

Intervention by Ambassador Gheorghe Magheru, Director general for
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Mr Chairman, Honorable Speaker of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies
Honorable Speakers of the Parliament
Honorable M.P
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Ever since I received the invitation of the Romanian Parliament to intervene as representative of the Romanian CiO of the SEECP in the Session dedicated to the future role of the PA of the SEECP in the European framework, I felt the intellectual challenge of trying to open such a debate in front of the distinguished MP's of our region.

At the same time, I felt encouraged as regional cooperation is one of the main traditional pillars of our foreign policy and we perceive the success of the SEECP also as a success of regional cooperation within the wider frame of the European construction.

Listening to the interventions in the previous session I believe we all have a common vision on the vitality and solidity of the SEECP process but also of the need to further its regional empowerment, its concrete activities in all sectorial fields but also its comprehensive and inclusive character.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are facing two major challenges:

1. confirming the vocation of our region, so much tested by the hardships of history, to become a sheltered haven of stability, security and prosperity in Europe, whereas we are challenged by a variety of threats, coming either from the Black Sea or the Southern Mediterranean.

We have witnessed a major breach of the rules of international law in the context of the developments in Ukraine, and notably the illegal annexation of Crimea, in an area adjoining directly the partners in the SEECP. We are presently also confronted with the effect of the complex unfolding of developments ranging from the South Eastern Mediterranean to the Northern shores of West Africa.

2. Within our own region, we are embarked on advancing stability within the framework open to all our countries by the Thessaloniki agenda for enlargement(2003) and the open foreign policy of NATO confirmed by the NATO Summit in Bucharest in 2008.

The building site for construction, reform and increased cooperation between participants in the Process is huge. The instruments and mechanisms at the disposal of the SEECP, either through the inter-governmental cooperation (the ministerial and expert meetings) or through the RCC, are already put to good account in advancing the rule of law, democracy, good governance and economic cooperation in our region.

Our meeting today in Bucharest and the recent meeting in Thessaloniki of the 28 EU MS and the Western Balkan partners, conveyed under the Hellenic Presidency of the EU are excellent opportunities to look back at the road we have travelled together on this long journey and the way ahead.

I seize this opportunity to welcome RCC Secretary General HE Goran Svilanovic, and underline his outstanding role in the region, in various capacities, since we first met in Bucharest, in October 2000, during a major round table meeting of the Stability Pact of South East Europe.

I would like to return to the Parliamentary Session. In my view, adding a new pillar to the SEECP through the parliamentary dimension is a necessary and essential step forward witnessing its maturity, its coming to age so to say.

Transferring into the regional multilateral dimension the institutional pattern regulating the governance of our countries by completing the executive branch with the parliamentary - the legislative one – is essential. This binome is thus completed in a triangle by the RCC which brings in a multitude of additional institutional partners to the Process.

A point in fact is that participants are either members of EU and NATO, candidates or aspiring members but also members of the Council of Europe and the OSCE, or the BSEC, all these institutions being endowed with Parliamentary Assemblies.

We see very well the activity of the future three permanent Committees of the new AP SEECP sharing views for instance with the PACE, the regional Assemblies of the Baltics, of the Mediterranean, etc. or inspiring themselves from the work of the rapporteurs of the PACE on issues of actuality in our region.

We also perceive the activity of the future PA SEECP as an essential support for inter-governmental cooperation. A concrete example may come from the experience gathered during the Romanian CiO having at its core complex issues related to good governance, the rule of law or combating corruption. For instance, in a couple of days, we shall host in Bucharest the

meeting of the ministers of justice and home affairs of the SEECP. It may well be that the ministers reach the conclusion that some legislative measures should be taken by the national parliaments in order to promote national and regional goals. It will be essential therefore that the national Parliaments be abreast of such regional developments or even be the initiators of cooperative ventures in the region, which might inspire and be taken over by the Governments.

Even more so, there is the essential role of the Parliament in promoting democracy and human rights, including rights of persons belonging to national minorities, of advocating freedoms in general.

All these are just some tentative ideas, coming from a diplomacy, namely the Romanian diplomacy with an established and dedicated commitment for cooperation with the Parliament in foreign affairs, but also in the pursuit of internal progress, two inseparable ventures in the Europe of today.

Honorable MPs,

Your Excellencies,

Looking forward to the Summit meeting in Bucharest by the end of June, we would like to commend the Romanian Parliament and all the distinguished guests present here for making possible that by the end of the Romanian CiO a new and essential dimension to the SEECP came into being.

We know there is still work ahead during the coming year and we hope that by the end of the incoming Albanian Chairmanship all the dedicated efforts still to be achieved in the ad-hoc working group will be concluded by success.

Thank you for your attention!