

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Bucharest, Romania)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT  
AND  
NICOLAE CEAUSESCU  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA

COUNCIL OF STATE IN THE  
PALACE OF THE REPUBLIC

11:10 P.M. (Bucharest Time)

PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU: Mr. President, Mrs. Elizabeth Ford, ladies and gentlemen, friends and comrades:

I should like once again to express our joy, our joy which we share, all of us, for having the President of the United States with us, and Mrs. Ford, too, and his associates, as our guests in Romania, and with the fact that this visit is part of the continuous development of the friendly relations and cooperation between our two people.

I think I shall not be mistaken if I say that in this very place, six years ago, day for day, we welcomed the first President of the United States ever to visit Romania. By sheer incidence, because it was not programmed to be so, you are coming to Romania precisely six years after.

At that time, that visit was regarded as a somewhat exceptional thing by some people, of course. Changes of particular importance have occurred in the world since.

But in the first place, I would like to mention with deep satisfaction the fact that relations between Romania and the United States have seen very strong progress. Besides many agreements in these years, various years, among which the last agreement regards our trade relations which, I have to say, was today ratified unanimously by the Counsellor of State while a few days ago it was adopted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States.

I can say that once this agreement has come into force, an agreement whereby our two countries mutually grant each other the most favored nation treatment, although I will have to recognize that Romania stands to gain significantly as a result of this, larger, broader prospects are opening up for the development of economic relations between our two countries.

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In order not to have people believe that Romania will have -- I don't know what kind of advantages as a result -- I have to say that this simply means that Romanian products are going to enjoy the same status as the produce of other countries, on the United States market.

It now follows, of course, for our goods to prove competitive both in terms of price, quality and technical.

In the last few years, our trade exchanges have gone up almost four times over.

I am convinced that after this trade agreement has come into force in the forthcoming years, we can achieve a substantial increase in our economic exchanges and cooperative adventures, although fulfilling the target of \$1 billion per annum in the next three to four years.

As you see, Mr. President, we are also practical people and we talk primarily of material things, things of economic exchanges. I should not fail to mention the fact that during these years we also concluded agreements in technology, science, culture, and there has been an intensive exchange of people in various walks of life between our two countries.

Only in the last few years more than 5,000 American young people spent several weeks in Romania, and starting last year groups of Romanian young people also visited the United States, within the program appropriately called Ambassadors For Friendship. Indeed they are good will ambassadors for peace and friendship.

We attach special attention to such activities, not only or necessarily in connection with humanitarian problems as described in the documents we signed together yesterday, but mainly with the need we feel for the people of our two countries -- for the young people all over the world -- to meet together to strengthen their cooperation so that in the future they can be at peace and work together with each other with no threat of force of war.

Bearing all this in mind, I wish to express my hope -- more -- indeed my conviction, that your visit to Romania is going to mark a moment of particular and new importance for the further extension of many-sided cooperation in all fields between our two countries.

I think I am not going to disclose a special secret if I simply mention that during our talks tonight we agreed to work in this direction with a conviction that this responds fully to the interests of our two peoples, to the interests of a general policy of cooperation and peace in the world.

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In the international sphere change has been perhaps even more important. It is true that fundamental changes have occurred in the manner people judge events, but in particular in the ratio of forces in the international arena.

Nowadays I think that nobody -- or at least very few people -- would regard as something strange or interpret as a heresy a visit by the President of the United States to Romania.

On the contrary, I would rather think it is vain regarded as something that should be normal for relations between states. This is the most telling proof of the depth of change in international relations.

That is why I take the liberty to say that the first visit six years ago by the President of the United States, to Romania, had a particular significance, not only for the relations between our two countries but also for the overall course for detente and cooperation in international terms.

The fact that two countries with different social systems and different insights -- to say nothing about the difference between their heritage -- were able to make a contribution, each one related to what it stands for, for the general course of peace, illustrates that today cooperation among states and among peoples, regardless of size, big and small, irrespective of their social system, becomes a factor of particular importance for the general force of events for ensuring new policy based on people's rights and mutual respect among all the nations of the world.

This time is the first visit of a President of the United States to another country, after the successful conclusion of the European Security Conference. I should like to interpret this as an expression of a beginning of the application of the points we have underscored by our signature yesterday together with the executives of the other participating states.

Of course, it just happened that this first visit was in Romania but maybe now acquires a special significance. Maybe that significance is that two states with different social systems and different insights are firmly determined to take action in order to carry into effect things for which they had signed a day before.

No doubt there are still many problems in the world that await a solution. You mentioned them in your speech yesterday. So did I. Distinct efforts will still be required by all states in order to see to it that new relations are built among states and that the right of each nation is respected for a free development, without fear of aggression and to ensure the rights of each people to choose its own social system according to its own will.

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There are problems in Europe. There are problems in Cyprus, in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Asia, but all of them could be solved starting from this new precedent of ruling out force, threat of the use of force. They could be solved by peaceful means so as to give a happier future to the people, and in particular we should think of the future of our children, of our young people, and of the total mankind.

We can hardly overlook the fact that the problems of disarmament are a matter of concern for all people these days, but there are economic problems of most serious degree, the solution of which requires close cooperation in order to solve them in a way opening the road toward a new economic future and working toward more progress in the world economic stability and ensuring the stability of all nations and a world of peace and cooperation.

Mr. President, in a country which has won its independence by long struggle, a country which has seen for hundreds of years the rule of foreign domination -- and everything here has been achieved by struggle and by work, by toil and sometimes by renouncing things which were necessary in order to ensure economic and social progress of the country to make sure of its independence.

That is precisely why we hoped so dearly from our hearts, our own independent development, and that is why we understand so well the people who now wage their struggle for independence for economic and social development consonant with their own will.

The country is, I think, the decisive factor in the process of building a better world, a world with more justice, and world of lasting peace.

The peoples have reached great achievements in the fields of science and human knowledge, in general. People now meet in the outer space and see eye to eye.

I think we should also set ourselves the goal to meet each other here on the earth to understand each other, to work together with each other, in order to make it so that each nation can enjoy her fruits of science, technology, the advantages of everything that human civilization has created best.

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It is in that spirit that Romania, my people, wish to cooperate closely with the people of America, with the United States of America, with all the peoples of the world starting from a conviction that only on mutual respect and only on friendly cooperation can we note the future of human civilization, can we build the world of peace for all.

With the conviction that the future will see even better cooperation between our two peoples and that your visit, sir, is going to give a new impetus to our cooperation, I would like once again to wish you to feel at home here during your brief visit to this country and to express my hope that at the appropriate time you might come again for a longer stay.

I do hope that Mrs. Ford -- as it happens the world over, given the private life of Presidents -- in this respect will be successful in persuading you to come back to Romania for a longer stay.

May I ask all that are present in this hall to join me in this toast to the President of the United States of America and to the esteemed Mrs. Ford, for the continuous developments of friendly relations and cooperation between Romania and the United States, for the continued well-being and prosperity of the American people, for peace and cooperation among all the nations of the world, to the health of all of you.

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(President Ceausescu's remarks are from an unofficial translation.)

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, Mrs. Ceausescu, ladies and gentlemen:

My visit to Romania is a very, very great pleasure because of some high level meetings between our Governments and the growing number of contacts at the ministerial level, and between officials and specialists at all levels we have witnessed in recent years improvement in U.S.-Romanian relations.

It seems very fortuitous and unique that within a day following the signing of the agreements in Helsinki that we have reaffirmed and expanded our fine personal relationship, that we have seen concrete evidence of better relations between the Romanian people and the American people, and that we have listened to the words of one of the leaders of the nations in Europe who has been strong and forthright that we should meet here on this occasion.

Our talks today, Mr. President, reaffirmed in the most positive terms our mutual interest in continuing to build our excellent bilateral relations.

Mr. President, my visit to Europe is significant for another reason. We both participated in the final stages of the European Security Conference at Helsinki.

As you, Mr. President, have pointed out on many, many occasions, the dynamics of change--social technological, global and dimensional--affect all nations, so can and should the results of Helsinki.

We welcome, Mr. President, the changing relationship being forged between East and West. This is a relationship in which Romania continues to assume a most important role. The efforts of the United States and Romania and those of the other three participating nations will be very useful -- in deeds, equal words.

Not the least result of the Conference has been to show that smaller nations can make an independence, can make an equal and valuable contribution to the world.

On recognizing the importance of the Conference's work, the United States views it as one important step in a continuing process.

It is imperative that we work together to lessen the chances for conflict. Let all nations cooperate to lessen human poverty, human suffering, and human hunger.

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The challenges we face require the best efforts and the best ideas of all concerned, and all nations must have a positive and active role to play.

Mr. President, my country fully recognizes the growing interdependence of mankind, the need for increased cooperation among the industrialized nations, and a greater recognition of the concerns of the developing nations.

The United States will make full and fair contribution. We look to the other nations of the world to join with us in this important endeavor.

Mr. President, I came to Romania for another very important reason. This complex world is marked by diversity. We recognize the importance of close ties with a country that shows such independence and such vigor.

We do not always agree, but we value the courage of a nation that wants to make its contribution to a better world by its own very special efforts.

Romania has won the admiration of the American people for her positive contributions to world understanding. I am confident that Romania will contribute constructively in helping to find practical and durable solutions to the problems of today, as well as for tomorrow.

Mr. President, on behalf of Mrs. Ford and myself, I thank you and your very gracious wife for your warm hospitality. I raise my glass to you, Mr. President, and to the building of a more secure and prosperous international community in which both of our peoples will find peace and progress in the future.

END (AT 12:03 A.M. BUCHAREST TIME)