



Integrated Country Strategy

Romania

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Table of Contents

1. Chief of Mission Priorities	1
2. Mission Strategic Framework	6
3. Mission Goals and Objectives	8
4. Management Objective	20

1. Chief of Mission Priorities

U.S. Embassy Bucharest has established three priority goals: Addressing Global Challenges in Partnership with Romania, Promoting Prosperity, Strengthening Democracy, and building on a strong foundation of People-to-People Contacts to further deepen our bilateral relationship. Externally, we will engage the Government of Romania, civil society, the media, the business community, the academic realm, and directly with Romanian citizens to advance these goals.

In 2021, Romania and the United States marked 25 years since the establishment of our bilateral Strategic Partnership and 10 years since the signing of an agreement to base a U.S. missile defense system in Romania. Our relationship with this strong and growing NATO Ally continues to hit new heights of cooperation, collaboration, and mutual support. Romania is a leader in its region of Europe, fully committed to spending 2% of its GDP on defense and vocal proponent of NATO's collective defense role, acting to protect its economy and information space from malign influence, and seeking to become a significant exporter of energy to increase the energy independence of Central European and Black Sea partners. Romania has pushed back malign influence in its nuclear power sector and partnered with American firms to provide cutting-edge, greener nuclear power, in large part to take important steps forward in combating climate change. We will continue to seek ways that the United States can partner with this emergent leader to tackle the full range of global challenges. Pre-COVID, Romania's economy was one of the fastest growing among middle-income countries globally, and we seek to help it return to high performance, especially in innovative sectors where Romania has flourished and where ties to U.S. firms are strong with potential for further growth. A key factor for enabling economic prosperity is Romania's continued commitment to democratic values and the rule of law, which is our third goal. Assisting pro-reform forces and Romania's ongoing effort to fight corruption is a critical component of this effort, and in particular we will emphasize the fight against human trafficking, which remains a major challenge in Romania.

As referenced above, many challenges remain in our bilateral relationship and within Romanian society at large. Despite its promising economic potential, Romania remains the second poorest EU member; EU Structural and Cohesion fund absorption rates continue to hover

Approved: April 14, 2022

around 50%; transportation infrastructure lags behind its neighbors; and corruption is still endemic, despite significant efforts by many elements in the Government and the judiciary. Yet, in general Romania's future prospects trend upward and its potential remains great, and our mission goals reflect that reality.

Global Challenges

Our first priority is addressing global challenges. Romania has matured in the last 30 years as a democracy and as a U.S. Ally, becoming a voice within NATO and the EU that is often aligned with the United States. We seek to build on this trajectory to partner with Romania in addressing pressing global challenges, from malign influence in the Black Sea region to climate change and international cyber threats. All of this is aimed at making both Romanians and Americans safer.

Romania's leadership within NATO as an Ally committed to meeting the 2% GDP benchmark on defense spending is now well-established. Our efforts will aim to continue its strong defense modernization program to bolster the Alliance's collective defense of the Black Sea region and NATO's Southwestern Flank. Romania's acquisition of American mobile rocket artillery, sophisticated air defense systems, modern combat aircraft and infantry fighting vehicles, and a host of other important systems should continue to transform the already-capable Romanian military into a first-rate partner. We will also work to ensure Romania is prepared to participate in international missions aligned with U.S., NATO, and EU security goals, now that the NATO mission in Afghanistan has ended. Our outstanding military-to-military relationship will continue to drive this crucial pillar of engagement.

Romania's very strong potential in the energy sector can, with proper attention and the right decisions, be leveraged into making it a regional energy exporter and model for its neighbors. In particular, President Iohannis' commitment at COP26 that Romania would be the first user of cutting-edge U.S. Small Modular Reactor (SMR) technology represents a very important step forward for Romania's contribution to fighting climate change. We will work with Romania to speed adoption of energy efficient technologies to achieve a climate resilient, carbon-neutral, and greener economy. This will also greatly boost Romania's economic potential.

Approved: April 14, 2022

We have no higher priority than the protection of American citizens traveling or residing in Romania. Doing so has been made more difficult (though not impossible) over the past two years by COVID, but we will continue to do everything we can to maintain this high standard of service. By facilitating legitimate travel to the United States, we will also help boost economic and people-to-people ties, which are included in other mission objectives.

Romania's strong, possibly outsized IT sector illustrates a national strength in cyber skills. Romania secured from the EU the prestige of hosting the EU's cyber resilience center in Bucharest. As the GOR aims to increase Romania's enterprise-wide cyber capabilities we will work with it to encourage continued growth and development in this area.

Prosperity

Romania is a country with enormous economic potential. Most analysts expect a return to high pre-COVID growth levels in 2022. However, the investment climate, while inviting, remains uneven and not as attractive as it could be. American investment is present in many sectors of the economy, but it is in the IT sector where it is perhaps most visible and holds the most potential for significant growth. Romania will also receive upwards of \$80 billion in EU post-COVID recovery funds, much of which is slated for infrastructure, healthcare, and digitalization efforts. Not only is there strong potential for U.S. commercial benefit from this program, but there also remains a preexisting challenge to properly absorb and utilize EU funds, something with which the country has struggled. Leveraging the expertise of the private sector, particularly among Romanians working for American and other western firms, we will work with the GOR to encourage reform of public procurement.

Romania has been a leader in countering economic malign influence. It reversed a deal with a U.S.-indicted Chinese firm to refurbish and expand its nuclear power plant and signed a new deal with an American consortium after approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with the United States on civil nuclear issues. It also passed legislation to keep its 5G telecom network out of the hands of malign actors. It will, at the time of this writing, soon adopt regulations to screen foreign investments for malign actors. We will continue to bolster Romania's leadership in this area.

Approved: April 14, 2022

Romania's healthcare sector has suffered from chronic underinvestment and has been hit hard by the pandemic. It will get a boost from EU funds, as noted previously. We also see significant interest in scientific and health exchanges with the United States and will pursue ways to foster and expand this links, to support innovation and improve the sector's performance.

Democratic Values

In its 30-plus year history since the end of communism, Romania has embraced democratic values – popular elections, peaceful transitions of government, human rights, respect for minorities, and the rule of law. It has become a leader in promoting and respecting these values in a region where other post-communist countries have seen a degree of backsliding.

This is not to say that challenges do not remain in this area. Since the 1989 revolution, the Embassy has actively helped Romania advance democratic values in many areas of society, and we will continue to prioritize this as a mission goal.

In the past few years, we have seen the replacement of a corrupt government which actively damaged the rule of law with a more reform-minded governing coalition. Nonetheless, serious challenges remain in reforming the criminal justice system so that it operates fully in accord with EU laws and principles. Public corruption, organized crime, and human trafficking continue to pose barriers to economic growth and contribute to the disillusionment of Romanian voters, who have increasingly turned to populist and anti-system parties. The Embassy, through engagement of various agencies at post, will continue to strongly advocate - in public and private – continued reform of the judiciary, unfettered application of anti-corruption measures, and increased government transparency. We continue to have significant influence in this realm, along with the EU, with which we will seek to work closely. Law enforcement cooperation, conducted through various agencies, also serves not only to protect the United States, but as a practical reinforcement of our values.

Respect for and social inclusion of minorities has advanced since 1989, but there are areas where more progress must be made. In particular, the Roma community still faces many obstacles in terms of overcoming discrimination, especially in education, employment, health care, and housing. We will continue to encourage and assist the Government of Romania to

Approved: April 14, 2022

make progress in more fully integrating the Roma. In addition, anti-Semitism continues to garner support among certain parts of Romanian society, as does resistance to teaching Romanian schoolchildren about the Holocaust (this is currently not done to any great degree in the Romanian school system). We will support Romanian efforts to address this challenge.

We have added to this goal a new objective of building up people-to-people contacts between our two countries, capitalizing on the enormous goodwill Romanians have towards the United States to deepen and broaden our ties and to further embed democratic values within Romanian society. We want to see this relationship begin to resemble those the United States enjoys with other longstanding friends and Allies, in which people-to-people connections in all areas thrive independently of government engagement.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Cooperate with Romania to address global challenges and security threats to make Americans and Romanians safer.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Romania, supported by US Embassy security assistance and cooperation mechanisms, continues to modernize and strengthen its armed forces to bolster the Alliance's collective defense as a regional pole in NATO's Southeastern Flank, and as an active participant in international missions aligned with U.S. NATO, and EU security goals.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Romania adopts energy efficient technologies and addresses environmental concerns to achieve a climate resilient, carbon-neutral, and greener economy.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Support and protect American citizens traveling to, or residing in, Romania and facilitate legitimate travel to the United States to strengthen our shared values and ties.
- **Mission Objective 1.4:** Romania enhances its enterprise-wide cyber capabilities, laws, and policies to meet its national and regional security needs.

Mission Goal 2: Promote economic prosperity to increase the country's security, competitiveness, and investment and trade opportunities for U.S. companies.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Romania develops a more attractive, transparent, and stable investment environment through substantive consultation with the private sector and continued economic reforms.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Romania strengthens its economic security by countering malign influence and other economic security threats.
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Romania increases international cooperation with science and health experts to foster innovation and improve health sector performance.

Mission Goal 3: Strengthen democracy, improve rule of law, and create a more equal and inclusive society by promoting Euro-Atlantic standards and people-to-people ties between the U.S. and Romania.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Romania improves rule of law by increasing its capacity at the governmental, societal, and private sector levels to more effectively combat public corruption and organized crime; and by strengthening law enforcement cooperation to increase the effectiveness and fairness of the justice system.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Romania strengthens its democratic institutions by increasing government accountability and transparency, respect for the separation of powers; and by demonstrating greater respect for and social inclusion of vulnerable, marginalized, and minority communities.
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Strengthen people-to-people ties between the United States and Romania with a focus on both underrepresented and under-engaged groups.

Management Objective 1: Provide an efficient and effective platform that allows the Mission to achieve U.S. policy objectives.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1: | Cooperate with Romania to address global challenges and security threats to make Americans and Romanians safer.

Description: | Since joining NATO, Romania has shown remarkable progress in its willingness and capability to defend itself as well as NATO's eastern flank. The Alliance is at its strongest when all members contribute a fair share in the face of the many challenges we confront. Toward this goal, Embassy Bucharest will continue working to strengthen Romania's capacity to respond to shared security threats and other global challenges. Furthermore, the 2021 White House Interim National Security Strategic Guidance requires the United States to reinvigorate and modernize alliances and partnerships in order to capitalize on a unique source of strength and American advantage from trusted Allies shouldering security responsibilities against common threats and adversaries.

Objective 1.1: | Romania, supported by US Embassy security assistance and cooperation mechanisms, continues to modernize and strengthen its armed forces to bolster the Alliance's collective defense as a regional pole in NATO's Southeastern Flank, and as an active participant in international missions aligned with U.S. NATO, and EU security goals.

- **Objective 1.1 Justification:** | Romania's political will to participate in U.S., NATO, and other international security missions is very high. However, at times Romania's military capabilities, older military equipment, and outdated doctrine and policy prevent it from doing more. The USG should assist the Romanian military with increasing its military capabilities and needed military acquisitions, thereby reducing its dependence on older equipment and increasing NATO interoperability via our military-to-military engagements, security assistance programs, and political and technical support. We should also help the Romanian military finish its transformation efforts, wiping away the final vestiges of its Warsaw Pact Era past.

- **Objective 1.1 Linkages:** | This Mission Goal supports multiple objectives from the March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy: to defend and nurture the underlying sources of American strength, including our national defense; to promote a favorable distribution of power to deter and prevent adversaries from directly threatening the United States or its allies; and by leading and sustaining a stable and open international system, underwritten by democratic alliances, partnerships, multilateral institutions, and rules. This goal also advances State – USAID Joint Strategic Mission Goal 1: to renew U.S. leadership and mobilize coalitions to address the global challenges that have the greatest impact on Americans’ security and well-being. Additionally, this goal supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy Goals 1 and 4: to revitalize European alliances and partnerships; and to leverage alliances and partnerships to address global and regional threats and challenges. Finally, the goal aligns with USEUCOM priorities to Deter Russian Aggression, Enable the NATO Alliance, Preserve U.S. Strategic Partnerships, and Focus on Key Relationships.
- **Objective 1.1 Risks:** | Failure to modernize its military would weaken Romania’s role as a leader in the Black Sea Region and on NATO’s Southeastern Flank, thereby diminishing US presence and leaving the region susceptible to influence from malign actors. In addition, as NATO partners advance with new technologies, Romania would be less able to participate with their legacy systems, leaving them further and further behind.

Objective 1.2: | Romania adopts energy efficient technologies and addresses environmental concerns to achieve a climate resilient, carbon-neutral, and greener economy.

- **Objective 1.2 Justification:** | Romania is aware of the importance of maintaining energy independence, even as its energy imports grow. In response, it is looking to develop its civilian nuclear capacity and offshore resources to account for future energy needs. Additionally, advances in clean energy technologies are essential to slowing climate change and to helping Romania fulfill its international climate obligations. To help Romania achieve economic prosperity through sustainable, affordable, and reliable energy access, we will continue to support developing the country's administrative

capacity and an investment-friendly legal framework. We will also continue our bilateral cooperation on offshore wind projects, promoting civil nuclear expansion, and advocating for U.S. Advanced Small Modular Reactor (SMR) technology as a safe, clean, and affordable nuclear power option to replace phased-out coal power plants.

- **Objective 1.2 Linkages:** | This Mission Objective advances State – USAID Joint Strategic Goal 1: to Renew U.S. Leadership and Mobilize Coalitions to Address the Global Challenges that Have the Greatest Impact on Americans’ Security and Well-being. Additionally, this Objective supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy, Goal 2, Sub-objective 4 to expand partnership with Europe to increase energy security and prevent Russia from using energy as a weapon by promoting diversified energy supplies and green technologies. Finally, this Objective supports JRS Goal 4, Sub-objective 1 to Secure Ambitious Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Outcomes in Support of the Paris Agreement Implementation.
- **Objective 1.2 Risks:** | Failure to diversify energy resources, strengthen regulations, and transition to greener technologies endangers Romania’s energy security and independence and poses an increased threat to global climate stability. In addition, a lack of progress on energy transition initiatives may lead to the country’s inability to meet its EU and international climate obligations. We will support energy cooperation with Romania to ensure the country can achieve its climate and energy diversification goals. We will also work with Romania to ensure that the EU’s policies and financing allow for investment into new technologies, including civilian nuclear projects.

Objective 1.3: | Support and protect American citizens traveling to, or residing in, Romania and facilitate legitimate travel to the United States to strengthen our shared values and ties.

- **Objective 1.3 Justification:** | U.S. Mission Romania has no priority higher than ensuring the safety and wellbeing of U.S. citizens. We support U.S. citizens in Romania by advocating for their interests while helping them exercise fundamental rights such as the right to vote. We provide emergency services in the event of death, destitution, disaster, imprisonment, or medical emergency, and provide routine services such as

issuing U.S. passports and documenting the births and deaths of U.S. citizens in Romania. We provide information that allows U.S. citizens to make informed decisions about their safety in Romania, a service more critical than ever since the emergence of COVID-19. U.S. Mission Romania also enables U.S. economic growth, family reunification, and cross-cultural exchange by facilitating legal travel to the U.S. Finally, we help keep the American public safe by carefully applying U.S. immigration laws and diligently vetting potential security threats.

- **Objective 1.3 Linkages:** | This mission objective supports Mission Goal 5 of the FY 2022-2026 Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan which calls for the protection of U.S. citizens overseas and the facilitation of legal travel to the U.S. It also supports the NSC's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance of collaborating with partner federal agencies to ensure that those who enter the United States have been properly vetted.
- **Objective 1.3 Risks:** | The COVID-19 pandemic has presented two major challenges for providing consular services to U.S. citizens in Romania and facilitating legal travel to the United States. The first is the persistent threat COVID poses to normal operations. While making every effort to maximize the availability of all consular services, we will continue to mitigate this challenge through flexible work schedules, and by ensuring safety protocols such as social distancing and the limiting of appointments as necessary for those requesting Consular services. The second challenge we face are the budget constraints stemming from reduced Consular fees due to COVID-19. We will continue to address budget challenges creatively by maximizing outreach through social media and other low-cost, high-impact mediums, as well as creative workforce structuring to maximize productivity.

Objective 1.4: | Romania enhances its enterprise-wide cyber capabilities, laws, and policies to meet its national and regional security needs.

- **Objective 1.4 Justification:** | Over the past few years, Romania has dedicated increased resources and personnel to cybersecurity and law enforcement. However, lack of

effective management and coordination among agencies with overlapping activities continues to be a concern. We will work actively with the public and defense sectors to ensure the Romanian government develops cohesive policies on coordinating cybersecurity efforts across agencies so that the country can effectively respond to increasing cyber threats.

- **Objective 1.4 Linkages:** | This Mission Objective advances State – USAID Joint Strategic Goals 1 and 2: to Renew U.S. Leadership and Mobilize Coalitions to Address the Global Challenges that Have the Greatest Impact on Americans’ Security and Well-being; and to Promote Global Prosperity and Shape an International Environment in Which the United States Can Thrive. Additionally, this Objective supports the March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) objective to Protect the Security of the American People. Finally, this Objective supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy Goal 4 to Leverage Alliances and Partnerships to Address Global and Regional Threats and Challenges.
- **Objective 1.4 Risks:** | Without strong, coordinated cybersecurity strategies, Romania could be subjected to a wide range of cyberattacks that could have devastating effects on provision of critical services for Romanian citizens as well as significant national security implications. As part of our engagements under the cybersecurity and digital affairs pillar of our Strategic Partnership, Post will continue to support the country’s efforts in capacity building, risk mitigation, and better cyber coordination. This is particularly important for this strategic NATO ally as it continues to push back on malign influences, making it a target in the region.

Mission Goal 2: | Promote economic prosperity to increase the country’s security, competitiveness, and investment and trade opportunities for U.S. companies.

Description: | Romania remains among the fastest-growing European Union economies, yet also among the poorest, lagging behind other EU countries in infrastructure, research and development, education, and healthcare. Romania will have significant opportunities to modernize and stimulate its economic growth through the use of EU recovery funds, implementation of energy-efficient technologies, and the development of a government cloud

Approved: April 14, 2022

to facilitate faster bureaucratic processes. These opportunities hold the potential for Romania to increase its economic growth, support its citizenry, and encourage innovation. It also provides opportunities for U.S. companies to support these initiatives through increased exports and contracts. These measures will also help the country to increase its resiliency against the increasing challenge of external threats and malign influence. Embassy Bucharest will continue working with the Romanian public and private sectors to eliminate barriers to inclusive and sustainable growth, encourage increased direct investment in and trade with the United States, and ensure increased energy security in Romania and the surrounding region.

Objective 2.1: | Romania develops a more attractive, transparent, and stable investment environment through substantive consultation with the private sector and continued economic reforms.

- **Objective 2.1 Justification:** | Romania must continue structural economic reforms, institutionalize good governance, and improve its administrative capacity to take full advantage of EU membership and funds, including under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). We will encourage the Government of Romania to comply with recommendations from the EU and international financial institutions, enact structural reforms, improve its public procurement process, enforce sound corporate governance practices in all state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and consult with stakeholders before enacting new economic policies, legislation, and regulations. We will continue to advocate for transparency, stability, and predictability, as well as policies that promote market-based growth, improve the business and investment climate, facilitate innovation, and increase potential U.S. exports and investment.
- **Objective 2.1 Linkages:** | This Mission Objective advances State – USAID Joint Strategic Goal 2: to Promote Global Prosperity and Shape an International Environment in Which the United States Can Thrive. Additionally, this Objective advances the March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) priority to Expand Economic Prosperity and Opportunity. Finally, this Objective supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy Goal 2, Sub-objective 1 to deepen economic cooperation with Europe to attract investment; build

stronger, more resilient supply chains and trade ties; and to build back better from the global pandemic.

- **Objective 2.1 Risks:** | Without meaningful progress to improve its investment environment, Romania's growth slows, negatively impacting fiscal stability and overall prosperity. Modernization of its procurement process can improve anti-corruption efforts, structural inefficiencies, and the absorption of EU funds – particularly for key infrastructure projects. We will work with the Romanian government to improve the efficiency of governance and public administration and encourage policies and regulations that support investment and sustainable growth.

Objective 2.2: | Romania strengthens its economic security by countering malign influence and other economic security threats.

- **Objective 2.2 Justification:** | Growing pressure from China, Russia, and other authoritarian states underscores the need for Romania to develop effective digital connectivity and technology governance. Romania can achieve this through investment in modern digital infrastructure and secure 5G networks. In addition, Romania must also strengthen its legal frameworks to protect and build resilience and address economic coercion. We will continue to encourage Romania to strengthen its capability, readiness, and resilience in cyberspace and promote secure investments, including for key digitalization efforts.
- **Objective 2.2 Linkages:** | This Mission Objective advances State – USAID Joint Strategic Goals 1 and 2: to Renew U.S. Leadership and Mobilize Coalitions to Address the Global Challenges that Have the Greatest Impact on Americans' Security and Well-being; and to Promote Global Prosperity and Shape an International Environment in Which the United States Can Thrive. Additionally, this Objective supports the March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) objective to Protect the Security of the American People. Finally, this Objective supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy Goal 2, Sub-objectives 2 and 3 to counter non-market and coercive economic practices, collaborate with Europe to create a Transatlantic digital economy, jointly set the rules of

the road for a 21st century economy that promotes democratic tech leadership, and promote safe and reliable data flows and a free, open, secure, and reliable Internet.

- **Objective 2.2 Risks:** | Inability to secure critical networks and promote investment legislation leaves Romania susceptible to an increase in malign influence, which could threaten the country's security and its status as a strong digital ally and partner of the United States. Lack of digitalization also leaves the administration open to inefficiencies and corruption. We will encourage Romania to strengthen its digital capacities, invest more in cybersecurity, and actively work to counter authoritarian threats.

Mission Objective 2.3: | Romania increases international cooperation with science and health experts to foster innovation and improve health sector performance.

- **Objective 2.3 Justification:** | The COVID-19 pandemic, other biological risks, and the escalating climate crisis are among the biggest challenges facing the global community today. Romania's weak healthcare infrastructure and lack of sufficient investment in health and research leave the country especially vulnerable to these challenges. They are also a key contributor to the "brain drain" phenomenon. Continued international cooperation in these areas is essential, and Romania must work actively to increase cooperation on science, research, and development to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and better health outcomes.
- **Objective 2.3 Linkages:** | This Objective supports State – USAID Joint Strategic Goal 1: to Renew U.S. Leadership and Mobilize Coalitions to Address the Global Challenges that Have the Greatest Impact on Americans' Security and Well-being. Additionally, this Objective supports the March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) goal to Protect the Security of the American People. Finally, this Objective supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy Goal 3, Sub-objective 2 to Lead Global Health Security Improvements to End the COVID-19 Pandemic and Quickly Mitigate Future Pandemics.
- **Objective 2.3 Risks:** | Without active international scientific cooperation and investment in research and development, Romania continues to lag behind its fellow EU

member countries and to lose its educated population. A lack of meaningful investment in health modernization increases Romania's vulnerability to disease outbreaks and the associated economic impacts. We will continue to work with Romania to prioritize healthcare spending, research, and investment to ensure stability and promote scientific innovation.

Mission Goal 3: | Strengthen democracy, improve rule of law, and create a more equal and inclusive society by promoting Euro-Atlantic standards and people-to-people ties between the U.S. and Romania.

Description: | Romania is an enduring ally through the Strategic Partnership, particularly via our robust security and law enforcement collaboration. However, corruption remains a significant challenge that threatens bilateral cooperation across a range of issues. Working in support of our common values, Embassy Bucharest is committed to deepening this collaboration, encouraging Romania to fight corruption by holding corrupt actors accountable and strengthen its democratic institutions, rule of law, and good governance. Additionally, we look forward to working with Romania as it continues its progress on building a more equal and inclusive democracy that delivers for all of its citizens.

Objective 3.1: | Romania improves rule of law by increasing its capacity at the governmental, societal, and private sector levels to more effectively combat public corruption and organized crime; and by strengthening law enforcement cooperation to increase the effectiveness and fairness of the justice system.

- **Objective 3.1 Justification:** | Romania has made significant progress developing its democracy since the fall of communism. Corruption in Romania, however, remains endemic and threatens progress made to-date. Malevolent actors such as organized criminal entities, terrorist organizations, and even enemy states can use corruption as a back door to pursue their goals and objectives in Romania. This is a direct security threat to NATO, the United States, and Romania. The USG must continue to assist Romania in

its efforts against corruption, to establish more effective rule of law, and to treat all its citizens equally under the law, thereby reducing the influence of malevolent actors.

- **Objective 3.1 Linkages:** | This Mission Objective advances State – USAID Joint Strategic Goal 3: to Strengthen democratic institutions, uphold universal values, and promote human dignity. Additionally, this Objective supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy Goal 2, to Strengthen Democracy & the Rule of Law throughout Europe and Eurasia. Finally, this Objective supports Interim National Security Strategy Priority to Lead and sustain a stable and open international system, underwritten by strong democratic alliances, partnerships, multilateral institutions, and rules, as well as the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption.
- **Objective 3.1 Risks:** | The risks to the Romanian society of not addressing corruption are multifold, because it negatively impacts nearly all aspects of society. It exacerbates social, political, and economic inequality and polarization; impedes the ability to respond to public health crises or to deliver quality education; degrades the business environment and economic opportunity; drives conflict; facilitates organized crime; and undermines faith in the government.

Objective 3.2: | Romania strengthens its democratic institutions by increasing government accountability and transparency, respect for the separation of powers; and by demonstrating greater respect for and social inclusion of vulnerable, marginalized, and minority communities.

- **Objective 3.2 Justification:** | Romania’s democratic institutions are still relatively new. Increasing government accountability and transparency, as well as ensuring respect for the separation of powers will help ensure political stability. Additionally, creating a more socially inclusive society that takes into account the needs and rights of all its citizens including vulnerable, marginalized, and minority communities will help strengthen Romania as a country and avoid democratic backsliding.
- **Objective 3.2 Linkages:** | This Mission Objective advances State – USAID Joint Strategic Goal 3: to Strengthen democratic institutions, uphold universal values, and promote human dignity. Additionally, this Objective supports EUR Joint Regional

Strategy Goal 2, to Strengthen Democracy & the Rule of Law throughout Europe and Eurasia. Finally, this Objective supports March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Priority to lead and sustain a stable and open international system, underwritten by strong democratic alliances, partnerships, multilateral institutions, and rules.

- **Objective 3.2 Risks:** | Without transparency and demonstrating greater inclusion of vulnerable, marginalized, and minority communities, Romania's democracy runs the risk of backsliding as its citizens will lose credibility in the government.

Mission Objective 3.3: | Strengthen people-to-people ties between the United States and Romania, with a focus on underrepresented and under-engaged groups.

- **Objective 3.3 Justification:** | Romania's fledgling steps towards inclusivity and legal and social equality remain wanting and fragile. This presents a destabilizing force across Romanian society with potential to increase. However, the Romanian people hold enormous goodwill for the United States. This goodwill is evident in receptiveness to Embassy messaging, public political statements, the ready consumption of American classic and popular culture, and the appreciation of American values and leaders. The USG should continue to encourage ever-stronger people-to-people ties in order to further this existing positive momentum across all strata of Romanian society and further American leadership while also increasing engagement, domestic equality, and respect for human rights and dignity. Stronger people-to-people ties among the United States and all domestic groups—particularly the traditionally underrepresented and under-engaged/marginalized—will result in a more robust and fair society that is better equipped to self-advocate and more impervious to malign internal and external division, manipulation, and exploitation.
- **Objective 3.3 Linkages:** | This Mission Objective advances the Interim National Security Strategy goals of expanded engagement and increased partnerships based on principles of mutual respect and equality and a commitment to furthering human rights, and dignity. This Objective will also help protect vulnerable groups against the malign forces of polarization, populism, and nationalist and nativist trends—all threats set forth in the

March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy and all real and current threats to domestic Romanian social cohesion. Finally, this Objective furthers Department priorities of increased American leadership and expanded international networks while simultaneously promoting Executive and Department goals of strengthening democratic institutions and promoting human dignity.

- **Objective 3.3 Risks:** | The risks to Romania and the United States of failing to fulfill this Objective are significant. There are significant voices challenging the U.S. model, and they are gaining ground. The United States runs the risk of the losing or the lessening of its position as a domestic/regional moral voice and aspirational model in Romania, as well as the concomitant redirecting of people-to-people ties toward other, and oft malign, international actors. Domestically, failure carries the risk of fracturing Romanian society and a return to more overt racism, exclusion, and bigotry. A fractured Romanian society is an easily manipulated one—something that threatens both EU and Alliance security while also hazarding gains in equality and human rights and dignity.

4. Management Objective

Management Objective 1: | Provide an efficient and effective platform that allows the Mission to achieve U.S. policy objectives.

- **Objective 1 Justification:** | Embassy Bucharest is committed to attracting and retaining the best talent possible to advance the U.S.-Romania relationship. This inherently means recruiting officers and an embassy workforce that represent the diversity of our respective countries. It also means fostering professional development through work opportunities and mentorship programs that develop the next generation of State Department leadership, and which allow our embassy workforce to reach its full potential. Finally, it means ensuring a work environment where people's contributions are both welcomed and recognized and providing the flexibility for people to ensure their and their families' wellbeing while still advancing U.S. strategic interests. In addition to empowering a forward-thinking workforce, Embassy Bucharest will continue to judiciously use U.S. government resources and ensure that proper controls are in place to prevent their misuse, including by malevolent outside actors. It will leverage technology and data to make evidence-based decisions that optimize productivity.
- **Objective 1 Linkages:** | Embassy Bucharest's management objectives support Mission Goal 4 of the Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan: to build and equip a diverse, inclusive, resilient, and dynamic workforce. Similarly, it aligns with the EUR Joint Strategic Objectives for recruiting officers who reflect the United States' diversity and who have the skillsets to advance EUR bureau goals. Its management objectives also align with the Mission Goal 4's call to modernize IT and leverage data to inform decision making, as well as to protect personnel, information, and physical infrastructure from 21st-century threats.
- **Objective 1 Risks:** | The failure to attract diverse, competitive applicants for Embassy Bucharest jeopardizes the advancement of U.S. priorities for Romania, and specifically undercuts key Mission priorities such as facilitating cross-cultural exchange that embodies the breadth of American society. Failing to maintain a motivated local

Approved: April 14, 2022

workforce similarly puts U.S. Mission priorities at risk, as they serve as the backbone and institutional memory of Embassy Bucharest. Injudicious resource management and a lack of management controls limit Mission capabilities and open the door to destabilizing threats.