

IAIN LINDSAY, Deputy head of Mission from the Embassy of Great Britain in Bucharest

The today event finalizes the major Twinning Project regarding the setting up of the General Anti-Corruption Directorate from within M.A.I. I would like to express my gratitude to the Metropolitan Police from London, to Steve Foster, the Spanish partners and to the Ministry of Administration and Interior represented by Minister Blaga, for the excellent co-operation that made this project a successful one.

The setting up of this Directorate represents an essential step towards the countering of corruption within the police structures. As you know, corruption is one of the major concerns of the European Union regarding the future accession of Romania into E.U.

Romania is facing nowadays a crucial period. There are only three months left until the publication of the European Commission's Report, which will be decisive for fixing the date when Romania joins the European Union. Corruption remains the milestone of this process. And, if the Romanian Government's efforts would not be considered convincing enough in this area, the safeguard clause could activate, and Romania's accession to the European Union could be postponed one year.

Thus, the countdown has begun and the fight against corruption should lead to some noticeable results. This is exactly what we expect from the General Anti-Corruption Directorate within M.A.I. We can understand the fact that the results can not appear overnight. But we want at least to see that complex investigations have been started in significant cases and that these cases arrive on the table of the anti-corruption prosecutors.

We appreciate the efforts and the firm attitude of the Romanian Government and especially the activity of the Minister of Justice Monica Macovei and of Minister Vasile Blaga. The success of this directorate will highly depend on the sustained co-operation between all the institutions with responsibilities in the area of the corruption countering. It is about working in team, a team with a common goal. The future success of the General Anti-Corruption Directorate also depends on its independence and on the political factor, and

we appreciate that the Directorate was thought to be totally independent from the Government's influence.

The success of this directorate will highly depend on the commitment and the courage of the policemen within this Directorate. We want to see a new generation of Romanian policemen, who have the courage to talk and take action when they notice corruption acts of their colleagues. Hiding this kind of corruption deeds is unacceptable. In this domain we can not talk about branch solidarity.

For carrying on the activity within the framework of this Twinning Project, the Ministry of Administration and Interior together with the British Embassy will soon launch a TV anti-corruption campaign. This campaign will reiterate the message that the police officers should carry out their missions lawfully and honestly. At the same time, the campaign will make the Romanian general public aware of the fact that they should not give or accept any kind of bribe.

I hope that G.A.D. will play an essential part in catching the big and the little fish from the waters of the Romanian corruption. I also hope that the activity of the officers within this Directorate will materialize in certain results as soon as possible. Thank you.