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To Whom It May Concern

Recommendation Letter

When I am asked to recommend a colleague, I usually begin by listing their titles and positions. In the case of Nataliia Fursenko, that would be the least accurate way to explain why I am writing this letter. What matters most about her becomes visible only when you watch how she thinks through legal material, and that is precisely what I had the opportunity to observe at close range. We first met in 2022 through academic circles, where we exchanged research findings and shared scholarly interests. My real understanding of her as a scholar, however, took shape in 2025, when she invited me to serve as an independent reviewer of her manuscript comparing the strategies Spain and the United States used to adapt their migration legislation to the needs of Ukrainian refugees. A reviewer sees an author without embellishment: you can tell where the reasoning sags, where a fact has been replaced by an assumption, where a conclusion was reached in advance. For that reason, my assessment rests not on the impression left by a finished text, but on how that text came into being. What sets Nataliia Fursenko apart from most scholars of migration law is the path she took to it. Her first specialization was criminology; her doctoral dissertation and monograph addressed delinquency among adolescent girls, its determinants, and its prevention. This is a discipline in which one cannot hide behind an elegant construction: a criminologist is obliged to work with statistics, with the actual conduct of real people, with causes that can be verified. Most specialists in migration law come to it from constitutional or international law, and their gaze naturally gravitates toward normative abstractions. Nataliia sees differently — behind a legal status she sees a living person whose fate depends on how the mechanism actually performs. This criminological instinct, carried over into questions of migration, gives her a perspective that many of her colleagues lack. It showed in the manuscript I reviewed. Where another researcher would have restated the established assessments of the European and American models, she broke them down into their primary elements: the temporary protection mechanism in EU law, the institution of humanitarian parole, and the asylum and refugee-status procedures in the United States. She tied every claim to a specific provision and traced the real scope of rights that provision opens for a person, how much room it leaves for administrative discretion, and how cumbersome its procedure is. The strongest impression came from the fact that she built her comparison on criteria she derived herself — the legal

nature of the status, the level of formalization, the limits of discretion, and the character of social integration. She did not borrow someone else's frame of reference; she built her own. For a reviewer, this is a rare case in which there is no need to fill in the author's thinking: the logic is transparent, every transition is justified, and no proposition is left hanging. Her scholarly courage is equally evident in her choice of topics. The protection of forcibly displaced persons, transnational law-enforcement mechanisms for securing social guarantees for the Ukrainian community abroad, the international legal protection of civilians under conditions of war, and the transformation of the legal identity of Ukrainians — these are areas in which there is as yet no doctrine to rely on. Working in them means moving ahead of the literature rather than following it, and risking error where no one has yet cleared a path. Her publications from 2024 through 2026 in the journals *Ukrainian Politico-Legal Discourse* and *Academic Visions*, as well as in the proceedings of international scholarly conferences, reveal a researcher who has deliberately chosen this harder road, because it is the one Ukrainian law most needs right now. I want to say a few words separately about how she writes. In her hands, difficult international-legal material reads with ease, and that ease is deceptive — behind it lies a great deal of work in organizing the argument. She leads the reader by the hand through the most tangled passages, explains the basis for every step, and never leaves a gap in the logic. More than fifteen years of teaching, from senior lecturer to associate professor in the Department of Constitutional, International, and Criminal Law, have taught her the essential skill of a scholar-practitioner: to make the complex understandable without oversimplifying. Now to the heart of the matter. I recommend Nataliia Fursenko not because she has a solid résumé, although she does. I do so because she belongs to that small group of researchers whose work proves useful beyond the walls of the academy. Her training in criminology taught her to verify facts rather than take them on faith. Her choice of subjects proves that she is willing to work where the ground is hard and there are no ready answers. Her ability to think clearly and write clearly means that her conclusions can actually be used — in the application of law, in the shaping of policy, in the protection of individual people. The combination of these qualities in one person is rare, and it is exactly what makes her research an independent contribution rather than a commentary on someone else's. Ukrainians now seeking legal protection in foreign jurisdictions need precisely this kind of scholar — one who understands law as an instrument that must work for a living human being. I am confident in her qualifications, I value her potential, and I affirm this recommendation without reservation.

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