reading of archive documents is with most significant interest.

The author focuses his attention on completely new problems, related to unknown or vaguely known parts of the history, organization and structure of the Bulgarian Church during Second World War in the newly annexed lands of Aegean Macedonia. In relation to the above, the following indisputable scientific contributions, as realized results can be outlined, and namely: comprehensive study, analysis and popularization, from historical, archive, source, archeographic and church-legal point of view the complex of archive funds of Central State Archive, State Archive - Blagoevgrad and Archive of the “Commission for Disclosure of Documents and for Declaring the Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian National Army”, which are related to the history, structure, organization and management of the two dioceses (Strumica-Drama and Drama); successful application of archival heuristics in search of archived legacy, related to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and implementation, for first time, in the scientific area a respective number of main (archive sources); precise definition of the terms, used in the text, which is a

serious challenge and personal responsibility for each researcher; meticulous localization of spiritual areas, parishes and management bodies in the studied dioceses; the usage of abundant quantity of statistical information in relation to clarification of certain aspect of the researched subject; research of different canonical and church-law aspect, related to individuals and event with important role in Strumica-Drama and Drama dioceses etc. Generally, both the problems and the approach to them is new, skilfully combining historical and church-law aspects of the studied subject and demonstrating original thinking method and courage of the author when he states his own scientific position.

The sufficient citations and participation in scientific forums, which show the good recognizability of Assoc. Prof. DoS D. Nikolchev among the scientific society.

My general impression of the scientific researches of Assoc. Prof. DoS D. Nikolchev, presented for participation in the competition is that they are at high professional level and completely correspond to the scientific specialties *Church Law* and *Structure and Management of Bulgarian Orthodox Church*.

The participation of the candidate for taking of the academic position **Professor** in the realization of various activities is also remarkable. It is important to be noted that during his professional career he had taken many managerial positions, he is member of editorial staff of prestigious Theological periodicals, he leads and participates in various scientific and research projects. In year 2007 he was awarded with a price for high scientific achievement of the *Association of Scientists in Bulgaria*.

The participation of Assoc. Prof. DoS D. Nikolchev in the organization of teaching activities, the performance of active research activities, his participation in scientific projects shows that he possesses the qualities and experience, required for taking of the academic position **Professor**.

In conclusion: After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works, presented for the competition, the analysis of their significance and the scientific and scientifically applicable principles, contained in them, I believe that it is reasonable to provide my positive evaluation and to recommend to the Scientific Jury the prepare a proposal report to the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Theology at Sofia University for the selection of Assoc. Prof. DoS Dilyan Nikolaev Nikolchev for the academic position **Professor** at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski“ in the professional direction 2.4. *Religion and theology (Church law, Structure and Management of Bulgarian Orthodox Church)*.

15 November 2020

dzhekova-Hristeva Ph.D.)

Statement prepared by:

(Assoc. Prof. *Rusalena Veselinova Pen-*

