



CORA

Newsletter

CONGRESS OF ROMANIAN AMERICANS
CONGRESUL AMERICANILOR DE ORIGINE ROMANA

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FEATURED STORY

Joint Statement of the Representatives of Romanian Americans on the Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance and Romania's Bid For NATO Membership

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CORA Celebrated its 10th Anniversary at its Annual Meeting

Activities began with visits on Capitol Hill with members of Congress and congressional staff members. CORA representatives visited the offices of two Senators, and three members of the House of Representatives.

It was clear from the messages of Friday's session speakers that U.S. government officials have a good grasp of Romania and its importance to the U.S. Corruption in Romania is the principle concern of our government.

Other speakers charged the Romanian American community to become very active in the next few months. They implored the community to watch media reports and respond to those that are negative - as Romania is frequently portrayed in an unfavorable light. The community must set the record straight by responding to these reports.

These speakers also stressed the need

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President Iliescu of Romania - Guest in Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Alfred H. Moses, former Ambassador of the United States to Romania, and The Honorable Sorin Ducaru, the Ambassador of Romania to the United States, hosted His Excellency, Ion Iliescu, President of Romania, on the occasion of his participation at the National Prayer Breakfast, at a *Working Luncheon* on February 7 at the Metropolitan Club in Washington.



Participants at a luncheon at the Metropolitan Club in Honor of the President of Romania (from left to right)

John Șerban, CORA Board Member, Anton Samoilă, Honorary Consul of Romania - Virginia, Armand Scala, CORA President, Hugh Hackney, Honorary Vice Consul of Romania - Texas, Ion Iliescu, President of Romania, John Rakolta Jr., Consul of Romania - Michigan, Archbishop Nathaniel Popp - CORA Chairman, George Dobrea, Consul of Romania- Ohio.

His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, was an invited guest. Present were members of the American and Romanian governments and friends of Romania.

Speakers were former Ambassador Moses, former Ambassador Geoană, Ambassador Ducaru and President Iliescu, who stated: *My participation in the National Prayer Breakfast, together with people from around the world was very moving. It was an experience new to me and one which I appreciate.*

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Central and East European Coalition Conference

A conference focusing on the U.S.-Russia relationship and its implications for Central and East Europe attracted Capitol Hill attention last month. Coinciding with President George W. Bush's summit meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the conference was hosted by the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC) and focused on two issues - Security and a New Europe, and U.S., Russia, European Union - Economic Interests. CORA is a founding member of the CEEC.

The first panel discussed the new role of NATO in the 21st century and the need for NATO enlargement.

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CORA Celebrated its 10th Anniversary at its Annual Meeting

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CORA Meeting (from left to right)

Board Members Cristian Călugărița, John Sânteu, John Șerban, CORA Chairman Archbishop Nathaniel Popp, Special Assistant to President Bush and Director for Central Europe Walter Andrusyszyn, CORA President Armand Scala and Vice President Mark Mayer.

Ambassador James Rosapepe (recent U.S.) were guests at a banquet on Friday evening. Letters from President Bush, President Iliescu (Romania) and numerous other dignitaries, congratulating CORA on its work, were read.

On Saturday, following a business meeting, a session was held to prepare CORA members for meeting with their Senators and Representatives in support of Romania's candidacy for membership in NATO. They were supplied with materials and ideas for use in their states and districts to achieve this objective.

for the community to maintain consistency in their demands for transparency from the Romanian government, feeling this approach would be an effective method to utilize in fighting corruption in Romania.

Analysis of the political and economic situation in Romanian was positive, reflecting improvements since last year's analysis. The current experiences of several businessmen in Romania reflected this improvement over the last year. However, a major "privatization" project was discussed revealing, unfortunately, underlying corruption.

Romania's inclusion in NATO was a consistent theme woven into the messages of the presenters. Additionally, Romania must share Euro/Atlantic values by supporting further democratic and economic reforms. This will promote economic prosperity and a market economy.

Ambassador Sorin Ducaru (Romania) and former Ambassador James Rosapepe (recent U.S.) were guests at a banquet on Friday evening. Letters from President Bush, President Iliescu (Romania) and numerous other dignitaries, congratulating CORA on its work, were read.

Remarks by Official Dignitaries

Let me commend your valuable and continuous dedication in making the Romanian-American community, the Romanian culture and identity, as well as Romania in general, better known, understood and appreciated in the United States. As a leader of the Romanian-American community, you have a tremendous role in deepening and diversifying the Romanian-American relations in the political, economic, social and academic areas, especially in this important year for the Romanian candidacy to NATO membership. I (would) like to assure you of Romania's full support for your initiatives and projects meant to further strengthen the friendship and cooperation between Romania and the United States. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania

As ambassador of Romania to the U.S., I had many moments when I was strongly encouraged by your advice and American experience, as well as

by CORA's activity, in accomplishing my challenging mission. For ten years CORA gave time and spirit in the benefit of the American and Romanian people, making the links between our two countries and our nations stronger than ever. We can not value enough your efforts, but we can assure you of our gratitude and our strong support for the future. Mircea Geoană, Minister of Foreign Affairs

No organization has done more during the past decade to bring about closer relations and better understanding between the United States and Romania. As U.S. Ambassador in the early 1990's, I greatly admire the leadership and dedication of Armand Scala and his colleagues in urging needed reforms on the Romanian Government and in seeking to instill a better understanding of Romania and its problems in U.S. Government circles. These determined efforts have met with increasing success in the years since, but much remains to be done.

Romania's loyal support of NATO policies and its success as a functioning multi-ethnic society are gaining increasing recognition. The work of CORA is today more important than ever as Romania struggles to overcome the economic depredations of the communist era and become a full member of NATO and the European Community. John R. Davis, U.S. Ambassador (ret.)

The Congress of Romanian Americans plays a uniquely important role in relations between the United States and Romania. Under the leadership of Armand Scala and his fellow officers, CORA has earned the respect of leaders and policy makers in both countries. When I was U.S. Ambassador, I always found CORA to be knowledgeable, credible, committed and extremely helpful in the Embassy's efforts to involve Americans of Romanian heritage from across the country in our work. Jim Rosapepe, Former U.S. Ambassador to Romania (1998-2001)

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Remarks by Official Dignitaries

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Congratulations to the Congress of Romanian Americans on its work on behalf of the freedom and well-being of Romanians in their own country and in the United States. Roger Kirk, Former U.S. Ambassador to Romania

You have made an important and continuing contribution to the improvement of American-Romanian relations and to a fuller understanding continued on page three of the contributions that Romanian-Americans have made to our country over the course of its history. Alfred H. Moses, Former U.S. Ambassador to Romania

We have worked together now for over 10 years." "We are happy and proud to see that you have done so well. We need each other. Your organization and you personally, have been a great asset to the CEEC (Central & East European Coalition). The CEEC helped us get Poland into NATO and we have committed ourselves and our organization to help all those aspiring nations who are qualified to join as well. The Polish American Congress appreciates its friends and allies, and we look forward to continuing to work together on issues of joint concern. Col. Casimir I. Lenard, Director, Polish American Congress, Washington Office

President Ilescu of Romania - Guest in Washington, D.C.

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I also am aware that the mood toward Romania is much friendlier, and I feel more friendly in return.

Although it was a working lunch, the majority of talks had been held the day before so that on this occasion hosts and guests could enjoy one another's company without the pressure of discussions.

His Eminence had the occasion to share a few words with Mr. Ilescu and to wish the Romanian nation success along the road to democracy and economic recovery.

In the Words of the Participants at CORA's 2002 Annual Conference

Very helpful, informative sessions, especially on government, economics and non-governmental organizations. Members of Opportunity Associates: U.S. who are training organizational leaders in NGO's in Romania - continue to benefit greatly from the informative and stimulating presentations and the connections that CORA provides. Cathy Fort, Madison, VA (3/14/02)

CORA has proven beyond any shred of doubt, that it is, by far, the only organization in the United States representing Romanian Americans, capable of reaching and be(ing) heard by the highest structures of the U.S. Government. CORA ... provided two days of intense sessions with top officials and leaders of various agencies and successful business owners. Cristian Călugărița, Pres., Viitorul Român Society, Los Angeles, CA (3/28/02)

The 'non-American' Romanian would like to express her gratitude for having been accepted to take part in the works of CORA. I learned a lot and I left with greater hopes for a better Romania. Mihaela Eremie, H. Humphrey Fellow - Romania (3/28/02)

Once again, (CORA)... organized a meaningful and relevant conference. CORA plays such a vital role in making a link between Romania and Romanian Americans. Svetlana Schreiber, JD, Cleveland, OH (3/24/02)

As a Romanian-American that lives in Romania for over ten years, I would like to commend CORA for its commitment to help Romania get integrated into NATO and into the European Union. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate... (CORA) ...for essential contribution in promoting Romania as an asset for peace and stability in the CEEC (Central and East European Coalition). Michael Stanciu, Bucharest, Romania (3/20/02)

Central and East European Coalition Conference

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Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE) and Congressman Joe Knollenberg (R-MI) then delivered remarks. They addressed the many important contributions that U.S. foreign policy has made to Central and East Europe. Following, the second panel discussed U.S. foreign assistance programs to Central and East Europe, the elimination of the Jackson-Vanik amendment and the granting of Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to those countries yet to attain that status.



CEEC Meeting (from left to right) Participants at the CEEC Conference, Congresswoman Constance Morella (R-MD), CORA President Armand Scala

Speakers for both panels entertained questions from an audience of over 100 people. Among those attending were Congressional and committee staff members, Administration representatives, the media, and members of the ethnic American communities.

A reception where Armand Scala was the Master of Ceremonies followed honoring several Members of Congress for their committed leadership and dedication to Central and East European issues. The honorees were: Senator Jesse Helms, Senator George Voinovich (R-OH) and Representative Constance Morella (R-MD). Other CEEC honorees were Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) and Representative William Lipinski (D-IL). Mr. Scala presented Senator Voinovich his plaque after complimenting the leader for a remarkable 40 year career serving the people of Ohio and the U.S. The plaque read: "For his outstanding leadership and dedication to CEEC issues and support of NATO enlargement."

**Joint Statement of the Representatives of Romanian Americans on the
Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance and
Romania's Bid for NATO Membership**

March 16, 2002, Washington D.C.

We, the representatives of Americans of Romanian descent, representing communities living in the United States, have gathered here in Washington DC at the annual meeting of the Congress of Romanian Americans between 14-16 of March 2002.

We share and endorse the vision of a Europe whole and free as presented by President George W. Bush on June 15, 2001 and by the former President William J. Clinton in October 1996. We believe that NATO remains the backbone of transatlantic security based on protection and promotion of freedom, democracy and human rights.

We stress our firm belief that NATO enlargement will further strengthen the Alliance as a pillar of the Euro-Atlantic security and provide a solution to the new threats that challenge all nations at the beginning of the 21st century. We acknowledge the progress Romania has made in preparing for NATO membership and we encourage our country of origin to persistently continue the reforms that would make possible its invitation to NATO as part of a robust enlargement of the Alliance this year in Prague.

We believe that NATO enlargement should embrace Southeast Europe, a region that is crucial for the security of the whole Euro-Atlantic community, recognizing Romania's role in stabilizing that region and facilitating countering the new types of security threats such as terrorism and transborder crime.

Based on presentations by the Administration Representatives and the U.S. Committee on NATO, it is our perception that Romania has irreversibly embraced democracy and a market economy and is making good progress on its way towards full integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. We laud the development of the relations between our native and citizenship countries and express our support for further continuing and enhancing this process.

Romanian Americans commit themselves to support the fulfillment of the vision of a Europe whole and free and respectfully urge the President of the United States and the United States Congress to endorse Romania's invitation to NATO at the Prague Summit in November 2002.

Armand Scala, *President*
Congress Of Romanian Americans

**Additional Signatories to the
Joint Statement of the Representatives of Romanian Americans on the Enlargement
of the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance and Romania's Bid for NATO Membership**

March 16, 2002, Washington, D.C.

American Friends of Romania	Washington, D.C.
American Romanian Committee	New York
Center Focus Publishing	Illinois
Cleveland Alliance for Romania's Entry Into NATO	Ohio
Concrete Surgeons, Inc.	Indiana
Cultural Foundation for Transylvania	Virginia
Dacia Revival International Society	New York
East European Research Center	Massachusetts
Help the Children of Romania	Michigan
Help Romania Fund	Ohio
Orthodox Brotherhood	Michigan
Reach To Romania, Inc.	Indiana
Romanian American Chamber of Commerce	Maryland
Romanian Baptist Community of Northern Virginia	Virginia
Romanian Heritage Association	Michigan
Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of American and Canada	Michigan
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America	Michigan
Viitorul Român Society	California

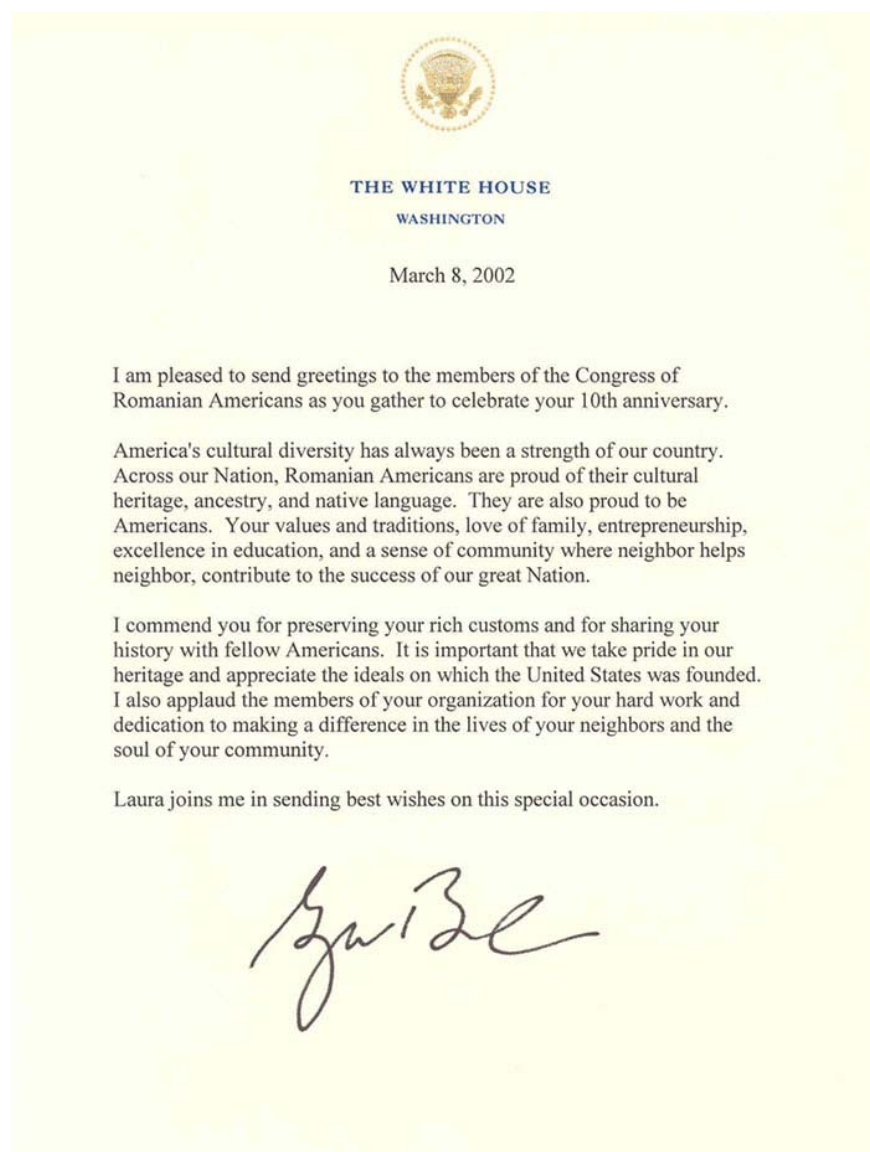
NATO Brief

The U.S. will withhold its recommendation regarding which countries to invite into NATO as new members until later this year, nearer to the NATO meeting in Prague, Czech Republic.

It is CORA's feeling that Romania will be invited, however Romania is responsible for fulfilling the requirements. This vote is a invitation only; it will not guarantee Romania's inclusion. If invited, it could take up to 1 year for the U.S. Senate to ratify the Prague agreement. The U.S. Senate will watch very carefully during the period following November's meeting. Should Romania be invited at that time, her progress and failures will influence the individual Senator's vote at the end of the ratification period.

Two-thirds (2/3) of the Senate is required for ratification. A U.S. Senate vote against ratification will result in a veto of Romania's membership since a single NATO member's vote can deny entry.

Romania must do what needs doing, and we must work to influence that government. We also must encourage and support our Romanian American communities in influencing governmental leaders in our own country.



U.S. Ambassador Meets with CORA on June 25th

At his request, CORA representatives met with Ambassador Michael Guest this week. CORA was represented by several member organizations: Friends of Romania, Opportunity Associates, the Romanian American Chamber of Commerce and CORA Staff, Elena Lazăr and Armand Scala.

The "off the record" topics covered the gamut, including press reports of friction among personalities within the Romanian government. The Ambassador did not seem to believe that these reports had an effect on the positive direction in which Romania was moving.

The meeting covered other topics, including non-government organizations and the reduction in the U.S. foreign assistance for Romania to \$29 million. The Ambassador continually stresses "transparency" to the Romanian government and asks Romanian Americans to do the same as a way to reduce corruption in that country.

Important Articles from Herzfeld & Rubin, P.C.

Recent issues of *The Romanian Digest* written by Mark Meyer, CORA Vice-President and Chairman of the Romanian American Chamber of Commerce can be found on CORA's website: www.romanianamericans.org, click on the left to links, then to Herzfeld & Rubin, then to Romanian Digest. From December to the present, you will find very well written and enlightening articles covering NATO, Restitution of Properties, Business environment, etc.

Romanian American Chamber of Commerce Hosts President Iliescu

On May 15th, the Romanian American Chamber of Commerce hosted Romania's President at a dinner attended by approximately 250 individuals of the business community and Romanian-American and Romanian government leaders. The meeting was held in New York.

Viitorul Român Society of LA Put On a Great Program!

On Sunday, January 20th, Romanians from Southern California celebrated *The Union of the Romanian Principalities*, event organized by Viitorul Român Society of Los Angeles. The guests of honor were the Ambassador of Romania to the United States, Sorin Ducaru for the first time on the west coast with his wife, the delightful Carmen Ducaru.

The audience warmly welcomed the dignitaries introduced by the President of the society, Cristian Călugărița. Among them were Dr. Eugene Șerbănescu, the Consul General of Romania; Consul Constantin Aron and his wife; Economic Conselor Gheorghe Gruia and his wife; Mr. Armand Scala, President of CORA; Directors of the California Ethnic Leadership Council, Rudolph Sigmund and Albert Misik; Executive Vice Presidents of the Slovak World Congress, Frank de Balogh III, representing the Hungarian Community; Rudolph Pan, leader of the Chinese Ethnic Community; Olgierd Klejnot, leader of the Polish Community; Vladis Pavlovskis, President of the Baltic American Freedom League; and Rory Fitzpatrick, representing the Los Angeles Councilman Tom LaBonge.

After the address of the Romanian Ambassador, History Professor Doina Lupașcu discussed the events (and their significance) which led to the Union of the Romanian Principalities. Armand Scala then made a short presentation describing CORA, Romania's entry into NATO and role the Romanian-American community can play in influencing the politics of the U.S. Rory Fitzpatrick presented President Călugărița a Certificate of Appreciation from Councilman Tom LaBonge followed by the Consul General's remarks on the importance of strengthening the ties of all Romanians abroad to benefit Romania's cause and heritage.

The rich cultural program lasted for over three hours, although it seemed like minutes. Program participants represented a wide variety of genres and styles. From the vibrant performance of the violin maestro, Professor Mihail Chiriuc, to the magical voice of the young soprano, Cleopatra Ilie, the flute of Ciprian Ignat, the poetry of Romanian actress Manuela Golescu, film director Dumitru Caranfil, the guitars of Gabriel Vamvulescu and Anatol Răzmerița, the spirited *Călușarii* dances, performed by Ioan and Ionuț Petrinca, and the artistry of the four members of the *Joc* dance ensemble, everyone was enchanted by the wonderful display of our Romanian cultural heritage. The evening climaxed to the tune of *Hora Unirii*, to which all in attendance joined hands and danced together in a symbolic hora of union and fraternity. Later in the evening, His Excellency Ducaru and President Călugărița provided interviews to the Romanian State Radio Station related to the events of the day. Congratulations to the organizers of this wonderful event!

Congress Of Romanian Americans

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