



LAUDATIO

IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF
ACADEMICIAN NAZIM GRUDA

FOR THE POSITION OF

**PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF EUROPEAN
ACADEMIES FOR SCIENCE APPLIED TO
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURE
(UEAA)**

Presented by Prof. Ioan Jelev • September 21, 2026
• UEAA General Assembly



1. General Assessment and Academic Standing

Research Contribution

One of the leading international authorities in **horticultural science** through a unique combination of **scientific excellence, interdisciplinary research, and sustained societal impact**.

- ◆ Appointed as **Courtesy Associate Professor at the University of Florida (2004)**
- ◆ **Invited Research Scholar at Virginia Tech** in the United States **(2007)**
- ◆ Within the **International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS)**:
 - Chair of the ISHS Division of Greenhouse and Indoor Production Horticulture **(2026-)**
 - Vice-Chair of the Division of Vegetables, Roots and Tubers **(2022–2026)**
 - Chair of the Working Group for South-Eastern Europe **(2017–2026)**
- ◆ **ISHS Honor Award** in recognition of his exceptional contributions to the society and international horticultural science.
- ◆ Appointed as **Distinguished Scientist**, Chinese Academy of Sciences **(2020 and 2025)**.
- ◆ **International FAO Expert on Green Agriculture for Europe and Central Asia** (since **2023**).

Publications / Books

According to the Stanford University global ranking, he has been ranked **among the top 2% of the world's most highly cited scientists**

- more than: **450** scientific publications and research contributions, **40** books, book chapters, **220** peer-reviewed publications indexed in Scopus
- over **13,000 citations**, resulting in a Google Scholar h-index of 55

His work consistently bridges fundamental plant science with practical agricultural applications, generating innovative solutions for sustainable food production under increasingly challenging environmental conditions. Through pioneering contributions in climate-resilient horticulture, resource-efficient cultivation, and controlled environment agriculture.

2. Alignment with the UEAA Mission and European Integration

Professor Dr. Nazim S. Gruda's career is in full accordance with UEAA Mission and European Integration. A defining trait of Nazim's work is his ability to bridge disciplines that have traditionally developed separately

- Born and educated in **Albania**, he has spent the majority of his professional career in **Germany**, contributing to teaching and research at five leading universities: the **Technical University of Munich**, **Humboldt University of Berlin**, the **University of Bonn**, the **Technical University of Berlin**, and the **University of Rostock**.
 - As **Vice President** of the **Union of European Academies for Sciences Applied to Agriculture, Food and Nature (UEAA)**, he has worked to strengthen the visibility and strategic role of the Academy within the broader European scientific landscape.
 - He is **Full member** of the **Academy of Sciences of Albania**.
 - **Foreign Member** of the **Lithuanian Academy of Sciences**.
 - **Honorary Member** of the **Romanian Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences "Gheorghe Ionescu-Sisesti"**.
 - **Corresponding Member** of the **Accademia dei Georgofili** in Italy.
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3. Personal Reflections and Leadership Impact

In conclusion

- Since 2017, when I met him, I was deeply impressed by the unique scope of his scientific achievements, the worldwide recognition and appreciation he enjoyed from academic institutions and scientific personalities of the highest rank. Only someone with dedication, diligence, seriousness, tenacity, the desire to get involved and support large-scale scientific initiatives, altruism, sometimes to the detriment of one's own priorities, the love for science and the curiosity for knowledge can achieve such achievements.
- I also remember that, during my visit to the Academy of Sciences of Albania, he accepted without reservation to get involved in supporting the work of the UEAA, which he did with all his dedication. I am very happy that I was the one who opened this path, by engaging him in the work of the UEAA and then by the proposal I made to be vice-president during my presidency - a real support for me throughout this period.

For all these reasons, I highly recommend that Academician Nazim Gruda take over the position of President of UEAA and I am convinced that together with Simone Orlandini, an excellent and dedicated scholar of international renown, they will make an excellent team, which will lead to the increase in the prestige of our academic organization, UEAA.

Thank You!