

## **WELCOME SPEECH**

**of the RECTOR of the Vasil Levski NMU**

**to the participants in the „2nd Erasmus+ Staff Mobility Gender Seminar”**

**10.10.2019**

**Dear officers,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Dear cadets,**

**Dear guests,**

Welcome to Vasil Levski National Military University and to the old Bulgarian capital Veliko Tarnovo. I am particularly delighted to welcome the participants from Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Romania and Bulgaria to the **2nd Erasmus+ Staff Mobility Gender Seminar** which is part of the European Initiative for the Exchange of Military Young Officers inspired by Erasmus.

I have made myself familiar with the work of the Initiative and its diverse activities, and I am impressed by the large number of events that are being proposed and carried out to harmonize European military education. I am glad that Vasil Levski National Military University works in close cooperation with partners from European Military Academies and Universities, and that representatives of our university contribute to the development of the Initiative.

A good proof of that is today's seminar, which we have the pleasure to host. Gender equality issues in the Armed Forces remain a trending topic both nationally and internationally. The Republic of Bulgaria has good policies in this area but only our joint efforts and shared experience would contribute to developing and maintaining a good working relationship in the military environment. I believe that today you will exchange valuable ideas and suggestions concerning the opportunities for attracting and retaining young people in the armies of the EU countries, the ways of raising their motivation to serve in these armies, and the contribution of the military academies to their performance as competent officers and effective leaders.

Once again, welcome to our university and to our town! I wish you fruitful work during the seminar and unforgettable stay in one of the most beautiful towns in Bulgaria.

**Colonel Ivan Malamov**

**Vasil Levski NMU Rector**