

THE POLISH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN  
RESOURCE COLLECTION  
ON NUCLEAR ISSUES

ROMANIA

UPDATED ON 28 APRIL 2015



Romania is a member of both the EU and NATO, and a signatory to multiple international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. Romania has presented a cautious approach towards changes in NATO's nuclear policy and is scheduled to host U.S. ballistic missile interceptors by 2015. The country has contributed to international cooperation in the fields of nuclear security and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

## NUCLEAR

Romania does not possess, produce or host nuclear weapons on its territory.<sup>1</sup> Romania is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and has an Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Romania is a member of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and Zangger Committee, as well as a participating state of the Wassenaar Arrangement.

### NUCLEAR DETERRENCE, DISARMAMENT AND POSITION REGARDING NATO'S NUCLEAR POLICY

After joining NATO in 2004, Romania's participation in NATO's nuclear activities has been limited by the 1997 NATO–Russia Founding Act, in which the Alliance declared that it had “no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members.” Nonetheless, Romanian armed forces and infrastructure could potentially play supportive roles in NATO nuclear operations. Moreover, Romania participates in the works of the Nuclear Planning Group and general discussions on NATO nuclear policy.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> A nuclear weapons programme had reportedly been pursued during the Cold War by Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. Ceausescu declared in 1989, shortly before his overthrow and the termination of the alleged programme, that Romania had the ability to produce nuclear weapons. However, statements by Romanian officials from the post Cold War period stressed that Romania had produced only a few milligrams of plutonium, which were not declared to the IAEA. See: “Romania Special Weapons,” Federation of American Scientists, [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org); A. Smale, “President Says Romania Has Nuclear Weapons Potential,” *Associated Press News Archive*, 15 April 1989, [www.apnewsarchive.com](http://www.apnewsarchive.com).

<sup>2</sup> L. Kulesa, “The New NATO Member States,” in: P. Foradori (ed.), *Tactical Nuclear Weapons and Euro-Atlantic Security*, Routledge, Abingdon, 2013, pp. 143–144. Romania is reportedly one of nine NATO countries actually assigned with “active nuclear tasks,” including “air control missions, reconnaissance, radar and communications support and refuelling.” See: S. Snyder, W. van der Zeijden, *Withdrawal Issues: What NATO Countries Say about the Future of Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Europe*, IKV Pax Christi, p. 17.

As the Alliance debated the 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) report, Romanian foreign minister Teodor Baconschi stated in April 2011 that “Romania pleads for a balanced approach to considering the defence/deterrence elements, either nuclear or conventional, as well as the elements of the anti-missile defence system, in order to be able to efficiently cover the entire range of security threats.”<sup>3</sup> In March 2012, Romanian president Traian Basescu added that advancement of the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons should be coupled with the preservation of NATO nuclear capacities as long as nuclear weapons exist. The president also stated that such an approach “is an additional guarantee of ensuring security to all the member states of the Alliance.”<sup>4</sup> Romanian officials have not referred publicly to any particular country as a threat to be deterred by NATO nuclear weapons.

Romanian official statements appeared to be consistent with the overall position among Central and Eastern European (CEE) NATO members, which opposed drastic changes to NATO nuclear posture.

According to studies based on interviews with Romanian and regional officials and experts conducted before the adoption of 2012 DDPR, Romania has shared the view that NATO should not withdraw U.S. non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNWs) from Europe or unilaterally reduce the NSNW arsenal. Still, CEE countries have been reportedly willing to agree to its consolidation or partial reduction, provided that such cuts were reciprocated by Russia.<sup>5</sup>

Studies on the 2012 DDPR process cited a number of CEE arguments for the sustained presence of U.S. NSNWs in Europe, while noting that individual countries of the region have attached different levels of importance to particular arguments. The main rationales included the role played by U.S. NSNW in maintaining the transatlantic link and the Alliance’s cohesion, as well as their utility in deterring potential threats to NATO.<sup>6</sup> Romania’s specific views in this matter remain unknown.<sup>7</sup> However, Romania and Bulgaria were described as states that emphasised the value of the presence of NSNWs in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, with reference to the potential

<sup>3</sup> “Minister Teodor Baconschi attends informal meeting of foreign ministers in NATO member states,” Romania’s Permanent Delegation to NATO, <http://nato.mae.ro>.

<sup>4</sup> “President Basescu arrived at the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul,” ACTMedia News Agency, 27 March 2012, <http://actmedia.eu>.

<sup>5</sup> J. Durkalec, “NATO Defence and Deterrence Posture: Central and Eastern European Perspectives,” *PISM Policy Paper*, no. 29, May 2012, pp. 1–3, 8–10, [www.pism.pl](http://www.pism.pl).

<sup>6</sup> CEE states did not directly point at specific countries to be deterred by the U.S. NSNW, although they referred to Russian NSNW arsenal, along with its possible deployment near NATO borders, and its role in Russian military doctrine and exercises. These countries also noted NSNW’s utility in deterring other, unspecified threats that could arise in the future. See: J. Durkalec, *op. cit.*, pp. 2–3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 1–3; K. Guthe, “NATO Nuclear Reductions and the Assurance of Central and Eastern European Allies,” *National Institute for Public Policy*, October 2013, pp. 8, 15–25.

acquisition of nuclear arms by Iran and Turkey's subsequent reaction.<sup>8</sup>

Romania has not referred publicly to NATO's nuclear policy in the wake of the

Ukrainian crisis, deteriorating relations between the Alliance and Russia, or the 2014 NATO summit in Wales.

## NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT EFFORTS IN THE GLOBAL ARENA

During the NPT review process, Romania has fully associated itself with the position of the European Union.<sup>9</sup> Romania chaired the meeting of the NPT Preparatory Committee in 2013.<sup>10</sup>

Romanian national statements on the NPT forum have vocally supported peaceful uses of nuclear energy, while stressing that such developments must be realised with adherence to the "IAEA highest standards of safety, security, and non-proliferation." Romania has advocated for recognition of the Additional Protocol together with comprehensive safeguards agreement as universal verification standard. The country has also endorsed work on the "State Level Concept" approach to the implementation of safeguards.<sup>11</sup>

Romania is a member of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Within the CD's forum, the country has also called for revitalisation of its work, including commencement of negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT).<sup>12</sup> Romania was also one of eight sponsors of the 2011 working paper on FMCT, according to which the treaty should establish increased transparency of military stockpiles of fissile materials, which should be declared and placed under safeguards. The proposed agreement could also include provisions for the elimination or conversion of such materials.<sup>13</sup>

Romanian statements within the CD have also advocated for entry into force of the CTBT.<sup>14</sup> Former Romanian minister of foreign affairs Cristian Diaconescu is a member of

<sup>8</sup> J. Durkalec, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> "Statement by H.E. Ambassador Cristian Istrate, Permanent Representative of Romania in Vienna, at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, Cluster III," New York, 5 May 2014, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> "Romanian chairmanship of the Preparatory Committee for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, 21 April 2013, [www.mae.ro](http://www.mae.ro).

<sup>11</sup> "Statement by H.E. Ambassador Cristian Istrate...", *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> "Statement by H.E. Mr. Doru Romulus Costea, State Secretary for Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, at the Plenary Meeting of the Conference on Disarmament," Geneva, 1 March 2011, pp. 3–4.

<sup>13</sup> See "Working Paper—Bulgaria, Germany, Mexico, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Sweden and Turkey on FMCT," 9 June 2011, CD/1910.

<sup>14</sup> "Statement by H.E. Mr. Doru Romulus Costea...", *op. cit.*, p. 4.

the Group of Eminent Persons (GEM), which promotes ratification of the CTBT.<sup>15</sup> The country hosts an auxiliary seismic station of CTBT's International Monitoring System (IMS).<sup>16</sup>

Romania expressed its support for further, extended, irreversible cuts of nuclear arsenals, following the ratification of the U.S.–Russia New START treaty.<sup>17</sup>

Romania has taken part in all three conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, in Oslo in March 2013, in Nayarit, Mexico, in February 2014, and in Vienna in December 2014.

Romania participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).<sup>18</sup>

## NUCLEAR SECURITY

The 2014 NTI Nuclear Materials Security Index ranked Romania as sixteenth out of 151 countries without weapons-usable nuclear materials. Romania ratified the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), along with the 2005 amendment. Romania participates in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and, since 2012, has been involved in the Nuclear Security Summits (NSS) process.<sup>19</sup>

Romania's sole nuclear power plant, located in Cernavoda, consists of two nuclear reactors. Two additional units are to become

operational in 2019 and 2020, respectively. Romania also operates the TRIGA research reactor in Pitesti, while another research unit, located at Bucharest-Magurele, was shut down and is being decommissioned. Additionally, in 2025, Romania plans to launch the Advanced Lead Fast Reactor European Demonstrator (ALFRED) which will be constructed within the framework of an EU initiative.<sup>20</sup>

All highly enriched uranium (HEU) was transferred from Romania to Russia by June 2009. The removal of spent HEU fuel took place under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) run by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and in cooperation with the

---

<sup>15</sup> "Group of Eminent Persons (GEM)," CTBTO Preparatory Commission, [www.ctbto.org](http://www.ctbto.org).

<sup>16</sup> "Country Profiles—Romania," CTBTO Preparatory Commission, [www.ctbto.org](http://www.ctbto.org).

<sup>17</sup> "Statement by H.E. Mr. Doru Romulus Costea..." *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> "Proliferation Security Initiative Participants," U.S. Department of State, [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov).

<sup>19</sup> On Romania's participation in the NSS process, see: K. Kubiak, "A Little-Known Success Story: Implementation of the NSS Goals in Central Europe," *PISM Policy Paper*, no. 9 (92), May 2014, [www.pism.pl](http://www.pism.pl); "Nuclear Security Summit 2014 National Progress Report: Romania," [www.nss2014.com](http://www.nss2014.com).

<sup>20</sup> "Nuclear Power in Romania," World Nuclear Association, [www.world-nuclear.org](http://www.world-nuclear.org).

IAEA and Russia.<sup>21</sup> Earlier, in 2003, all fresh HEU fuel was repatriated to Russia under the Tripartite Initiative of the United States, Russia and the IAEA.<sup>22</sup> The U.S. and the IAEA also supported Romania in the conversion of the TRIGA reactor from HEU to LEU (low enriched uranium) fuel, completed in 2006.<sup>23</sup>

Since 2008, the U.S. DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has assisted Romania within the "Second Line of Defence" programme, aimed at countering nuclear material smuggling.<sup>24</sup> In 2009, Romania and the U.S. signed an agreement on the DOE's technical support

in enhancing the physical security of special nuclear materials and radioactive sources in Romania.<sup>25</sup>

In 2011, Romania contributed €500,000 to projects aimed at securing the Chernobyl facility in Ukraine. The country also donated €30,000 to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund in 2013. Romania has offered to share its experiences in nuclear security-related issues, by providing assistance and expertise. The country organised workshops and training courses focused on prevention of the illicit trafficking of nuclear materials, and participated in exercises related to nuclear security.<sup>26</sup>

## MISSILES

### MISSILE DEFENCE

Romania strongly supports the deployment of elements of the U.S. missile defence system in Europe (the European Phased Adaptive Approach, or EPAA) as part of NATO's ballistic missile defence (BMD) capability. By 2015, Romania is scheduled

to host a U.S. Aegis Ashore installation with 24 SM-3 Block IB interceptors at Deveselu Air Base in the south-western part of the country. The facility will be deployed as an element of the second phase of EPAA. Missiles based in Romania will expand the EPAA's coverage

<sup>21</sup> "NNSA Announces Removal of Last Highly Enriched Uranium from Romania; Air Shipment of Russian-Origin Spent Fuel," National Nuclear Security Administration, 30 June 2009, [nnsa.energy.gov](http://nnsa.energy.gov).

<sup>22</sup> "Weapons-Grade Material Curtailed: IAEA, U.S., Russia Assist Romania to Remove Fresh HEU Research Reactor Fuel," International Atomic Energy Agency, 22 September 2003, [www.iaea.org](http://www.iaea.org).

<sup>23</sup> "Nuclear Security Summit 2014 National Progress...", *op. cit.*

<sup>24</sup> "NNSA and the Border Police of Romania Cooperate to Thwart Nuclear Smuggling," National Nuclear Security Administration, 2 December 2009, [nnsa.energy.gov](http://nnsa.energy.gov).

<sup>25</sup> "U.S. Ambassador's remarks at the signing of the U.S.–Romanian Implementing Agreement regarding the nuclear security," Embassy of the United States in Romania, [romania.usembassy.gov](http://romania.usembassy.gov).

<sup>26</sup> K. Kubiak, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 7.

of South-Eastern Europe against short and medium-range ballistic missiles launched from the Middle East.<sup>27</sup>

The Romanian official position stresses that the country's participation in the missile defence system will both enhance Romanian national security and constitute a Romanian contribution to the security of the whole Alliance.<sup>28</sup>

Romania also underlines that cooperation with the U.S. strengthens the ties between the two countries.<sup>29</sup> The U.S. presence on Romanian territory is apparently perceived in terms of both reassurance and deterrence, especially in the wake of increased tensions between NATO and Russia, including Russian threats against Romania. In December 2014, Romanian foreign minister Bogdan Aurescu stated that the U.S. presence provides "a security guarantee that Romania has and that represents the guarantee of the fact that Romania will not return to another influence sphere."<sup>30</sup>

Romania has also hinted at potential threats posed by the proliferation of ballistic missile technology, with possible reference

to Iran, which possesses missiles capable of reaching the territory of Romania and other countries on NATO's South-Eastern flank.<sup>31</sup>

The country has emphasised its preference for the EPPA over G.W. Bush's previous missile defence plan, which would not fully protect Romania and neighbouring states.<sup>32</sup> During discussions on the Bush system, Romania supported its establishment, expressed readiness to join it, and called for expansion of its coverage, stressing the importance of the indivisibility of security of all NATO members.<sup>33</sup>

The Obama administration had requested Romania's participation in the EPAA in February 2010.<sup>34</sup> Bilateral talks between the two countries had started in June 2010. The final agreement was signed in September 2011, and ratified by Romanian parliament in December 2011. Construction work at Deveselu base started in October 2013, and the U.S. assumed command of the base in October 2014.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>27</sup> "Romania's participation in the Missile Defense System," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, [www.mae.ro](http://www.mae.ro); "The European Phased Adaptive Approach at a Glance," Arms Control Association, May 2013, [www.armscontrol.org](http://www.armscontrol.org); "Progress of the European Phased Adaptive Approach," Remarks by U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State F.A. Rose, Bucharest, 18 November 2014, [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov).

<sup>28</sup> "Romania's participation...", *op. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>30</sup> "Aurescu: Deveselu, a concern for Moscow as it is guarantee Romania will not return to another influence sphere," National Press Agency AGERPRES, 10 December 2014, [www.agerpres.ro](http://www.agerpres.ro).

<sup>31</sup> "Questions and Answers Regarding Romania's Participation in the US Ballistic Missile Defense System," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, [www.mae.ro](http://www.mae.ro); J. Durkalec, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> "Questions and Answers...", *op. cit.*

<sup>33</sup> B. Górká-Winter, M. Madej (eds.), *NATO Member States and the New Strategic Concept: An Overview*, PISM Report, May 2010, Polish Institute of International Affairs, pp. 90–91.

<sup>34</sup> "Romania Hopes to Conclude Missile Shield Negotiations This Year," Global Security Newswire, 21 January 2011, [www.nti.org/gsn](http://www.nti.org/gsn).

<sup>35</sup> "Romania's participation...", *op. cit.*; J. Adamowski, "Poland, Romania Eye Intensified Cooperation with United States," Defense News, 20 November 2014, [www.defensenews.com](http://www.defensenews.com).



In the run up to the 2012 NATO summit in Chicago, Bucharest supported the dialogue on missile defence issues between NATO and Russia.<sup>36</sup>

## BALLISTIC AND CRUISE MISSILES

Romania does not currently possess, produce or host ballistic missiles on its territory. Bucharest has not expressed an intention to acquire such capabilities. Romania is a subscribing state to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and chaired the initiative in the 2011–2012 term. Romania has unilaterally pledged to comply with the Guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime. The Romanian arsenal of cruise missiles consists solely of ship based anti-ship systems. Romania possesses Soviet-origin SS-N-2C Styx missiles.<sup>37</sup>

## CHEMICAL

Romania does not possess or pursue chemical weapons. Romania is a member of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The country is also a member of the Australia Group (AG).

## BIOLOGICAL

Romania does not possess or pursue biological weapons. Romania is a party to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

---

<sup>36</sup> "Teodor Baconschi at NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, 12 August 2011, [www.mae.ro](http://www.mae.ro).

<sup>37</sup> "The Military Balance 2014," The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 2014, p. 131.