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ROMANIAN MILITARY NEWSLETTER

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**Romania's participation with forces in NATO operation
to enforce arms embargo against Libya**

Special points of interests:

- Romania's participation with forces in NATO operation to enforce arms embargo against Libya
- „8x8 Armoured Personnel Carrier“ national program launched at Moreni Auto Mechanical Plant
- Ceremony for the ROFND XXI Detachment's military returning from Kosovo TO



Ministry of National Defence, Gabriel Oprea

Press statement of the minister of national defence Gabriel Oprea, March 23rd, 2011: „Today the Cabinet approved a supplement for the current year's budget of the Ministry of National Defence, with money from the Government Reserve Fund, in order to support its participation with force in the NATO operation meant to enforce the arms embargo against Libya.

It is about 19,164,000 lei, approximately 4.5 billion dollars in budgetary lending, „Defence“ Chapter.

As you know, UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973 asks all the states and especially those who act within regional organizations, to impose an arms embargo against Libya. On March 22nd, NATO decided to start an operation to enforce this embargo through monitoring, report and, if needed, interdict the vessels suspected of carrying illegal arms or mercenaries.

Taking into account all these decisions made by the international organizations, The Supreme Council of National Defence (CSAT) on the same day passed a Decision on Romania's participation with forces in NATO operation to enforce arms embargo against Libya.

Romania will take part in this operation with „Regele Ferdinand“ Frigate manned with 205 military and two staff specialist officers from the navy forces.

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„Regele Ferdinand“ Frigate and the two staff officers belong to the forces Romania has placed at the NATO disposal within the joint Response Force in 2011.

Hereinafter I will present you several procedural elements. The NATO member states have the obligation to annually report NATO the forces participant in the NATO Response capability. These forces are negotiated and sent to the planner for a contingent NATO operation.

The forces should be ready and capable to timely take action. For instance, from the NATO request the two staff officers have five days to get ready while the frigate has 60 days. Funding these forces represents each member state's obligation.

On Sunday, March 20th, NATO called out a Extraordinary Force Generation Conference, required to start-up the Directive for the initialization of the mission planning process.

This conference set the mission's demands and the forces' needs. As to the Response Force, Romania has been mentioned with staff officers and „Regele Ferdinand“ Frigate. We have been requested to accept our participation with forces and, as you know, the acceptance comes from the CSAT. Taking into account that NATO had not approved the Execution Directive for the Operational Plan by March 22nd, Romania could not have sent its own forces.

NATO's Execution Directive for the arms embargo passed in NATO on March 22nd and Romania's CSAT decided to pose at the NATO's disposal the requested forces.

During the preparation period, „Regele Ferdinand“ Frigate will undergo control and calibrating tests for its propulsion, fight, navigation, communications and protection equipments.

There will come also a specific training of the crew, their medical and psychological check, as well as the preparation of the mission's documents.

In 2007 and 2008 „Regele Ferdinand“ Frigate took part in NATO missions in Italy and Croatia. It also participated in ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR operation in 2005, 2007, 2008, 2010, and in 2008 concurred at ensuring the NATO Summit's security, in Romania. The main missions „Regele Ferdinand“ Frigate may carry out are: escort, areal interdiction, surveillance, air control.

The vessel's main task is to impose the embargo by asymmetrical threats engagement, sea control missions, support for amphibious and special forces missions.

As secondary missions, the vessel may intervene to remove the results of the environmental and sea disasters and carry out search and rescue missions.

Romanian Armed Forces are ready to accomplish the mandate entrusted to our country, as NATO member state, making its contribution to ensuring the stability and security in Mediterranean area of responsibility“.



„Regele Ferdinand“ Frigate

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„8x8 Armoured Personnel Carrier“ national program launched at Moreni Auto Mechanical Plant



Minister Gabriel Oprea addressing the audience at the starting-up of the „8x8 Armoured Personnel Carrier“ program

Minister of National Defence, Gabriel Oprea, participated on Thursday, March 17th, in the starting-up of the „8x8 Armoured Personnel Carrier“ national program that took place at Moreni Auto Mechanical Plant. The research project of this new product meets the Romanian Armed Forces' requirements and was expounded on this occasion.

With reference to the importance of this program both for the Romanian Armed Forces and for the national defence industry, Minister Oprea stated: „The Romanian troops need a 21st century-level ordnance and I may assure you that as long as I head this ministry I will search for a solution primarily within the national industry. In MoND we have experts, we have resources for research and development in armoured vehicles and we also have political will. „8x8 Armoured Personnel Carrier“ program is the first one designed to renew the national defence industry

and, at the same time, it provides the Romanian Armed Forces with an efficient, highly protected and mobile product, internationally competitive, to be exported for the Romanian State's benefit.

The ministry's leadership priorities include keeping the soldiers' safety and ensuring the best conditions for their missions both home and in TOs: „15 soldiers were killed in action in TOs and many have been wounded from the improvised explosive devices' attack on the armoured carriers they were in. It is our duty and obligation, in memory of their price, to do our best to ensure the protection of all our military. That is the reason why we are now here“, stated the Minister of National Defence.

As to the cooperation between the MoND and the national defence industry plants, Minister Gabriel Oprea stressed on the fact that 2010 was the year when a concrete initiative, supportive for the national defence industry, passed through the enactment of the Government's Order no. 38: „This decision was a lifesaver for many economic agents and Moreni Auto Mechanical Plant, which received 5,000 tons of used-up ordnance to be deconstructed, was one of them. The free transfer of those 50,000 tons of atypical, overstock or dangerous ammunition meant to be carved out and salvaged and of those 30,000 tons of unutilized armament and technique went towards keeping the job of the highly qualified specialists and preserved the production installations for the coming years.

The event was also attended by the Chairman of the Defence, Public Order and National Security Committee from the Chamber of Deputies, Costica Canacheu, senators, deputies, the Chairman of the County Council Dambovita, Florin Popescu, the Chief of the General Staff, Major General Stefan Danila, and representatives of central structures from the MoND.

A steering and floatage demo of two amphibious armoured carrier prototypes, produced by Moreni Auto Mechanical Plant, took place at the end of the activity.

„8x8 Armoured Personnel Carrier“ (TBT 8x8) will be a fighting armoured transporter, designed to ensure a three-level protection of the infantry troops against splinters, bullets, light infantry gunnery, and also against CBRN effects during the specific missions.

The carrier's plank allows:

- Different configuration possibilities: troop transporter, point of command, rescue vehicle, ambulance, NBC reconnaissance or fighting machine endowed with various guns.

- Integration of NATO and European Community compatible equipments, made by the Romanian industry, involvement in NATO programs, establishment of new strategic partnerships, logistic support for the Romanian Armed Forces for a long term.

TBT 8x8 meets different requirements ranged in categories as: mobility, survival ability, own fire power, command, control and communications.

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Ceremony for the ROFND XXI Detachment's military returning from Kosovo TO



Aspect from the ceremony occasioned by the Detachment's military return from Kosovo TO

The 32nd Infantry Battalion „Mircea“ from Timisoara hosted the military ceremony occasioned by the returning from Kosovo TO of the ROFND XXI Detachment's military.

Through his speech for this occasion, the Defence Minister Gabriel Oprea wished the 86 military from the detachment „Welcome home!“ and congratulated them for the exemplary way they accomplished the entrusted mission in Kosovo TO, where they reached the required performance standards: „You have successfully concluded a difficult stage to a normal economic and social life in Kosovo. At the end of this mission I want to thank you for the results and for the professionalism, loyalty and bravery you proved“.

The Defence Minister Gabriel Oprea thanked the military's families who offered them a moral support from home then he reviewed the main missions that the soldiers from ROFND structures have been carrying out during 21 rotations: „In their nine years of continuous presence of the Romanian troops in this operational area they provided, along with our allies and partners, a stable

environment for the local authorities and international organizations action. We are very proud as the Romanian Armed Forces have been able to sent in the TOs such well trained structures like ROFND detachments who can report „Kosovo, mission accomplished!“

Talking about the missions the Romanian soldiers are now carrying out in the region, the defence minister stressed the fact that „the NATO mission in Kosovo moved to the second phase, of discouragement, that implies a progressive forces downsize. In this phase Romania keeps supporting the international efforts to a stabilized area and a secure environment.“

The ceremony was attended, along with the soldiers' families, by the Commander of the 4th Infantry Division „Gemina“, Brigadier General Dumitru Scarlat, the Commander of the 18th Infantry Brigade „Banat“, Brigadier General Gheorghe Simina, and local and county representatives of the public authorities.