

**STATEMENT**

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Higher education field: 9. Security and defense,  
Professional area 9.1. National security  
Scientific specialty ‘Organization and Management of Non-Material  
Production’

***Reference:*** dissertation thesis for the award of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences"  
- field of higher education 9. Security and defense, professional area 9.1.  
National Security

***Author of dissertation thesis:***  
Dr. Plamen Atanasov Atanasov

***Topic of dissertation:***  
SECURITY AND COMMUNICATION

***Grounds for presenting this statement:***  
*Participation in a jury of members stipulated by Order № 3-PK-331/28.09.2023 of the  
Rector of New Bulgarian University, Sofia*

## **1. Relevance and significance of the scientific problem**

The relevance of the chosen research problem dedicated to the connection "freedom - communication" is indisputable, both from the point of view of the socio-economic changes of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, as well as in the context of the challenges posed by the transformation of human society. which result in the restructuring of socio-economic realities and the formation of a new type of human organization. It is generally believed that in the post-industrial society, information processes have become a leading system-forming factor of the social, political and economic life of mankind, and the security of effective communication is an obvious indicator of the level of social development. In today's world, where information and communication technologies are of great importance, it is legitimate to consider security and communication as interdependent concepts, within which the causality between them becomes increasingly critical. Social networks, e-mail, mobile applications and other means of communication are part of the daily lives of billions of people, so the security-communication correlation has important implications for individuals, societies, countries and international relations.

The significance and relevance of research dedicated to security and communication in the light of globalization and international challenges, in addition to posing the question of social interaction and the possibilities of influencing at all levels, incl. supranational, confirms the need to reveal and propose adequate approaches and methods for managing information flows in order to prevent collisions in the social dimension, since in the modern world information and communications play a key role in the formation of public sentiments, influence and interaction, and therefore have a decisive role in the social sphere.

Although he shares the dominant view that the problem of security and communication is related to the new broader and integrated approach to security (within the framework of the so-called broad security), Dr. Atanasov argues that dealing with the complex and multi-layered challenges of the modern world, requires interdisciplinarity, as well as the use of knowledge and methods from different scientific disciplines. That is why I admire the scientific ambition of Dr. Atanasov in the context of contemporary challenges in the field of security and social sciences, to analyze and evaluate this

essential theoretically and practically complex problem and to substantiate his answers about the directions and possibilities for solving it , which is key to the development of new and innovative approaches to security.

The study is appropriately conceptualized. The object and the subject of the overall analysis in the dissertation work are correctly defined and are directly related to the goal of the scientific research - to bring to the fore the interrelationship "security-communication" and to present the complex mechanism by which it functions, highlighting the tools for guiding it in the dimension of social constructs such as the state and society. Within the set time limits and terminological clarifications, it has been achieved through the consistent and full solution of the three research tasks that specify it as the main tools for intervening in the "security/communication" interdependencies, which are detailed and operationally described in the structure at work.

I especially note that already at this stage, with the formulation of the goal and tasks, the postdoctoral student Dr. Atanasov assumed the theoretical-applied focus as the leading one in his research.

## **2. General characteristics of the dissertation thesis**

The dissertation work of Dr. Plamen Atanasov submitted for review is characterized by a clear, measured and logical structure. The content of the work is contained in a volume of 307 pages, including an introduction, five chapters, each ending with conclusions, a conclusion, a bibliography and appendices, which creates a prerequisite for a balanced exposition. In support of the argumentation of the post-dissertation student, 7 tables and 15 figures are included in the presentation. 4 appendices illustrating the author's theses are also presented to the work.

In order to achieve the goal of the research, the post-dissertation student thoroughly and analytically processed and systematized 377 titles of monographs, articles, studies, reports and internet sources in Bulgarian, English, German and Russian.

The chosen research approach to the study in the face of the convergent, divergent and system-oriented approach, built on a scientific toolkit, including historical, theoretical and comparative analysis and synthesis as methods for researching the theoretical propositions deserves a positive assessment. The approach of empirical

research was applied to collect the necessary information, which ensures the achievement of the set scientific goal.

The leading hypothesis of the study, that "The matter of security that people realize in their daily lives or that they strive to achieve, is in a significant part described and explored fully through the process of communication, which proceeds in the direction of security-building relations" in general is confirmed.

The topic of the presented dissertation fully corresponds to the content and, although thematically comparable developments are found, it has its own appearance. With its logically structured exposition, critical approach and thematic balance, the dissertation work is a finished product with distinct results, which gives reason to draw the conclusion that post-dissertation Dr. Atanasov has a thorough and multifaceted knowledge of the state of this interdisciplinary problem that is essential for science and practice and demonstrates a very good awareness of the nature and dimensions of security as a subject of communication.

### **3. Assessment of scientific and scientific-applied contributions**

According to Dr. Atanasov's self-assessment, five scientific and applied contributions have been achieved in the dissertation work, which I define as entirely his personal work and the result of independent scientific research.

In its entirety, the research work carried out complements and enriches the existing knowledge about the conceptual foundations of the security-communication interconnection at the beginning of the 21st century, as a new discourse among the current concepts of security.

In a scientific-applied way, the study contributes to the presentation and evaluation of an innovative perspective in the field of security, which not only changes the way we understand this fundamental category, but also objectifies it as an inseparable part of human development within the framework of public relations, as thus, it appears rather as a key element in the active adaptation of man and his social associations to the world.

Through a critical rethinking of the main theories of security, postdoctoral researcher Dr. Atanasov consistently guides the development of a new perspective in the understanding of security. In this new perspective, security is presented as a phenomenon

that is sought and achieved in the context of communication and its role in the modern world.

The possibility of credibility of the obtained scientific-applied results is contained in the conducted empirical research, which leads to the generation of a Model for recurring dependencies, which represents a significant advance in the understanding of how systems deal with security and adapt to modern challenges. This Model is related to the emergence of communication phenomena such as censorship, propaganda and information warfare and plays the role of a key tool in security management and in the creation of strategies to overcome essential transformations in modern development. Since the Model is also related to the development of publicity and order in international relations, it is essential for understanding international security and for creating measures to increase stability on a global scale.

Overall, this innovative perspective on security opens up opportunities to more effectively and intelligently manage challenges in the modern world and emerges as an important element in the modern security discussion.

#### **4. Evaluation of publications and the abstract**

Dr. Plamen Atanasov is the author of a number of publications on the researched topic. The leading thesis in the dissertation is supported by sixteen publications, one of which is co-authored. All of them are in the direction of the posed scientific problem, verify the results of scientific research and ensure its public representativeness.

The abstract for the dissertation meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff and the Regulations for its Application, faithfully and accurately reflecting its content in a volume of 49 pages.

Here is the place to point out that according to the Report on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the NBU by group of indicators for the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences", Plamen Atanasov forms 415 points, which exceeds the required 350 points.

#### **5. Statement on the presence or absence of plagiarism**

Within my competences and my available sources, I do not detect plagiarism in the presented doctoral work. I am not aware of any non-anonymous and motivated written signals for plagiarism detection being received during the procedure.

## **6. Critical notes, recommendations and questions**

Research on a complex and significant issue such as security and communication is undoubtedly of interest, poses questions and critical recommendations that are difficult to capture in a limited opinion.

Therefore, I will only share my more significant specific notes:

First of all, in the work there are redundant statements from the point of view of their popularity for science, which, apart from the fact that they could be reduced in view of the large volume of the dissertation, should be used only if the author's thesis is based on them.

Secondly, with regard to the conclusions of the individual chapters, more can be desired, both in terms of their wording and their systematization, and some of them could be reformulated in order to be more representative and focused.

Thirdly, it is necessary to distinguish the contributions of scientific and scientific-applied ones, as well as greater precision and categoricalness in the statement when defining them.

I recommend that the author Dr. Atanasov continue his research work on the topic and promote it at international scientific forums.

## **7. Conclusion**

Evaluating the merits of what has been achieved, I grant a positive assessment of the dissertation work on the topic "Security and Communication" and I confidently express my consent that Plamen Atanasov Atanasov be awarded the scientific degree Doctor of Sciences in the field of higher education 9. Security and defense, professional area 9.1. National Security.

02 November 2023  
Sofia

Member of jury:  
Prof. Dr. Lidia Velkova