НАЦИОНАЛЕН ЦЕНТЪР ПО
ОБЩЕСТВЕНО ЗДРАВЕ И АНАЛИЗИ
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OPINION

of Prof. Maya Petrova Stoyneva, DrSc, PHD,
from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Biology,

prepared on the basis of Order RD-164 / 15.04.2021. of the Director of NCPHA Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hristo Hinkov

on the materials for participation in a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", field of higher education 7. "Health and Sports", professional field 7.1 "Medicine", specialty "Hygiene" (for the needs of the Department of Chemical Factors, Directorate " Analytical and laboratory activities", NCPHA), announced in State Gazette of Bulgaria, issue 14 of 19.02.2021, p. 213 **with the only candidate for participation in the competition Chief Assistant Vera Tsvetanova Pavlova, MD**

1. Brief biographical data about the candidate

Chief assistant Vera Pavlova, born on August 17th , 1974, is a graduate of the Faculty of Chemistry (currently the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy) of Sofia University, where she received a Master's degree in Applied Chemistry. After successfully defending her dissertation (PhD thesis) at the NCPHA in 2007, she acquired ONS "Doctor" (PhD), and in 2011 she became Chief Expert. Since 2012, V. Pavlova has held the position of Chief Assistant, and since 2017 till nowadays she has been Head of the Chemical Factors Department in the PCA Directorate of NCPHA. She has a total experience of 16 years, 5 months and 24 days as of the date of the competition.

During the period 2006-2013, V. Pavlova completed four specializations abroad: two at Masaryk University in Brno (Czech Republic), one at the University of Michigan (USA) and one at the University of Turku (Finland).

2. Assessment of the teaching activity of the candidate

I highly appreciate the teaching activity of the candidate, who according to the submitted documents for the period 2014-2019 has spent a total of 151 hours as a supervisor and lecturer in various disciplines (including those for acquiring a specialty in NCPHA), of which 40 hours she was a lecturer for two interns (one from the University of Maastricht and one from UCTM), and she was also a supervisor of 1 graduate, a scientific consultant of 1 graduate and a reviewer of 2 Master Theses. As a lecturer, I would like to pay special attention to this labor-intensive and time-consuming part of the candidate's activities, which is extremely important for the theoretical and practical training of young staff and the implementation of scientific continuity. In this regard, it is important to note that V. Pavlova initiated the organization and holding of a seminar for doctoral students and young scientists "Modern aspects of public health and

ecology" as a joint event of NCPHA, "Union of Chemists in Bulgaria" and Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy of Sofia University, which was held in 2017 and 2018.

3. Evaluation of the scientific, scientific-applied and publishing activity of the candidate

3.1. Participation in scientific and applied research projects

The applicant is a project leader of one project (DKOST 01/19-23.08.2016, National co-financing of COST "Cyanobacterial blooms and toxins in water bodies: Presence, impact, management") and is a participant in 7 projects, 1 of which is international under the COST program, 1 is under the Operational Program "Environment", 4 are with the National Scientific Fund (NSF) of the Ministry of Education and Science and one is with the NIS of Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". The projects themed on actual scientific and scientific-applied problems. Some of them are directly related to future expected changes in the legislation of Bulgaria and other European countries according to new WHO norms, as well as to national security in relation to the quality of drinking water and public health, especially with regard to algal toxins and their effects and permissible concentrations. Here I would like to emphasize that she was a permanent member representing Bulgaria in the COST project, not a substitute participant. According to the submitted Habilitation Report, it is evident that the candidate is the head of a current scientific topic study at the NCPHP and is a participant in three other topic studies and one program of the same institution.

3.2. Characteristics of the published scientific results

The competition documents provide a list of 10 Group V publications (total number of points 105.5, with 100 points required) and 15 Group G (7 and 8) publications (with total points 235 with 200 points required), listing not only their scientometric indicators but their data from the NACID list. Thus, the total number of publications is 25, and the total number of achieved points is 340.5. I would like to point out a technical error in the Publication List under letter V - Impact factor of publication 6 of this list (of which I am a co-author) is 1.08 for year 2017 (https://www.resurchify.com/impact/details/21100868232), while the provided value of 3.38 is close to the Cite Score of the journal in Scopus (https://www.scopus.com/sourceid/21100868232). This change in value definitely does not lead to a change in the points under point V.

3.3. Reflection of the candidate's scientific activity in the literature (citation)

The list of citations presented in the documents includes 23 citations, divided into three parts in group D - under items 10, 11 and 12. To the list of submitted citations under item D10 I can add the citation „Yang Y., G. Yu, Y. Chen, N. Jia & R. Li 2021. Four decades of progress

in cylindrospermopsin research: The ins and outs of a potent cyanotoxin. - Journal of Hazardous Materials 406, 124653, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhazmat.2020.124653. IF=9.038, Cite Score=13.1, SJR=2.010 (2019), Q1" of publication 9 from the List of publications under item V. In this way, the total number of scores increases from 310 to 325. The provided citations are an evidence of scientific recognition of the candidate.

3.4. Reflection of the scientific activity of the candidate in participation in scientific forums

A List of 37 participations in scientific forums is presented, of which 7 are international (and 1 of them is a symposium). Participations are distributed as follows: 18 reports, 18 posters and 1 lecture. Additional information is given to the List of participations in scientific meetings, reflecting the most important scientific highlights of the reported results. This information I accept in full in the form presented by the candidate.

4. Contributions in the works of the candidate

The scientific and scientific-applied contributions are described in detail in the Habilitation Report submitted by the candidate in the competition documents. Due to the limited scope of this Opinion, I will only note here that I accept the presented author's structuring and the contributions formulated by the candidate in accordance with the described scientific interests, among which the work on toxins of cyanoprokaryotes (division Cyanoprokaryota/Cyanobacteria), known as cyanotoxins, and mainly on microcystins for which WHO provided permissible norms (microcystin LR). I consider it important to emphasize that publication 9 of the List of publications from group B reflects the first for the country evidence of the presence of the specific cyanotoxin cylindrospermopsin in the waters of two important wetlands from the group of Burgas lakes - Mandra reservoir and Burgas lake.

5. Assessment of the personal contribution of the candidate

I highly appreciate the personal contribution of the candidate in the scientific papers and research projects, as well as in the participation in conferences, presented in the competition documents. Her contribution is clearly seen from the following facts: 1) in 11 of the publications V. Pavlova is the first author, and in 3 she is the second author, which shows that in 58% of the scientific works she is a leading author; 2) Out of a total of 37 participations in scientific forums, V. Pavlova is the first or only author of 15 reports and posters in Bulgarian and of 8 reports and posters in English, which makes up 62% of all participations; 3) in the presented scientific projects she is the leader of one project and a permanent member in the successfully completed COST project CYANOCOST. In addition, the documentation submitted by the applicant does

not reflect the important fact that V. Pavlova is the head of one working package in two of the projects with NSF (namely, DN9 /13/2017 and KP-06-OPR06 /2/2018).

6. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks and recommendations to the candidate.

7. Conclusion

Based on the above, I PROPOSE that candidate Chief Assistant Vera Tsvetanova Pavlova, MD should take the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the competition in the field of higher education 7. "Health and Sports", professional field 7.1 "Medicine", specialty "Hygiene" (for the needs of the Department of Chemical Factors, Directorate " Analytical and laboratory activities", NCPHA), announced in State Gazette of Bulgaria, issue 14 of 19.02.2021.

The opinion is prepared by

(Prof. M. P. Stoyneva)

1st June 2021