ROMANIA

Romania has remained steadfast as a strategic partner in NATO and Coalition operations, including significant contributions of troops, equipment, and other assistance in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Balkans. Romania continues to improve its capabilities for NATO and multinational operations and has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to volunteer its forces and assets in support of U.S. national security interests. The U.S.-Romanian agreement authorizing U.S. access to military facilities in Romania – particularly along the Black Sea coast – provides for combined training and rapid deployment to unstable regions to the east. Romania's efforts to promote greater cooperation among its Black Sea neighbors in the areas of defense, law enforcement, energy, economic development, environment, and democratization complement U.S. goals to enhance stability in this sensitive and important region. However, with Romania facing severe budget pressure from the global economic downturn, additional U.S. assistance will be required to support Romania in completing its military modernization, improving its interoperability with U.S. and NATO forces, and increasing its expeditionary deployment capabilities in support of NATO's collective defense and Coalition operations.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: Since December 1989, Romania has actively pursued a policy of strengthening relations with the West in general, more specifically with the U.S. and the European Union. Romania was a helpful partner to the allied forces during the first Gulf War, particularly during its service as president of the UN Security Council. Romania has been active in peace support operations in Afghanistan, UNAVEM in Angola, IFOR/SFOR in Bosnia, KFOR and EULEX in Kosovo, and in Albania. Romania also offered important logistical support to allied military operations in Iraq in 2003 and, after the cessation of organized hostilities, has been participating in coalition security and reconstruction activities. Romania is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which it chaired in 2001.

Romania was the first country to enroll in the NATO Partnership for Peace program. NATO member states invited Romania to join the Alliance in 2002, based on Romania's rapid progress in modernizing its armed forces and its contributions to allied peacekeeping and other military operations. Romania officially became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on March 29, 2004 after depositing its instruments of treaty ratification in Washington, DC. In 1996, Romania signed and ratified a basic bilateral treaty with Hungary that settled outstanding issues and laid the foundation for closer, more cooperative relations. In June 1997, Romania signed a bilateral treaty with Ukraine that resolved certain territorial and minority issues, among others. Romania also signed a basic bilateral treaty with Russia in July 2003.

Romania hosted President Bush's final NATO Summit April 2-4, 2008. The venue symbolized the expansion of the Alliance from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and set new goals for years to come.

Romania acceded to the European Union on January 1, 2007 along with Bulgaria, bringing the number of EU states to 27. Romania is a strong advocate for a "larger Europe," encouraging other countries that were formerly part of the Soviet sphere to integrate into both NATO and the EU.

Romania has been actively involved in regional organizations, such as the Southeast Europe Cooperation Initiative (SECI) and the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, and has been a positive force in supporting

stability and cooperation in the area.

Romania maintains good diplomatic relations with Israel and was supportive of the Middle East peace negotiations initiated after the Gulf conflict in 1991. Romania also is a founding member of the Black Sea Consortium for Economic Development. It joined the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in 1972, and is a member of the World Trade Organization.

U.S.-ROMANIAN RELATIONS: Cold during the early post-war period, U.S. bilateral relations with Romania began to improve in the early 1960s with the signing of an agreement providing for partial settlement of American property claims. Cultural, scientific, and educational exchanges were initiated, and in 1964 the legations of both nations were promoted to full embassies.

Responding to Ceausescu's calculated distancing of Romania from Soviet foreign policy, particularly Romania's continued diplomatic relations with Israel and denunciation of the 1968 Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, President Nixon paid an official visit to Romania in August 1969. Despite political differences, high-level contacts continued between U.S. and Romanian leaders throughout the decade of the 1970s, culminating in the 1978 state visit to Washington by President and Mrs. Ceausescu.

In 1972, a consular convention to facilitate protection of citizens and their property in both countries was signed. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) facilities were granted, and Romania became eligible for U.S. Export-Import Bank credits.

A trade agreement signed in April 1975 accorded most favored nation (MFN) status to Romania under section 402 of the Trade Reform Act of 1974 (the Jackson-Vanik amendment that links MFN to a country's performance on emigration). This status was renewed yearly after congressional review of a presidential determination that Romania was making progress toward freedom of emigration.

In the mid-1980s, criticism of Romania's deteriorating human rights record, particularly regarding mistreatment of religious and ethnic minorities, spurred attempts by Congress to withdraw MFN status. In 1988, to preempt congressional action, Ceausescu renounced MFN treatment, calling Jackson-Vanik and other human rights requirements unacceptable interference in Romanian sovereignty.

After welcoming the revolution of December 1989 with a visit by Secretary of State Baker in February 1990, the U.S. Government expressed concern that opposition parties had faced discriminatory treatment in the May 1990 elections, when the National Salvation Front won a sweeping victory. The slow progress of subsequent political and economic reform increased that concern, and relations with Romania cooled sharply after the June 1990 intervention of the miners in University Square. Anxious to cultivate better relations with the U.S. and Europe, and disappointed at the poor results from its gradualist economic reform strategy, the Stolojan government undertook some economic reforms and conducted free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections in September 1992. Encouraged by the conduct of local elections in February 1992, Deputy Secretary of State Eagleburger paid a visit in May 1992. Congress restored MFN in November 1993 in recognition of Romania's progress in instituting political and economic reform. In 1996, the U.S. Congress voted to extend permanent MFN graduation to Romania.

As Romania's policies became unequivocally pro-Western, the United States moved to deepen relations. President Clinton visited Bucharest in 1997. The two countries initiated cooperation on shared goals, including economic and political development, defense reform, and non-traditional threats (such as trans-border crime and non-proliferation).

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Romania has been fully supportive of the U.S. in anti-terrorism efforts. Romania was invited to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in

November 2002 and formally joined NATO on March 29, 2004 after depositing its instruments of treaty ratification in Washington, DC. President Bush helped commemorate Romania's NATO accession when he visited Bucharest in November 2002. On that occasion he congratulated the Romanian people on building democratic institutions and a market economy following the fall of communism. Romanian troops serve alongside U.S. troops in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

In March 2005, President Traian Basescu made his first official visit to Washington to meet with President Bush, Secretary of State Rice, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, and other senior U.S. officials. In December 2005, Secretary Rice visited Bucharest to meet with President Basescu and to sign a base use and access agreement that allows for the use of Romanian military facilities by U.S. troops. The first proof of principle exercise took place at Mihail-Kogalniceanu Air Base from August to October 2007.

Peace and Security: U.S. security assistance facilitates Romania's continued integration into NATO, expands its capabilities, and directly supports continued contributions to NATO and Coalition operations, including in Iraq and Afghanistan. Assistance in defense, military, and security sector restructuring will be used to provide the Romanian military with needed defense articles, services, and training tailored toward meeting mutual security interests and goals. U.S. assistance will contribute to Romania's base modernization, key communications and information technology, and the training of the country's military personnel. These programs will be implemented through the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Focus on Performance: As an active member of NATO, Romania is supporting U.S. and NATO goals through its contributions to the allied military presence in the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq. A model NATO member, Romania has over 1,600 troops deployed in operations alongside U.S. forces. The United States will continue to provide the Romanian military with needed defense articles, services, and training: our assistance converts into real-time military operational improvements on the ground with U.S., NATO, and coalition forces. The funding increase is needed to improve the quality and quantity of the Romanians' pre-deployment training. Additional force protection training and equipment (e.g. Counter Improvised Explosive Devices) before kinetic operations are vital to lower battlefield casualty rates. In addition to these force protection measures, this request will specifically fund an increase in the deployable strength of a nascent Special Operations Battalion, which currently keeps 90 soldiers deployed downrange or preparing for deployment without appreciable caveats. Command and Control gear and Staff training are needed to graduate them to Company and finally Battalion size operations.