

The message addressed to the participants to the activities organized with the occasion of the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SECI Center by

**Mr. President Traian Basescu**

26<sup>th</sup> of May 2005

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure for me to transmit the SECI Regional Center for Combating Trans-border Crime (the SECI Center) my salute on its 6<sup>th</sup> year of existence. As President of the host country, I can tell you in all honesty that Romania is proud to host and to have supported this courageous initiative from the very beginning, as its results in time have proved that the Center has been a real success in strengthening cooperative regional efforts to share best practices, harmonize national legislations as well as yielding concrete operational results in the South Eastern Europe.

Since I took office in December last year, one of our main strategic priorities is the unprecedented fight against corruption and organized crime. We have decided to give prominence to this objective in the framework of the national security strategy, we set up a program of measures in order to eradicate the systemic corruption, and we act for harmonizing the efforts of all our competent bodies in this respect.

We are determined to undertake the reform in the justice and home affairs field.

We have all witnessed the increasing menaces endangering the democratic community: terrorism, proliferation, corruption, organized crime and trafficking in human beings. Those are real threats, with terrifying consequences that affect everyone, governments and citizens of Eastern or Western Europe alike. Our strength in facing these challenges lies in solidarity, promoting democratic values and reinforcing the respect for human rights. This also means firm reaction, close cooperation and adequate response to the complex situations that our states face.

Transnational crime in South Eastern Europe has increased substantially and went beyond the national borders of the countries on the region. The fight against this phenomenon at national level proves to be inefficient most of the times; therefore international cooperation between law enforcement agencies gains a particular importance.

Taking into consideration the unconventional security threats posed by the political and social instability, the perpetuation of the inter-ethnic conflicts and the persistence of the poverty in this part of the world, we pay particular attention to strengthening the border control.

Many of the transnational threats facing Europe emit from this region. Romania is determined to contribute at promoting efficient and result-oriented policies. Among those practical simulation exercises are included, to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), enhance cooperation between Black sea riparian countries in terms of improving border control and exchange of relevant information and intelligence on illegal

activities related to illegal activities. One such concrete example is the “Black Sea Border Security Initiative”, launched last year in Bucharest.

In the same way, the Bucharest Declaration endorsed at the recent meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the States participating to the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECF), has offered us all the opportunity to launch a new initiative which aims at enhancing and intensifying the cooperation between the SECI Regional Center for Combating Trans-border Crime and the European Union’s specialized institutions, as a means to sustain the latter’s actions against corruption and organized crime, as well as our support for the speedy elaboration of the Action Plan, as mentioned in the 18<sup>th</sup> Resolution of the Joint Cooperation Committee of the SECI Center, which includes drafting a new legal base for the functioning and future development of the Center.

We are looking forward to fostering this initiative and to promoting it as a cooperation model for Caucasus and Central Asia to enhance the regional cooperation aimed at curbing trafficking in persons and narcotics, financial crime, arms` smuggling, and financing sources for terrorism.

Before concluding, allow me to congratulate you for the outstanding results obtained so far, as well as for the active contribution at the consolidation of peace and stability in South-Eastern Europe. I would also like to express my confidence that the SECI Center will become more and more involved in fighting organized crime, continuously proving its capacity of being a clearing house for intelligence sharing and cooperation and a more efficient service provider for its member countries and the entire democratic community in this part of Europe.

**THE PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA**

**TRAIAN BASESCU**