

Romania approves US military surge for war against Iran amid deepening domestic crisis

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The Romanian government is playing an increasingly important role in the military drive of both US imperialism in the Middle East and the NATO powers against Russia in Ukraine.

On March 11, Romania officially approved the increase of US military assets at its air bases in Câmpia Turzii and Mihail Kogălniceanu (MK), and their use in the war of extermination against Iran. The legal requirements were railroaded through on the same day.

President Nicușor Dan chaired a Supreme Council of National Defence (CSAT) meeting to approve the formal US request, after which a classified document was passed through parliamentary commissions and a plenum vote.

The vote was carried with the support of the entire political establishment, with the far-right parties masquerading as political opposition.

Romanian officials absurdly described the US deployment as “defensive.” Dan referred to “refueling jets, as has already been discussed in the public space, monitoring equipment, satellite communications equipment, connected to the Deveselu shield [the Deveselu Military Base is a Romanian NATO base hosting the US Navy Aegis Ashore Ballistic Missile Defense System]. This equipment is defensive and is not equipped with actual weaponry.”

Even though the official document remains classified and was only available to MPs in the hours before the vote, Romanian press reports citing insider sources describe hundreds of military personnel and fighter jets. It is widely understood that the MK air base will function as an important platform for bombers flying in from Western Europe towards Iran.

The MK base, situated near the port city of Constanța on the Black Sea, is a vital military hub for US

imperialism. The Romanian government has recently embarked on a massive expansion of the base, said to be worth €2.5 billion [US\$2.9 billion], which will see it become NATO's largest European base.

MK was first established as an American air base in 1999 to support the NATO onslaught against neighboring Serbia. Later it became a vital staging ground for the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, and was involved in CIA torture flights. The base plays a key role in the war against Russia in Ukraine, providing a platform for espionage and targeting for NATO's Ukrainian proxies.

Thus, the development of the MK air base sharply illustrates the manner in which the Romanian bourgeoisie integrated the country into the structures of world imperialism after the restoration of capitalism by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The trampling of human rights and wars of aggression were carried out either in complete secrecy from the population or despite public opposition. This was possible only through the political disenfranchisement of the working class, the result of the betrayals of Stalinism and its successor organisations. In 1994, the Romanian political establishment rallied around the so-called Snagov Declaration initiated by post-Stalinist leader Ion Iliescu. It postulated that whatever tactical disagreements the various political forces would present in public, they would all remain committed to “Euro-Atlantic” integration.

The same consensus holds today, as Romania is drawn into the emerging global war instigated by US imperialism. The day after the approval of the US military surge, President Dan met with Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky in Bucharest. The two signed a “strategic partnership” and agreed to set up

joint drone production facilities in Romania. Zelensky also visited an F-16 pilot training center that has been training Ukrainian pilots since 2024.

The Romanian ruling elites are also having to navigate the breakdown of the imperialist alliance between the European powers and the US. The current dominant faction, around Dan, favors an attempt to appease both sides in order to maintain Romania's "security interests," i.e., its predatory regional ambitions. After the undemocratic suppression of the most aggressive pro-Trump candidate, C?lin Georgescu, in the previous elections, Dan has made several overtures toward the US administration, including his participation as an "observer" in Trump's so-called "Board of Peace" meeting February 19. Romania is also involved in the European-led initiative to "reopen the Strait of Hormuz," with Defence Minister Radu Miru?? volunteering staff officers, divers, and de-mining equipment for a potential European operation in the strait.

The oil price hikes caused by the war against Iran are intensifying an already advanced economic and political crisis in the country. Loans of tens of billions of euros contracted in recent years for rearmament are fueling a public debt of almost 60 percent of GDP. At the same time, the population is confronting an inflation rate of 9.2 percent, the highest in the European Union. The economy has officially entered a technical recession following two consecutive quarters of GDP contraction and is heading towards a full recession.

The grand coalition government of Ilie Bolojan, supported by President Dan, is using the debt crisis to attempt a systematic dismantling of what remains of workers' social rights, including deep attacks on education and steps towards the privatization of the country's healthcare system.

Following the model imposed by the bourgeoisie internationally, government cuts are giving way to a wider wave of job losses. Tens of thousands of jobs have been lost in recent months in manufacturing, IT, and the services sector. Over 1,200 auto workers are being laid off at Dacia Mioveni (Renault group) in the first part of the year, while over 3,000 workers are currently in "technical unemployment" at the Gala?i steelworks. Almost 1,500 fixed-term workers have been left without jobs at the Oltenia Energy Complex (CEO), with hundreds more contracts expected not to be

renewed on May 1.

Romanian workers can defend their jobs and social rights only in a struggle against capitalism and imperialist war. This requires the development of rank-and-file organisations in workplaces and communities, independent of the trade union bureaucracy, and with an international socialist strategy.



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