



Interview with Lieutenant General Croitoru, Romania's Chief of Air Force Staff

Conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Jim Bates and Lieutenant Colonel Mihai Stir

This interview was conducted in late 2007.

The strategic environment today is complex and subject to unforeseeable developments. Terrorism, instability due to failed or failing states, regional crisis and conflicts are but some examples. Can you tell us how the Romanian Air Force is remaining relevant in today's challenging environment?

Talking about these strategic aspects of the worldwide threats today, I think that, firstly, we must talk about the aspects which involve NATO and EU. I cannot talk about the implications for the Romanian Air Force in isolation,

because the Romanian Air Force is getting involved where Romanian politics is involved. We can only be specific about the national level when referring to renegade aspects. I can say this because at the national level, we act in conformity with all NATO standards and procedures. We have our Main Air Operational Centre (MAOC), which is NATO connected and we perform the air policing mission directly under NATO command. We are subordinate to Combined Air Operation Centre (CAOC) 7 Larissa and then to Component Command Air Headquarters (CC Air HQ) Izmir. This could be taken as a particular aspect of this idea of responding to direct threats. We will respond as an

Air Force wherever Romanian politics is involved. Although it is not particularly a defence against terrorism issue, we are currently performing air policing in the Baltic States. As an Air Force, we are already operating in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans with our transport aircraft. In this regard, we remain involved in the missions, which the Alliance and the EU are establishing for themselves.

How has Romania's integration into NATO impacted your Air Force?

Yes, joining NATO impacted the Romanian Air Force. Let's talk through this in stages. Immediately