

# **Bulgarian writer in governmental post seeks to exalt Christ**

February 28, 2018

As a playwright, author and spokesman for Bulgaria's ministry of defense, Alexander Urumov wants to use his prominence for one purpose—"to draw attention to the name of Christ."

Urumov grew up in a culturally Christian home, identifying as Orthodox by tradition but lacking any personal faith in Christ. He became an adult about the time Bulgaria emerged from more than four decades as part of the Soviet Union's Eastern Bloc.

"It was a historic moment for our country, for Eastern Europe and for the whole world," he said during an interview between speaking engagements in North Texas.

## **'Pain, emptiness and hopelessness'**

However, it also was a dark time for Urumov personally. He was teaching at a school for abandoned children and drinking heavily to numb the pain he encountered daily.

"There was so much pain, emptiness and hopelessness around me and in me," he said.

One day, a particularly troubling conversation with a 10-year-old boy pushed Urumov over the edge. As the boy described his dreams for the future, he talked about finding a good job, marrying a beautiful wife, buying his own house—and getting a big ferocious black dog he could

unleash on the mother who abandoned him, if she ever dared to visit.

“It was too much,” Urumov said. “I couldn’t bear any more pain. I went into the forest. I was crying. I don’t cry much, but I could not stop. I prayed, ‘God, if you exist, reveal yourself to me.’ And God visited me.”

Gradually, God began to transform Urumov from the inside out.

“It was a process,” he said. “It took time for God to gently work in my life.”

## Spiritually awakened

At age 29, Bulgaria’s minister of defense hired Urumov as his personal media adviser and as director of communications for the armed forces. That led to an extended role as director of public communications for the Bulgarian National Bank before he returned to the [ministry of defense](#) as spokesman a few years ago.



Alexander Urumov

Along the way, Urumov committed to use his writing talents for Christ. He wrote several plays and collections of short stories that received critical

acclaim.

He also became involved with [Haggai International](#), a Christian program that trains and equips leaders in business, government and other areas for evangelism and discipleship.

“It was a life-changing experience,” Urumov said. “It woke me up spiritually.”

He began to organize several seminars a year to develop disciples of Christ. In the process, he met a former drug trafficker from Iran named Ali.

Ali—who earned the nickname “the immortal” for emerging unscathed from blood battles in the Iran-Iraq War—spent 14 years in prison, including four in solitary confinement. In prison, he found a Bible written in his native Farsi language, and he became a believer in Christ. Now he serves as a missionary and aid worker in refugee camps. Urumov wrote his story in the book, [Ali the Immortal](#).

## Let the light shine

Urumov appreciates the freedom evangelical Christians enjoy in Bulgaria today.

“This is a good time for believers in Bulgaria—maybe the best time in our history,” he said.

However, democracy and globalization also have opened his nation to other influences from Western Europe, particularly nontraditional understandings of gender, sexual identity and marriage, he said.

Urumov has written and spoken against some aspects of the [Istanbul Convention](#), a Council of Europe measure that opposes violence against women but also includes provisions regarding sexual orientation and

gender identity.

He and other critics assert the [convention](#) opens the door to same-sex marriage and includes language about gender identity foreign to Bulgarian culture.

Urumov realizes taking unpopular stands because of his Christian beliefs may endanger his position in government, but he remains bold in speaking out for what he sees as biblical values.

“It’s temporary,” he said. “For now, I am on a hill. I have to let the light (of Christ) shine.”