



POLITECHNIKA POZNAŃSKA

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To whom it may concern,

It is not within the scope of my activities or intentions to refer to and comment on the situation of Dr. Bilal, currently employed at the Gdańsk University of Technology, but I will allow myself to refer in a few sentences to the situation when he was an employee of the Poznań University of Technology and in my team he implemented the NCN project financed from Norwegian funds "Designing of peroxidases-based biocatalytic system for a bio-mitigation of emerging contaminants" (2020/37/K/ST8/03805). I would like to clearly emphasize that Dr. Bilal contacted my research team by his own and shown interest in joining my research team as an external researcher and it has to be clearly stated that the proposal of his scientific stay in Poland was not our initiative. Before receiving permission to apply in the POLS competition from the Poznań University of Technology, Dr. Bilal, then an employee of Huaiyin Institute of Technology, presented a number of documents confirming his scientific achievements, as well as letters of recommendation issued by renowned scientists, which indicated significant scientific involvement in the conducted research and very good cooperation with young scientists employed at Huaiyin Institute of Technology. These recommendations were additionally verified after consultations with renowned European scientists who had the opportunity to work with Dr. Bilal. After obtaining unambiguously positive recommendations, Dr. Bilal obtained permission to submit an application in the POLS competition and possible employment in the structures of the Poznań University of Technology after obtaining funding, which actually happened. It is worth noting that the project authored by Dr. Bilal received very positive assessments from external reviewers and the innovative nature of the planned work was repeatedly emphasized. During the research carried out under the grant, Dr. Bilal demonstrated considerable conscientiousness and commitment as well as extensive practical and theoretical knowledge, and the work conducted under my and direct supervision was carried out in accordance with the highest standards. Moreover, each manuscript, both research and review-type, in which I or other employees of our university appear as co-authors, was verified before being sent to the publisher. The project, completed over a year ago, was dutifully settled, and the report on the implementation of the grant is currently undergoing substantive assessment at the NCN. I would like to emphasize here that the implementation

of this project also allowed for the involvement of Polish scientists, which directly translated into their development and allowed the implementation of new research directions.

Nevertheless, although I do not fully agree with the allegations made, because the scientific level of the works signed with my name and the ethical issues related to them are of the highest value to me, I have contacted the Editors-in-Chief of the journals where my articles with Dr. Bilal were published to re-verify and/or possibly withdraw these articles from the journals. My request is currently being verified by the ethics committee of the publisher and we will be notified of the decision made. Additionally, I have subjected the remaining works by Dr. Bilal, in which I or members of my team are co-authors, to a detailed analysis and I do not find in them any signs of works generated by "article factories".

In my scientific and organizational activities, I have always valued cooperation, both domestic and international, because I believe that the possibility of carrying out joint work with scientists from other countries allows us to look at the analyzed problems from different perspectives, which usually leads to the development of interesting solutions with significant utility potential, and also enables the transfer of knowledge, improving the qualifications of employees of the domestic unit. What is more, apart from the scientific aspect itself, hosting and working together with scientists from other countries also has a social dimension, because

it allows us to get to know other cultures and their customs, which also translates into the development of the employees of the hosting unit. I would also like to emphasize that other scientists from abroad have visited me recently, including from Italy – the University of Catania, and Morocco. The result of these long- and medium-term stays are papers accepted for publication and articles that are in the evaluation process. It is not my role to evaluate the policies of other universities in Poland regarding the employment of foreigners, but I would like to strongly emphasize that NCN and NAWA grants are evaluated by recognized, independent national and international experts, and the level of competition means that only the best applications submitted by leading scientists have a chance of obtaining funding.

I would also like to emphasize that I am currently cooperating with MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), DTU – Technical University of Denmark, UTS – University of Technology Sydney and the University of Catania. The result of this cooperation are numerous works that I presume are building the research potential of our country. None of the collaborators have ever questioned my competences or unethical actions.

I declare that I do not conduct and will not conduct research with people who do not demonstrate a broadly understood culture in scientific activity. I would also like to mention that I did not recommend Dr. Bilal for work at the Lodz University of Technology, giving evidence of good practices.

I would be grateful if you would exclude me from correspondence concerning the activities of Dr. Bilal and Dr. Boczkaj. These people have currently no connections with my research group and with Poznan University of Technology as well.

Sincerely,

Teofil Jesionowski