

**Freedom House's
Romanian Government Transition Support Program**

**Quarterly Report
July 1-September 30, 2000**

I. Program Objectives

On April 1, 2000, Freedom House received a three-year cost extension from the US Agency for International Development to continue its Romanian Government Transition Support Program. This program aims to:

- strengthen the organizational and management capabilities of key Romanian government institutions;
- strengthen the internal and external capabilities of the Romanian government;
- support the development of organizational structures and management systems within state institutions in order to facilitate competent governance and decision-making.

II. Activities and Impact

1. Professional Internship Training with American Counterparts

Freedom House organized, starting September 8, 2000 a ten-week internship program for four Romanian government officials. The four participants were:

- **Lucia-Ioana Baicoianu**, Juridical Counselor, National Agency for Regional Development, Government of Romania
- **Ion-Bogdan Bucur**, Deputy Director, Communications and Public Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Elena Buzarnescu**, Expert, Labor Inspection, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
- **Cornelia-Maria Simion**, Counselor-Director, Foreign Trade and International Relations Directorate, Government of Romania

The first week of their program consisted of an orientation during which they met with individuals that represented a broad cross-section of the Washington, D.C. –based policy and opinion making community. During this portion of the program, the Romanian government officials were accompanied by eleven other professionals from Eastern Europe, consisting of journalists and representatives of government and non-governmental organizations. The program introduced the participants to federal and local governments,

national media, free-market institutions, and the NGO community in the U.S., while providing a forum for them to interact with American counterparts and with one another. Highlights of the orientation program included meetings on federal legislative processes and constituent relations on Capital Hill, a discussion on international economic development with the Mayors Office, New York City, and a visit to the United Nations. (See Attachment A for a complete copy of the orientation program schedule and Attachment B for complete copies of the orientation evaluation forms.)

Impact:

The participants were overwhelmingly positive about the orientation period.

“All meetings and events scheduled in the orientation week were interesting and useful and provided us, the Visiting Fellows of Freedom House the opportunity to gain knowledge of the American democratic system, international affairs, legislative process in the US, and ultimately the true democratic values which can be found here” –*Elena Buzarnescu*

“Generally speaking, the orientation program as a whole was very useful to me. All American institutions that were visited by us and also, the approachment [inclusion] of such different topics, gave me a real opportunity to get into American experience and democracy overview” –*Cornelia-Maria Simion*

Following the orientation program, on September 18th, the participants were dispatched across the U.S. to participate in their first internship assignment specifically designed to match their professional interests and needs.

Ms. Baicoianu’s internship was at:

- US Senate Office of Legislative Counsel

Mr. Bucur’s internship was at:

- Communications Office, Mayor’s Office, District of Columbia

Ms. Buzarnescu’s internship was at:

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Ms. Simion’s internship was at:

- Texas Department of Economic Development

2. On-site Assistance in Organizational Management and Public Affairs

During July-September, 2000 Freedom House sponsored three American-Romanian specialists through the American Volunteers for International Development(AVID) program to provide technical assistance and managerial support to the Romanian Presidency and government organizations. Sandra Pralong and Ramona Calin continued their assignments with the Presidency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs respectively. On September 4, Katja Eliad began a 3-month assignment with the Department for the Protection of National Minorities.

- **Sandra Pralong, Advisor for the Relations with Romanians Abroad, Presidency of Romania.**

The objectives of Ms. Pralong's assignment are:

- Improving policy coordination among state institutions;
- Improving representation and increasing involvement of Romanians living abroad in domestic affairs, especially legislative input and enhanced facilities for trade, business and investment;
- Enhancing dialogue between the Romanian state and targeted communities of Romanians abroad, especially the media, youth and students, etc.

Impact:

Through Ms. Pralong's efforts, the Presidency organized programs to stem Romania's brain drain and encourage Romanians studying abroad to return to Romania. In cooperation with the U.S. Embassy's Return to Romania program, the Presidency organized a Youth Forum (held July 2-4, 2000) and Job Fair for Romanians studying abroad (held July 5, 2000). More than 150 students attended the Youth Forum and sixty-three companies interviewed 1,000 students at the Job Fair. Within a few weeks, the Ministry of the Interior alone reported hiring or finalizing hiring of 24 students interviewed at the Fair. The Presidency raised funds for the event from private sponsors and Romanian state agencies.

Ms. Pralong helped the President's Office to establish new voting centers for Romanians living abroad in preparation for presidential and parliamentary elections later in the year.

Ms. Pralong continued projects established during earlier reporting periods. These included: coordinating Working Groups to bring together representatives from each of the eight state institutions involved with the relations of Romanians abroad; pushing for passage of the bill to create a Council for Representation of Romanians abroad; and follow-on activities to the Youth Forum and Job Fair.

- **Ramona Calin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Directorate for Political Affairs.**

The objectives of Ms. Calin's assignment are:

- Repositioning the U.S. Romania-Action Commission (USRAC) and
- Initiating a campaign in the international press to create a more realistic image for Romania.

Impact:

During the reporting period, Ms. Calin met with Center for International and Strategic Studies (CSIS) implementers, U.S. participants, and MFA representatives involved with the USRAC to discuss how best to revitalize the commission. After evaluating the USRAC's strengths and weaknesses, Ms. Calin offered a plan to the MFA for restarting USRAC operations after elections are held in Romania. She then organized several working groups with representatives from academia and the private sector to develop the groundwork for a revitalized USRAC.

Ms. Calin continued her efforts to establish a medium/long-term international public image strategy for Romania. She contacted major public relations firms in New York and Washington D.C., to seek assistance in: providing training for Romanian diplomats who already serve or will be serving as press/communication officers abroad and developing a program aimed at bringing about broader, more positive international media coverage of Romania. Ms. Calin also institutionalized a task force for communication within the MFA. This task force brings together directors from the MFA's Department of European Integration, Economic Directorate, Directorate for Communication and Promotion, and along with the Spokesperson to coordinate a national and international communication strategy.

- **Katja Eliad, Department for the Protection of National Minorities (DPMN), Directorate for Relations with Civil Society**

Ms. Eliad began her 3-month assignment Department for the Protection of National Minorities (DPMN), Directorate for Relations with Civil Society on September 4. The objectives of her assignment are:

- Strengthening overall operations within DPMN, and
- Establishing and maintaining relationships with international partner institutions.

Impact:

After surveying the staff and Minister, Ms. Eliad identified internal communication and organization as areas that DPMN needed to improve upon. Ms. Eliad then arranged for Partners Romania Foundation for Local Development (PRFLD) to conduct and co-finance a 3-day team building and team communication workshop for DPMN staff in November. PRFLD expressed interest in providing conflict management training to DPMN staff in the future. Ms. Eliad also worked closely with the PHARE project to develop software and acquire equipment for a database of minority rights resources. With Ms. Eliad's assistance, DPMN is arranging a yearlong mentoring relationship with PHARE that will provide long-term training for DPMN staff. Ms. Eliad began efforts to provide training to minority NGOs and build relationships between these NGOs and other civil society organizations. Finally, Ms. Eliad met with several embassies and the Council of Europe to assess prospects for improved cooperation with international organizations.

(See attachment C for AVID volunteer reports.)

List of Attachments

- Tab A U.S. training orientation schedule
- Tab B U.S. training orientation evaluations
- Tab C AVID volunteer reports

The Visiting Fellows Program
Sponsored by Freedom House

Group 33 Orientation - Fall 2000

Friday, September 8 and Saturday, September 9: Arrival and Hotel check-in

The Virginian Suites Hotel
1500 Arlington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22209
Tel: (703) 522-9600
Fax: 525-4462

Sunday, September 10: Tour of Washington DC

11:15 Meet Andy Colburn in hotel lobby, dress very casually!

12:30 **DC Ducks**
Metro: Union Station (red line)
Tel: (202) 966-3825

Monday, September 11: Welcome and Introduction

9:30 Bus pick-up at hotel

10:00 **Introduction and Welcome**
Jim Denton, Executive Director
Paula Gibbons, Director of Exchange Programs
Location: Freedom House
1319 18th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 296-5101
Fax: 296-5256
Metro: Dupont Circle

12:00 **Lunch Discussion: "The U.S. Constitution and an Overview of the U.S. Government and Federalism"**
Clyde Wilcox, Adjunct Professor of Government, Georgetown University
6068 North 26th Street
Arlington, VA 22207
Tel: (703) 241-5518
Location: Freedom House

3:00 **"The Federal Judicial System"**
Judicial Fellow
The Supreme Court
Location: 1 First Street, NE
North Door, Maryland Ave. Entrance
Washington, DC
Contact: Curator's Office
Tel: (202) 479-3298
Fax: 479-2926
Metro: Union Station

4:45 Bus returns to hotel

Tuesday, September 12:

8:30 Bus pick-up at hotel

- 9:00 **NGO only**
“Grant Seeking : An Orientation to the Funding Research Process”
Anita Platinski
The Foundation Center
Location: 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW
K Street Entrance
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 331-1400 ext.4022
Fax: 331-1739
Metro: Farragut North of Farragut West
- Journalist only**
“Introduction and Welcome”
Paula Gibbons, Director of
Exchange Program
Location: Freedom House
- Government only**
“Legislative Processes”
Richard Beth, American
Government Specialist
Congressional Research
Service (CRS)
Location: Freedom House
- 11:00 **“Freedom of information Act (FOIA): Public Access to Information and Government Transparency”**
Thomas Blanton, Executive Director
The National Security Archive (FOIA)
Location: George Washington University
Gelman Library
2130 H Street, NW
Washington, DC
Tel: (202) 994-7000
Fax: 994-7005
Metro: Foggy Bottom-GWU
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:30 **“Exporting the Free Enterprise Ideal”**
Andrew Wilson
Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)
Location: Freedom House
Tel: (202) 721-9222
- 3:00 **“White House Foreign Policy”**
National Security Council
Mark Brzezinski, Director for Southeast European Affairs
Location: Old Executive Office Building
17th & Pennsylvania Avenues, NW
Washington, DC 20503
Contact: Judy Russ
Tel: (202) 456-9101
Fax: 456-9150
Metro: Macpherson Square
- Enter at Pennsylvania Avenue entrance; ask security desk to call Judy Russ to get you. You will need photo id
- 4:30 **“Activities of the National Endowment for Democracy”**
National Endowment for Democracy (NED)
Paul McCarthy, Program Officer
Rodger Potocki, Program Officer
Location: 1101 15th Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 293-9072
Fax: (202) 223-6042
- 6:00 **Welcoming Reception**
The Embassy of Romania
Location: 1607 23rd Street, NW

Washington, DC
Tel: (202) 296-5101

Wednesday, September 13:

- 8:00 Bus pick up
- 8:30 **Open bank accounts (bring passports)**
Citibank
Location: 1225 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC
Metro: Farragut North
- 9:45 **“The Role of the Executive Branch in Foreign Policy”**
State Department
Renee Earl, Deputy Director for the European Bureau, Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
Christopher Murray, Deputy Director of European Union and Regional Affairs
Dr. Daniel S. Hamilton, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs
U.S. Department of State
Location: 2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520
Contact: Jeff Jamison
Tel: (202) 647-6988
Fax: 647-0414
Metro: Foggy Bottom
• use 21st and C Street Entrance
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:30 **“The Legislative Process”**
Stephanie Blanton, Legislative Assistant for Congressman David Dreier
Location: R-California 28th District
237 Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515-0528
Tel: (202) 225-2305
Metro: Capitol South
- 3:00 **Group Photo in front of Capitol Building**
Contact: Mattox Photography
Tel: (703) 578-0900
* meet photographer at Grants Statue on 1st Street
- 4:00 **“The SEC: A Global Prospective”**
Ester Saverson, Assistant Director Office of International Affairs
Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Office of Public Affairs
Location: 450 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20549
Room: 11300
Contact: Carol Patterson
Tel: (202) 942-0020
Metro: Gallery Place – China Town
- 5:00 Bus returns to hotel

Thursday, September 14:

- 9:15 Meet in hotel lobby, check-out of rooms, bring luggage for two nights in New York

1:30 Lunch

3:00 "Wallstreet and the Media"
CNNfn
Myron Kendell , Financial Correspondent
Location: Five Penn Plaza, 20th Floor
New York, NW 10001
Contact: Margaret Dowling
Tel: (212) 714-7800
Fax: (212) 714-7962

3:45 Tour of CNN Studios

4:30 Return to Hotel

8:00 **ShowTime: The Music Man**
Neil Simon Theatre
Location: 250 West 52nd Street
New York, NY

Saturday, September 16: New York City

5:25 Penn Station, Return to DC

8:45 Arrival, Check into Virginian Suites

ORIENTATION PERIOD EVALUATION FORM

Please type your answers to the following questions or write clearly in ink. If you need more space, please continue on the reverse side of the page. We appreciate your candid and thorough remarks.

NAME: LUCLA-IOANA BACCIOIANU

INTERNSHIP TYPE: GOVERNANCE
(Governance, NGO Management, Media, or Economic Development)

1. Please give an overall evaluation of the Orientation Program, including comments on how it might be improved in the future.

The Orientation Program was a very interesting one, but we had too many meetings in a day, meetings that haven't been very related ~~one~~ between them. One might say it wasn't also the best training that could be given.

In the future FH staff should offer FH visiting Fellows a possibility of understanding better ~~the~~ about the purpose of this Orientation Program. We've been very tired and confused sometimes, at the end of the day,

2. Was the Freedom House staff organized, professional and efficient? Were you properly prepared by the staff? Please comment and give suggestions.

FH staff was good organized and efficient with the documentation on the meetings, institutions and individuals, but not very good in knowing, from my own point of view.

Maybe, it could of been better for us as foreigners in such an anonymous and fast cities to have more time to understand from the very beginning ~~everything~~ the responsibilities we're receiving.

3. If you were scheduling the Orientation Week what meetings or events would you add or delete? Which briefings were especially useful and interesting? Which were not?

All meetings were good and useful to attend to, the instructions and addresses being interesting also, but a schedule more flexible could of been better for the very first week.

4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the best and 5 being the worst) how would you rate the overall orientation program in providing a broad introduction to American government, business, and media? Please circle your answer.

Very useful					Not so useful
1	2	3	4	5	

When complete, fax a copy to Freedom House at (202) 296-5256 AND also send the original to FH, 1319 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. **THANK YOU!**

ORIENTATION PERIOD EVALUATION FORM

Please type your answers to the following questions or write clearly in ink. If you need more space, please continue on the reverse side of the page. We appreciate your candid and thorough remarks.

NAME: Ion - Bogdan BUCUR

INTERNSHIP TYPE: Governance

(Governance, NGO Management, Media, or Economic Development)

1. Please give an overall evaluation of the Orientation Program, including comments on how it might be improved in the future.

The program was a little bit too ambitious for one week but the overall evaluation is in my opinion good. It was a good mixture between administration at federal level international organisations, NGOs, etc. The schedule was well elaborate, diversified and structured.

It was a good idea to include a show on Broadway because it gave us a taste of New-York's cultural life.

The visit to U.N. was too short ... in order to give us an idea of what's happening there. Maybe in the future you could include a visit to the office of the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. ...

Visits to the international organisations of interest for ^{the} South-East of Europe, such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, could be added in the future ...

2. Was the Freedom House staff organized, professional and efficient? Were you properly prepared by the staff? Please comment and give suggestions.

For the ambitious schedule of the orientation week I think the F.H. staff was well organized and efficient. The instructions were clear enough and I could manage to follow the program. I've got from the staff all the information I needed in order to prepare myself for the program activities.

The organizers should probably point out, in front of the group, at the end of the last activity, all the changes in the next day schedule. They should also insist on the importance of the timing of each activity mentioned on the schedule.

3. If you were scheduling the Orientation Week what meetings or events would you add or delete? Which briefings were especially useful and interesting? Which were not?

All activities were interesting with only one exception: the visit at S.E.C. If I could, I would probably add others (such as: visits to I.M.F. and ~~to~~ the W.B.) and not delete.

As I've mentioned the briefing at the S.E.C. was not very interesting.

The most interesting briefings were, in my opinion, the following:

1. - Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
2. - White House Foreign Policy
3. - The Role of the Executive Branch in Foreign Policy
4. - Activities of the National Endowment for Democracy
5. - Exporting the Free Enterprise Ideal (CFE).
6. - C-SPAN

I would also include visits to one of the big news agencies such as A.P. or REUTERS and to one of the biggest newspapers such "The Post" or "N.Y. Times".

4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the best and 5 being the worst) how would you rate the overall orientation program in providing a broad introduction to American government, business, and media? Please circle your answer.

Very useful

Not so useful

1

2

3

4

5

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ORIENTATION PERIOD EVALUATION FORM

Please type your answers to the following questions or write clearly in ink. If you need more space, please continue on the reverse side of the page. We appreciate your candid and thorough remarks.

NAME: ELENA BUZARNESCU

INTERNSHIP TYPE: GOVERNANCE
(Governance, NGO Management, Media, or Economic Development)

1. Please give an overall evaluation of the Orientation Program, including comments on how it might be improved in the future.

All meetings and events scheduled in the Orientation Week were interesting and useful and provided us, the visiting fellows of Freedom House the opportunity to gain knowledge of the American democratic system, international affairs, legislative process in the U.S. and ultimately of the true democratic values which can be found here.

2. Was the Freedom House staff organized, professional and efficient? Were you properly prepared by the staff? Please comment and give suggestions.

The Freedom House staff was efficient and professional but a better preparation prior to meetings in terms of information received could contribute to a more in-depth knowledge of the institutions in the U.S.

3. If you were scheduling the Orientation Week what meetings or events would you add or delete? Which briefings were especially useful and interesting? Which were not?

All meetings and briefings scheduled in the Orientation Week were interesting and very well balanced between the internship types.

4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the best and 5 being the worst) how would you rate the overall orientation program in providing a broad introduction to American government, business, and media? Please circle your answer.

Very useful

Not so useful

①

2

3

4

5

When complete, fax a copy to Freedom House at (202) 296-5256 AND also send the original to FH, 1319 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. **THANK YOU!**

ORIENTATION PERIOD EVALUATION FORM

Please type your answers to the following questions or write clearly in ink. If you need more space, please continue on the reverse side of the page. We appreciate your candid and thorough remarks.

NAME: CORNELIA MARIA SIMION

INTERNSHIP TYPE: GOVERNANCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
(Governance, NGO Management, Media, or Economic Development)

1. Please give an overall evaluation of the Orientation Program, including comments on how it might be improved in the future.

Generally speaking, the orientation program like a whole, was very useful for me. All American institutions that has been visited by us and also, the apprehendment of such different topics, gave to me a real opportunity to get into american experience and democracy overview.

I has been especially interested on the following subjects: legislative process, Government Transparency, White House Foreign Policy and the main attributions of the Governmental institutions. But, all other topics has been interesting from global perspective overview.

My opinion is, that it will be more useful for future if the orientation period should be 2 weeks in order to get more and detailed information by a specific assessment and deeply discussions.

2. Was the Freedom House staff organized, professional and efficient? Were you properly prepared by the staff? Please comment and give suggestions.

The Freedom House staff was well organized. People that we discussed with from Freedom House has been professional and generally efficient. They tried and succeeded to take care on the most problems that we had to face. But, it is so difficult to take into account all requests from all members of the team. Hopefully, they succeeded to have an answer to each of us.

For future, may be it should be taken into account the number of the visiting fellows (it should be more efficiently if this number should be diminished or divided into 2 groups)

ACTIVITY REPORT:

From: S. Pralong, AVID volunteer
Advisor for the Relation with Romanians Abroad

Period covered: January 1 through August 1, 2000

Place of assignment: Romanian Presidency, Bucharest Aug. 7th 2000

So far 2000 has been exceedingly busy. Two main events have undergirded the various activities of the first six months: the launch of a Bill in Parliament and the organization of a major Forum for Romanian youth studying abroad.

Before describing these programs in more detail and before discussing plans for the second half of the year, I would like to put these two types of activities in context.

In spite of the progress made since 1996 (and, especially, since 1999) in ensuring closer relations between Romanians abroad and those in the country, so far two main institutional issues still hinder the state's relation with Romanians abroad:

a) **Insufficiently coordinated state policies:**

Until my arrival last year, the eight institutions having (partial) jurisdiction over relations with Romanians abroad had no institutionalized means of coordinating their policies¹.

As of June 1999, inter-ministerial coordination was made possible via the monthly Working Groups that I have established, creating a place for dialogue under the auspices of the Presidency (see below). These Working Groups bring at the same table representatives from each state institution involved in the relation with Romanians abroad (e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Education Ministry, Culture Ministry, etc.).

Each Working Group is organized by theme: Legislation; Language, Culture and Education; Media; Business; etc. Representatives of each institution may cross register in several Groups, but the focus of each Working Group is to coordinate policies in one domain. For instance, the Working Group on "Language, Culture and Education" coordinates the promotion of Romanian language education among the various institutions (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Education Ministry, the Ministry of Culture, the Presidency, the Government). Each institution finances Romanian study grants and language programs in neighboring countries (Moldova, Ukraine, Macedonia, Albania, Yugoslavia, etc.), though the various institutions rarely coordinate the allocation of funds to avoid overlap among recipients.

¹ There are actually 13 such institutions if one includes state-funded media, that have international channels, and associations receiving funds from the state such as the Romanian Cultural Foundation.

b) Insufficient organization of Romanian communities abroad, which limits their ability to become viable partners in an institutional dialogue with Romanian state authorities.

As mentioned in previous reports, Romanians abroad represent the equivalent of half of Romania's population (10-12 million, depending on statistics). Their relation with the "mother country" has been tumultuous, to say the least. They want to have a say in determining the state's policies towards them, and have been encouraged in this claim by President Constantinescu, who made improved relations with Romanians abroad one of the cornerstones of his policy. (It is now enshrined in Romania's National Strategy as one of the five key issues determining Romania's National Security.) My activity has been mostly articulated around making good on the President's promise (see below).

According to whether they live in neighboring countries or in the West, Romanians abroad have different claims on the State:

- In neighboring countries, Romanian communities seek the support of the Romanian state to gain political rights and protection of their minority status, as well as to finance education and facilitate access to Romanian-language media and culture.
- Those in the West seek the passage of key legislation regarding property restitution, fiscal facilities of those seeking to return and reside in the country, etc. Unfortunately, in both cases, the weakness of civil society institutions (associations, Churches, etc.) and their constant in-fighting makes it very difficult for the Romanian state to find viable interlocutors to pursue policies that address these different claims.

These two issues have been targeted for solution and have been addressed through the activities undertaken so far.

In the strategic plan elaborated on January 10, 2000, I focused on the **pursuit of three related objectives** to further **remedy both institutional weaknesses**:

1. Improved policy coordination among state institutions;
2. Better representation and increased involvement of Romanians living abroad in domestic (economic) affairs (especially legislative input and enhanced facilities for trade, business and investments);
3. Enhanced dialogue between the Romanian state and targeted communities of Romanians abroad, especially the media, youth and students, etc.

A. KEY PROGRAMS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2000:

Between January and July 2000, each of these objectives has been (or is) in the process of being reached, as follows:

1. Improved policy coordination of state institutions; and

2. Better representation and increased involvement of Romanians abroad in domestic affairs;

Both these objectives are being reached together, primarily through one specific project: the creation of a **Council for Representation of Romanians abroad.**

Such a Council can be only created through the adoption of specific legislation (via a Bill submitted to Parliament.) The Bill was drafted by the inter-ministerial Working Group, "Lexus", in charge of coordinating policies regarding legislation relevant to Romanians abroad. Previous memos have detailed the Working Groups set up at the Presidency and how they function to improve the coordination of state institutions. The "Lexus" Working Group included representatives from various institutions: the Government, Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry Education, etc. It operated under joint chairmanship: my own and that of National Representative Stefan Glavan, President of the Sub-Commission for Relations with Romanians Abroad in the Chamber of Deputies. Mr. Glavan officially sponsored the Bill in Parliament since the President has no legislative initiative.

The Bill to constitute the Representative Council for Romanians Abroad ("Consiliul Superior de Reprezentare al Romanilor de Pretutindeni") calls for each community of Romanians abroad to elect one or more representatives to the Council (the number is proportional to the size of the community, the total number of Councilpersons is 100).

Due to restrictions in the Romanian Constitution with regard to the eligibility to public office of Romanians with more than one nationality, the Council cannot be a formal part of the Romanian state apparatus. If it is to be truly representative of Romanians abroad and to include people with dual nationality, or even those who have lost their Romanian citizenship, then the Council can only have a *consultative* role. Since the main objection of Romanians abroad vis-a-vis the Romanian state has to do with how certain legislation affects the rights and obligations of this important community, the Council has been set up in an advisory capacity within Parliament. The Council's two main attributions are to "vet" legislation and give opinions on bills relevant to Romanians abroad, and to help state institutions coordinate their policies.

In June the Bill has been approved by the Chamber's External Affairs Committee, and it is now being discussed in the plenum of Parliament. The hope is for it to be voted this Fall, so that the elections to the council can coincide with the general Parliamentary and Presidential elections in Romania.

The Council will allow Romanians abroad to have an organized "voice" that will raise some of the group's priority issues (property rights, restitution, citizenship, tax, pensions and health-insurance, etc.) By being organized, this "voice" will also be able to hold state institutions accountable for the way they spend the funds destined to nurturing the Romanian state's relation with Romanians abroad. Last, but not least, by holding the state institutions accountable, the Council will also improve inter-ministerial coordination of state policies towards Romanians abroad.

3. Enhanced dialogue between the Romanian state and targeted communities of Romanians abroad, especially the media, youth and students, businesspeople, pensioners, etc.

This objective had started being addressed last year already, with the initiation by the Presidency of the **Romanian-language Press Forum**, an event that gathered for the first time in Bucharest representatives of the Romanian-language publications in 20 countries.

The first edition of the Forum was held in Bucharest and Sinaia, in October of 1999, and brought back to the country—in some cases for the first time since their exile—over 150 representatives Romanian-language publications from countries as diverse as the US, Moldova, Canada, Yugoslavia, France, Israel, the Ukraine, Italy, Germany, Albania, Sweden, Australia, Macedonia, Great Britain, South Africa, etc. The Forum created a network of Romanian-language publications around the world, and fostered new links between the Press in Romania and the one abroad.

So big was the success of this first event (financed exclusively with money from local commercial sponsors), that less than 8 months later, a second edition of the Forum was organized, this time by the representatives of the Romanian press without organizational help from the Presidency. Thus the objectives of the Press Forum were achieved—to enhance the state's dialogue with targeted communities, to improve the ties between Romanians in the country and those abroad, in this case via the media, and to create a self-sustaining event that becomes institutionalized.

In addition to the Romanian-language press from abroad, another series of media events was inaugurated in the first half of 2000: the **bilateral press “summits”**.

Starting from the premise that Romanian minorities in neighboring countries would greatly benefit from improved relations between the press in their host countries and the Romanian one, a series of bilateral press “summits” was started with two gatherings between the Romanian and the Bulgarian press. In the first event (a 2 day “summit” in March) Bulgarian Journalists were hosted in Romania, in the second event (in June), Romanian Journalists were the guests of the Bulgarian press. These summits are starting to clear up some of the misperceptions regarding bilateral political and economic relations (the Danube Bridge issue was key in the first encounter), as well as clarify stands with regards to minority groups and border populations. Funds allowing, the next “summit” is planned for the Fall and will address the complex Romanian-Moldovan relationship.

In addition to the press, another professional group targeted by the strategy is the community of **Romanian business-people from abroad**. In focus is primarily the business community of North America, which has the most developed business potential for investments and trade relations between the US, Canada and Romania. The two Embassies, Romanian and American, have cooperated in bringing together a group of Romanian-American and Romanian business people at a Conference in Washington, in mid-January 2000.

This conference benefited from the groundwork done by the Presidency. Together with the Romanian Importers and Exporters Association (ANEIR), the Presidency and the Government have set up the **first Forum of Romanian business-people from abroad**, inviting over 100 business-people from 12 countries to Bucharest, to meet their Romanian counterparts, in a 2 days event in September 1999. A business network was initiated with that occasion, and the idea was pursued with the Washington Conference of January 2000.

The Washington conference, partially sponsored by the World Bank, also launched the **Romanian-American Business Network (RABN)**, which is now seeking to establish itself as a self-sustaining entity. The next event of the Network—a follow-up conference—is planned for the second part of 2000 in Los Angeles

Last but not least, the third group targeted are **Romanian youth studying abroad**. The objective here is to stop the brain-drain and create a **Job Fair**, that will help such students find employment in Romania upon graduation. A second objective is to give Romanian students now in foreign universities a **forum** for dialogue among themselves, as well as with state authorities, in order to improve facilities set up to lure them back (for instance in research universities and education.)

This program, launched by the Presidency in January 2000, dovetailed with a similar program set up by the American Embassy in Bucharest, the Return to Romania (RTR) program. RTR was designed around the creation of a Web page for jobs offered to, and demanded by, Romanian students from US Universities. The similarity between the two programs—the Presidency's Youth Forum and Job Fair, and the Embassy's RTR program and Web page—invited a collaborative effort between the Presidency and the implementors of the RTR program (IREX).

The collaboration proved difficult but was, in the end, fruitful. The two organizations brought in 32 and, respectively, 31 international and Romanian companies to the Fair (a total of 63). The budget for both the Forum and the Fair (approx. \$ 40,000) was raised exclusively by Presidency from private sponsors and from other state institutions (my department in the Presidency has no budget at all, therefore all we do is with other people's money.) IREX made no financial contribution and, in the end, failed to even deliver the promised in-kind contribution (T-shirts, bags and other miscellaneous items for the students.) Nonetheless, the program was successful.

The **Youth Forum** itself was held at the Cotroceni Museum on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of July and included round-tables with state authorities, civil society and business leaders and career development counselors, as well as a number of sessions in which students could present their own programs and ideas. One hundred and fifty Romanian youth from foreign universities attended the Forum. The Presidency ensured accommodations and helped obtain maximum discounts on Tarom, the national airline.

The **Job Fair** was held on July 5th in the Presidency itself. Sixty three (63) companies, international and domestic (among which also 5 public service employers—Ministries, the Post Office, etc.) set up booths in the reception halls of the Presidential Palace

(turning it into a beehive!) to interview almost 1000 youth (the doors were open to all, including students from Romanian universities.) The event was a huge success. Especially notable is the interest that the young graduates showed for state institutions: the Ministry of Interior, for instance, has already hired or is in the process of finalizing negotiations with no less than 24 students among those it interviewed at the Fair.

Following the event, a special association is being set up by some of the participants and the young volunteers who helped in the organization of the Forum and the Fair. Their goal is to institutionalize the Forum and the Fair as a yearly event. This “institutionalization” occurred in the case of the Romanian-language Press Forum as well. Now, another project initiated by the Presidency (and in this case the US Embassy as well) is becoming a self-sustaining institution of civil society. This is perhaps the single most powerful source of satisfaction for me, as the initiator of the project, for it demonstrates the importance of these programs in the Romanian context.

A. ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR:

Some of the programs mentioned above need to be completed:

1. Youth Forum and Job Fair: funds need to be urgently found to help those graduates from Western Universities who expressed interest in working for the state, to be hired in those institutions with insufficient personnel budgets (such as the Presidency). Total funds needed in the next four months to hire 10 students: \$8,000;
2. The Job Fair needs to be evaluated (total number of employees hired due to the fair, an analysis by type of employers, etc.)
3. The Bill for the creation of the Council needs to be voted into law, which involves a strong push in Parliament;
4. The bilateral press “summit” with Moldova needs to be scheduled for late October.

In addition to these, three other programs will be initiated this September, and are expected to be completed before the end of the mandate in November:

1. A program to facilitate the return of Romanian pensioners, from abroad, to their home-country;
2. The publication of a “Who’s Who”-type of volume about the Romanians of North America—the first in a collection on Romanians abroad;
3. A program to expand the number of voting places for Romanians abroad, by allowing honorary consulates to open voting sections.

Each of these programs helps contribute to one or several of the three key objectives stated at the beginning of this report:

- enhanced coordination of state policies (by expanding voting sections, which requires coordination of policy between several Ministries—Public Function, Foreign Affairs—Presidency, Government and Parliament);
- increased involvement of Romanians abroad in the life of Romania (by bringing home more pensioners);

- improved dialogue between state and Romanian communities from abroad (via the publication of a volume to present selected biographies of prominent exiles and community leaders.)

It is my hope that with the addition of these last three programs, the key objectives I had set up for myself at the beginning of my mandate have been successfully reached, helping the Romanian communities as well as the state be better off because of it.

Bucharest, August 14 2000

ACTIVITY REPORT 2

I am very pleased to send you my second monthly activity report.

I am still working mainly on the two projects that I have started in June: the U.S-Romania Action Commission and the Image Task Force.

1. The US Romania Action Commission - USRAC : Over eight weeks have passed since I have been "involved" with the revival of the commission. These two weeks in August proved less interactive, as most of the people we should have gathered for the last two brainstorming sessions: government and press) were out for holidays. However, we succeeded to attract the presence of Mrs. Anca Boagiu, the new Minister of Transport and Mrs. Simona Marinescu, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Labour, as new members to the Commission. Also, I have met again with Mrs. Zoe Petre, Presidential Counselor and the Co-Chair of USRAC to inform her of new developments. Together, we have put together the lists for the last groups to be invited during early September.

Also, we agreed to co-ordinate a working meeting in the area of energy and transport sometimes in October. This meeting will be benefiting from the presence and expertise of Mr. Fred Gordon, Vice President of Energy and Transport Group at CSIS.

It looks like we have almost succeeded to make this commission less political and more business and academia oriented.

2. The Image Task-Force: I am pleased to inform you that we have already institutionalised a

Task force for communication here, at the Ministry of foreign Affairs. This group gathers five directors from the Department of European Integration, The Economic Directorate, The Directorate for Communication and Promotion and the Spokesperson of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We have already met three times thus far. Together we are trying to establish a thorough national and international strategy of communication, based on the two draft proposals that you have received in my first monthly report.

To conclude, although the month of August is slow, we progressed a bit on both projects. I shall be travelling to New York with Minister Petre Roman's delegation at the UN, during the week of September 11. I shall be also coming to D.C, to finally get to know you and try to understand how CSIS functions. I guess I shall be staying for two days, but I will let you know more precisely when exactly that is.

Best,

Ramona Calin

PURPOSE:

- a. Aim at repositioning the U.S. Romania-Action Commission
- b. Research opportunities to establish a medium/long-term international public image strategy for Romania.

FINDINGS:

a. The U.S.-Romania Action Commission/ USRAC

Following some three months of local research and outreach for the expansion of the Commission's operations here in Bucharest, it became necessary to meet with our U.S. counterpart organisation, the Centre for International and Strategic Studies – CSIS, based in Washington D.C. In this respect, I traveled to Washington D.C. where I have met with Mr. George Handy, the Executive Director of the USRAC and Mrs. Georgeta Pourchot, the Commission's Project Co-ordinator. I have brought to their attention the efforts carried through in Romania, where we were trying to reshape the Commission, by reorganising it and giving it a private sector boost in the fields of Energy, Transport and Finance.

Unfortunately, the Commission is closed for the duration of this fiscal year, due to:

1. Severe financial constraints: eight major U.S. players have withdrawn or diminished their operations in Romania and aren't subsequently members to USRAC.
2. Lack of organisation/co-operation among the two parties.

The Commission was founded in 1998, following an agreement between CSIS and the Romanian Government. The agreement was that CSIS would coordinate operations in co-operation with the Romanian Government - ran back then by Prime Minister Ciorbea- who has offered high level co-operation and co-financing of start-up operations of USD 80,000. The CSIS requires an annual budget of USD 300.000 to oversee the Commission's works. They have offered to fund-raise the difference of USD 220.000. Yet, the Romanian Government has failed to disburse any money for the Commission, thus breaking the initial agreement made with the CSIS. The CSIS has been left in a position of fund-raising the whole amount.

In spite of this predicament, CSIS continued the co-ordination of its operations from Washington D.C. Several positive actions resulted from CSIS' efforts. During this period, more than 700 leaders and experts from business, government and academia have been drawn from 12 countries to participate in one or more of the Commission's 240 activities. However, in Romania there was a laps of co-ordination with the CSIS, ranging - from the basic necessity of having a local Executive Director in Bucharest, who would not be a Government employee, but rather a professional with managerial skills who would dedicate their time to the Commission - to the lack of responses to correspondence and recommendations sent by the Washington D.C. bureau. In the meantime, the CSIS was successful in co-ordinating a similar operation in Poland: The US/Poland Action Commission and was therefore expecting similar reactions from the Romanian counterpart. In the absence of those: both co-ordination and moreover the bettering of the business

climate in Romania, the CSIS professionals who were in charge with the Romanian account, were left in a position of resuming the Commission's operations for the current year.

Alternatively, I have met Mr. Fred Gordon- Vice President of the Energy and Transport Group, in New York. He seemed to be extremely dissatisfied with the inefficiency of the Romanian government in solving the privatisation of the gas and electricity utilities. His Group has lost another year with the delay. In this respect, his company will not invest further unless something changes. Mr. Gordon feels that both Mr. Petre Roman's intentions and Prime Minister's Isarescu's are good, but the execution does not happen, as a result of heavy bureaucracy and very slow pace. There has been a lot of positive talk going, but no affirmative action. Mr. Gordon is planning to visit Romania again towards the end of October and I have offered to assist him in co-ordinating some high-level meetings in Bucharest.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Given the priority Romania gives to bilateral relations with the United States, I was asked by Mr. Petre Roman, Minister of State and Romania's Minister of Foreign Affairs to undergo necessary steps for the continuation of the co-operation with the CSIS. I now serve as a special advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as part of the "Romanian Government Transition Support Programme", supported by Freedom House/USAID. In this capacity and in line with the legitimate interest Romania has in the development of this exercise – manifested overtly by Mrs. Zoe Petre, Presidential Counselor and the Romanian Co-Chair of the U.S.- Romania Action Commission, Mr. Petre Roman, Minister of State and Romania's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Mircea Geoana, Romania's Ambassador to the United States, I recommend the following actions:

1. Written invitations to CSIS by Romania's newly elected President and Prime Minister to restart the operations during 2001 and the granting of at least 25.000 USD to CSIS for re-start up operations.
2. Redesign the format of the U.S./ Romania Action Commission, by setting up an independent organisation in Romania who could co-ordinate an on-going exercise between interested parties of the private sector and the Romanian Government. Assistance in organising the venues such as: office space, facilities and a start-up amount (covering six months) to initiate the local operations, until membership is collected from companies at the national level.
3. Active participation of ten major local business players.
4. Active participation of ten multinationals, with international CEOs backing this membership.
5. The commitment of both parties: private sector and business to participate in regular working meetings (every six weeks) tailored on specific agendas which would tackle practical recommendations on how the government of Romania will address issues to better Romania's economy.

Up till now, I have already organised several working groups with private sector and members of the Academia to prospect a future collaboration in a revamped commission. Following my discussions with Mr. George Handy, we agreed that it is necessary to also invite the EU as part of the exercise and rename USRAC- the U.S.-EU- Romania Action Commission.

EXPECTATIONS:

The U.S.-Romania Action Commission should succeed at involving businesses in cooperative efforts on projects beyond their direct interests and thereby enhance the profile of the respective business in Romania. The main contributions for improved national transformation and growth result in:

- Government – business co-operation that has increasingly benefited economic policy in major industrialised countries.
- Informal and unofficial reviews of complex issues involved in national transformation that extends the limits of formal exchanges with government.
- Face-to-face exchanges between leaders addressing urgent practical problems that accelerate the sharing of know-how and the building of mutual trust.
- Measurable progress in solving practical problems aimed at near-term solutions that build momentum and confidence to solve larger problems.
- Romania's credibility that it has the capacity to carry through similar exercises which are meant to better the country's state of affairs.

B: Research opportunities to establish a medium/long-term international public image strategy for Romania.

The main purpose of my presence at the Ministry is to aid at establishing a medium/long-term international public image strategy for Romania.

In this respect, I have contacted the two major public relations firms in New York and Washington D.C., to seek assistance in: a) providing training for Romanian diplomats who will serve as press/communication officers abroad and: b) the development of a program aimed at bringing about broader, more positive international media coverage of Romania.

The development of a specialized curriculum to train Romanian diplomats in the press/communication fields could be led by members of the P.R. firms' staff who have served as senior press and communication advisors in both the public and private sectors for more than a decade. These companies have the experience of training public and private sector spokespeople in these areas. This training, which would be conducted by two or three trainers, as a combination of classroom style presentations to a group and break-out sessions, where the larger group would be segmented into smaller groups so that a more hands-on type of training may be provided. Subsequent one-day media communications seminars (perhaps at a central location in Europe) could be provided.

The development/conduct of a program geared toward bringing about more positive international media coverage of Romania and its achievements/progress to-date in a variety of areas is also needed. These firms have developed and carried out similar programs for a variety of developed and developing countries around the world over the last decade. These firms are currently involved in similar projects in Ukraine and other Central Eastern European countries.

I have also contacted the World Bank and the USAID offices in Washington D.C. to seek financing for these two projects.

In New York, I have met with the United Nations' Assistant-Secretary General, Mr. John G. Ruggie and with Mr. Edward Mortimer, Director for the Speech-Writers' Division at the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, to understand how the Speech Writers' Division operates and to duplicate this experience here, at the Ministry. This would serve the Ministry in the long-run and for immediate purposes would offer a tremendous help during Romania's exercise of the OSCE troika.

Additional information and mission notes, along with proposals and speech-writing samples could be provided, at your request.

Many thanks for your attention,

Yours sincerely,

Ramona Calin
Special Advisor
RGTS - Freedom House/USAID

Bucharest October 6, 2000

Dear Jennifer,

I am pleased to send you my first monthly report from the Department for the Protection of National Minorities (DPMN) of the Government of Romania. (I can't believe it's already been a month!).

This is a summary of my activities at the Directorate for Relations with Civil Society and International Bodies (RCSIB) for this month:

The main objective of my mission is to establish and maintain contacts with international partner institutions. I have first contacted Embassies here in Bucharest and have presented the DPMN and the Minorities in order to further contact and collaboration with the mother countries. I have also contacted the Council of Europe and Human Rights Division of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, where I was told that the communication with the DPMN is difficult, that their participation in international and European events is limited compared to what it should be.

My impression is that it is certainly useful to establish contacts with international partner institutions but it doesn't seem to be of first importance at this stage of my mission. Today the DPMN is not capable of maintaining international relations because it doesn't yet have the structure to support such contacts. The dpt doesn't even have a data base where the international data could be stored, managed and kept up to date.

The DPMN needs reorganization and managerial strengthening.

1.

The dpt suffers from a lack of **communication** among team members. To improve the communication in the DPMN as a whole, I have surveyed the staff and the Minister and they agreed to a 3 days training on Team Building and Team Communication.

Consequently, I have met with Mrs. Nicole Rata, Executive Director of Partners Romania Foundation for Local Development (PRFLD) to discuss the project and they've agreed to co-finance the training with the DPMN.

Mrs. Rata also mentioned that, on the long term, they would like to provide training for dpt members to become experts in conflict management and prevention to work at the local level with PRFLD.

The date of implementation for the training is November 16-19, 2000.

2.

There is also an urgent need for **organization**. We are thus developing a data base project for the RCSIB in collaboration with a software designer. The implementation will take place 6 weeks from now (November 20, 2000) and will depend on the acquisition of computers with Access 2000 as software to support the application. I undergo this mission together with Ruppert Wolfe Murray, team leader of the PHARE project 9803.01 for the Improvement of the Roma Situation in Romania. The data base is critical to my mission,

due to the fact that it will provide the support for my gathering information about minority rights resources.

3.

A long term Mentoring program (one year starting in January 2001) is under construction. Having suggested the need for long-term **training** for the DPMN staff, we were able to "hire" Mr. Martin Emerson, trainer for the PHARE Project. Mr. Emerson will write a draft proposition and will then meet again with the dpt' directors to finalize the Mentoring project, project which will then be submitted to Minister Eckstein's final approval.

4.

Training sessions for the minority NGOs are also programmed and I've sent questionnaires to survey what each minority needed and wished in terms of training.

5.

The 17 Minorities NGOs need to **interact**, by developing closer ties and bonds with the Romanian effervescent Civil Society. I have met with the FDSC and CENTRAS (two of the most important NGOs in Romania) and both were very receptive to the idea of a closer collaboration. An important event, CENTRAS NGO FORUM 2000 is hosted in December in Bucharest. I have notified the NGOs of the existence of the Forum and urged them to participate. The preliminary process involves the participation of minority NGOs at the local level.

6.

I was able to take care of some basic **logistics**, by requiring the acquisition of new shelves for the DCSIO and have contacted a volunteer willing to rearrange the dpt's library and archive which is, as of today in a non-existent and decrepit state.

This a very exciting time to be at the DPMN with the coming elections in November announcing a whole new range of possibilities for the dpt.

Till next month,
My Best Regards,

Katja Lee ELiad