

*Permanent Mission of Romania
to the United Nations
New York*



*Mission permanente de la Roumanie
auprès de [Organisation des Nations Unies
New York*

ADDRESS

by

H.E. Mr. Traian Basescu,

President of Romania

at the High Level Plenary of the General
Assembly of the United Nations

New York, September 14th, 2005

Mr. President of the General Assembly,
Mr. Secretary General,
Distinguished Heads of Delegations,
Excellencies,

I am honored to represent Romania at this largest ever gathering of world leaders. We came to New York for we believe the Organization created six decades ago lived up to expectations and hopes that the world emerging from the ashes of war would be a safer and better place to live in. We came for we believe it is entirely possible to reshape once more this prime Organization of ours to serve better the needs and wishes of 21st century's people, as the centerpiece of the multilateral system. We came for we believe the decisions we are bound to take will prove that global political creation and structural transformation can be effected successfully in times of peace, and not only against the backdrop of prevailing violence; we can unite around the dividends and promises of peace, and not only in solidarity against the evil, the unjust, or the war. We came because we believe in the United Nations.

Romania aligns herself fully with the statement to be delivered by Prime Minister Tony Blair on behalf of the European Union. I wish here to commend our Union and successive Presidencies that dealt with the U.N. reform for the drive and constructive leadership displayed throughout the negotiating process. We can be proud of where the EU stands today at the United Nations and on the global scene.

Mr. President,

Romania's membership in the U.N. is now half a century old. The U.N. has changed a lot in the meantime, and so has Romania. We are now part of an alliance of our choice – NATO -, and bound to join formally the EU. We have been quite successful in overhauling our country into a vivid, functional democracy, and a free economy thrilling lately on a 5,5 A average growth. Equally important-from-here-onward,-is how we will be able to reach out to other nations which did not benefit from similarly propitious circumstances, share with them how we did it, and be of assistance to them. We have been dealing with hardship so recently that it should be easier for us to turn to others for support, in genuine selflessness and full credibility.

We will act on development in accordance with the EU policy, trying to make a difference from the standpoint of a country with friends, relationships and projects developed all over the planet. UN is at its best in this area. The UN should expect more from this new Romania over the years to come, as it will endeavor to integrate in its works the unique expertise on transition Eastern Europeans have acquired.

Acceding to the EU, my country is now acknowledged at the U.N. as an emerging donor. Few seem fully aware that recently the donors' community has expanded with a significant number of new participants, some emerging in the context of EU enlargement, while other come from almost all regional settings to include countries

in dual status, recipients and notable providers of aid and assistance. Development objectives we have signed up to at the U.N. World Summits of the '90s stand a better chance of being implemented as foreseen or even ahead of schedule as a result of this fast multiplication of donor sources.

New assistance providers will for some time be in need of some coaching. Romania is no exception. We are presently working with the UNDP to improve our capacity to make use of EU structural funds, and we will seek partnerships to maximize the effectiveness of our first projects in assisting development.

Romania is set to intersect EU's schedule of ODA targeted goals, at a pace that is sustainable and allows us to deliver on commitments.

Following up on our commitment at the Millennium Summit, in close cooperation with the U.N. agencies in Romania, we launched in 2004 the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) Report. It sets out in very concrete ways targets and indicators on key development parameters. It acknowledges the interconnection of economic, political, social and humanitarian features of global issues.

Romania is committed to achieve the set MDGs targets as it advances on the road to European integration. These targets have been included in the National Anti-Poverty and Promotion of Social Inclusion Plan, and replicated in local plans. Budgetary allocations will continue to be made available in key areas in order to reach MDG targets by 2015 or earlier.

Mr. President,

Security and regional cooperation are paramount components of any outlook we may be taking of U.N. performance and achievement. Here Romania speaks out of the unparalleled experience she gained during the term she is currently serving in the Security Council, which remains the critical U.N. body charting international relations on threats to global and regional security.

We have just 3 days ago commemorated victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States. Before, during and after that strike virtually all regions have had their own terror-generated attacks; from London to Sharm-el-Sheikh, from Moscow to Bali, no one seems to have been spared. That is sadly true of the UN itself, too. It cannot be overemphasized that without an enduring "safety net" there are no "safe heavens". As the UN are trying to make the most out of globalization's benefits, terrorists seem to already have connected their evil works to many of the new era's openings. As they increasingly interact among themselves, we too, supporters of freedom and safety for everyone, everywhere, do not have a choice but to increasingly join our forces and pool together all our resources.

I am proud that Romania was able, together with the fourteen colleagues in the Security Council, to spearhead, as Chairmanship of 1540 Committee, global efforts

against the worst-case security scenario, that of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) or related materials and technology falling into terrorists' hands.

In this global quest, we cannot overlook activities such as the illicit trafficking in human beings, arms, drugs and counterfeited goods, which can also fuel significant resources to terrorist networks and keep regional conflicts open. In many parts of the world, including in Romania's neighborhood, this is far from being a myth.

Romania has taken for some time now the view that protection against security threats is not anymore just about taking a stand at one's own border; we have to go where these challenges originate and take them up with resolute action and sustained investments. This is part of the rationale for Romania's joint endeavors with partners and allies in shouldering stabilization and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan. With over 2,000 peacekeepers on duty around the world, Romania's is a major stretch and a significant investment in a wide range of U.N.-mandated and U.N.-authorized operations, and we have therefore a very high stake in their successful outcome.

In both Afghanistan and Iraq elections are coming across at the end of tremendous dedication and painstaking efforts of their people first, and also of a steadily engaged international community. Romania bears her share of this burden all the way through.

All efforts put so far in the stabilization and consolidation of freedom in post-Saddam Iraq should be seen in the longer perspective of the Middle East development.

We see the new Constitution of Iraq as the cornerstone of a rising Iraq, laying down as it does the main features structuring society there for generations to come. For sure, a foundation needs to be set up firmly for the entire edifice to hold. In this case, securing the broadest support of all segments of Iraqi society around it is key.

As Chair of the 1518 Committee of the Security Council, Romania actively contributed to the identification and freezing of funds and assets estranged by individuals or entities associated to the former Iraqi regime. Proceeds resulting from such freezes in over 20 countries went already back to the Iraqis through the Development Fund for Iraq.

Of special relevance to Middle East peace prospects is the successful withdrawal from Gaza and parts of Northern West Bank. This represents a step toward peace, provided both parties commit themselves to ensuring a peaceful and economically viable status for the Palestinian territories; Israelis and Palestinians must seize the opportunity and engage in a meaningful dialogue that could lead to the resumption of peace talks, with a view to reaching, through negotiations and in accordance with provisions of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East.

Romania stands as a catalyst for cooperation in her region, and is keen to bring up this experience at the international level.

My country's particular experience in South-Eastern Europe and the wider Black Sea area reveals that meaningful cooperation between the U.N. and regional organizations is decisive both on conflict management, and in handling responses to transnational non-conventional threats.

Our own regional belonging to South Eastern Europe and the Black Sea area offers plentiful evidence of both the needs and opportunities fostered by the new cooperative approaches to security. That is why we feel confident that it will be possible for the Security Council to take a step forward in acknowledging the enduring relevance and the potential still unleashed from Chapter VIII of the Charter, when it takes up once more the theme of global-regional cooperation in stabilization processes under the Romanian Presidency in October. The conclusions reached on that occasion will be most helpful as Romania takes up concurrently the Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of ministers, and of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization. Bucharest will also host the Francophone Summit in 2006.

In the Balkans, the way in which the Kosovo issue will be addressed over the coming months is going to be decisive for the overall prospects of lasting stability, integration and prosperity for the whole region.

East of Romania, in the wider Black Sea area, in the very proximity of the enlarged EU and NATO, we have to find something better and more sustainable than responding to conflicts by putting them in the refrigerator for years and decades. When applied to geopolitics, the laws of cryogenics have paradoxical applications: if frozen for too long, conflicts do not get solved, they may get worse, and at best resurface after awhile in their original state. The best way to overcome this approach is to work to make the logic of cooperation, based on benefits that would result for all from stability in the wider Black Sea area, prevail.

My contention is that securing the Black Sea area and South Eastern Europe for lasting stability and prosperity is not only entirely within reach, but should also be a priority concern of global import, to the same extent as addressing crises in more troubled areas is, for accomplishing that mission means that we can all rely on a vast land being conflict-free, and open to invest in achieving peace where this is most needed.

Our ultimate aim should be to see the day when the international community is able to deal with each and every security challenge anywhere, anytime, by better pooling together existing resources and capabilities for responding to unlawful violence. We are encouraged to see this happening with regard to the conflict management agenda in Africa. We would need more of that as far as conflict prevention goes, too. Under UN auspices, we have witnessed regional ownership over local conflicts and

crises being buttressed by contributions from outside organizations such as the EU and NATO. In such instances, geographical distance is no more a match for common aspirations toward functioning democratic systems, ruled by the law, and for sustainable development.

There is a deep connection between security, development and respect for human rights, democratic values and good governance in everything we are attempting now to reform our Organization. This essential linkage is more evidently reflected in the notion of a Peace Building Commission; Romania unreservedly supports it, being aware at the same time that it will still take a great amount of continued commitment and mobilization of resources to see it come true.

Mr. President,

Six decades after the U.N. was created as a bulwark against abuse and terror, basic human rights and liberties are still baffled around the world as a not so uncommon occurrence. Many regimes still get the shivers at the mere utterance of the word "democracy". In Romania's own proximity, there still are separatist areas of non-law, where people are protected by no applicable law or principle. Often, the most affected are children, women and persons belonging to various minorities. The U.N. should not hesitate to activate available mechanisms suited for addressing such threats, and take appropriate measures, including by action at Security Council level.

We have high hopes that the new Council for Human Rights will take up more effectively and credibly these grievances.

To conclude, Mr. President, as we drew closer to this Summit, we all shared the view that the U.N. was at a crossroads. We can be content now that when we return to our constituencies we leave behind an Outcome Document that firmly sets the one and only Organization we all have in common on a structural reform pathway. Of paramount importance is that 191 states managed to concur on a common vision not only to strengthen the U.N. as the centerpiece of multilateral architecture, but to reengineer it to lead in an ever more diverse and an ever more promising world. This global agreement means that we share in common the deep belief that there can be an Organization shielding the entire humankind and providing to the needs and aspirations of all of it.

We leave behind a huge political investment of trust and hope on behalf of our people. It would all however have been in vain unless we will show positive political will in making these constructs come to life. We need to strengthen our common universal frame, and we all also need it to work better with regional and national levels in a consistent matrix of subsidiarity and complementarity. Romania is ready to embark on this transition to reform.

Thank you.