STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR DORU COSTEA,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ROMANIA
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE (UNGA 59)
THEMATIC DEBATE ON OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
- NEW YORK, 19 OCTOBER 2004 -

Mr. Chairman,

Romania has aligned with the statement of the European Union, just delivered by the distinguished Ambassador Chris Sanders of the Netherlands. While fully sharing the EU policy, objectives and demarches in the area, we would like to briefly point out our national contribution with respect to their fulfillment.

Mr. Chairman,

The so-called “other weapons of mass destruction”, namely the chemical and biological ones, continue to pose threats to the international security and stability, in spite of the multilateral agreements prohibiting the production and use of these weapons.

And this is not because the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) or the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) failed their ultimate target. As we heard two weeks ago from the Director-General, “the OPCW is moving decisively from being a new organisation still in the early stages of fulfilling its mandate, to being a mature one with a solid and widely recognized record of achievement and the increasing support of the international community”.

Romania attaches particular importance to the OPCW activity and continues to contribute to the promotion of its core objectives, mainly the CWC universalization and the national implementation. In this last instance, our country hosted, between 17 and 19 May 2004, the third meeting of the National Authorities of the Eastern-European States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Representatives of 25 National Authorities from all the regions of the world, as well as from international organizations such as the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the European Council of Chemical Industry Associations (CEFIC) discussed the practical actions needed to fulfill the objectives of the OPCW Article VII Action Plan on enhancing the effectiveness of the CWC’s National Implementation Measures. The status of the
Convention's implementation in Eastern Europe was reviewed, focusing on the requirements for legislative and administrative provisions to monitor and declare scheduled chemicals. Participants shared their experience in this topical area, further strengthening the cooperative network established to provide implementation support to individual States Parties.

The United States of America and Romania launched, in this context, an assistance programme for the implementation of the Convention; it is about a software to be available to all National Authorities in need of legal and practical support in the process of applying CWC provisions.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the Biological Weapons Convention, Romania shares the conviction that the programme of work for the period 2003 – 2005 will significantly strengthen the BWC. The new format facilitates the exchange of views, experience and best practices at expert level and may result in common understanding and concrete recommendations – the necessary input for the 2006 Review Conference. Romanian authorities will continue to actively follow up this new process with a view to improving the national legislation and mechanisms necessary for the BWC implementation. An ad hoc inter-ministerial group was established in order to coordinate the internal BWC-related activities.

Mr. Chairman,

In today's environment, overshadowed by incidents like the 2001 anthrax letters, not only has the proliferation of WMD become an imminent threat but also more specifically, terrorists' access to and use of chemical and biological weapons prove to be a frightening possibility.

Against this background, Romania welcomes the suitable responses of the international community, such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and we hope that we will soon witness its concrete results in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors.

We are looking forward for the decisions and measures the First Committee will adopt in order to further strengthen the norm against the proliferation and use of chemical and biological weapons, with particular focus on terrorists and terror groups.

Thank you for your attention.