



## President Ion Iliescu receives UNDP Romania delegation for presentation of “Beautiful Romania” Project

### Beautiful Romania – Capacity building & job creation in heritage protection

On 21 May 2003, the President of Romania, Mr. Ion Iliescu, received Soknan Han Jung, UNDP Resident Representative, Irina Arabagiu, General Director, Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs, and Florin Banateanu, Head of UNDP Socio-Economic Section, for a briefing on the “Beautiful Romania” project which was officially launched earlier in Bucharest.



*From left to right: Soknan Han Jung (UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator) and Ion Iliescu, President of Romania*

Ms. Jung highlighted key aspects of the Beautiful Romania project which aims at social integration of disadvantaged youth and the creation of jobs through the revitalisation of urban historic centers. Ten Romanian cities (Alba-Iulia, Brasov, Braila, Medias, Iasi, Sighisoara, Constanta, Sibiu, Focsani, and Targoviste) will benefit. The project, co-funded by the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs and municipalities, will be implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (National Agency for Employment), the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing, and the Ministry of Development and Prognosis.

Florin Banateanu and Irina Arabagiu, representing the Executing Agency, presented a detailed description of the project.

The interactive discussions generated useful comments from the President. In the context of the strategic objectives of sustainable development in Romania, and especially in light of Romania's future European Integration, the President suggested that two geographical areas -- the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube Delta -- be considered for inclusion in the project. These two areas were declared by the 5<sup>th</sup> Pan European Ministerial Environment Conference (Kiev, May 2003) as the most important ecological resources on the continent.

Some interesting Romanian sites such as Apolodor Bridge (Drobeta Turnu-Severin), the biggest hydroelectric power station in Europe (“Portile de Fier”), and Tulcea city were also suggested by the President as possible future project targets. The President noted the potential contribution of the project to the improvement and revitalization of the overall urban environment. He also recommended that the stakeholders of the project be involved in the writing and updating of cities' monographs that were initiated by the Romanian Academy and the Romanian Social Institute.

The “Beautiful Romania” project is expected to contribute to the National Sustainable Development Strategy, and to increase the profile of Romania on its way towards EU accession.

For further info, please visit our website at [www.undp.ro](http://www.undp.ro) or contact UNDP Romania: [florin.banateanu@undp.org](mailto:florin.banateanu@undp.org)



*Florin Banateanu (Head of Socio-Economic Section, UNDP) and Irina Arabagiu (General Director, Minister of Culture and Religious Affairs)*