



„The Distinguished Visitors’ Day”

On the 26th of March 2008, on board of the Italian frigate ITS EURO, anchored in Constanta Harbour, „The Distinguished Visitors’ Day” took place, an event attended by Vice-Admiral Roberto Cesaretti, Commander of the Operative Force „Active Endeavour”, by Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defense, Georgeta Ionescu, by the assistant of NATO Secretary General for Public Diplomacy, Jean- Francois Bureau, by Rear Admiral Dorin Danila, head of the State Major for Romanian Naval Forces, and by General Jan Gavrilă, prime-deputy Coordinator of the Romanian Task Force for organizing the NATO Summit.

Vice-Admiral Roberto Cesaretti wanted to mention during the meeting that the Romanian naval forces have three times attended the NATO operation Active Endeavour, in the Mediterranean Sea, with their two frigates, „Regina Maria” and „Regele Ferdinand”, and this autumn a new ship is bound to leave on a new mission. *„Active Endeavour is a permanent operation, not only connected to the NATO Summit from Bucharest, since the terrorist threat is not only about today, but is rather a permanent one, and the contribution of nations is therefore important. From a maritime point of view we are constantly ready to receive information”,* said Vice-Admiral Cesaretti. *“Besides the Summit, these days we will be celebrating the 4th anniversary of Romania’s presence with full rights as NATO member. Romanian militaries have done extremely well in all their missions and we should therefore thank them. Throughout the duration of the Summit-ului I will keep permanently in touch with the Romanian Naval Forces, that are going to report on any potential problems. The ship will leave the Constanta harbour on the 28th of March and will anchor in a harbour of the Mediterranean Sea”,* said Vice-Admiral Roberto Cesaretti.

The activity of the Romanian forces as part of the NATO missions was saluted by **Jean- Francois Bureau**, assistant of NATO Secretary General for Public Diplomacy: *“as UE and NATO member, Romania is a key member of the Euro-Atlantic family, participates in taking collective decisions and ensures an active participation in missions such as ISAF, KFOR or Active Endeavour. Romania also attends a series of regional initiatives for improving the relations in the Black Sea area”*. Also, the Bureau declared that NATO’s actions cannot be carried out without the support of the population, especially since there are numerous threats of terrorist attacks world-wide. *“One can be for or against globalization and in all NATO countries democracy rules, therefore any individual is entitled to freely express himself or herself. Those who are against NATO must be also regarded as North-Atlantic Alliance interlocutors, but they also have to comply with the rules of democracy, as the Alliance member states do.”*, mentioned Jean- Francois Bureau.

Present at the event, **Rear Admiral Dorin Danila**, head of the State Major for Romanian Naval Forces, informed that the military operation "Active Endeavour" which NATO performs in the Mediterranean Sea, will also be extended in the Black Sea.

The Italian frigate ITS EURO anchored in Constanta harbour on the 24th of March 2008, as part of a public diplomacy activity performed before the NATO Summit.

“Active Endeavour” is the only NATO mission with an anti-terrorist focus, and is lead by the Permanent Naval Fleet of NATO in the Mediterranean Sea. The operation moved to the East side of the Mediterranean on the 6th of October 2001, following the terrorist attacks of September 11th from the USA, in order to discourage terrorist actions in international strategic waters. In Martie 2004, NATO extended the area of missions performed by “Active Endeavour”, so as interrogation missions of suspect ships throughout the Mediterranean Sea, were included in its attributions.