



Romania

**National MDGs Debate: Achievement of targets within reach for Romania as a new EU country & Time to Help Others**



*Wide view of the MDGs debate panel in the Human Rights Hall.*

**Bucharest, 16 October, 2007.** The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Commission organized 12 simultaneous debates on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and development assistance in all new EU Member States (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia).

In Romania, the debate took place at the Palace of Parliament under the aegis of Mr. Bogdan Olteanu, Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies, Mr. Machiel Salomons, United Nations Resident Coordinator a.i. and Mr. Anton Niculescu, Secretary of State. This sub-regional event was organized with the help of the Foundation for Development of Civil Society, World Vision Romania, and the Federation of Development NGOs.

“As a new EU member, Romania enjoys significant more support for trade and

development, so we have strong reasons to be optimistic that the achievement of its country specific MDGs has become much more tangible,” said moderator Gabriela Alexandrescu, Executive Director of Save the Children at the onset of the debate.

“Romania is currently living a paradox,” argued Mr. Bogdan Olteanu, Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies, in his opening statement. “Although we’re just starting to learn how to receive aid from the European Union and how to access structural funds, we now have to learn how to offer aid to the less developed countries. It is a noble mission that will require both public effort and private solidarity.”

The event gathered decision-makers, members of parliaments, the international community and non-governmental organizations to discuss both European and national development policies as well as development assistance policies of Romania as a new EU donor country.

The contributions ranged from political aspects of Romania’s emerging Official Development Assistance (ODA) policies, to a preview of the soon to be released 2007 National MDG Progress Report and to the specific efforts of civil society to contribute to various MDG targets.



*Machiel Salomons, Acting UN Resident Coordinator.*

“The UN system is extremely pleased with the advances made by Romania towards some of its most important targets,” said Mr. Machiel Salomons, UN RC a.i., in his opening statement. We attach a great importance to the decrease, achieved ahead of schedule, of the severe poverty rate, to the containment of the HIV/AIDS incidence and to the remarkable decrease of the maternal mortality rate.”

Mr. Salomons pledged UN’s unwavering support to further achieve lagging targets regarding consumption deficit of the poor, female employment, child mortality, access to safe water, and the growth of the afforestation rate, while also building up Romania’s capacity for international assistance.

All 12 debates, including the Romanian one, aim at mobilizing political and public interest in the development assistance topic and prepare voices from the EU new member states in the discussions on the European Development Days which will

take place in Lisbon, 7-9 November, as the biggest worldwide development event.



*Bogdan Olteanu, Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies.*