

**MINISTERIAL MEETING
DANUBE-BLACK SEA: TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP FOR
INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT
(Bucharest, 23 February 2007)**

**Statement of Mrs. Lucia Ana VARGA
State Secretary
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATER MANAGEMENT**

ROMANIA

**Mr. Ministers,
Mr. Ambassadors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The importance of the fact that Romania has taken over the ICPDR Presidency this year has been amplified by the fact that our country has become European Union member state. Having the presidency of the ICPDR, Romania has particularly in view to get the political support for the continuation and intensification of the water and aquatic environment protection activities undertaken by the Danube river basin states, Parties to the ICPDR and the involvement of the Black Sea riparian states in activities organized in this field by the European Union.

As a Danube basin and Black Sea riparian country, Romania is especially interested in joining the efforts from these two geographical areas for the improvement of the water quality and the aquatic environment.

From this point of view, we consider that one of the priorities of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River is the continuation of the Water Framework Directive implementation. This year is very important because we will begin the elaboration of the Programme of measures for the achievement of good water quality status. This action will impose that we have to revise the way of achieving economic development of the region.

In this way, we consider that it is necessary to continue to give a special attention to the nutrients and dangerous substances discharges into the water. These measures will have a significant benefic impact on the Black Sea ecosystem. However, we cannot reach the proposed objective – the recovery of the marine ecosystem to 1960s conditions, without the substantial input of the riparian Black Sea countries, both regarding the waste water discharges elimination and the marine resource over-exploitation.

Another priority of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River will need to have in view the strengthening of the co-operation for the flood risk management. The floods during 2006 have shown us that there is a need for a better co-ordination among the Danube countries, in order to increase the forecast for response. In addition, taking into consideration the more obvious climate change phenomenon, we have to review the national and regional co-operation strategies in

order to face the extreme phenomena. Because we are now at a final stage which has involved a massive GEF and other international financial institution intervention in the region, we think that this is the moment to think about other types of instruments which allow us to support the necessary investments for the water protection. In this way, a special attention has to be granted to the contribution which the private sector needs to have within the environment investments, for a long term sustainable development of the region. In order to accomplish this task, it is necessary to establish, at the ICPDR level, a framework partnership with the representatives of the major economic sectors, which can be particularly applied at the national level.

We need to have in view that satisfied results at regional level can only be obtained by establishing and achieving concrete objectives at national level. Because almost of the Romanian territory is situated in the Danube basin, during the last two years, the Romanian Government has granted a special attention to the programmes and projects which have as objective the protection of the water quality at national level. In this way, we have been approved 1.4 billion euros loans contracting between 2006-2009 for financing the priority environment and water management investments, which include urban waste water treatment, mining zones rehabilitation and the restoration of some sites affected by the historical pollution.

In addition, we will start the implementation of a Programme for the reduction of the nutrient pollution from agriculture sources, financed by the World Bank, estimated at 50 million euros and also of a 510 million euros programme for carrying out, rehabilitation and extension of the sewerage and waste water treatment systems in the cities.

Regarding the Danube aquatic ecosystem recovery, Romania has forbidden the sturgeon fishing for a period of 10 years. By taking this measure we have in view the recovery of this old species stocks, which are very valuable from economic point of view.

Finally, I express my hope that the regional co-operation outlines for an integrated water management in the Danube basin will be an example at European level and, why not, worldwide.

Thank you for your kind attention.