

Wednesday 5 September 2001

## 16. State of accession negotiations with Romania

A5-0259/2001

### European Parliament resolution on Romania's application for membership of the European Union and the state of negotiations (COM(2000) 710 – C5-0610/2000 – 1997/2172(COS))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Romania's application for membership of the European Union, submitted on 22 June 1995, pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union,
  - having regard to the 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Romania's progress towards accession (COM(2000) 710 – C5-0610/2000),
  - having regard to the Enlargement Strategy Paper on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries presented by the Commission (COM(2000) 700),
  - having regard to the decisions taken by the European Council, notably at Copenhagen (21/22 June 1993), Luxembourg (12/13 December 1997), Helsinki (10/11 December 1999), Nice (7-9 December 2000) and Gothenburg (15/16 June 2001),
  - having regard to the Accession Partnership for Romania, concluded in 1999, which will be revised in 2001,
  - having regard to its resolution of 4 October 2000 on Romania's membership application to the European Union and the state of negotiations (COM(1999) 510 – C5-0033/2000 – 1997/2172(COS))<sup>(1)</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 31 May 2001 on the Treaty of Nice and the future of the European Union (2001/2022(INI))<sup>(2)</sup>,
  - having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy and the opinions of the other committees concerned (A5-0259/2001),
- A. whereas a deep commitment to bring Romania into the mainstream of its preparation for accession to the European Union was confirmed by President Ilescu and the Romanian Government,
- B. whereas in the report of 1999 the Commission considered, in the light of the principles set up at the Helsinki Summit, that if priority were not given to dealing with the crisis in the childcare institutions, the Commission would have to reconsider its evaluation of the political criteria; noting that the above-mentioned 2000 Regular Report from the Commission states that Romania fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria,
- C. whereas Romania's incorporation of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child was incomplete because of textual alterations which compromised the position of the abandoned child,
- D. whereas the secondary legislation on international adoption of 1996 created a legal framework for child trafficking world-wide, a situation deplored and opposed by the Hague Convention for International Adoption contracting parties, under whose nominal auspices the offending legislation was claimed to rest, and lately by the Romanian Orthodox Church,
- E. whereas this grave situation has held back the development of child services, which in turn has led to a continuation of significant abuse and neglect of children in state institutions, and to the growth of the street-children problem and child trafficking,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 178, 22.6.2001, p. 152.

<sup>(2)</sup> 'Texts Adopted', Item 4.

Wednesday 5 September 2001

- F. whereas on 14 December 2000 the incoming government put a stop to international adoption; whereas in June 2001 the Romanian adoption committee decided to suspend international adoption; whereas, at the High-Level Group meeting of 12 June 2001 and subsequently, the Prime Minister declared a suspension of international adoption for between one and two years, and added a review of cases in process dated prior to 14 December 2000, pending adoption of the appropriate law,
- G. whereas the government's new programme for child protection underlines its commitment to care for Romania's needy children through the provision of modern, non-institutionalised childcare services in compliance with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and its optional protocol on trafficking,
- H. whereas the Prime Minister has declared his intention to make Romania a no-go area for traffickers,
- I. whereas the improvements already made in some sectors of public administration must be accompanied by reinforcement of Romania's administrative capacity,
- J. whereas there have been positive macroeconomic developments in recent months, such as significant growth, a historically high level of exports, a substantial increase in the Central Bank's foreign reserves, and an important reduction in the unemployment rate; noting that the macroeconomic stability achieved is being undermined by high losses in state-owned enterprises, the lack of financial discipline and the black economy,
- K. whereas significant progress has been made in the veterinary sector, organic farming and agricultural trade,
- L. whereas the total financial assistance envisaged under the pre-accession strategy is of around € 630 million per year, representing around 6 % of the consolidated Romanian national budget revenues and up to 25 % of investment expenditure under the national budget,
- M. whereas only eight chapters were provisionally closed at the end of July 2001, but welcoming the fact that Romania intends to accelerate negotiations and that six new chapters were opened in June and July 2001, bringing the total number of chapters under negotiation to seven; noting that the Romanian President stated at the Gothenburg Summit Romania's full intention to work for the opening of all chapters under the present government,

### **General**

1. Welcomes the Romanian Government's commitment to be evaluated on the basis of its actions rather than its promises and documents produced; stresses that the capacity to implement and enforce legislation is at least as important as the *acquis* itself;
2. Endorses President Iliescu's speech of 20 December 2000, expressing Romania's commitment to consolidate democracy and the rule of law; welcomes the government's programme, which has to be implemented as a basic instrument for preparing Romania's accession to the European Union;
3. Urges the Romanian Government to ensure constant implementation of the principle of equal opportunity and to take positive action on equality between women and men, in particular in the areas of education, job creation, job seeking, promotion opportunities and combating violence against women;
4. Welcomes and firmly supports the Prime Minister's personal commitment to tackling the problems of prostitution and pornography and urges the Commission to give its best support to this initiative;

Wednesday 5 September 2001

### ***Minorities***

5. Insists on the abolition of any remaining discriminatory measures, such as access to employment, in the Romanian legal framework;
6. Calls on the Romanian authorities to do their utmost to comply with EU basic principles regarding the protection of minorities, to adopt strategies for integrating minorities, to recognise their legitimate rights and, in particular, to introduce legislation against discrimination pursuant to Article 13 of the EC Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights; welcomes the abolition, by an Emergency Ordinance of 21 June 2001, of Article 200 of the Penal Code; urges the Senate to complete the procedure immediately;
7. Recognises the serious problems which the government faces in integrating the Roma into society; welcomes the adoption on 6 June 2001 of the national strategy for improving the status of the Roma and notes that the correct application of this law is of the utmost importance in reducing the existing level of discrimination;
8. Welcomes the fact that minority languages may be used in Romania for administrative purposes in localities where at least 20 % of the population belong to the minority in question;

### ***The rights of the child***

9. Strongly supports the Prime Minister's clear and unambiguous statements, analyses and action plans of 12 June 2001 to tackle root-and-branch reform of child health and development within the proper legal framework, including the suspension of international adoption to address trafficking directly;
10. Supports also the Minister of the Interior's newly created police and judicial proposals to tackle the corruption and inadequacies of the system with regard to children's rights;
11. Urges the Government to incorporate these plans into law and to implement them without delay; points to the need to put in place the administrative capacity required for reform implementation; notes that an executive committee of the High-Level Group under its Chief Executive Officer is tasked with monitoring and anticipates that its regular reports will be submitted to the European Parliament;
12. Believes implementation of these key reforms will significantly enhance the smooth passage of the accession process and bring the date of EU membership considerably closer;

### ***Economic criteria***

13. Welcomes the improvements in terms of macroeconomic stabilisation and recalls that sustainable economic growth will depend on the implementation of the appropriate economic policies, including privatisation;
14. Calls on the Romanian Government to implement in full the medium-term economic strategy for 2000-2004 and the economic policy action plan for 2001-2004, as a macroeconomic policy geared towards growth and stability, and to tackle the necessary structural reforms consistently in order to satisfy in the medium to long term the economic criterion of a functioning market economy able to withstand competitive pressure and the market forces of the EU internal market;
15. Reiterates that major economic and sectoral reforms are still needed, in particular in the environment and agricultural sectors, and considers that the budget passed in April 2001 is based on overly optimistic assumptions, which could undermine these reforms and macroeconomic stability;
16. Notes that direct payments to agricultural producers are playing an important and controversial role in the accession negotiations; encourages the negotiating partners to conclude technical agreements for each area, with transitional periods to be avoided as far as possible;

Wednesday 5 September 2001

17. Notes that negotiations on the Environment Chapter have not yet begun with Romania, and that the Romanian negotiating position is only expected to be presented in the autumn; calls for any transition periods for full compliance with the *acquis* to be kept to a minimum, and for establishment of intermediate targets; calls further for careful monitoring of progress in meeting these targets, for establishment of a practical programme of implementing measures and for details of the financing arrangements that are envisaged;

18. Believes that the environmental accidents that occurred at the beginning of 2000 have confirmed the seriousness of environmental problems that exist in Romania, as well as the weak infrastructural capacity in this sector; notes that major efforts are needed in order to reinforce monitoring and laboratory equipment at local and central level;

19. Recalls the alarming assessment of high-risk sites in mining and the ore-processing industry and expects the Romanian authorities to fully implement its commitments with regard to the recommendations of the Baia Mare 'Task Force';

20. Calls on the Government to postpone completion of the second reactor at the Cernavoda nuclear power plant until a least-cost investment and sustainable energy strategy has been developed, taking into consideration the existing overcapacity of power plants and the low level of energy efficiency; calls on the Commission to review its proposal to co-fund the construction of the second reactor;

21. Underlines the importance of encouraging the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, in order to absorb the large number of workers made redundant in the restructuring of large enterprises and the agricultural sector; calls on the Romanian Government to focus on improving the business environment by simplification and transparent implementation of economic regulations, as well as better access to financing;

22. Welcomes the rationalisation of the Romanian banks at the instigation of the IMF, but considers that more efforts are needed to make the Romanian banking sector healthy and transparent;

23. Notes that the economic situation is still giving cause for concern, especially for children, the elderly and disabled persons, and strongly believes that restructuring, as well as implementation of social security and health care reforms, is urgently needed to address the question of poverty in Romania;

24. Calls on the Commission and the Romanian Government to give special attention to employment-related aspects, in particular those of the agricultural sector; urges that special cross-border flanking measures, such as transitional periods, be considered in regions where workers are likely to commute across borders;

#### ***Administrative capacity and ability to adopt and enforce the 'acquis'***

25. Urges the Romanian Government to do its utmost to improve Romanian public administration, developing a comprehensive strategy for public administration reform, depoliticising the civil service, attracting and retaining high-quality professionals, improving training provisions and abolishing the common practices of double jobs; welcomes in this respect the recently approved law on local government;

26. Believes that steps must be taken to prepare Romania to adapt not just to the existing *acquis*, but also to the developing *acquis*, and that much more effort needs to be devoted to monitoring and adjusting to this than has been the case in the past;

27. Views with the utmost concern the recent evidence of increasing involvement by the executive in the functioning of the judiciary, and reiterates the need to ensure adequate salaries for judges, in order to attract and retain top-quality professionals and to reduce the possibility of corruption;

28. Notes that the level of pre-trial detention, overcrowding and the lack of alternative measures are all problems that still need to be comprehensively addressed;

**Wednesday 5 September 2001**

29. Notes that anti-corruption measures need to be adopted and duly implemented with a view to ensuring transparency and accountability in political life, building up public sector neutrality and accountability, creating a sound business environment and opening up Romanian society in terms of freedom of information and improved access to it; notes that the division of tasks among the numerous bodies involved in the fight against corruption remains unclear and that coordination between these bodies should be improved; calls on Romania to develop an anti-corruption culture in the public service and to set up an anti-fraud unit to cooperate with the European Union bodies;

30. Expresses its concern about the reduction of freedom of information and of an independent media and urges the Romanian Government and Parliament to refrain from adopting any measure that does not comply with the basic principles of a democratic society;

31. Regrets that the level of information from the government to the people, and from the public administration to citizens, about social issues in general is inadequate; notes that the European Union's information campaign for Romania has been inadequate, and calls for significant improvements in this respect; calls on the institutions of the European Union to step up their information campaigns on the implications of enlargement; wants more cooperation, exchange of information and best practices in the field of information and communication policy towards the citizens;

32. Urges the Romanian Government to support the social dialogue and, in particular, to regulate employee redundancies and employer solvency;

33. Urges the Romanian Government and the Commission to reach, as soon as possible, a solution on the existing legislation contradicting the provisions of the European Agreement, regarding the export restrictions on logs and scrap metal, the obstacles to EU law firms establishing themselves in Romania, the suspension of public procurement legislation and the loss of independence of Romania's energy regulators;

***EU pre-accession financial assistance***

34. Welcomes the recent agreement between the Commission and the Romanian Government to prolong the RICOP Programme, which allows complete use of the financial assistance made available;

35. Insists on the need to ensure correct monitoring and follow-up of Romanian participation in Community programmes, in order to prevent any misuse of financial assistance;

36. Welcomes the establishment of payment agencies on a decentralised basis and calls on the Commission to improve information provided, under Sapard, to the rural population on rural development;

37. Calls on Romania to take the legislative measures required to ensure that internal and external financial control complies with international standards and calls on Romania to develop the administrative and organisational conditions that will allow new concepts of financial control and internal audit to be applied; considers that priority should be given to twinning schemes in this area; would like to know the level of absorption of Community funds;

38. Insists on the need to reinforce the staff of the Commission's delegation in Bucharest, in order to ensure that the implementation of the EU financial assistance is properly accompanied, evaluated and monitored on the spot;

***Border controls, visa restrictions and internal security***

39. Reaffirms its position that Romanian citizens do not require a visa to enter EU territory and reasserts its position contained in its legislative resolution of 1 March 2001 on the draft Council regulation listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those countries whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (14191/2000 — C5-0714/2000 — 2000/0030(CNS))<sup>(1)</sup>; calls on the Council to adopt the regulation as soon as possible;

<sup>(1)</sup> 'Texts Adopted', Item 3.

Wednesday 5 September 2001

expresses the wish that the visa requirement for Romanian citizens should in fact be abolished from 1 October 2001, provided that the necessary conditions are complied with; invites the Romanian Government to make a clear commitment to the fight against illegal immigration and residence, including the repatriation of illegal residents;

40. Considers that the law on foreigners adopted on 2 April 2001 is a first step and welcomes Romania's decision of 30 June 2001 to issue a new type of passport with improved security items; notes that reinforced visa requirements with some neighbour countries will be of the utmost importance; urges the Romanian Government to adopt the necessary programmes for enhancing border control capacity;

41. Expresses its concern about the complaints by Romanian citizens regarding the action of the various intelligence and security services created in the different Ministries and of the Romanian Intelligence Service;

#### **Romanian contribution to regional stability**

42. Draws attention to the important role of Romania in the stabilisation of south-east Europe, and welcomes Romania's constructive participation in various regional cooperation initiatives, such as the South-East Europe Cooperation Initiative (SECI), the South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECF), the Stability Pact for South-East Europe, and the Initiative for Central Europe (ICE); welcomes the important contribution that Romania is already making in the context of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), particularly in the '15+15' consultation machinery concerning the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP);

43. Considers that a NATO decision to invite Romania to become a member of the North Atlantic Alliance in 2002 would be an important contribution to regional security; welcomes therefore Romania's efforts to satisfy the requisite conditions for NATO membership and, in particular, Romania's efforts to restructure its military sector and to adjust its defence policy;

44. Welcomes the Romanian OSCE chairmanship which is helping to improve the common goals of conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction;

\*

\* \*

45. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the parliaments of the Member States and the Government and Parliament of Romania.

---

## **17. State of accession negotiations with Slovenia**

**A5-0260/2001**

### **European Parliament resolution on Slovenia's application for membership of the European Union and the state of negotiations (COM(2000) 712 – C5-0612/2000 – 1997/2181(COS))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Slovenia's application for membership of the European Union, submitted on 10 June 1996, pursuant to Article 49 of the EU Treaty,
- having regard to the 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovenia's progress towards accession (COM(2000) 712 – C5-0612/2000),
- having regard to the 2000 Enlargement Strategy Paper on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries, presented by the Commission (COM(2000) 700),
- having regard to the decisions taken by the European Council, notably at Copenhagen (21/22 June 1993), Luxembourg (12/13 December 1997), Helsinki (10/11 December 1999), Nice (7-9 December 2000) and Gothenburg (15/16 June 2001),