

Press briefing by Mr. Ferdinand Nagy, Commissioner of Romania Pavilion and President of BIE

27 July 2012

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished representatives of the press,

Thank you for being here today, I am glad that you took interest in our press briefing. Let me introduce myself, I am Ferdinand Nagy, commissioner of the Romania Pavilion at Expo Yeosu 2012. I am also currently President of the Bureau for International Exhibitions – the BIE.

First of all, I wanted to announce that on Sunday, the 29th of July, we will celebrate the National Day of Romania at Yeosu EXPO. It is a very important moment for us, which will contribute to a better assertion of the Romanian identity at this expo, it will be a great opportunity for displaying a part of the Romanian culture with the aim to deepen the understanding between our two countries.

Let me announce the official program for the National Day of Romania, the 29th of July:

At 10.00 AM, at the EXPO Hall, we will have the Official Ceremony, followed by a special performance. It will be an outstanding concert performed by a group of Korean pan flute players from Seoul who will interpret Romanian and International songs – it will be a repertory that will captivate the audience and bridge the cultural and language barriers.

Romania is famous for its tradition in pan flute playing and, at the same time, the artist Gheorghe Zamfir is world renowned for his contribution to the development of the pan flute as a musical instrument. Gheorghe Zamfir is also known as "The Master of the Pan Flute" and he is standing as a leading figure within the history of Romanian folk music. Zamfir is considered the most important person to popularize the pan flute worldwide.

We think that it will be a great intercultural experience having Korean artists interpreting Romanian traditional music on the pan flute. It will be a vibrant example of how a connection between our two cultures can be made. Through this event, we want to emphasize the importance of promoting people-to-people and cultural exchanges.

You are all invited to come and see our pan flute show on our National Day!

Now, let me tell you a few words about Romania's participation at the YEOSU EXPO. First of all, I am convinced that our Pavilion is a success at this EXPO, as over 500.000 visitors came to experience Romania Pavilion. All of the visitors seem to enjoy their visit to our pavilion and truly learn something new about our country.

The main theme of our pavilion is the Danube Delta - the second largest river delta in Europe. It is the best preserved delta on the continent and it has the status of a Biosphere Reserve, Ramsar zone and UNESCO World Heritage Site. International Friends of Nature named it Landscape of the year 2007-2009. The Danube Delta hosts over 300 species of birds as well as 45 freshwater fish species in its numerous lakes and marshes.

The Romanian Pavilion is focused on the uniqueness and ecological importance of the Danube Delta and its protected areas, generated by bio- and ethnodiversity, in the context of sustainable development.

The information in our pavilion is presented through an interactive system based on cutting-edge technology, such as augmented reality and the Kinect application, which provide visitors with information on touristic, economic and cultural opportunities in Romania.

Actually, the Romanian pavilion is structured as a journey through the Danube Delta. The fluid shapes of the walls and ceilings, as well as the colors chosen for the decoration: white, blue and green, invite the visitors to find out more about the geography, culture and traditions of this area. The ground floor covers the biodiversity, while the mezzanine covers the ethno diversity, the connection being made by the tree of life.

So, our pavilion tells a story of harmony between man and nature and, in the same time, emphasizes the need to respect and protect the natural environment.

As a plus, considering that one of the traditions that we Romanians are most proud of is our gastronomy, near the entrance of the Pavilion the visitors have the possibility to taste traditional Romanian dishes.

Romania, as the country which holds the Presidency in Office of the Bureau for International Exhibitions (BIE) and as a founding member of this international organization, faces a great responsibility of a qualitative and professional representation at international exhibitions and other public diplomacy events.

Ladies and gentleman,

For us, the presence to the Expo 2012 represents a valuable occasion to make Romania better known worldwide, to share our culture, traditions and history, as well

as recent experiences, as Romanians and Europeans, with different countries coming from different geographical and cultural spaces.

Fascinating culture, spectacular landscape, creative and friendly people, these are the reasons to build an overseas bridge between Romania and Korea.

Also, I like to emphasize the co-operation between Romania and Korea in the economic, cultural, and social fields. Our bilateral relations, including in the area of trade and economic exchanges have to be further enhanced. I expect that Romania's involvement in this important event will fully contribute in that direction, and at the end of the project we will identify various and consistent areas of co-operation.

In the documents prepared for you, there are two detailed presentations of the Romania Pavilion and some photographs.

Before I resume my presentation, I want to underline some general thoughts about the Yeosu EXPO.

This is my third Expo, as commissioner of section, and I can say that such public diplomacy events offer real opportunities to participating States from different geographical areas in the world to promote themselves and to interact directly with national values and culture of other countries. Our goal here is to increase interest in Romania and its rich culture and heritage as well as in its potential to develop economic and cultural projects with Asian partners. The visitors are informed about the sustainable development problems worldwide and sustainable measures to protect the living paradise - Danube Delta and its wildlife.

Romania's presence at this major public diplomacy event of world notoriety provides the occasion to show the Asian public a comprehensive image of the tourist and business opportunities in Romania. The Koreans' growing interest for our Pavilion is a reason for optimism as to the final results of this event.

I want to commend Commissioner Lee for putting together such a meaningful event. I would also like to praise our host country, the Korean Government, the mayor and the people of Yeosu for the successful organization of the EXPO.

I think this EXPO is a success story and has achieved the objectives to establish a common understanding for the great value of the oceans and seas and also to raise global awareness for the sustainable use and preservation of marine environment and its resources.

International Exhibitions give us a chance – in this globalized world we live in today – to take time and truly learn something meaningful about other foreign cultures and nations.

EXPOs represent a unique opportunity to deepen our knowledge about another country and to foster a better understanding among people all over the world, in order to build up common interests and goals – such as the theme proposed by the Republic of Korea for EXPO 2012: *The Living Ocean and Coast: Diversity of Resources and Sustainable Activities*.

Thank you for your attention and if you have additional questions, I am ready to answer them.