



**UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN
EUROPE
(U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION)**

**Hearing on
“The Romanian Anti-Corruption Process: Successes and Excesses”
Wednesday, June 14, 2017 - 9:30 a.m.
Senate Visitor’s Center (SVC) - Room 212-210**

Opening Statement of Senator Roger F. Wicker, Chairman

The hearing will come to order. Welcome and good morning to everyone. The Helsinki Commission is mandated to monitor the compliance of participating States with the consensus-based commitments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe or “OSCE.” These include commitments relating to combating corruption and good governance. Today’s hearing will focus on the ongoing effort to combat corruption in Romania.

Earlier this year, the Romanian parliament considered passing a bill that would have pardoned many officials who had already been convicted of corruption. This measure sparked mass demonstrations that rolled across Romania – the largest since 1989 – drawing more than half a million people and lasting for more than two weeks.

These protests put an international spotlight on how intensely Romanians from all walks of life feel about the corrosive effects of corruption. They reflected the desire of the Romanian people ensure that their country is a transparent democracy based on the rule of law.

Since joining NATO in 2004 and the EU in 2007, Romania’s resolve to be a strong and reliable NATO ally and friend to the United States has been truly admirable. Romania has also become a key strategic partner of the United States in an increasingly complex Black Sea region, where eastern members of the Atlantic alliance have been threatened by the aggressive actions of a resurgent Russia on their borders.

The United States attaches great significance to its strong military defense and security cooperation with Romania, which has greatly intensified in recent years. This was demonstrated in the recent meeting between President Trump and President Iohannis, where this strong cooperation was emphasized. Today, U.S. and Romanian soldiers work side-by-side at NATO’s Multinational Division-Southeast Headquarters in Bucharest, and the U.S. Marine Corps play a vital role in NATO’s Black Sea Rotational Force. Romania is also playing an integral role in our alliance’s ballistic air missile defense and is a strong partner on cyber initiatives and intelligence sharing.

In order to establish even stronger ties between our two nations, the United States and Romania launched the “Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century between Romania and the U.S.” in 2011, which seeks to expand our partnership beyond shared defense and military cooperation by

furthering our mutual prosperity through open markets, encouraging more quality foreign direct investment, and enhancing people-to-people ties between our two countries.

The United States has been a key-trading partner for Romania. In 2016, we imported over \$1.9 billion in goods from Romania, up from \$470 million in 2000. U.S. exports to Romania in 2016 were over \$750 million, up from \$230 million in 2000. Some of the United States' largest companies invest in the country, including Citibank, Honeywell Garret, Ford, IBM, and others. In October, the U.S. Department of Commerce will host the largest annual U.S. Government-led trade mission, Trade Winds Southeast Europe, in Bucharest.

This partnership is rooted in a shared commitment to democratic values, respect for human rights, and commitment to good governance and the rule of law. While Romania plays a critical role in the defense of the physical security of the West, just as important is the defense of the values of rule of law and the independence of the judiciary.

I am concerned, however, by information that I received from the National Union of Romanian Judges and Association of Romanian Magistrates. Their letter, which I will include in the record for today's hearing, asserts that the Romanian Intelligence Service continues to play an aggressive, yet undisclosed role in criminal investigations and has influence over the judiciary system—even infiltrating and influencing judicial outcomes.

Romania's anti-corruption efforts have garnered international attention and have been held up as an example for other countries, such as Ukraine. We want those efforts to be successful. In holding this hearing today, we hope to support those working to fight against corruption in a way that is consistent with the rule of law and strengthens the democracy Romanians have worked so hard to build.

I welcome an excellent panel representing a cross-section of experiences in Romania who will assess its anti-corruption process—focusing on both the unquestionable progress that has been made to date, but also attempting to constructively address problems that remain.

Leading us off will be Ambassador Marc Gitenstein, currently Special Counsel at Mayer Brown here in Washington D.C. Ambassador Gitenstein served as U.S. Ambassador to Romania from 2009 through 2012, and was a champion for stronger U.S. relations as well as an advocate for a fair and transparent business environment for all investors in Romania. He continues to be closely involved with Romania through various board memberships and the activities of his law firm.

Following Marc, we will hear from Ms. Heather Conley, Senior Vice President of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, where she heads the Europe Program. Ms. Conley is long-time observer of Romania and a highly respected policy analyst of countries in the Black Sea region. From 2001 to 2005, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau for European Affairs with responsibilities for U.S. bilateral relations with the countries of Central Europe.

Next, will be Mr. David Clark, who is a former aide to the Right Honorable Robin Cook—the former UK Foreign Secretary in Tony Blair’s Labor Party cabinet—and author of a recent Henry Jackson Society report on Romania’s fight against corruption and how it has affected the rule of law.

Finally, we will hear from Mr. Phil Stephenson, who will testify about his own unsettling experiences as a U.S. investor in Romania, and government actors who may be trying to influence the corruption fight for their own political and economic goals.

I am looking forward to this important and fruitful discussion.



30 August 2016

Hon. Christopher H. Smith Chairman
Hon. Roger W. Wicker Co-Chairman
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
U. S. Helsinki Commission
234 Ford House Office Building
3rd and D Streets, SW
Washington, DC 20515
United States of America

Dear Chairman Smith and Co-Chairman Wicker,

We are writing you on behalf of the professional associations of the magistrates from Romania (which include judges and prosecutors) to notify the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission) of the ongoing issues of unlawful involvement of the Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI) in the judiciary. This is undermining the separation of powers, destabilizing the rule of law, severely threatening the independence of the judiciary and democracy in Romania, compromising the fight against corruption and brutally violating the human rights in the country.

We ask, therefore, for your cooperation with our professional associations to address the following six issues in order to preserve the rule of law and safeguard the human rights in Romania.

The first issue is related to the fact that SRI has transformed the Romanian courts into so-called “tactical fields” where they conduct specific operations, and they monitor and profile all Romanian judges using “behavioral patterns”, even when there is no suspicion of wrongdoing. These facts were revealed by SRI General Dumitru Dumbrava, the head of the Romanian Intelligence Service’s legal department, who also publicly stated in April 2015 that this secret intelligence agency is following/monitoring every court case they have an interest in, until a final verdict has been reached.

Having the Romanian judges profiled and the courts transformed into “tactical fields” by a secret intelligence agency is undermining the independence of the judiciary and the separation of powers. Our professional associations have formerly requested the Romanian authorities to clarify these statements and the involvement of the SRI in the judiciary, but they have failed to do so citing “classified” secret documents.

The second issue is the involvement of the SRI in criminal investigations under the pretext of fighting corruption. This involvement is done outside the law and compromises the integrity of the fight against corruption.

After the fall of communism in Romania, SRI was categorically forbidden to conduct any penal investigations. This was due to the fact that the former communist secret police, the “Securitate”, had a penal division unit that, under the cover of penal investigations, conducted the most horrific abuses and violations of human rights.

In 2015, the Romanian public found out that SRI is involved in anticorruption criminal investigations due to secret orders issued by the Supreme Council of National Defense (CSAT). CSAT is an administrative body that operates under the authority of the President and is tasked with organizing and coordinating the national defense, military and security activities of Romania.

In total contradiction with the law, CSAT issued an unknown number of secret orders since 2005 granting SRI authority to be involved in criminal investigations. All these orders are “classified” and not known to the public, judges or attorneys, so nobody knows exactly what SRI is doing during criminal investigations.

We requested clarifications on the legal background for SRI to be involved in criminal investigations, but we received no conclusive answers since the CSAT orders are “classified”.

The third issue is the SRI’s monopoly in carrying out wiretappings for criminal investigations, which threatens the integrity of every criminal case in Romania. Wiretappings can be used as evidence in criminal cases, even in the corruption ones, and it is important that they would be unaltered.

Initially, SRI had the authority to conduct wiretappings that was only limited to national security cases. After 2005, through different secret orders, CSAT extended the authority of SRI to conduct wiretappings on regular criminal cases as well. Afterwards, CSAT made SRI the sole authority in Romania allowed to conduct wiretappings.

SRI is a militarized secret intelligence agency and its activity, technology and tools are classified. As a result, none of the parties involved in a criminal case have access to the tools SRI uses to do wiretappings or to the original recordings, all relying solely on SRI to provide the admissible “evidence” to the parties. It is now documented by recent court cases that SRI has provided prosecutors with altered transcripts and recordings in order to ease the convictions.

Earlier this year, the Romanian Constitutional Court (CCR) ruled that the technical surveillance ordered by the prosecutor must be performed only by the criminal investigation body or police experts, not by secret intelligence agencies. This should have removed SRI from the criminal investigations.

However, immediately after that decision, CCR judges were viciously attacked by the media, politicians and civil society figures, all of whom have close ties with SRI. This raised serious doubts that SRI fully understands its role in a democratic society and respects the separation of powers.

Instead of creating an independent authority to do wiretappings under civilian control, as urged by our professional associations and consistent with CCR's decision, the current Romanian government passed on March 2016 an emergency ordinance making SRI a penal investigation body for national security related cases.

Thus, the current Romanian Government has re-established SRI with powers and prerogatives that the former communist secret police once had, but were taken away and forbidden by law after the fall of communism. This represents a major and serious step backwards for the democracy in Romania.

The fourth issue is the SRI's involvement in scrutinizing and vetting people nominated for public offices. According to an official response that our associations received from CSAT, one of SRI's objectives is to investigate and "verify" such persons in order to prevent the "corrupt" ones from having access to a public position.

In other words, before a person is convicted in a court of law, SRI is able to rule unilaterally whether such person is "corrupt" and should not ascend to a public office. In this respect, SRI functions as a court, which "convicts" a person of corruption without the rights of due process. This grants SRI an extra-legal and arbitrary authority to subjectively determine who is "qualified" to occupy public positions. Such a non-transparent way to control the appointment of public officials gravely distorts the democratic process and tramples upon fundamental human rights.

The fifth issue is the unresolved problem of the undercover agents that operate among Romanian magistrates, which includes judges and prosecutors. This issue surfaced publicly in 2015, when the former Romanian President Traian Basescu stated that there are undercover agents among the magistrates, who are "blackmailed" or otherwise controlled because of their undercover status since they are in violation of the law.

A Romanian law passed in 2004 prohibited all magistrates to be operative or undercover agents, informants or collaborators of secret intelligence agencies. Each magistrate was required to annually sign a sworn affidavit, under the penalty of perjury, that they are in compliance with this law. Although the law required CSAT to verify that magistrates had complied with their signed affidavits, our professional associations found out in 2015 that in the 10 years since the law was enacted, CSAT had never conducted any such verifications.

After multiple requests during 2015 from our associations to CSAT urging for these verifications to be performed, the Romanian Presidency released a statement on January 18, 2016, stating that CSAT had performed the verifications and there were no undercover agents among the magistrates. However, the next day, the President's chief of staff stated that he has "doubts" that such verifications could have actually been performed effectively, because CSAT does not have the capabilities "to chase after undercover officers".

His statement is shocking, since CSAT is the institution mandated by the law to perform these kinds of verifications and to make sure that the intelligence agencies have no undercover agents among the magistrates. In other words, the chief of staff and advisor of the President has, in effect, acknowledged that there is no control and oversight to the activities of the Romanian secret intelligence services, which make them unaccountable to anybody.

The sixth issue is the public misinterpretation in Romania of the position of U.S. government officials regarding these on-going violations to the rule of law. Regularly in the past years, U.S. officials either from the U.S. Embassy in Romania, State Department or from Congress who have visited Romania were seen to implicitly endorse with their statements these abusive actions of the Romanian Government.

When the U.S. officials talk about the judiciary in Romania, they talk only from the perspective of aggressively prosecuting corruption cases, totally ignoring the importance of due process and respect for human rights, integrity of the criminal cases and the independence of the judiciary.

For example, none of the U.S. officials have said anything about the unlawful involvement of SRI in the criminal investigations, that the courts have become “tactical fields”, the unresolved issue of the undercover agents among the magistrates, nor about respecting the human rights and due process during criminal investigations.

Further, the non-governmental organization Reporters Without Borders, concluded in their 2016 press freedoms report¹ that the media in Romania is “manipulated and spied on” and corrupted by “excessive politicization, [...] editorial policies subordinated to owner interests and intelligence agency infiltration of staff”.

As such, the statements of the U.S. officials are often taken out of context, spun by the media and presented to the Romanian public as the American officials have nothing against or even support the SRI's involvement in the judiciary. This combined effect is severely undermining the confidence of the Romanian public in judicial proceedings and the rule of law across the country.

In fact, a survey conducted by the European Commission² in May 2016 found out that 13% of the Romanians have lost confidence in the judiciary since 2015. This is the biggest drop in confidence in any institution across the entire European Union in one year.

As the U.S. has demonstrated better than any other nation, the basic principle of the rule of law depends on the separation of governmental powers, and especially the independence of the judiciary. Therefore the judiciary, as a distinct power, must not be influenced by the executive power using infiltrated undercover agents of secret intelligence agencies. The administration of justice must be transparent and fully governed by laws, procedures and regulations that are public, not by secret orders given by an administrative structure under the authority of the President.

Some have justified these violations of democratic principles as a means to fight corruption. In reality, these abuses are compromising over time the anti-corruption efforts the Romania needs, and will lead to a dysfunctional state that will not be able to maintain a system of checks and balances among its powers of government. The fight against corruption must be conducted within the boundaries of the law, and cannot be used as an excuse to violate the democracy, rule of law and human rights.

¹ <https://rsf.org/en/romania>

²

<http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/yearFrom/2010/yearTo/2016/surveyKy/2130> – see the Annex

In summary, the unlawful involvement of SRI in the Romania's judiciary, based on secret orders, as well as the unresolved issue of the undercover agents operating among the magistrates, represent a real threat to the independence of the judiciary and democracy in Romania, undermine the rule of law and the fight against corruption, and severely violate the human rights in the country.

These threats to democracy and the rule of law in Romania are inconsistent with the Helsinki Accords and thus warrant your close attention.

We are including with this letter a similar letter we sent to Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission, and two press releases from MEDEL, an international organization of European judges, that also has raised similar concerns on these issues.

We thank you in advance for your attention to these matters. The National Union of the Romanian Judges as well the Association of the Romanian Magistrates, the co-signers of this letter, remain open to working closer with the Helsinki Commission on promptly addressing these challenging issues facing the Romanian judicial system.

Sincerely,

Judge Dana Girbovan
President
National Union of the Romanian Judges

Judge Gabriela Baltag
President
Association of Romanian Magistrates


The seal of the National Union of the Romanian Judges (UNJR) is circular. It features a central figure of a person holding a scale of justice. The Latin motto "IUNCTIS VIRIBUS" is inscribed around the perimeter of the seal.
The seal of the Association of Romanian Magistrates (AMR) is circular. It features the acronym "AMR" in the center, surrounded by the text "ASSOCIATION OF ROMANIAN MAGISTRATES" and "ROMANIA".

Attachments:

- (1) Letter from UNJR and AMR to Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker (President of the EC)
- (2) Two press releases from MEDEL



21 January, 2016

Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker
President of the European Commission

Dear President Juncker,

We are writing you on behalf of the professional associations of the magistrates from Romania, requesting the European Commission to include in the new Cooperation and Verification Mechanism report on Romania the ongoing issue of the undercover agents among the magistrates, as well as the unlawful involvement of the Romanian Intelligence Services (SRI) in the judiciary, as the threats to the independence of the judiciary.

These unresolved issues are a threat to the rule of law and democracy in Romania. They are also undermining the independence of the judiciary and the fight against corruption, creating the premise for severe human rights violations.

The issue of the undercover agents among the magistrates surfaced when it appeared publicly that, since 2004, the Supreme Council of National Defense (CSAT) has never verified the annual affidavit given by judges and prosecutors, under the penalty of perjury, that they are not operative agents, inclusively undercover, informants or collaborators of the secret intelligence services.

Despite the fact that we sent to CSAT multiple requests during 2015, this institution has not clarified the problem. The Romanian Presidency released a statement only on January 18th, 2016, stating that CSAT performed verifications and there are no undercover agents among the magistrates. However, the next day, the President's chief of staff stated that he has "doubts" that such verification could have actually been performed effectively, because CSAT does not have the capabilities "to chase after undercover officers".

The statement is shocking, since CSAT is the institution that should, according to the law, perform this kind of verifications and make sure that the intelligence agencies have no undercover agents among the magistrates. In other words, the chief of staff and advisor of the President, who is a CSAT member, stated that the Romanian secret intelligence services are basically uncontrollable, making this issue a very seriously one, which has to be utterly looked into by the European Commission and reported in the CVM.

The second issue is related to the statement made by the SRI General Dumitru Dumbrava, the head of the Romanian Intelligence Service's legal department, who stated that the courts became the "tactical field" for this secret agency and they are following/monitoring every case they have an interest in, until a verdict has been reached.

The Romanian law prohibits any involvement of SRI not only in the court proceedings, but even during the penal investigations. The former communist secret police, the "Securitate", had a penal division that was used to perform the most horrific abuses under the cover of criminal investigations. This is the reason why, after the fall of communism, the law governing the activity of SRI prohibited categorically the involvement of this intelligence agency in the judiciary process.



Circumventing the law, the public found out in 2015 that CSAT, which is a militarized entity under the authority of the President, has passed some orders granting SRI certain competence in the judiciary process. Nobody knows exactly what this intelligence agency is doing in courts or among the magistrates because the CSAT orders are classified.

The basic principle of the rule of law is the separation of powers in the state, therefore the judiciary, as a distinct power, must be independent and not influenced by the executive power using infiltrated undercover agents of secret intelligence agencies. Also, the administration of justice is done publicly and on behalf of the law, therefore it should be governed by laws, procedures and regulations that are public, not by secret orders given by a militarized structure.

The unresolved issue of the undercover agents among the magistrates, as well as the unlawful involvement of the SRI in the judiciary process based on secret orders represent a real threat to the independence of the judiciary and democracy in Romania, and are undermining the rule of law and even the fight against corruption.

Regrettably, the media from Romania is not reporting accurately these real problems facing the judicial system, many even stating that this involvement of the intelligence agencies in the judiciary process is normal because they are supporting the fight against corruption.

The fight against corruption must be conducted within the boundaries of the law, and cannot be used as an excuse to undermine the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary.

We included along with this letter two press releases from MEDEL, the organization of the European judges, who also raised similar concerns during 2015 on these issues challenging the Romanian judiciary system.

It is imperative that all the serious issues challenging the Romanian judiciary system be reported in an objective, rational and fully transparent manner, so they can be resolved.

We call, therefore, the European Commission to include in the CVM report on Romania the unresolved problem of the undercover agents among the magistrates as well as the unlawful involvement of the Romanian Intelligence Service in the judiciary process as the biggest threats to the independence of the judiciary.

We thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. The National Union of the Romanian Judges as well the Association of the Romanian Magistrates, who is co-signing this letter, remain open to working closer with the European Commission on resolving, in the upcoming year, these challenging issues facing the Romanian judicial system.

Sincerely,

Judge Dana Girbovan
President, UNJR



Judge Gabriela Baltag
President, Association of the Romanian Magistrates

<http://www.unjr.ro/stiri/55-europeanmagistratesconcernedabouttheinfluenceofintelligenceagencyoverthejudiciaryprocessinromania.html>

Athens, 23rd of May 2015

European magistrates concerned about the influence of intelligence agency over the judiciary process in Romania

MEDEL - Magistrats Européens pour la Démocratie et les Libertés - shares the same deep concerns of the judges and prosecutors from Romania who took a stand against the unlawful involvement of the Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI) in the judiciary process. This situation is a threat to the democracy in Romania, therefore we call on all Romanian authorities to take immediate actions in protecting the independence of the judiciary and reestablishing the rule of law so every Romanian would have the confidence that has part of a just and fair trial.

The claims made by General Dumitru Dumbrava, the Director of the SRI legal department, that the courts are a “tactical field” where this secret service conducts intelligence operations “until every case is finalized”, revealed that SRI is involved in the judiciary process along with the prosecutors and judges, which it is incompatible with the common European standards on independence of the judiciary.

Also, the claim made by General Dumbrava that SRI is proactively profiling and categorizing judges by “patterns” of criminal behavior, an operation done to identify suspects of terrorism, exposes that the judges are under pressure and intimidated by this intelligence agency.

We are also deeply troubled by the fact that, based on what the former Romanian president Traian Basescu said, there were SRI undercover agents among the Romanian magistrates, and for 10 years nobody verified if they were removed from the judiciary system or not.

Every institution part of the judiciary process, the judges, prosecutors, has a unique role in delivering justice and they must be allowed to perform their duties without any interference from outside, otherwise the notion and process of “justice” is compromised.

These statements raise reasonable doubts about the independence on the entire Romanian judiciary system, therefore require immediate action from all Romanian authorities in order to reestablish the credibility that judges are independent and people have part of a just and fair trial.

We follow the development of this situation very close and we expect the Romanian Superior Council of Magistracy, which is the guarantor of the independence of the judiciary, to be firm and do all the necessary steps to clarify these claims and reassure that the judges are independent of any influence.

We also call on the Romanian Parliament to thoroughly investigate the statements made by General Dumitru Dumbrava about the involvement of the SRI in the judiciary process. If what General Dumbrava said is true, that is a severe violation of the Art. 6 of European Convention, and any involvement of a secret service in the judiciary process must be immediately stopped and proper measures taken to guarantee that a similar unlawful activity will not be repeated in the future.

Nevertheless, we are asking the Romanian President to address this situation in CSAT and to use his power and authority to ensure that the Romanian intelligence agencies are not interfering with the judiciary process in any way.

Romania made important steps forward, in the past decade, in building a healthy judiciary system, and any influence or involvement of a secret intelligence agency in the judiciary process would represent massive steps backwards from the standards of democracy and rule of law that Romania is pursuing.

MEDEL will support any future actions of the Romanian judges and prosecutors in protecting the independence of the judiciary system and will address this unprecedented situation from Romania with the European officials.

<http://www.unjr.ro/75-europeanmagistratesconcernedthattheinvolvementofthesecretservicesintheromanianjudiciaryprocesshasnotbeenclarifiedyet.html>

Chisinau, Moldova - 21 November, 2015

European magistrates concerned that the involvement of the secret services in the Romanian judiciary process has not been clarified yet

MEDEL - Magistrats Européens pour la Démocratie et les Libertés – expresses deep concerns that the Romanian Superior Council of Magistracy failed to clarify for the public the involvement of the Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI) in the judiciary and that the matter of the undercover agents among the magistrates has not been yet clarified. The lack of public debate about these important issues concerning the independence of the judiciary is weakening the democracy in Romania.

We were astonished to find out that the Romanian Superior Council of Magistracy decided the statement made by SRI General Dumitru Dumbrava, that the Courts were "tactical fields" for this secret service, did not affect the independence of the judiciary.

Even more shocking was that the Council used in the deliberation process notes from SRI, explaining their involvement in the judiciary, that were classified as "secret". Keeping such notes secret and inaccessible to the public is depriving the Romanian citizens of their right to a fair trial and is raising more doubts about the independence of the judiciary in the country.

All laws, regulations and agreements involving the administration of justice have to be accessible to the public. The fact that even the judges are unable to know the relationship between the prosecutors and the secret services or how the secret services are operating in the courts, where they should not be present at all, raises serious concerns about the administration of justice in Romania.

MEDEL restates the need for absolute transparency in the judicial system and that it is the duty of the Superior Council to be the guardian of independence and transparency, the foundations of a functional and credible judiciary system.

Another issue that was not yet clarified is that of the undercover agents among the magistrates. The Supreme Council for National Defense (CSAT) failed to provide an update with the status of its investigation to check the magistrate's declarations that they were not undercover agents of any secret service.

We are also concerned about the SRI's acknowledgment in its 2014 activity report that this intelligence agency constantly took actions in order to assess the quality and consistency of the information addressed to the prosecutor's office, the accuracy of the judicial argumentation and, respectively, the relevancy of the evidence. In other words, SRI acts as an active party in the trial, which is strictly and totally prohibited by law.

The lack of public debate, the reluctance of the media to discuss and investigate these important topics and the sporadic reactions from the civil society are weakening the democracy in Romania. The best example to illustrate this is that a new Big Brother law was passed without any public and parliamentary debate taking place, and with a very weak reaction in the media and from the civil society.

MEDEL calls again on all Romanian authorities to clarify all the aspects related to the involvement of the secret services in the judiciary process, which is undermining the independence of the judiciary and threatening the democracy in Romania. We will support any further actions of the Romanian judges and prosecutors in protecting the independence of the judiciary and we will provide an update about this serious situation in Romania to the European institutions.

Gualtiero Michelini

president of MEDEL