



**prof. dr Duško Vejnović**

**From Knowledge to Security: The Faculty of Security Sciences at the University of Banja Luka as the Foundation of Defendological Protection, Defense, and Security of the Republic of Srpska**

**Prof. Dr. Duško Vejnović**, Full Professor at the University of Banja Luka, President of the European Defendology Center in Banja Luka, and Editor-in-Chief of the scientific journals *Defendology* and *Sociological Discourse*

## **From Knowledge to Security: The Faculty of Security Sciences at the University of Banja Luka as the Foundation of Defendological Protection, Defense, and Security of the Republic of Srpska**

In the dynamic world of the 21st century, issues of security, protection, and defense (defendology) represent one of the key challenges for every state and society. The Republic of Srpska, as a constitutive entity of the community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is no exception to this global trend. On the contrary, the specificities of its geopolitical position, historical legacy, and contemporary security challenges create a unique context in which issues of protection, defense, and security (protection + defense = security), conceptualized within the scientific discourse as Defendology—the science of protection, defense, and security—gain particular importance. In this sense, the role of educational institutions dealing with these matters becomes crucial for long-term stability and security.

The Faculty of Security Sciences at the University of Banja Luka, as the leading higher education institution in the field of security studies in the Republic of Srpska, bears a special responsibility in the creation and dissemination of defendological knowledge. Defendology, as a scientific discipline focused on protection, defense, and security, provides the fundamental framework for understanding and analyzing the mission and vision of this faculty. The development of higher education in the field of security in the Republic of Srpska has followed a relatively short but significant path. The Faculty of Security Sciences was established in response to the growing need of society to train professional and academic personnel capable of addressing complex security challenges, risks, and threats. Founded with the goal of advancing both theory and practice in security sciences, the faculty has from the outset been oriented toward creating an academic environment that unites theoretical knowledge with practical skills.

From a historical perspective, the development of the Faculty of Security Sciences cannot be separated from the broader social and political context of the Republic of Srpska. After the Dayton Peace Agreement and the establishment of Bosnia and Herzegovina's specific political architecture, security issues gained a new framework. Under such circumstances, the need for the institutionalization of education in the field of security became evident. Thus, the Faculty became a key institution for educating future professionals in areas such as criminology, security, corporate security, defendology, civil protection, and emergency management, though not in the study of heterogeneous military sciences and their achievements.

Over the years, the Faculty of Security Sciences has continuously adapted its programs and curricula to modern security risks, challenges, and threats. Evolving from traditional approaches focused on physical security and territorial integrity, the Faculty has embraced a comprehensive approach that includes issues of cybersecurity, critical infrastructure, environmental security, and other modern aspects of security.

The mission of the Faculty of Security Sciences can be understood through several key dimensions directly connected to the defendological principles of protection, defense, and security of the Republic of Srpska. Primarily, the faculty's mission is aimed at educating highly qualified professionals and scholars capable of recognizing, analyzing, and appropriately responding to complex security threats, challenges, and risks. This includes an education that combines theoretical knowledge and practical skills, with a particular emphasis on developing analytical abilities and critical thinking. In this way, the mission of the faculty directly contributes to building the human capacity necessary for the functioning of a comprehensive security system.

The second aspect of the mission relates to scientific research in the field of security sciences. The faculty is tasked with continuously advancing theoretical knowledge and keeping up with contemporary trends in the field of security. Through scientific research, publications, and participation in international projects, the faculty contributes to the advancement of defendological thought and practice in the Republic of Srpska. This research is not only for academic progress but also has a practical dimension, as it seeks solutions to concrete security problems.

The third aspect of the mission concerns cooperation with security system institutions. The Faculty of Security Sciences is not an isolated academic institution, but an active partner in the construction of the security system of the Republic of Srpska. Through formal and informal cooperation with the police, security sectors, military, civil protection, and other relevant institutions and entities, the faculty contributes to the improvement of the security system and the practical implementation of defendological principles.

The fourth aspect of the mission pertains to international cooperation and networking with related institutions in the region and beyond. In a globalized world, security challenges, risks, and threats know no borders, making international cooperation and exchange of experiences crucial for an effective response to transnational threats. The Faculty of Security Sciences has the mission of enhancing its educational and research activities through international cooperation, while also promoting the security interests of the Republic of Srpska on the international stage.

The faculty's mission also includes the promotion of a culture of security within the broader social context. Through educational programs, public lectures, seminars, projects, and other forms of public engagement, the faculty contributes to

raising awareness about the importance of security issues and developing a culture of security as a vital element of overall social culture.

The third challenge is balancing academic autonomy with the needs of the security system. As a higher education institution, the faculty has an obligation to maintain academic autonomy and a critical approach, while simultaneously remaining relevant to the practical needs of the security system. This balancing act can sometimes be challenging, particularly in the context of specific political and social circumstances.

The fourth challenge pertains to internationalization. While international cooperation is essential for high-quality education and research in the field of security, it also carries risks related to potentially neglecting local specifics and needs. The faculty must find a balance between integration into international academic currents and focusing on security challenges specific to Republika Srpska.

Despite these challenges, the prospects for the development of the Faculty of Security Sciences in serving the defendology of Republika Srpska are significant. On one hand, the growing awareness of the importance of security issues in the contemporary world creates a favorable environment for the faculty's activities. On the other hand, the geopolitical specifics of Republika Srpska's position and the complexity of the security challenges it faces create a need for highly qualified experts and researchers in the field of security.

To capitalize on these opportunities and overcome the challenges, the Faculty of Security Sciences must continue to enhance the quality of teaching and research, strengthen institutional capacities, develop partnerships with relevant domestic and international actors, and adapt to changing security challenges. Through this approach, the faculty can fulfill its mission and vision within the defendology of Republika Srpska, contributing to the development of an efficient and sustainable system of protection, defense, and security (Defendology).

The mission and vision of the Faculty of Security Sciences at the University of Banja Luka represent an essential framework for understanding its role in the defendology of Republika Srpska. Through educational, research, and social activities (the third mission of faculty and university development), the faculty contributes to developing theory and practice in protection, defense, and security, educating professionals capable of addressing complex security challenges of the modern world.

Defendology, as a scientific discipline providing a comprehensive approach to security issues, offers the theoretical framework through which the faculty's activities can be understood and analyzed. By applying defendological principles in education and research, the faculty contributes to building an integral security system of Republika Srpska, where different aspects of security are viewed as interconnected elements of a unified whole.

Despite numerous challenges faced, the Faculty of Security Sciences has significant development prospects. Through continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and research, strengthening institutional capacities, developing partnerships with relevant actors, and adapting to evolving security challenges, the faculty can achieve its mission and vision within the defendology of Republika Srpska.

It is important to emphasize that the activities of the Faculty of Security Sciences are not solely aimed at narrowly defined security objectives but also contribute to broader social values and well-being. By promoting an ethical dimension of security and critical thinking, the faculty contributes to the development of a society where security serves human rights, freedoms, and quality of life. In this sense, the mission and vision of the faculty reflect not only technical aspects of security but also the humanistic values that should underpin every system of protection, defense, and security—Defendology.