

Romanian DefMin Ciuca receives Turkish counterpart, discuss NATO bilateral cooperation

Minister of National Defence Nicolae Ciuca received on Tuesday, at the Ministry of National Defence's headquarters, his counterpart from the Republic of Turkey, Hulusi Akar, during his official visit to Romania.

According to a release from the Ministry of National Defence (MApN), the meeting, rescheduled from 2020 in the context of the restrictive measures imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, had a comprehensive agenda and included topics related to the security situation at international and regional level, allied efforts to consolidate NATO's deterrence and defence position, with focus on the eastern flank, as well as issues on the EU-Turkey agenda.

At the beginning of the meeting, Minister Ciuca presented a message of condolences to his counterpart for the losses suffered by the Turkish Army last week, following the crash of a helicopter.

At the same time, according to the quoted source, the Romanian minister underlined the importance of Turkey's consistent participation in the staffing of multinational structures in Romania, especially in positions within the South-East Multinational Corps Command (HQ MNC-SE), and appreciated both the significant role of the Turkish Army in NATO operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo and in the EU missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the presence of this important allied state in various regional initiatives.

A distinct point on the agenda of the meeting was the bilateral cooperation in the field of defence, highlighting the importance and interest of the sides to strengthen this relationship under the Joint Declaration of Strategic Partnership, signed by Romania and Turkey a decade ago.

In this context, the importance of the cooperation of the armed forces of Romania and Turkey for the consolidation of security in the Black Sea region was reiterated and the participation of the Turkish military staff in the NATO exercises organized in Romania was appreciated.

"This year we will have a substantial participation of Turkish land units in NATO exercises that will take place in Romania. So, for us, one decade after the signing of the Joint Declaration of the Strategic Partnership, the Turkish Army remains a key-ally in the Black Sea region," concluded Minister Ciuca, according to the release.

The meeting between the two ministers was attended by the Chief of the Defense Staff, Lieutenant General Daniel Petrescu, and the Secretary of State for Defence Policy, Planning and International Relations, Simona Cojocaru.

The program of the activity in Romania of the Turkish Minister of National Defence, Hulusi Akar, also included a visit to the Command of the South-East Multinational Division, a meeting with the HQ MNC-SE command team and a wreath-laying ceremony at the Turkish Heroes Cemetery in Bucharest.