



# MILITARY REVIEW

## NEWSLETTER

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### THE COMMANDER OF THE US AIR FORCES IN EUROPE VISITS ROMANIA

On Thursday, April 27, Minister of National Defence, Angel Tîlvăr, and the Chief of Defence Staff, General Daniel Petrescu, met, at the MoND Headquarters, with the Commander of the US Air Forces in Europe (COM USAFE) and Commander of Allied Air Command (COM AIRCOM), General James B. Hecker, as part of the visit the American official pays to Romania.

The activity represented an excellent opportunity to discuss topics of common interest in the field of air forces, within Allied context, and to develop and increase cooperation relations within the Romania-USA Strategic Partnership.

The American official's visit to Romania included meetings with the command teams and the Romanian soldiers deployed to the 90<sup>th</sup> Airlift Base "Comandor Aviator Gheorghe Bănciulescu"- Otopeni, 57<sup>th</sup> Air Base "Mihail Kogălniceanu", 86<sup>th</sup> Air Base "Locotenent Aviator Gheorghe Mociorniță" - Borcea and to 71<sup>st</sup> Air Base



“General Emanoil Ionescu” - Câmpia Turzii, as well as with a delegation of the Air Forces’ Staff headed by Lieutenant General Viorel Pană, the Chief of Air Force Staff.

The activities carried out during the visit contributed to the development and consolidation of military cooperation plans between the two structures, thus ensuring high-level representation and the promotion of Romania’s interests in the field. At the same time, this was an opportunity for further identification of the cooperation possibilities in the field of the conduct of enhanced Air Policing Missions, enhanced Vigilance Activities as well as of the exercises and assessments.

## MINISTER ANGEL ȚILVĂR CO-CHAIRING OF THE B9 DEFENCE MINISTERS MEETING

On April 26, Minister of National Defence, Angel Țilvăr, co-chaired together with his Polish counterpart, Mariusz Błaszczak, the B9 Defence Ministers Meeting held in Warsaw.

The meeting was also attended by Secretary of State for Defence of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ben Wallace, and the Assistant Secretary General for Operations, Thomas Goffus, had an intervention via video conference.

“The B9 format continues to demonstrate its relevance and added value, being an important platform for the permanent consultation of the Allies on NATO’s Eastern Flank”, Minister Țilvăr stated.

During the meeting, the officials addressed aspects regarding the current security challenges posed by the latest developments of the Ukraine war and the regional and Euro-Atlantic implications, the continuous provision of international support to Ukraine, the assessment of the implementation of the decisions adopted at the Madrid Summit regarding the deterrence defence posture and on the Eastern flank, as well as the preparation of the Vilnius Summit scheduled to be held on 11 July 2023

“The agenda of the meeting was also calibrated around the preparation of the Vilnius NATO Summit on the defense dimension. The crucial decisions taken last year in Madrid must be implemented during this summit. At Vilnius, measures taken to strengthen the defence and deterrence on the Eastern flank, all the way from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, must be continued, the consolidation of the Allied presence on the Eastern flank must be reinforced, and the importance of increasing the allied response capacity emphasized”, the Romanian official pointed out.

Also, the Minister of National Defence mentioned the need to implement the decisions made at the Madrid NATO Summit,



especially the security of the Black Sea, a region of strategic importance for the Alliance, as well as the need to continue coordinating the NATO-EU efforts to support Ukraine and its partners from the region.

“This aggression war, launched on February 24 last year, totally changed the security paradigm from the Black Sea region, as well as the perception of threats. We believe that it is very important to continue supporting the most exposed partners in the region to the hybrid actions of the Russian Federation, such as the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the fields of resilience and the development of defence capabilities”, Minister Țilvăr added.

At the end of the meeting, the Romanian Minister of Defence reiterated the relevance of the discussions in the B9 format in synchronizing the perceptions of the Eastern Allies and strategic partners regarding the security developments on the Eastern flank and ensuring an adequate response to them. At the same time, he emphasized the strong message of unity and solidarity conveyed by the presence of the NATO forces deployed on the territories of the Allies neighboring the Eastern flank, as well as the continuous consolidation of the Allied deterrence and defence posture.

## DEFENCE MINISTER’S OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

On April 25, Minister of National Defence, Angel Țilvăr, paid an official visit to the Republic of North Macedonia, following his counterpart’s invitation, Slavjanka Petrovska. During his visit to Skopje, the Romania official was received by the President of the Republic of North Macedonia, Stevo Pendarovski.

The visit represented an opportunity to review the status and perspectives of bilateral cooperation at regional level, within the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM), as well as at multilateral level and within NATO, but also to have an exchange of opinions on the security of the Black Sea region and of the Western Balkans.

Thus, landmarks of bilateral defence cooperation were highlighted, such as the importance of developing the political-military dialogue, joint training or the initiation of collaboration in the fields of military education and Special Operations Forces.

Within NATO context, the Romanian minister emphasized the Allies' commitment to the implementation of allied deterrence and defence measures on Romanian territory and pointed out the Vilnius Summit which is to take place this summer. In this regard, he thanked for the contribution of the Republic of North Macedonia with an infantry platoon to the HQ South-East Multinational Brigade in Romania, which represents a strong signal of Allied solidarity. Romania's active involvement in the EU's efforts dedicated to the Eastern partners and those from the Western Balkans was also emphasized.

"The Western Balkans region is of major importance for Romania, and maintaining the stability of this area is one of our strategic objectives. The stability of the states from this region is fundamental for Europe's security and, implicitly, for NATO's collective deterrence and defence posture. At the same time, Romania strongly supports the achievement of European aspirations for the countries from the Western Balkans", minister Angel Tîlvăr conveyed.

The two ministers agreed on the need to maintain a constant bilateral dialogue both at high level and at the level of experts, in support of an efficient implementation of the projects undertaken both at bilateral and multinational levels. In this regard, the usefulness of the format of bilateral political-military consultations planned to take place this year, with a view of having concrete discussions on bilateral cooperation, was emphasized.

Minister Tîlvăr reiterated Romania's full involvement in supporting the Ukrainian people and highlighted the importance of continuing providing international support to this country.

The Romanian official emphasized the importance that must be given to the Republic of Moldova in strengthening its resilience and crisis management, but also to the other states in the region that are vulnerable to threats posed by the Russian Federation.

Minister of National Defence thanked the North Macedonian side for the participation of the Deputy Defence Minister,



Tiron Jajaga, in the first edition of the Black Sea Security Conference carried out under the umbrella of the International Crimea Platform, co-organized in Bucharest, on April 13, by Romania and Ukraine.

In regional context, Minister Tîlvăr highlighted the importance our country attaches to the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial regional initiative, 2023 being an important year for Romania, which is to take over the rotational presidency of the format for two years.

"We wish to capitalize on the extraordinary potential of this regional cooperation format during Romania's Presidency. We support the process of the adaptation of SEDM projects to the ever-changing regional and global security environment, in order to focus on efficient and pragmatic approaches, which brings added value for the participating states", highlighted Minister Tîlvăr.

At the end of the meeting, the two interlocutors agreed to increase bilateral cooperation, as well as within SEDM.

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SEDM is a regional initiative which contributes to peace-keeping and promotes the strengthening of and good neighborly and tight among the South-Eastern European states by providing a political-military platform and involving in practical projects in the field of regional security and stability. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Italy, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, the United States of America, Turkey and Ukraine are part of the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial Process, while the Republic of Moldova has the status of observer.

## ROMANIAN SOLDIERS AT MULTINATIONAL EXERCISE “ANAKONDA 23”, IN POLAND

More than 400 soldiers and approximately 60 technical means of the 151<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion “Războieni” and the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion “Neagoe Basarab” participated in Multinational Exercise “Anakonda 23”, which was conducted in Poland, over 28 April - May 18.

The Romanian soldiers trained alongside other structures of the Alliance member and partner states, “Anakonda 23” Exercise representing the highest training form of the Polish Armed Forces and one of the major training events within NATO.

In this context, starting from April 24, personnel and equipment convoys moved on the roads of Iași and Craiova garrisons in order to participate in this exercise, which was planned in 2021.

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The battalion from Iași, a unit of the 15th Mechanized Brigade “High Bridge”, was established on September 15, 1994 and continues the glorious fighting traditions of the 1st Infantry Battalion of the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment “Războieni”. Over the 28 years of its existence, the “Black Wolves” participated in 10 international peacekeeping missions, in five areas of the globe (Angola, Bosnia, Albania, Iraq and Afghanistan). Also, the soldiers of this battalion have participated in numerous multinational exercises conducted in the USA, Germany, Ukraine, Norway, Slovakia, Bulgaria and the Republic of Moldova.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion “Neagoe Basarab”, established on September 15, 1994, through the reorganization of the 26<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Regiment “Rovine”, continues the fighting traditions of the 26<sup>th</sup> “Rovine” Regiment established on April 1, 1880. The “Red Scorpions” were deployed 14 times in theaters of operations from Europe, Asia and Africa.

## MOND LEADERSHIP, AT THE UKRAINE CONTACT GROUP MEETING

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, Minister of National Defence, Angel Tîlvăr, and the Chief of Defence Staff, General Daniel Petrescu, participated in the eleventh meeting of the Ukraine Contact Group, organized at Ramstein, Germany.

This new edition of the Ukraine Contact Group, an initiative that soon marks one year since its launch, has shown, both



at practical and conceptual levels, the unity of more than 50 democratic states and international organizations in support of Ukraine, a nation determined to protect its internationally recognized borders, against a brutal and unprovoked invasion.

The initiative launched by the US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin continues to provide Ukraine the international support needed to face multiple and heterogeneous crises, including the humanitarian and energetic ones, 422 days after the start of the Russian Federation’s aggression war against Ukraine, which changed the security paradigm in the Black Sea region, by generating multiple challenges in the international security system.

On this occasion, Minister Angel Tîlvăr conveyed Romania’s support for Ukraine’s right to self-defense and emphasized the need to continue providing international support to Ukraine as long as necessary.

“This unity is constantly being tested and I would like to point out that it was also demonstrated by the numerous participation of states, both in physical and online formats, at the first edition of the Black Sea Security Conference organized under the aegis of the International Crimea Platform, an event that I hosted in Bucharest together with my colleague, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bogdan Aurescu, and our

Ukrainian counterparts, Oleksii Reznikov and Dmytro Kuleba. It is very clear now that President Putin's plan to divide us has failed", minister Angel Tîlvăr stated.

In the context of the meeting, the Romanian Minister of Defence pleaded for the need to support the states from the Black Sea region exposed to hybrid threats, cyber attacks and the propaganda and disinformation actions of the Russian Federation, such as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia.

## **MOND SPECIALISTS PARTICIPATED IN LOCKED SHIELDS 2023 CYBERNETIC DEFENCE EXERCISE**

Ministry of National Defence participated, with more than 50 specialists, in the largest cybernetic defence exercise, Locked Shields 2023, conducted throughout 18-21 April.

The exercise was planned and organized by NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Center of Excellence for from Tallinn, Estonia, and brought together this year around 3,000 military and civilian professionals from 38 Allied and partner nations.

This year, Romania was at its third consecutive participation and teamed up with the Republic of Moldova.

Our country's team was coordinated by the Cyber Defence Agency of the Cyber Defence Command and was made up of over 130 specialists belonging to the institutions of the national defence, public order and national security system and to the private companies activating in the field.

Locked Shields is the largest international Live Fire Exercise (LFX) in the cyber defence field and is the most advanced in terms of the required technical expertise.

The main purpose of the exercise was to train and test the current technical capabilities functioning in an international secure environment, further develop the and cyber defence and security specialists as well as to improve coordination and cooperation in critical situations.

The role of the exercise was to train and test the teams of specialists by engaging them in solving complex scenarios and massive cybernetic incidents under extreme pressure, including in the strategic decision, judicial and public communication fields, as well as the evaluation of the teams' ability to adapt and protect their own networks.

Locked Shields is a Red Team vs. Blue Team training exercise where rapid reaction teams of the NATO member and partner states help a fictitious country under large-scale cyber-attack protect the governmental IT networks and critical national

infrastructure in real time (banking systems, gas and electricity distribution networks, satellite and 5G communication systems) against multiple and multidirectional cybernetic attacks. Thus, teams can assess the ability to maintain functional systems in real situations and under special conditions.

In addition to the specialists from the Republic of Moldova, the team also included representatives of the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Foreign Intelligence Service, the Special Telecommunications Service, the Protection and Guard Service, the Romanian Intelligence Service, the National Cybernetic Security Directorate, Atos, Bitdefender, Bitsentinel, CrowdStrike, Data Core Systems, Deloitte, Dendrio, Enevo Group, MassMutual, Orange, Provision, Safetech, SecureWorks and Vodafone.

## **STATE SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE POLICY, PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PAID A VISIT TO THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE**

On April 20, State Secretary for Defence Policy, Planning and International Relations, Simona Cojocaru, had a meeting with Deputy Secretary General for Common Security and Defence Policy of the European External Action Service, Charles Fries.

The meeting with DSG Fries represented a good opportunity to address some current issues, such as Romania's participation in missions and operations conducted under the aegis of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), EU initiatives in the field of defense and security, as well as the



implementation of the Strategic Compass. At the same time, issues regarding the security situation in the Black Sea region, the efforts to counter the effects of the Russian Federation's aggression war against Ukraine, as well as the vulnerable situation of the Republic of Moldova, a state facing multiple security challenges, including EU support for this candidate state, were also addressed during the meeting.

The Romanian State Secretary emphasized the importance of consolidating EU's role at global level, including by strengthening its security and defence dimension, in complementarity with NATO. At the same time, the official reiterated Romania's commitment regarding the multidimensional support provided to Ukraine and emphasized the need to increase the assistance given to the Republic of Moldova, by making maximum use of the instruments that EU has at its disposal. He also highlighted Romania's constant participation in all EU's training missions and military operations, by emphasizing our country's significant contribution to EUFOR Althea Operation, an operation that has a key role in maintaining a stable and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **DEFENCE MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE US AMBASSADOR TO BUCHAREST**

On April 20, Minister of National Defence, Angel Tîlvăr, received the visit of the US Ambassador to Bucharest, Kathleen Kavalec, at the MoND Headquarters.

At the beginning of the discussions, Minister of National Defence congratulated the American diplomat on taking over the ambassador portfolio to Romania and expressed his appreciation for the excellent level of defence cooperation carried on based on the Strategic Partnership, by mentioning that our country's bilateral relationship with the United States remains a constant strategic priority of the national defence policy.

The meeting agenda addressed the conclusions of the Defence Minister's visit to the USA as well as the bilateral



cooperation prospects, including the contribution to joint efforts of consolidating Euro-Atlantic security within NATO.

During the meeting, the Romanian dignitary highlighted the importance of collaboration at operational level, the joint training contributing to increasing interoperability between the two countries' armed forces. Minister Tîlvăr and Ambassador Kavalec welcomed the 30th anniversary since the launching of the State Partnership between Romania and the Alabama National Guard, an excellent example of cooperation in the military field.

The Romanian official emphasized the strategic importance of the Black Sea for the Euro-Atlantic security, in the context of the Russian Federation's aggression war led in Ukraine and the need to support the vulnerable partners, such as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia. In this context, the Defence Minister commended the efforts undertaken at the level of the Administration and the Congress of the United States of America on the development of an American strategy at the Black Sea. Also, Minister Tîlvăr expressed his appreciation for the US commitment to the security in the region, by increasing the military presence in Romania and supporting the Allied decisions to consolidate the defence and deterrence posture on the entire Eastern flank of the North Atlantic Alliance.