

Beat: News

## ANTI-CORRUPTION MOBILIZATION CONTINUES IN BUCHAREST AND PARIS BY SOLIDARITY

### THE DIASPORA IN FRANCE IN CHAMP DE MARS

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**USPA NEWS** - For the past week, demonstrators have been pounding across Romania to protest against a decree that relaxed anti-corruption legislation, eventually withdrew on Saturday by the executive. Romania, a country in Eastern Europe of 20 million, has joined the European Union since January. 2007

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#### THE SIGNATURE OF A DECREE WHICH DEPENDS THE OFFENSES OF ABUSE OF POWER DECLARES THE GROUND

At the root of the crisis in Romania, there is the signing of a decree adopted on Tuesday by the Romanian Social-Democratic government of Sorin Grindeanu, in office since late December. It provides for the decriminalization of several offenses and makes the abuse of power punishable by imprisonment only if it causes a loss of more than 44,000 euros.-----

It was adopted as a matter of urgency - and without going through Parliament - when the leader of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), Liviu Dragnea, is at the heart of a trial involving fictitious jobs in which the damage is estimated by the Prosecutors to 24,000 euros. Even before its adoption, demonstrators were moved by this measure, which they believe is intended to protect Liviu Dragnea and other politicians involved in corruption scandals. Despite significant progress in the last decade - an anti-corruption prosecutor's office was established in 2002 -, Romania remains one of the most corrupt countries in Europe. Anti-corruption mobilization does not seem to be weakening after a week of demonstrations across the country. In recent years, scandals have accompanied the daily life of the Romanians. Exposed in particular by the progress of anti-corruption, they have nonetheless fueled anger in almost every aspect of everyday life. Since the demonstrations in Bucharest in front of the Government Palace, the famous decree has been withdrawn. The European Commission and the US State Department have also publicly expressed their concern.-----

In France, the Romanian diaspora in France organized a demonstration on Sunday in Place Trocadero, in solidarity with those in Bucharest. The event initiated by "Romanian Diaspora in Paris" presents their press release that we are publishing as follows . The demonstration brought around 1,500 people at the Champ de Mars, according to the organisers. Photos have been taken by Voicu Sereda.

#### PRESS RELEASE BY ROMANIAN DIASPORA IN PARIS-----

We hope to be able to make our voices heard by the French, our voices reflecting those of our compatriots from Romania, the diaspora and our neighboring countries. This is the largest Romanian demonstration since the 1989 Revolution which led to the collapse of the communist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu.-----

That is why more than 600 Romanians who live in France will gather today 5 February from 3 pm on the Place du Trocadero for the 3rd Sunday in a row. Given the extent of the demonstrations and the echo of Romania's situation in the main international media, we consider it important that this event does not escape the French media.

PHOTOS : Voicu Sereda.

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#### 1. We will not accept half measures

Over the past 5 days, as well as every Sunday for three weeks, we have gone out by hundreds of thousands in Romania and the Diaspora to ask our Government to repeal Emergency Ordinance No. 13 (OUG 13) Adopted in secret on Tuesday, 31 January. We will not be satisfied with an ambiguous assertion made by Sorin Grindeanu yesterday evening, in which he first affirmed "the abrogation of OUG 13" and then his "prorogation".-----

2. We will not accept that the actions of this Mafia Government lead to the isolation of Romania, after all the progress we have made in recent years in the fight against corruption.-----

3. A blow to democracy in Romania is a blow to European democracy.-----

Our efforts in probity have been recognized by our neighbors, which is why the Moldovans and the Bulgarians are demonstrating these days as a sign of solidarity with us. According to organizers of the demonstrations, "a step backwards in the fight against corruption in Romania would be a bad sign for Bulgaria. The success of recent years in Romania is one of the few hopes that something can be done for the rule of law."-----

4. Dear French people, in December 1989, you saw the birth of a democracy, you integrated it into the European Union, you have not finished your duty. Source "Romanian Diaspora in Paris"

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