

PRESENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE



GEN Daniel PETRESCU
Chief of Defence Staff

The Romanian Military Thinking International Doctrinal Conference was organised by the Defence Staff, on the occasion of the 163rd anniversary of the Defence Staff and the 24th edition of the Romanian Military Thinking Journal Awards.

Keynote speakers:

- **GEN Daniel PETRESCU** – Chief of Defence Staff
- **H.E. Mircea GEOANĂ** – NATO Deputy Secretary General
- **Iulian CHIFU** – State Advisor to the Romanian Prime Minister for Foreign Relations, Security & Strategic Affairs
- **H.E. Bogdan Lucian AURESCU** – Minister of Foreign Affairs
- **David MUNIZ** – Chargé d’Affaires, US Embassy in Romania

“War is back in Europe. This is the most severe security crisis in Europe after the Second World War. War has its own philosophy: things could go one way or another very quickly. It is a clash of will, a clash of armies, a clash of leaderships, a clash of economies, the support of the population and so on. There are a lot of imponderables, things we do not know, and it is probably what we cannot think about that would influence the outcome”.

“As we speak, we need to be conscious about the fact that the war is happening close to our borders, that people are dying as we speak. I need to start by strongly condemning this attack, which was unprovoked and which is illegal, the attack of Russia against Ukraine. (...) This is a war for national survival for Ukraine. This is a war of choice for Russia, but this is also a battle where our values, the values of the West, are tested. It has political, military, economic and all types of implications. At the political level, I would say that we deal with a new political and military framework. It is characterized by more uncertainties and constraints compared to the period before this war. Probably a regress in integration and international cooperation might follow as a result of this war, but, probably, the globalization process would not be stopped”.

The Chief of Defence also noted that: *“The war in Ukraine has already triggered some changes in the hierarchization of the European countries priorities. We see the European countries cooperating more and we see the willingness to invest in defence. I think that everybody has realized the importance of creating your own capabilities, capabilities you can rely on in case of a crisis, especially if it is a military crisis”.*

As for the Western sanctions on Moscow, he emphasized that: *“The Russian Federation is under sanctions from the West. At the same time, there are countries outside Europe that are still cooperating, politically and economically with Russia. Therefore, Russia is not totally isolated at the global level”.*



H.E. Mircea GEOANĂ
NATO Deputy Secretary General

“Romania is a highly-valued NATO ally. Romania makes an important contribution to our shared security, including at this pivotal time”.

The NATO official drew attention to the fact that the Black Sea region has been the point of interest and the launching pad for Russian aggression build-ups for more than two decades now. *“Russia’s irresponsible and hostile behaviour in the Wider Black Sea Region has deeply affected the security of the North Atlantic Alliance and has also hampered economic development and exacerbated instability in the region. (...) What happens in the Black Sea does not stay in the Black Sea. It has global repercussions”.* That is why the importance of the Black Sea in the new Strategic Concept.

“Russia’s partial withdrawal from Kherson demonstrates the incredible courage of the Ukrainian armed forces and it shows us how vital it is to continue our support for Ukraine. President Putin is responding to his failures on the battlefield with more indiscriminate attacks on the Ukrainian cities, the civilians, the civilian infrastructure, and with a dangerous nuclear rhetoric. So, we must stay the course. The North Atlantic Alliance will not be intimidated or deterred. We will support Ukraine’s right to self-defence for as long as necessary. At the same time, we continue to strengthen our own defences to keep allied territory and our citizens safe”.



Iulian CHIFU
**State Advisor to the Romanian Prime Minister
 for Foreign Relations, Security & Strategic Affairs**

Iulian Chifu highlighted the solidarity of NATO and EU countries for supporting Ukraine. *“We are all expecting and we need that Ukraine wins the war. It is a fact that is assumed at the NATO Secretary General level, at the EU level. Like-minded countries, we are supporting Ukraine, and there should be no step back, as it would mean compromising our principles and values, and actually undermining the rules-based order”.*

Iulian Chifu mentioned that the UN General Assembly adopted, on 14 November 2022, a resolution regarding the costs of the war and sanctioning Russia *“for war crimes, for destruction, for all the behaviour unsuitable for the international law”* in Ukraine.

At the same time, he showed that the population supported the assistance given to Ukraine and bore the costs generated by the increase in energy prices and inflation. *“Citizens assume the fact that we need to pay. To pay directly for assistance in Ukraine, for refugees, for the developments in Ukraine, for each and every issue (...) and the costs that are coming from the rising cost of the energy, the inflation in our countries. And we have done it, we succeeded in having the support of our people to do that, in order for our children and grandchildren to have the same life, with liberty, with democracy, with human rights observed, with their free choices, and not under the type of autocracy that Putin is imposing on these people”.*

Another highlighted aspect was that of the secondary sanctions: *“We cannot accept that somebody takes profit of the costs, the grievances and the support of our people for the war in Ukraine, and makes money or supports Russia to avoid the sanctions. This is another very important point and I am quite sure that in the foreseeable future we will see the developments in that area. It is a matter of justice, for each and every one of us, including at the international level, that anyone who introduces the war in Europe, as this is the case, is paying for the costs it has caused to our citizens and our countries”.*

He also stated that there is a war in Europe that *“no one thought possible”*, but that the factors that led to its emergence must be understood. Iulian Chifu added that the war, beyond the conventional component, has also an important hybrid component, along with the threats related to the use of nuclear capabilities. Following this war, as the adviser to the Prime Minister of Romania indicated, the states can evaluate the investments they have made in recent years in military capabilities as well as the national economies reaction to a situation in which a greater production of armaments and ammunition is necessary.



H.E. Bogdan Lucian AURESCU
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Romania

In his speech, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bogdan Aurescu, emphasized the need to strengthen the Defence and Deterrence Posture on the Eastern Flank, including in the Black Sea region, stressing the importance of fully implementing the historic decisions adopted at the NATO summits in 2022, in Brussels and Madrid, as well as those included in the Alliance New Strategic Concept. He mentioned that, in late November, he would host, “on behalf of Romania, for the first time, the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in Bucharest. (...) The Foreign Ministers meeting in Bucharest will also offer an opportunity to reflect on our future approach towards Russia, including on the long term”.

The Romanian official emphasized the importance of continuing support for partner states, especially those most affected by the effects of Russia’s aggressive pursuit of interests. In this context, he showed that “Our support for these countries should include at least three key areas: defence, resilience and economy, with the aim to ensure that these countries become self-sustainable, resistant to hybrid challenges and able to protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity”. Moreover, he highlighted that “the United States is also working on a national strategy focused on the Black Sea region. There is also a draft under discussion within the US Congress. This is an approach encouraged by Romania and firmly embedded in our bilateral agenda”.



David MUNIZ
Chargé d’Affaires,
US Embassy in Romania

The US Chargé d’Affaires in Bucharest, David Muniz, stated that the current situation: “is a constant reminder that this region is no longer in peace, and a constant reminder of the need for NATO in the first place”. (...)

Moreover, the US official emphasized that NATO allies have never been stronger, and the Alliance is so strong because of its members, Romania included, support. Romania was appreciated to be “in a critical place, a critical location, and giving critical help. You should be very proud of what you have achieved on behalf of the Alliance, on behalf of the Western world. (...) Romania and the Black Sea region are now, more than ever, integral to Europe’s defence and to its economy. Thanks to you, NATO remains strong and able to guarantee its Article 5 commitments”.

Regarding Russia’s actions in Ukraine, David Muniz showed that the horrors produced by this war, similar to those of the Second World War, will remain in the collective memory.

PANEL 1
THE CONSEQUENCES OF RUSSIA’S INVASION OF UKRAINE
FOR THE WIDER BLACK SEA AREA
– PLENARY SESSION
(COORDINATED BY THE NEW STRATEGY CENTER)

Moderator:

- **MG (r.) Leonardo DINU** – New Strategy Center

Speakers:

- **GEN Daniel PETRESCU** – Chief of Defence Staff
- **MG Konstantinos KOLOKOTRONIS** – Director, Military Intelligence & Security Branch, Hellenic National Defence General Staff
- **LTG (ret.) Ben HODGES** – Senior Advisor, Human Rights First
- **H.E. Cristian DIACONESCU** – New Strategy Center
- **Silviu NATE** – Director, Global Studies Center, “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu

The global and especially the regional security environment has dramatically changed following 24 February 2022, the day of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, affecting the rules-based international order.

The invasion has mobilised international efforts in coordinating support to Ukraine, both on national basis and as NATO member states. The support has got materialised in humanitarian, economic and military aid.

In this context, NATO has moved from reassurance to deterrence and defence measures, by deploying response forces included, to strengthen the posture and presence on the eastern flank. Considering the geographical location of Ukraine, the Wider Black Sea Area has gained even much more importance than it used to have prior to the invasion, maritime security being also mentioned as key to peace and prosperity in the new NATO Strategic Concept adopted in Madrid, in June 2022.

Being a complex problem, mainly because of the dual nature of challenges – external and internal – and the profound connection between the region experiencing direct conflict and other regions in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, the Wider Black Sea Area security requires a holistic approach.

The mentioned holistic approach should take into account various aspects in order to prevent the Wider Black Sea Area from becoming a strategic environment defined by chaos and the consequences of war from being globalised. Among those aspects, the following, which will represent the focus of the panel, can be mentioned: future emergent and disruptive technologies, unmanned systems, interagency communication, energy security, exploitation of resources and new sources of energy, supply security, food security, navigation safety, national and regional transport infrastructure, humanitarian crisis.

PANEL 2
THE FUTURE OF NATO: DETERRENCE AND DEFENCE
IN THE NEW STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT
 – PLENARY SESSION
 (COORDINATED BY THE CENTRE
 FOR DEFENCE AND SECURITY STRATEGIC STUDIES)

Moderators:

- **COL Florian CÎRCIUMARU** – Director, Centre for Defence & Security Strategic Studies, “Carol I” National Defence University
- **COL Dan-Lucian PETRESCU** – Centre for Defence & Security Strategic Studies, “Carol I” National Defence University

Speakers:

- **Antonia COLIBĂȘANU** – Senior Geopolitical Analyst & COO, Geopolitical Futures; Lecturer, SNSPA; Senior Associate Expert, New Strategy Center
- **MG Karol DYMANOWSKI** – Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces
- **Cynthia SALLOUM** – Faculty Advisor & Senior Researcher, NATO Defense College
- **Phillip PETERSEN** – President, New Generation Warfare Center
- **MG Iulian BERDILĂ** – Chief, Land Forces Staff

NATO has proved to be the world’s largest, enduring and most powerful military alliance. Considering the new strategic environment, even prior to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the Alliance launched the “NATO 2030” initiative, formulating the new strategic outlook, based on the identification of the main challenges and opportunities in the next ten years and beyond, as well as the concrete proposals to make NATO stronger and ready for the future.

As far as the challenges are concerned, they can be subsumed under three categories, namely a changing threat landscape, with a return of geopolitical strategic and systemic competition, shifting internal dynamics, with marked illiberalism, and continued evolution of warfare, with the emergence of new technologies, operational domains, military doctrines.

With regard to the proposals for NATO to adapt to growing global competition and more unpredictable threats, including terrorism, cyber-attacks, disruptive

technologies, climate change, and Russia and China’s challenges to the rules-based international order, they are related to deepening political consultation and coordination, strengthening deterrence and defence, improving resilience, preserving a technological edge, upholding the rules-based international order, boosting training and capability building, combating and adapting to climate change, investing in NATO.

Deterrence and defence represent the focus of the panel, especially in the context of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the strategic environment in the Wider Black Sea Area, and the adoption of the new NATO Strategic Concept in June 2022, in Madrid. At the Summit in Madrid, the Heads of State and Government agreed to bolster Allied deterrence and defence, reaffirming their commitment to maintaining an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities. Moreover, it was reiterated the importance of the Defence Investment Pledge to meet the NATO-agreed guideline of allocating 20% of annual defence spending on major new equipment by 2024 as well as the commitment to the full and speedy implementation of military plans to strengthen the Alliance’s deterrence and defence posture and to improve the readiness of forces to meet current and future defence needs. The deterrence and defence concept is complemented by the NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept, which provides a vision to guide the Alliance’s long-term warfare development to remain militarily strong now and in the future.

PANEL 3**ARMED CONFLICT NEAR NATO'S EASTERN FLANK:
LESSONS IDENTIFIED**

– PLENARY SESSION

(COORDINATED BY ROMANIAN MILITARY THINKING JOURNAL)

Moderator:

- **NAVY CAPT (ret.) Cristian BOGDAN** – Scientific Advisor, *Romanian Military Thinking Journal*

Keynote speaker:

- **H.E. Sorin DUCARU** – Director, European Union Satellite Centre

Speakers:

- **LTG Viorel PANĂ** – Chief, Air Force Staff
- **MG Corneliu POSTU** – Director, ROU Defence Staff
- **COL Marjan MILENKOVSKI** – J-1 Department, General Staff Army of the Republic of North Macedonia
- **Greg MELCHER** – Chief Operations Officer, New Generation Warfare Center
- **RADM (LH) Auras-Liviu COMAN** – Deputy Chief for Operations & Training, Naval Forces Staff

24 February 2022 will remain a watershed date in European history; that day, the Russian regime led by President Vladimir Putin launched a military invasion of Ukraine, marking the return of war in Europe for the first time in decades.

Much of what has transpired since the war's onset has come as a surprise, whether in its political and strategic dimensions or in operational and tactical terms. The war was not an impossibility prior to 24 February, but it was certainly viewed in the West as improbable from the perspective of a rational cost-benefit analysis. This is especially so when one considers Putin's attempt to swallow the entirety of Ukrainian territory. The means with which Russia attempted its conquest also raise a number of questions as to its armed forces' level of preparedness, organisation and operational ability. Today, it is clear that Russia's military capacity was overestimated while Ukraine's capacity to resist was underestimated.

For its part, the Atlantic Alliance has displayed a political unity that was admittedly lacking in recent years prior. The United States has demonstrated

unequivocal commitment to the defence of Europe, while European allies have shown both political resolve and a will to take defence spending seriously. Very little dissent or free riding has occurred in the West. Solidarity with Ukraine has been optimal, both politically and through the delivery of weapons.

The European Union (EU) too has acted swiftly, most notably through the imposition of sanctions on Russia in lockstep with US and UK sanctions. The EU has also decided to finance the delivery of weapons to Ukraine.

This debate will examine some identified lessons that NATO, its allies and partners can draw from the war in Ukraine while the Alliance released its new Strategic Concept and, once again, has demonstrated its ability to adapt to a new environment.

Topics:

- (Policy/Diplomacy) NATO's response to Russia's aggression and implications for both the EU and for NATO's new Strategic Concept;
- (Policy/Diplomacy) Diplomacy in conflict;
- (Military) Ukraine's military performance on the battlefield;
- (Military) Russia's military performance on the battlefield:
 - Attacks on Kyiv;
 - Air Operations;
 - Land Operations;
 - The War at Sea: Naval Blockade in the Sea of Azov and in the Black Sea;
 - The role of Nuclear Threats;
 - The new technology on the battlefield.
- (Economy) Economy supporting the participants in conflict;
- (Social) The human factor in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict;
- (Info) the role of STRATCOM before and during military operation in Ukraine;
- (Infrastructure) the role of infrastructure in military operations.

ROUND TABLE
GLOBAL COMPETITION AND THE IMPLICATIONS
FOR SECURITY AFFAIRS
 (COORDINATED BY “GENERAL NICOLAE CONDEESCU”
 ROMANIAN DEFENCE INTELLIGENCE TRAINING CENTRE)

Moderator:

- **Dan COLESNIUC** – National Defence and Security Expert, Ministry of National Defence

Speakers:

- **GEN (r.) Ștefan DĂNILĂ** – Former Chief of General Staff
- **MG Gabriel-Nicușor ANGHEL** – Chief, Military Intelligence Directorate
- **BG Laura JURCUȚ** – Chief, Directorate of Quality & Relations with Beneficiaries, Special Telecommunications Service
- **Adrian Victor VEVERA** – General Director, National Institute for Research & Development in Informatics
- **MG (r.) Cristian EREMIA** – Program Coordinator, Integrated Intelligence, Defence and Security Solutions
- **Iulia ANGHEL** – Lecturer, Faculty of Communication Sciences, Ecological University of Bucharest
- **LTC Alina BAȘCA** – Romanian Intelligence Service
- **Mirela ATANASIU** – Scientific Researcher, Centre for Defence and Security Strategic Studies, “Carol I” National Defence University
- **Cristian BARNA** – Training Manager, Intelligence4ALL

Global competition aligns across economic, military and political vectors, having at the core the competition of ideals, values and governance. That is why, the new NATO Strategic Concept emphasises the idea of rules-based international order, alongside one of multilateral norms and institutions.

The intrinsic challenges of the global competition require the review and revision of security affairs in line with the developments in the strategic environment. Global markets, complex global supply chains, encapsulating technological progress and strategic industry, define the competition.

Military strength and resiliency, including military-civil fusion, pose significant challenges for competitors. To achieve long-term strategic objectives without

crossing the threshold of military confrontation entails actions in all operational domains – cyber, space and hybrid ones included, as well as a wide range of soft power elements.

Global competition is also related to the political domain, as a whole-of-government approach should be developed and implemented not only to integrate all the indicators provided by intelligence, advanced forecasting and decision support capabilities but also to tailor the most appropriate responses, which get materialised in the economic and military fields, including strategic communication. In the long-term global competition for building capabilities, their interdependency and interoperability should be also taken into account.

Considering the redefinition of security by extending the concept to include the currently perceived threats as well as the normative aspects in the field, security affairs are intended to protect the state and its citizens by using diplomacy, maintaining effective armed forces, implementing civil defence and emergency preparedness measures, ensuring the resilience of critical infrastructure and using intelligence services to detect, avoid or counter threats. In this regard, security affairs unquestionably require multidisciplinary analyses to broaden the perspective and people educated and trained to perform such tasks.

The mentioned aspects will be enlarged upon within the panel that is organised as a roundtable discussion.

PANEL 4**INVESTMENTS IN SECURITY AND DEFENCE AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE EU STRATEGIC COMPASS AND THE NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT**

– PLENARY SESSION

(COORDINATED BY INTEGRATED INTELLIGENCE, DEFENCE AND SECURITY SOLUTIONS/I2DS2)

Moderator:

- **Niculae IANCU** – President I2DS2, Integrated Intelligence, Defence and Security Solutions

Keynote speaker:

- **Florin Marian SPĂTARU** – Minister of Economy

Speakers:

- **RADM (LH) Ion-Cristian LIȘMAN** – Deputy Chief of Defence Staff for Resources
- **Thomas-Durell YOUNG** – Program Manager, Europe Center for Civil-Military Relations, Naval Postgraduate School
- **Emanuel CERNAT** – Managing Partner, Corporate Affairs Strategies
- **BG (r.) Plamen BOGDANOV** – Associate Professor, University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Sofia
- **Adrian DUȚĂ** – Director, Euro-Atlantic Centre for Resilience

Romania has assumed a substantial increase in the defence budget, including investments in defence capabilities. Romania's level of ambition is aimed at a solid defence posture, in the national and allied context, in the Black Sea region, on NATO's eastern flank, and on the EU's eastern border.

National efforts should be correlated with the EU (EDF and PESCO) as well as NATO (DIANA included) defence capability development initiatives. Intelligent investments in the development of new capabilities entail the integration of our country into the European projects that are relevant to the objectives derived from the *2040 Defence Strategic Analysis* as well as a coherent contribution to the new Allied security and defence policies.

Topics:

- Impact of the EU Strategic Compass “investment” dimension on the Romanian defence capability development;
- NATO new Strategic Concept and Romania's level of ambition in the Allied context;
- European defence capability development through EDF and PESCO;
- Research and technological development in NATO. The DIANA Initiative implications for Romania's future defence technologies;
- Military mobility at the confluence of European and Transatlantic defence and security.

PANEL 5**MARCHING TO A NEW WORLD CHARACTERISED BY RIVALRY. NATO'S EASTERN FLANK AND ITS FUTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH RUSSIA**

– PLENARY SESSION

(COORDINATED BY THE CENTER FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND EARLY WARNING)

Moderator:

- **Narciz BĂLĂȘOIU** – Director, Center for Conflict Prevention & Early Warning

Keynote speaker:

- **H.E. Bogdan Lucian AURESCU** – Minister of Foreign Affairs

Speakers:

- **RADM (UH) Mihai PANAIT** – Chief, Naval Forces Staff
- **Iulian CHIFU** – State Advisor to the Romanian Prime Minister for Foreign Relations, Security & Strategic Affairs
- **Sergei KONOPLYOV** – Kennedy School of Government, Harvard
- **Mustafa AYDIN** – Professor, Kadir Has University, Istanbul
- **Orysia LUTSEVICH** – Managing Director, Ukraine Forum, Chatham House
- **Oazu NANTOI** – Member of the Parliament of Moldova, Intelligence Oversight Committee
- **Greg SIMONS** – Researcher, Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Uppsala University

The commonly accepted definition of great power takes into account population, territory, resources, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence that can assure the ability to exert influence on a global scale. From this perspective, the world may be viewed as undergoing a new phase of competition, entailing mainly economic elements, or even rivalry, as well as political, military and geostrategic aspects, which can lead to a multipolar international system. The great power rivalry could represent a source of instability for a future multipolar world. Moreover, the current distribution of power allows not only great but also middle and small powers as well as non-state actors to have military capabilities that threaten global security, which further complicates the picture.

In this context, to which the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is added, NATO's eastern flank and its future relationship with Russia is complex. The topic is addressed in the new NATO Strategic Concept adopted in July this year. At the NATO

Summit in Madrid, Allies agreed that Russia is the most significant and direct threat to their security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Consequently, they also agreed to further strengthen NATO's posture. However, the allies remain willing to keep open channels of communication with Moscow to manage and mitigate risks, prevent escalation and increase transparency as NATO seeks stability and predictability in the Euro-Atlantic area and between NATO and Russia.

Therefore, after NATO's practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia was suspended in April 2014, in response to Russia's military intervention and aggressive actions in Ukraine, and its illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, and Russia suspended, in October 2021, the work of its diplomatic mission to NATO, and required NATO to close down the NATO Information Office in Moscow and suspend the work of the NATO Military Liaison Mission in Moscow, in grand strategic terms, the relations between NATO and Russia will remain highly consequential. The war in Ukraine has changed NATO's understanding of Russia's priorities, risk tolerance, and ultimate foreign policy aims. On the one hand, it compels NATO to return to its core mission, namely the defence of Europe, and to adapt its posture accordingly as quickly and sustainably as possible. On the other hand, considering the mentioned aspects of competition and rivalry, the challenges in Asia and the Middle East included, it can lead to reconceptualising alternative frameworks in international relations.

These are some of the topics that will be discussed within the panel.

HISTORY SECTION

THE WAY TO COLD WAR. POLITICAL MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS AND SECURITY DYNAMICS IN THE WIDER BLACK SEA AREA, 1942-1955 (COORDINATED BY THE INSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY HISTORY)

During the Second World War, 1941-1944, the Black Sea Campaigns involved the Axis forces, namely the Romanian and Bulgarian navies as well as German and Italian units, and the Soviet naval forces. The German air superiority contested the Soviet superiority in surface ships. All of the major Soviet shipyards were located in Ukraine – Nikolayev and Sevastopol, in the Crimean Peninsula. They were occupied in 1941 and the ships were evacuated to harbours in Georgia, which became the main bases for surviving fleet. As the Montreux Convention allowed Turkey to close straits to all military traffic, some ships were obtained in Romania, Bulgaria or Hungary and then converted to serve the German cause.

In 1942, operations were dominated by the Siege of Sevastopol. In 1943, the Kerch-Eltingen Operation had the object of defeating and forcing the withdrawal of the German forces from the Crimean Peninsula. In 1944, a series of offensives by the Red Army were directed at the German-occupied Crimea, being known as the Battle of Crimea.

Between 1945 and 1946, there were three major crises considered to be the triggers of the Cold War, namely in Iran, Turkey and Greece. They intersected with great power rivalries to increase tensions between the Soviet Union and the Anglo-American allies. The crises were part of a general restructuring of power relationships in the region, many historians considering the Iranian crisis as a pivotal event in the Cold War, which shaped the foreign and domestic policies of most nations around the globe, in the context of what was known as the bipolar international order.

The mentioned crises were iconic for the intersection of local interests, local power struggles and great power politics.

However, the causes of the Cold War were not represented by geopolitics and strategy alone.

To them, there were added changes in the balance of political forces, which further complicated international relations. The post-war transnational ideological conflict between the USA and the USSR was part of the ongoing European restructuring, in political, economic and military terms, and internal power relationships.

In this context and following the logic of bipolar international order, the two political-military alliances that dominated the international stage for about 50 years were established, namely the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, in 1949, and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, in 1955, having the USA and the USSR respectively as informal leaders.

The round-table discussion will enlarge upon the mentioned aspects.

PANEL 1
FROM THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD
TO THE PEACE SETTLEMENTS, 1943-1945

Moderator:

- **Manuel STĂNESCU** – Deputy Director, Institute for Political Studies of Defence & Military History

Speakers:

- **Petre OTU** – Professor, Chairperson, Romanian Military History Committee
- **Dan-Dragoș SICHIGEA** – Chief, Mangalia Museum Section, National Museum of the Romanian Navy
- **George UNGUREANU** – Curator, National Military Archives of Romania, Central Archive Repository
- **Alin SPĂNU** – Adjunct Professor, University of Bucharest

PANEL 2
GEOSTRATEGIC BALANCE AT THE BLACK SEA
DURING EARLY COLD WAR, 1946-1955

Moderator:

- **Carmen-Sorina RÎJNOVEANU** – Director, Institute for Political Studies of Defence & Military History

Speakers:

- **Constantin HLIHOR** – Professor, University of Bucharest
- **Liviu ȚÎRĂU** – Associate Professor, Faculty of European Studies, Babeș-Bolyai University
- **Liliana BOCȘAN** – Associate Professor, University of Bucharest
- **Lucian DRĂGHICI** – Researcher, Romanian National Military Archives

ROUND TABLE
ROMANIA AND THE EARLY COLD WAR

Moderator:

- **Petre OTU** – Professor, Chairperson, Romanian Military History Committee

Speakers:

- **Bogdan SCHIPOR** – Senior Researcher, “A.D.Xenopol” History Institute the Romanian Academy
- **Gheorghe ONIȘORU** – Professor, “Ștefan cel Mare” University, Suceava
- **Ion RÎȘNOVEANU** – Scientific Researcher, “Ferdinand I” National Military Museum
- **Alexandru OȘCA** – Deputy Chairperson, Romanian Military History Committee
- **Cristina BRĂGEA** – Scientific Researcher, Institute for Political Studies of Defence & Military History
- **Ion GIURCĂ** – Professor, “Hyperion” University