

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends

May I present the Verdict of the Jury for granting the annual award "Verica Barac" for individual contribution to the fight against corruption in Serbia.

The laureate of this year's "Verica Barac" award is Academician Dr Dušan Teodorović, (full) professor at the University of Belgrade.

DUSAN TEODOROVIĆ - Full Professor at the Faculty of Transport and Traffic Engineering, University of Belgrade. Professor emeritus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the United States. Regular member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. President of the Board of Education in The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. Visiting professor at prestigious international universities. He has published more than one hundred works, including 80 in international journals from the SCI list in the field of traffic engineering, operational research and artificial intelligence. Academician Teodorović is one of the few professors and scientists fully dedicated to the profession of professorship, and even more so to its protection, defense against the onslaught, both in the academic and scientific community and from all external usurpers and the people who occupy important positions in

society and the state, but behave towards education and science in a barbaric way.

He has accepted his ability and skills as an intellectual who is fortunate to be gifted with them, but he nevertheless demonstrates the courage to defend the ability, skills and morale in the profession to the very end, without compromise. With great courage, understanding, and scientific arguments he stands up to drastic degradation of the higher education system without merit in the society.

Academician Teodorović is one of those in the teaching and scientific profession who have realised that the present and future are built on education and culture. By investing in education and science and its development, all other natural and human shortcomings are successfully overcome. Humanity and civilisation are going through the way where education is and shall be the most important resource. Investment in education and science is not only the most reasonable and rational, but also the most profitable and gratifying choice. This courageous man is a righteous person belonging to the „sacred teaching profession|“ and at the same time a strict and responsible scientist courageously and responsibly defending against everything that pollutes the honour and dignity of this profession and its activity. Unfortunately, education and science have become a thing of status and a means of decorating those whose capacity

is limited or lacking. Professor Teodorović vigorously denounces the indifference towards the establishment of educational and scientific institutions in order to serve those whose ambitions are without coverage and in need of a diploma as a status symbol, not as confirmation and proof of knowledge and competence.

In public, Professor Teodorović has fiercely criticised false evaluations, distribution of fake diplomas, academic titles, legalisation of plagiarisms, false authorship and forgery of research results. He is very much aware that such dishonorable work invalidates the development of education, science in society both in the present and in the future. These „fraudulent“ experts assault and enter the most important social and state institutions. They, with the help and support of the powerful men and the government officials conquer these institutions, and hiding behind their authority while occupying undeserved high positions, degrade, paralyze and destroy them. They enter into the state institutions and diminish their functionality and efficacy. Such inapt professionals accept whatever post they are offered, regardless of their competence. Their undeserved and unchallenged status simulates success and leads to increasing influence, privileges and personal gains. Academician Teodorović has strongly condemned this phenomenon in his public appearances. He has shown that tolerating futile and undeserved academic titles in the public arena there are a lot of futile holders of the titles is a cause for concern because this

incomprehensible quest for academic recognition fortifies feeble aspects of our culture. The dissemination of undeserved academic titles creates confusion and distorts the system of values of our society. Unsophisticated souls start to believe that they are important when they really are not, nor can they ever be. Lack of sense for measure is aggression of conceited narcissism. This incomprehensible quest for academic titles in our society ridicules academic seriousness and is mockery of education and young people. This questions the essence of education, to which academician Teodorović attaches the greatest importance. "If we want to have a serious education that will help this society, we have to try to create an intellectual elite which has been collapsing for the last sixty years," says the academician. In his opinion "the first prerequisite for the elite is moral integrity". Such an integrity includes honesty and courage, the exact values that have been so questioned and devalued in our society. With global recognition and indisputable authority, academician Teodorović emerges as a critic of the education system and the ruling scale of values. As a venturer of critical thinking, on behalf of the values, rationality and common sense, he challenges what is not worth and what is the "sick tissue of society." This is all the more significant as the Serbian intellectual elite is numb and slow in reacting to the challenges and of the past and present. Its reaction, if any, is scarce and vaguely visible, and on the margins of society. It bears no significant impact on the structural changes in society. We perceive Teodorović's Promethean effort to

unmask the truth and defend the values as introducing light in social darkness. We recognise him as an intellectual of high moral culture who is always ready to defend the profession, ingenuenity and his consciousness. And he never disregards the values of education, science and society. Therefore, he defends the power of self-determination.

The Jury congratulates the academician Teodorovic and hopes that he will continue in fight for better education for those who come after us.