

**STATEMENT BY MR ADRIAN NASTASE, PRIME MINISTER OF
ROMANIA, ON THE 2001 REGULAR REPORT ON ROMANIA'S
PROGRESS TOWARDS EU ACCESSION (BUCHAREST, 13 NOVEMBER
2001)**

“Firstly, it has to be said that the European Commission’s 2001 country report for Romania is a more favourable one than the 2000 Report.

For the first time, the European Commission includes Romania among the candidate countries that have made significant progress in the EU accession process. Progress has been stressed out regarding both political and economic criteria.

For the political criteria, for example, it is noted the overall improvement of the decision-making, being stated that there is considerable progress, at the same time, in the efficiency of the legislative and the executive powers. Inter-ministerial co-operation, inter-departmental management of the governance have produced the expected results.

Reportedly, the Romanian Government has obtained significant progress in the field of human rights (childcare system, rights of homosexuals, restitution of properties etc); at the same time, in the field of minorities, laws adopted by the Government are mentioned, as well as the Strategy for Roma, as the Commission follows closely their future implementation.

The measures concerning the treatment for asylum seekers and the statute of refugees are amongst the measures that are positively mentioned in the Report. We have expected this, given the efforts of the Government towards the adoption of the legislation in the field of justice and home affairs.

As lifting of the visa regime for the Romanians travelling in the Schengen area is a priority, the governmental action has focused on this field, with the results accordingly mentioned in the Report. There is still a lot to be done, more investment is necessary. The important fact is that we have proved our capacity to mobilize efforts, a quality required in the post-September 11 international context.

For the economic criteria, if last year it was mentioned that “Romania has not significantly improved the potential for economic development”, for this year progress towards a functioning market economy and macro-economic stabilization are extensively presented. Economic growth in 2001, the increase in the GDP and exports, the possibility of slimming down the inflation as an agreement with the IMF has been concluded – all these are considered positive signals sent by Romania to the Union. For the first time, decisive progress in fulfilling the EU accession criteria is endorsed.

It has to be pointed out that the most important measures undertaken by the Government are mentioned in the Report, as the launching of structural reforms in key areas of the Romanian economy is referred to. There is progress regarding the internal market legislation, in the transposition of the Community acquis for the free movement of persons, goods, company law, competition, taxation, transports, telecommunications, consumer protection etc.

For the first time, Romania is treated as a reliable partner that respects its commitments, once undertaken. It goes without saying that costs are involved, with major impact on the day-to-day life of each of us. We are prepared to assume them as such, seriously and in a responsible way.

We know that there are still problems to be solved: the weak administrative capacity, for example, is criticised, as well as the insufficient implementation of some sectoral strategies. An entire economy cannot be completely transformed in only 11 months. The important thing is that this process has started – as remarked also by the Commission – and that we are committed to pursue it.

We have remedies to this.

In the Government meeting held at the end of August, it has been presented a document regarding the necessary measures to be undertaken with a view to the establishment of a functioning market economy, according to the Romanian National Programme for Accession and the Pre-Accession Economic Programme.

The priorities we have set out are: enhancing the administrative capacity, the creation of a sustainable legal environment, to address continuously the objective of fighting inflation and diminishing interest rates, together with the ongoing process of restructuring the real economy.

We shall continue the restructuring of the industry and shall extend the privatisation process; the Government is also addressing the consolidation of the financial system – banking, improvement of the financial discipline, mainly regarding the State-owned enterprises.

The Government will implement several sectoral strategies: for example, in the field of agriculture, we have in mind the enhancing of the administrative capacity, rural development, the improvement of products' quality. In the field of environment, priorities are the establishment and the development of non-polluting technologies.

The Government will analyse in detail the content of the Report and will elaborate a programme to speed up the preparations for accession, based upon the assessment and recommendations of the Commission. We want Romania to be an important player in the EU enlargement process and, to that end, we are prepared to undertake the necessary efforts to fulfil our commitments.”

[Quelle: <http://www.gov.ro/engleza/index.html>]