

## **Romania to request increased allies' participation in Afghanistan Operations**

Military and civil officials in Romania and Alliance member-states attended, in Iasi, a conference on the subject of the „NATO Lessons in Afghanistan-Romanian contribution on the stability, security and global peace". The conference is one of a series of meetings organized in Romania prior to the NATO Summit in Bucharest.

The debates aimed at a lucid assessment of the operations the Alliance launched in Afghanistan, and at a review of the Romanian military contribution to the democratization of this country. These discussions resulted in the proposal that Romania requests the NATO members present at the Bucharest Summit for an increased participation in Afghanistan operations, a request the United States never ceased to insist upon over the last few months. Romania seeks the support of as many NATO member-states as possible, so that they can participate with military force and civil specialists in solving the problems faced by the population in Afghanistan, problems that the Romanian militaries on the operation theaters are asked to help in.

Deputy Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defense, Corneliu Dobritoiu, declared to TVR Iasi that an imminent retreat of the American partners from Southern Afghanistan – whose participation is essential to the success of the Romanian troops – is not unlikely. "Above all, we are called to carry out our operational mission; and according to my findings based on current assessments, we need to employ a more powerful, better-balanced force in the Southern Afghanistan. Also, there is the possibility of an imminent retreat of the American forces operating together with our troops in Zabul" he said. "We must explain to every NATO member that when it comes to Afghanistan we are talking of long-term involvement for the solving of the social problems in the area. We must go beyond the phase of the strictly military cooperation; we must get more and more involved in the solving of the civilian problems" concluded the Romanian official.

**(Source: Radio Romania Actualitati, TVR)**