

BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIP



CONSTRUCTED on the shared democratic principles and mutually compatible approaches to a peaceful world order, India and Romania have strengthened the bilateral relationship during more than six decades of their engagements. The new geo-political realities and growing primacy

of geo-economics in the era of globalization are drawing both the countries closer to redefine their course of action to chart out a new partnership in the 21st century. Their old cultural and political linkages would provide a viable base for the new partnership, which will be primarily driven by economic and commercial exchanges. With the membership of the European Union (EU), Romania has become an integral part of the emerging Pan-European order. Hence, New Delhi and Bucharest should explore new vistas of cooperation in the frameworks of bilateral as well as multilateral-India-EU relations.

India and Romania have witnessed transformative impact of changes in the global political and economic dynamics as well as structural reforms at the national level. Economic rise and strong democracy make New Delhi play greater role in evolving a multipolar world order and

Romania also seeks an appropriate role in the world through its economic performance and inclusive development focusing on democratic values. Although a vibrant bilateral relationship warrants multifaceted linkages and greater convergence of interests between the two countries, New Delhi and Bucharest see trade as a major driver for their new partnership.

The EU-28 is India's largest trading partner, and bilateral level of Indo-Romania trade has reached US \$727.27 million in 2011-12. Considering the huge opportunities in various sectors of both the economies, there is an immense scope of expanding economic engagements. India and Romania have the potential to expand cooperation in the areas of Information Technology (IT), agriculture, infrastructure, science and technology, tourism etc. Indian IT Inc appears keen in increasing its footprint in Europe. In the framework of the EU-India partnership, Romania can contribute to India's thrust on developing world class infrastructure in the country. Both India and Romania have been initiating a number of economic reforms to boost economic growth and make the business environment conducive to the business community from the two countries.

India's economic reforms, high economic growth and revolution in IT sector have transformed the country's im-

age in the world community. The second most populous country has emerged not only as a major market but Indian business enterprises have also proved their competencies and are now confidently looking for opportunities outside the country. On the other hand, Romania has also achieved successes in reforming the economic system and effectively reducing poverty in the last decade. Economic reforms in the country have made Romania more attractive for foreign investments. As a prominent country of Eastern and Central Europe, Romania can be the gateway for Indian Inc in harnessing business potentials in the region.

In pursuit of establishing a vibrant and comprehensive economic partnership, India and Romania should consider some policy measures to further boost their economic interactions. As India-EU free trade agreement is yet to be finalized, India and Romania need to closely work on several aspects, such as easing visa procedures, movement of Indian IT professionals, direct flight links, exchanges between civil society organizations, including the academia, to strengthen the bonding. As an EU member state, Romania can be an important facilitator for developing compatible policies between India and the EU at global economic forums and institutions, which will certainly have positive impact on the bilateral relations and develop more synergies in the new partnership.

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