



1.04.2008

„Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Honorable audience,

It is my great pleasure to take part at the invitation of German Marshall Fund and Chatham House at a conference which will bring together so many creative and critical energies but altogether necessary. It is itself a remarkable event which naturally completes the NATO Summit's agenda for 2008 in a formula of special impact. It is natural for me to underline also on this occasion the stimulating role of the non-governmental organizations within the debate of some issues in the centre of the Euro-Atlantic community carried out within the political and academic environments: security, stability, democratic construction, energy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In Bucharest the largest NATO event in the history of Alliance is taking place. If the dimension of the event places us already in history, the value and the success of this Summit depend on the commonly agreed decisions which will be adopted by Chiefs of States and Governments regarding the ambitious issues on the agenda.

Therefore I would like today in front of you to make reference to the expectations and aspirations which we as country hosting the event connect to the Alliance and to its significance in the current international system.

Romania is at the crossroad of some regions which present an increasing interest for the Alliance but also for the global agenda. Once with Romania's accession NATO has become a direct neighbor of Ukraine and Republic of Moldova. The Black Sea where the Alliance is present through sovereign states, offers a direct link with Russia and Southern Caucasus. Through Turkey, member state and riparian to the Black Sea, the region is neighbor with the Middle East.

In a geo-strategic drawing the connection between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea brings us closer to Central Asia. Therefore I would like to notice the fact that in Bucharest besides the meetings of the Allies we will host the reunions of NATO-Russia, NATO-Ukraine, and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and for the first time ISAF.

I am convinced that in Bucharest we can make real progress in implementing an entire set of projects and initiatives of immediate relevance for our societies. We can make essential steps forward within the expansion policy, the energetic and cybernetic security, the Alliance's partnerships, the NATO role in Afghanistan, the collaboration with other international organizations and the consolidation of the military capacities. There is a chance that we have to use it at maximum. The international evolutions do not offer us the luxury to postpone or to halves of measures.

As the president of a country which has developed within its Euro-Atlantic destiny and counted on the support of the Allies, I have the moral duty to express publicly my hope that in Bucharest the Alliance will open its gates for all the three candidates: Albania, Croatia and Macedonia (FYROM). Therefore we need an agreement based on the individual progresses of each candidate state but also within the regional context which is continuously changing.

The expansion does not represent a single stimulus of bringing closer other states to the Alliance. We must not forget that the peace partnerships are an essential element for increasing security and sustaining reforms. I am glad that we have the opportunity to meet also with the leaders from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. I am hoping that this meeting will mark the moment of passing to a superior level into NATO relations with these three states whose struggles and aspirations must be better known and in the same time encouraged.

It is our duty to support our partners from the Balkans on their European and Euro-Atlantic path to which they have already listed. The NATO role in promoting security and regional stability continues to be essential for the Alliance itself, for its partners and for the basic balance of the region. Romania is determined to keep on being an active part in the common efforts based on the Decision 1244 taken by the Security Council of United Nations. It is the materialization of the responsibility which we have for the stability of the region, for the neighbor states of the Alliance and for the expectations of our citizens and those from the Balkan states. We must not forget within this context the essential role of Serbia as partner in the consolidation of the regional stability.

We consider that Serbia has paid enough for the mistakes from the past. The Serbian people continue to wear its cross for the mistakes committed on its behalf. This is the reason for which we should be prepared at this Summit to offer to Belgrade a clear perspective on returning to the place which it deserves, within the European and Euro-Atlantic community. Serbia is a state of crucial importance for the stability and the economic development of the region. Therefore it is important for democracy to win and to grow stronger in this country.

Honorable audience,

Passing now to the Eastern neighbors I strongly believe that the Black sea Region is part of the same process of promoting democracy, stability and reforms in the entire Europe. Governments and people are fighting for security, for modernism and for a better life, facing the frozen conflicts and trans-border criminality.

I am convinced that the message NATO would send by granting Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Georgia and Ukraine would have a strong impact on the entire region. We will encourage this way a community extended through values and the security that democracy and stability are protected. Not only our neighbors need such a security, but the entire transatlantic community.

Guided by the same vision we support the development of NATO collaboration with the Republic of Moldova, a Armenia and Azerbaijan but

also with the states from Central Asia. These partnerships can substantially contribute to the regional support of stability and Euro-Atlantic security.

Going on with the same geographical space I would like to notice the special significance of the NATO-Russia Council coming together. We have the opportunity to continue a complex dialogue which characterizes our relation. As any partnership this relation is not always free of difficulties. The open and pragmatic dialogue with Russia cannot exclude the free will expressed by the states from the region regarding the expansion of the Alliance. Under the same approach we must consider the measure of the allies to develop instruments which ensure safety in front of the threats resulted from the new technologies in the area of long-action missile. The NATO – Russia relation remains essentially a strategic element of the Euro-Atlantic safety. Only through an open and efficient dialogue we can find together solutions for stabilization of the situation Afghanistan, for continuing the collaboration within the regime regarding the weapons control in Europe and also in fighting against terrorism and ensuring stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Taking a comprehensive strategic look at the whole situation, NATO interacts with all the same partners in the expanded area of the Black Sea. The relation with the riparian states but also with the ones from Central Asia together with the Alliance's preoccupations regarding energetic security denotes the fact that the region of the Black Sea has naturally become an interest area for NATO. The Alliance's expertise in the reform of the defense area, the crisis management and maritime security can be used to offer support in protecting the energetic infrastructure and the maritime ways of communication.

We must not also forget that the preoccupations related to energy are in close connection with the environmental protection. And in the end the environmental protection is another expression of the safety concerning human communities.

Ladies and Gentleman,

NATO has understood that European security cannot be defined strictly from the geographical point of view. In order to protect the allies' security

we must contribute to the insurance of the international security. NATO success in Afghanistan is crucial for the future of this country, for the war we are carrying against terrorism and therefore for our security. We have achieved notable progresses in our commitment for Afghanistan. We must be sure that the progress in Afghanistan is irreversible.

As state participating in Afghanistan since 2002, Romania has joined its allies in order to reconfirm with the occasion of this Summit our firm commitment and our unitary vision on success together with our partners.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The progress of the NATO commitments has demonstrated the need of a comprehensive approach for a collective defense. The consolidation of the NATO partnerships and collaboration policy constitutes an elementary dimension of this approach. We are hoping that the Summit from Bucharest will mark the developing collaboration between NATO and ONU and also the strengthening of the relations with our partners on issues of security starting from our common interests. For the moment the Northern-Atlantic Alliance is in full process of changing its military capacities with the purpose of being able to have flexible forces, available at any time. In the same time NATO widens the horizon of actions and implies new partners to be able to face the most recent threats and in order to accomplish successfully the missions to which they are committed. The NATO changing process was a catalyst for updating the security and defense system and therefore we appreciate the importance of this process and the need for it to continue.

The 21st Century is under the sign of new threats heading to the allies' security, doubled by the persistence of some traditional threats: terrorism, proliferation of mass-destruction arms, regional conflict, and trans-border organized crime. It is clear to us today that these issues cannot be solved by any state alone. A consequence which cannot be disputed is the NATO has become a collaboration structure for collective security which is more needed than ever.

NATO does not represent just a military alliance but also the support sustaining the Trans-Atlantic community with values. The resources and the

vision of the allies from both sides of the Northern Atlantic give us the opportunity for NATO to represent in the region and in the entire world an indispensable force for creating a better, more stable and more prosperous world.

The future of the Alliance lies in our capacity to develop a comprehensive vision on what it regards our direct interests and to develop a successful collaboration with all our potential partners. The future of our security lies in our capacity to permanently adapt this vision and this inspired action in a world which keeps on changing.

The NATO reunion at Bucharest can signify the moment when the Alliance through its decision consecrates a vision and marks a new phase of its changing. The Summit from Bucharest could be a bridge between NATO's Euro-Atlantic and international commitments, between our previous achievements and what we will have to keep on accomplishing so that the citizens of our countries to be convinces that we can guarantee peace and safety.

Thank you very much for your attention!"