

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COUNTRY'S DEFENCE (1990-2015)

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***Abstract:** The author presents some negative aspects of the Romanian society on how the governance act was performed in the 26 years that have elapsed since December '89. The article highlights some strengths of our country, related to population, material and financial resources, quality of people and their will to live in a state of law, without being humiliated and ruined by various domestic and some foreign political actors. In this context, according to the author, there are also some serious issues concerning the country's preparation to defend itself militarily which should be considered. Thus, the emphasis falls upon the responsibility of all politicians who populated the Presidency, Parliament and governments in the 26th years.*

***Keywords:** good governance, Romania, economy, finances, sustainable development, defence.*

1. Introduction

The topic of good governance is increasingly present in the public space in Romania being analysed from various perspectives by politicians, government officials, more or less independent analysts, and by the so-called opinion leaders who operate through media vectors.

A study performed on those 26 years emphasizes the obvious contradiction in expressing the positions, exposed points of view, determined by membership in political and local influence groups, as well as by the influences of foreign, multinational and national players acting

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only according to their own interests: geopolitical, economic and financial, military, informational and of other kinds. Blaming only the phenomenon of globalization and its effects on Romania is unacceptable, without taking into consideration the obvious mistakes of the Romanian politicians and governors who “ruled” in the period between 1990 and 2016.

Unfortunately these mistakes, economic and financial inadvertencies, widespread corruption, the dissolution of the social fabric, bad policies in education, health, defence and environment have never been analysed and assumed and therefore have not been corrected until now (March 2016). Considering the autism of so-called political class, this is not a good sign for the short and medium term (2016-2030).

In the following pages we intend to bring to your attention some aspects and phenomena occurring in the late 26 years, which have affected us as citizens and Romania as an European country with an ancient civilization and history.

2. Geographical layout and population

Romania is a country situated in South-eastern Europe (according to some) and Central Europe (according to others) given the geographic reality that Europe is stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals). The unfortunate multi-millenary history has placed us in an area of geopolitical turbulence between European and Eurasian powers with opposing interests, often hostile to stability and peace.

We have an area of 238,391 km² (rank 81 in the world) and a population of 21.462 million inhabitants (rank 54) with a density of 90 inhabitants/km². These data are known by everyone, but ignored with serenity by those who have ‘planned’ and are still ‘planning’ our destiny. Everybody also knows the aspects of relief (mountains, hills, and plains) harmoniously structured, the access to the Black Sea (247 km of coastline) and the undeniable advantages of the Danube River and inland water network. To all these we can add important mineral resources and the fertile soil. What about these rare gifts of nature? We have sold them for nothing, we have managed them poorly, we have robbed them (see the forest), we have destroyed the social fabric of the country, including the Romanian peasant who has suffered so much throughout history.

In this context we consider it appropriate to mention a publicly expressed expert opinion¹:

“Predators who have led and are leading the country ignore the future and do not prepare for it; they are only interested in the present, to be able to steal now, when the people’s mind is still enslaved. Those who lead Romania are made, not born. They are the embodiment of the ‘new man’, created before ’89, they are like mutants, another species! Unfortunately we are witnessing a total dissolution of the country. And intellectuals kept silent thus becoming accomplices. Rarely can you find an intellectual characterized by integrity. Many of the Romanian citizens can be compared to slaves serving a mafia system. Politicians, just like intellectuals, are seeking ‘to talk nicely’, not to ‘bother’; all of them want to be politically correct ...”

The direct not rhetorical question is how we capitalize this potential, given the truth revealed by some foreign and Romanian analysts, who support with geopolitical, economic and financial and military arguments that **“Romania is a country too rich, with too much fertile soil to be kept without a fight”**. And this comes in addition to other vital components of the state, including the defence component (the armed forces and other structures of the national defence system). We will see what happened in point of “defence” in the late 26 years!

3. Economy and finances

The economy of a state is the pivot of its existence and permanence, amid the emphasizing of positive (few) and negative (many) elements of globalization imposed at an accelerated pace by the major economic world powers, which are also under the influence of multinational corporations increasingly greedy and destructive to the natural world.

“The end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century² stand out by the significant changes imposed by economic, political and cultural

¹ Călin Georgescu, Ph.D., former executive director of the National Centre for Sustainable Development of Romania (1997-2013) and, since 2013, president of the European Research Centre in Vienna (Club of Rome). Interview published in the “Formula AS”, Wednesday, March 5, 2014.

² Dr. Teodor Frunzeti, Dr. Vladimir Zodian, *Lumea 2013 – Enciclopedie politică și militară*, Editura RAO, București, 2013.

globalization. Globalization – by the utmost free movement of capitals and goods – favoured both traditional and emerging powers. World powers (states) are much simpler classified in relation to their GDP”.

Currently, the ranking is led by USA, European Union, China, Japan, Germany, France and UK. The exact figures for 2015 are available on various informational media. GDP per capita ranges from 134,400 USD (Liechtenstein), 108,800 (Luxembourg), 84,490 (Norway), 47,380 (USA) to 180 USD (R.D. Burundi and Congo). These huge discrepancies confirm the great gaps that turn increasingly emphasized, with more serious political, demographic and economic consequences for the future.

Romania with a GDP per capita of 7,540 USD ranks among the last countries in Europe in this respect. Why do we have this situation?

A possible answer:

- **Destruction in the late 26 years** of national industrial heritage worth about 1,600 billion euros (public sources);
- Only 30% of Romania's GDP is achieved in industrial activity;
- Chaotic and irresponsible loans, which in 2015 reached 131 billion value (no effect in infrastructure works or investment);
- Alienation, in exchange for insignificant prices, of industrial assets and natural resources (oil, gas, aluminium, gold, rare metals etc.);
- Compensation in National Authority for Property Restitution “style” (under political control) to former owners or those “savvy” who bought the rights in question, totalling about 70 billion euros, of which 70% illegally granted by overvaluation;
- Destruction of the Romanian capital banking system, so that today over 80% of the banks operating in Romania are foreign, without any interest in the development of the country in which they operate and focused exclusively on extortion of population and local entrepreneurs;
- Lower foreign currencies reserves of the country to 31 billion euros and supply gold to 103 tonnes, due to the payment of a huge external debt and enslaving interest to the leading actors of globalization (IMF and World Bank) and the destruction of small states and “emerging” economies;
- Many other causes that can be identified by economists and financiers, who are supposed to be still keen on the country called Romania.

Finally, to have a clearer picture of the situation, this is what the authors say in “The World in 2013”³:

“The great powers intervene directly and indirectly, including through military means, for the corporations to obtain access to financial and natural resources and markets. National and regional logistics, international legal regulations, from WTO, IMF and WB are all important results of the states’ action in support of major corporations. “The withdrawal of the state from the economy” is more than a slogan or a corporate strategy of separating the corporations of small and medium countries from those of their own states and their getting under the control of multinationals”.

A similar perspective is also presented by Călin Georgescu, Ph.D.⁴:

“Today corporations dictate to politics in most of the world. Following only their own profit, they hide reality, undermining the future of the young generations and depriving nations of authentic leaders and patriots. 200 multinational companies are more powerful than about 150 countries! The economic field is led by the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organisation. This troika has led to economic collapse and environmental disaster in many places in the world. Instead of serious economic policies, Romanians are offered bread and circus: buy others’ merchandise and believe that you live well. This happens on a background of unprecedented poverty and moral decay”.

In our opinion, it is important to be reviewed in this context, who, how and why actions like “Roșia Montană” and “Pungești” were possible due to reasons of lack of awareness and/or treason.

4. Romania’s current social fabric, reconsidering the role of historical and cultural traditions

During our known history (at least 2,500 years) a cultural model of our customs and traditions was established and consolidated, which together with other factors have contributed to the survival of the Romanian people in the most adverse conditions. This social and cultural fabric (territory,

³ *Ibidem.*

⁴ Călin Georgescu, Ph.D., *Interview*, „Formula AS”, Wednesday, March 5, 2014.

language, culture and customs, traditions) was a real pillar of stability, like a rock in our history.

For several years, there were attempts that largely succeeded for this rock to be crushed by vectors and beneficiaries of globalization with the help of native traitors (animated by the prospect of immediate and uncultivated gains and depersonalization).

Let us explain:

- The foolish import of foreign cultural models, in clear contradiction with the traditions and realities in Romania;
- The falsification of history by “experts” especially designated by foreign “actors”;
- The atomization of family and family values;
- The aggressive promotion through media of illiteracy, aggressiveness, immorality and bad taste, all contributing to moral upheaval of citizens, primarily youth;
- The concerted attack on the main religion in Romania (89% are Orthodox Christians);
- The disorganization of education by the so-called reform (which occurs every six months), each of them more inept and antinational than the previous one (see the disappearance of national history from the curricula, following the decision of Brussels “technocrats”);
- The development of social envy and hatred between different socio-professional groups, ironically, generated by the Governments of Romania (to study carefully the annual attacks against the military triggered by Boc administration in 2010 and continued until today, including by “technocrats”). Who has to gain from this?!

Here is what the author Călin Georgescu, Ph.D. says⁵:

“Unfortunately, in the post-December Romanian politics, there is a lack of a long-term vision. A map of the future is also missing. If Romania could understand the huge opportunities it has in times of crisis, it would make a giant leap, not only for its recovery, but also in order to occupy a leading unbeatable position, at least in the Balkans. We can restore social justice, defend the country’s sovereignty and preserve the traditions of the Romanian people. Let us not forget that Romania is not just a country. We,

⁵ Ibidem.

Romanians, are a civilization. That is why Romania's foreign policy needs are especially related to preserving the identity of the state against the attack of non-state entities, i.e., corporations and "strategic investors" such as hedge funds. Romania needs a state that serves selflessly its citizens, not one that serves international capital. Consolidation and development of modern unitary national state should be our motto, as our predecessors'. Strengthening the state rule is essential in the times when we live. The binomial state-citizen relation is the one that has worked best in human history.

We are certain that the sociologists, historians, philosophers and other people of culture in Romania, who have kept their national feeling intact and defend our values, will present many other aspects of the attacks on the "national fibre" and will propose ways of counteraction.

5. Political and administrative management quality

In the 26 years of "original democracy", the policy makers in central and local administrations have created an ocean of frustration and dissatisfaction for the Romanian citizens. To identify just some phenomena:

-The **Parliament** and parliament members have entered in the top of corruption, incompetence and lack of trust (only 12% of Romanian still have confidence in this institution);

-**The governments and all ministers** after 1989 acted without a vision, often emotionally and conjecturally, fully contributing to the destruction of industrial heritage, the indebtedness of the country, the destruction of social cohesion and poverty of the population, while encouraging the theft of public assets and expansion of corruption at all levels and in all state institutions and agencies;

-**The parties, or at least** most of them, are, in fact, interest groups, often criminal clans, without any interest in reform and serving the public interest;

-**The expanding** hydrocephalus bureaucracy that only consumes resources, causing unnecessary paperwork and making hard life for Romanians (over 256 government agencies, commissions and committees, with hundreds of employees each). In fact, these structures are maintained and new ones are created for political clients and relatives;

-Irresponsible appointments in posts of ministers, state secretaries and directors of political bodies and other clients, without any training in the area that were placed to lead (examples: a waiter/cook at the Ministry of Interior, an accountant assigned at Ministry of Health, a lawyer specialized in criminal issues within transportation ministry, a secretary to TAROM, etc.). These strange appointments condemned Romania to stagnation and poverty, because these people have no training and no desire for a long-term vision in the national interest.

At this point there can be written thousands of pages of facts and arguments stating a political and administrative management largely disastrous for Romania and its citizens.

Therefore we consider it is necessary to introduce some feedback from an official document of the Romanian state in the “threats, risks, and vulnerabilities” (ARV) chapter⁶:

•**The social nature** on the background of trends such as: demographic decline, active population emigration, actions that have the effect of environment degradation, weaknesses in national health, education and social assistance systems, distortions in the labour market, the trend of escalating crime (proliferation of underground economy, tax evasion); the low resistance without major turbulence on foreign markets, especially the banking and financial area;

•**Corruption** - which affects the rule of law and confidence in the judicial act and state institutions, generating potential damage to the economy and affect the country's development, good governance, the decisions made to the benefit of citizens and communities; dysfunctions in the absorption of European funds, using public money in agriculture, energy, environment, justice, health, education and scientific research; the scarcity of critical infrastructure; the absence of a real multi-annual budgetary planning to determine ownership and compliance with investment programs; the limited ability of central and local governments to implement national and European public policies; the deficiency affecting the ability of state institutions to evolve and diminish the impact of risks and threats to

⁶ *Guide of the National Defence Strategy for the period 2015-2019*, CSAT Decision no. 128, 12.10.2015 (Ghidul Strategiei Naționale de Apărare a țării pentru perioada 2015-2019, document aprobat prin Hotărârea CSAT nr. 128, din 10.12.2015).

these systems; the resource scarcity and inconsistency in managing various types of risks.

There were also other aspects we consider of interest, as follows⁷:

• **“The current Romanian state is a weak state.** It acts according to myths and prejudices and makes important decisions based on wishful thinking (this thinking distorts reality to suit leaders’ own desires). Romanian society is different from the mature economies of Europe, meaning that if a government changes in Europe, nothing bad happens; economy is going forward, the institutional structure works. **While in Romania we do not have adequate management,** and management means vision and perspective. The current Romanian state no longer exists because it no longer works institutionally”.

What can be said about political and administrative “management” in Romania!? Of course, many things, but 90% are negative aspects.

6. Sustainable development between reality and necessity

On this complex and often controversial topic tons of books, studies, articles and projects were written. Since 1990, we have heard and read how leading politicians brag, without blinking, how well they understand sustainable development and how they will create in the shortest time a Romania sustainable in terms of economic, demographic and environmental issues. Absolutely none of these promises have been fulfilled until today.

Instead, what was indeed achieved was the opposite: the perverse effects of sustainable development such as:

- Massive **de-industrialization**;
- **Sale** of strategic assets to foreign companies (of often unknown ownership) as is the case of oil, natural gas, aluminium, and other important natural resources;
- Massive **pollution** of the surrounding environment because of the authorized institutions non-intervention and corruption;
- Massive **deforestation**, with clear criminal and anti-national purposes, backed by corrupt politicians;

⁷ Călin Georgescu, Ph.D., Interview, „Formula AS”, Wednesday, March 5, 2014.

- **Significant decline in population** (-2% per year), so in 2040, in the optimistic version there will be only 16 million Romanians (including those working abroad);

- **Sabotage and punishment** of small domestic agricultural producer through lack of financial support, taxes, purchase of production at bargain prices (e.g. 0.50 Lei/ litre of milk?!);

- The planned **destruction** of irrigation systems.

Since 2008, Romania has had a “**National Strategy for Sustainable Development**”, but according to the main author no provision in this document has been implemented.

What could be done even with a minimal political will and good faith:

• Strengthening the legislative and constitutional power of the state. Laws run effectively by officials whose authority and competence determine people to trust the system.

• Launching research and development involving Romanian Academy, universities and other research institutions and structures.

• Firm monetary and fiscal policies. Low level of taxes. Preservation of national currency.

• Development of transport ways.

• A foreign regional and global policy to promote conciliation.

• Transformation of a handicap in advantage of economic niche: Romanian agriculture.

• Forest protection and environment conservation.

• Sustainment development – national concept.

• Personal security: health strategy based on prevention, healthy food, education through movement, stable demographic policy.

These actions require long term **concrete plans** to transcend group interests of successive governments, as is increasingly often noted.

7. National defence between theory and practice

For Romania, to strengthen defence structures (primarily military, and other components of the National Defence System, Security and Public Order) is of **critical** importance, in maintaining national sovereignty and integrity.

A brief analysis of events in recent years, on global, regional and zonal levels shows a worrying increase in risks, threats and vulnerabilities, including in our geographical region.

Romania is located in the vicinity of turbulent areas, also from the military point of view (Ukraine, Russia, Turkey and Russia, the Western Balkans and Middle East).

One would have expected our power structures (President, Parliament, Government, ministries, and central and local authorities) to become aware in the 26 years of the role of defence and of the armed forces in maintaining the existence of the Romanian state.

Instead of this logical course, in the national interest, serious events occurred with negative consequences on short, medium and long term:

- The so-called reform of the armed forces was limited to one dimension - destroying several military units and massive reduction of staff;

- These irresponsible reductions were not compensated, as promised, with modern equipment and weapons systems;

- The annual budgets of the MoD were, on paper, between 1.2 - 1.4% of GDP, but in reality, by perverse manoeuvres, they were not higher than 0.9 - 1.1% of GDP (given that in the North Atlantic Treaty on the Accession (2004), Romania has committed to defence spending at 2.28% of GDP);

- Active and reserve soldiers have been attacked and insulted in speeches since 2010, the tone being given by the President, Prime Minister and other "politicians". For this reason their morale decreased, which could have serious consequences in the event of a military conflict (which maybe has been its whole point). We know no case of a Northern hemisphere country where the politicians leading the state behave in this outrageous manner;

- In the Armed forces(and other institutions), the people promoted to top military positions are increasingly the obedient and politically supported people, instead of professionals and those who believe in patriotism and moral values;

- It has been obsessively repeated since 2002, that we do not need so much the armed forces because NATO defends us. This is a very foolish approach; NATO can defend us if we are able to defend ourselves. In fact, many foreign analysts told us this straight to our face (see the statements of STRATFOR founder - George Friedman);

-Older or newer weapon systems and equipment lack normal maintenance and current repairs (an example - the network of military communications RTP / RMNC has been abandoned since 2008 until today, leading to more than 3,000 landmarks and parts that need fast mending, approaching total collapse, under the gentle, contemplative eyes of the ones "in charge");

-The main provisions of the "National Defence Strategy" are not pursued systematically, like a check list, to see what has been done and what has not been done (and who are politicians and military responsible for this and consider it a simple paper document);

-Another important document, "**National Defence Strategy Guide for the years 2015-2019**"⁸, makes a comprehensive and fair analysis of the internal and external threats, risks and vulnerabilities to Romania and proposes several national security objectives. However, their fulfilment requires political will, and significant human, material and financial resources. Are current and future governors willing to give them!? We will see;

-Multi-annual procurement plans are a myth, a legend and have never worked. Every government and every Defence Minister changes everything and starts from scratch. Still, it is known that a complex weapon system or equipment cannot be achieved in one year. The requirement is for 10-15 years of rhythmical budget allocations at the level required by plans and projects. But who can understand the phenomenon!?

-Another problem is generated by the planned destruction of indigenous production capabilities in defence (both state-owned enterprises and private Romanian companies). A book can be written about this phenomenon and maybe someone will write it;

-The Romanian Armed Forces is poorly equipped with respect to important aspects regarding deterrence and retaliation capability, e.g. modern multi-role combat aircraft, attack helicopters, antitank means, tanks and armoured carriers with enhanced striking capacity and survivability in battle, etc.;

⁸ *Guide of the National Defence Strategy for the period 2015-2019*, CSAT Decision no. 128, 12.10.2015 (Ghidul Strategiei Naționale de Apărare a Țării, pentru perioada 2015-2019, Aprobat prin hotărârea C.S.A.T. din 10.12.2015).

-The equipment provided for the combatant is still outdated and far from modern standards. Perhaps it is considered that if the soldier dies there is no problem, the result is decreasing the number of pensions the system will need to pay. We will never see politicians or sons of politicians fighting with a gun in their hands, if necessary. They will be found in tax havens and other exotic places where they secured their possessions.

We consider that at this point we should dwell more on the demomilitary component of Romania defence, important in the current geopolitical context:

Romanian population	Citizens capable of military effort	Active military during peace time	%	Military reservists	%
In 1989 year 22,800,000	6,840,000	340,000	1.48	820,000	3.6
In 2015 year 21,462,000	6,438,600	73,000	0.34	80,000	0.37

We see a drastic 4.5 times reduction of the military in peacetime and 9.75 times of reservists mobilized in units increasing their number at war and in the emerging new crises. The figures presented show a blatant irresponsibility of all those who decided with respect to defence issues for the past 26 years.

First we are a NATO and EU border country, then we are situated in an area with many risks and threats, and NATO defence devices move “timidly” to the east, not to offend Russia. Only Russia is still angry with us after the 300 years during which we were allies or adversaries.

Given the facts above and the fact that in terms of modern weapons we are close to zero, it would be necessary to have an army at peace between 120,000-140,000 soldiers (fighters, not civilian political clients planted abundantly in the central structures of MoD), and the figure of potential to mobilize in the first phase to be at least 400,000 people. It would have been an effort, but state defence costs all over the world. Given that a young man fit for military service, being unemployed, consumes resources, it would have added something to the salary of 1.100 lei of a professional soldier and would have solved two problems, one social and the other of military and defence.

Another shortfall which adds up is that 4 million Romanian are gone abroad on long term. At least one million of them are fit for military service in case of war. But they are far and, as some are publicly stating, they do not want to die to defend the wealth of Romanian corrupted people.

To get a clearer picture of human and military and combat equipment potential, we present in the annex a “**Table on potential demographic and military capabilities of Romania, neighbouring countries and the Russian Federation**”⁹.

In conclusion to this chapter, what we have found from the data and information from public sources is that our country defence was knowingly kept in this situation in 26 years. Unfortunately, there are no signs that the situation might improve on the short and medium term, despite the development of defence planning documents and laws.

8. Some conclusions

We cannot imagine for a moment that the current politicians and military leaders in top positions will be somewhat impressed by what a retired general thinks and writes. They could, however, take note that many active, in reserve and retreat officers think alike and are exasperated by the way the **Armed Forces** and **Defence** are treated.

Some conclusions are necessary:

- **The Romanian society**, as a whole, is bewildered and confused by the chaotic policies without vision in all fields;

- **Citizens** do not understand why political and economic mafia continues unhindered to steal, as shown by daily cases in the media.

- **Romania** lives from indebted money, on the account of future generations who may no longer live in Romania.

- **The de-industrialization** and destruction of small agricultural producers continue at increasing pace;

- **The security of the citizen** is increasingly threatened by all sorts of underworld clans being in “the same league” with those who are responsible to eliminate them;

⁹ Source – „GLOBAL FIRE POWER Group”

- **The moral degradation of youth is emphasized** by drug use, by dependence on TV shows which promote violence or a type of lifestyle with increasingly grotesque touches;
- **Education** continues to be the background for some unfortunate experiments, with a pronounced antinational character;
- **Health care** exists only on paper; plans and strategies are never applied;
- **Defence** is like a flower in the buttonhole that arises only on 1st December. Otherwise it is on its own.

We meant to make some proposals in the end that would change the situation according to our opinion, but we realized that we will do it in vain. We wish the near future would contradict us!



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