



LAVDATIO

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Next, year, the National School of Political Studies and Public Administration will celebrate its 25th anniversary – as a matter of fact, in January 2015, less than a month after the 25th anniversary of the Romanian Revolution of December 1989. This is an important moment for all of us – for our academic community and, let me add, for our friends from Europe who supported us, who worked with us – some of them from the beginning, in the early 90s.

We have good reasons to be proud: the people who founded this university managed to transform the idea of an elite *school of government studies* into a decision during *the first month* of existence of the new government. But let me mention that – after the Revolution – we were happy to have or to discover good friends abroad – in the „old Europe” – who gave us their advice and their support, who offered us their expertise in different essential areas of the institutional and academic development of the National School.

Today, we have the privilege to confer the title of *doctor honoris causa* of our university to Peter Volten, Professor Emeritus of the University of Groningen. I said this many times: the tradition of the National School – the School of Government Studies of Romania – is to honour through this award careers putting together academic excellence and performance as a practitioner in different positions in public service – in conclusion: a real contribution to the theory and practice of this domain.

Professor Volten's career is considered by many as being that of a „bridge-builder between East and West in theory and in practice”. His colleagues from the University of Groningen are saying that „Academia and its „real life” impact have always gone hand in hand in Volten's long and distinguished career”.

I've known Peter Volten since February 1990: it's almost 25 years and I am in the right position to support this characterisation of his career and his role in ECE in connection with the E-A integration of this region. Yes, his career is a good example of a professional dedicated to bridge-building between East and West, to a new approach of the national and international security agenda.

Peter Volten's professional evolution started with long and fruitful years – more than a decade – in the *public service*: in the Directorate of General Policy Affairs and as a Director of Studies and Strategic Planning in the Ministry of Defense of the Netherlands (1977-1989) – let me mention that he was involved in the work of NATO's body which takes decisions on the Alliance's nuclear policy: the Nuclear Planning Group – we were joking that during those years he was keeping an eye on NATO's targets in ECE!

But in June 1989 he became Director of Research and Senior Vice-president (in 1990) of the IEWSS, in New York [] This position – he spent 3 years in New York – offered him the opportunity to be directly connected to the transition in the East after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of Soviet domination in this region. When he was back in the Netherlands, in 1993, Peter Volten founded a Dutch branch of the



IEWSS to contribute to the democratic transformation in ECE, particularly the field of the functioning of the armed forces in an open and liberal society. In 1994 he was appointed Professor of History and Theory of International Relations at the University of Groningen and later on, Director of Department. But he took his growing activity in the Central and Eastern European region with him, founding, in 1995, the CESS. This Centre soon became a well-established NGO and a steady presence all over ECE. Education and research programs were implemented from Poland or Romania to Slovenia or Kazakhstan. In 94, having his support, we developed at the National School the first modern program in national security, security sector reform, civil-military relations and the democratic control of the armed forces in Romania. But let me add that his activity was not only about research and teaching – during the late 90s and early 2000, Peter Volten played an important role in assessing the process of security sector reform in ECE and the performance of all these countries on the road of E-A integration. Let's only mention his reports published in „Harmonie Papers” in „Organising National Defences for NATO membership” (in 2002): on the first wave candidates, on Romania and Bulgaria, or Albania and Slovakia. Or in other volumes / books / monographies of the CESS: „The Western Balkans Candidates for NATO membership” (in 2005) on Croatia or assessing in general in „Security and Defence in South East Europe” (in 2003). In this context, Peter Volten was discussing not only the formal or official agenda of this process but also „The Unexamined Dimension of Aspirants's Readiness for Entry” (CESS, 2002). Let me add his reports and research on the security sector reform in Ukraine and Moldova.

Our colleague, I.M. Pascu, a state secretary in the MoD when Romania signed PfP and started to develop its contribution as a „de facto member” of the club (94-96) and afterwards minister of defence in charge with the decisions and actions associated with the most important period of transformation, building our membership to NATO (2002-2004), published a few years ago a report on the process – on his and our country's „battle agenda”. Let me say that the contribution of Peter Volten – his assessments and his advice were an important part of this real history told to us by I.M. Pascu. I was mentioning from the beginning that Peter Volten's academic and research activity and his public involvement with the real process of reforms in ECE have gone „hand in hand”: that's why his reports on the enlargement of NATO and security sector reforms in the region represented not only policy papers or long lists of recommendations for the candidate countries; his research was the *starting point* for a real contribution to the development of this domain of security studies and international relations discipline. He published extensively on security sector reform in transitional societies, civil-military relations and the democratic control of the armed forces. In 2002, for instance, he contributed with chapters on this subject not only in books or monographies published in the West – Groningen or Baden-Baden, but also in Romania, in Bucharest – in a book edited by George Maior and Larry Watts („Globalization of Civil-Military Relations”); in the same year he published a book on „New Approaches to Security Studies: Implications for Civil-Military Relations” with the Publishing House of the MoD of Romania.

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen...

Peter Volten's career is representative for the evolution of an entire chapter or domain of IR as a discipline: security studies. His activity and contribution started with his research at Stanford University on



Soviet security and defense policy – later on he published his book on „Brezhnev's Peace Program: a Study of Soviet Political Process and Power” (1982). During the 80s it covered the difficult debate on the rationale of defense policies of the West: his book on „More Value for Defense Money” (1987) still today is mentioned for its relevance and timeliness.

Quoting again his colleagues from the University of Groningen, I would say that during his career Peter Volten experienced NATO's dilemmas, crises and development – before the end of the cold war, but especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall. He was connected to its effort to avoid an „existential crisis”, to broaden its concept of security, to develop its new *raison d'être* and to reinvent itself; his contribution was linked to NATO's enlargement, a process that managed to keep alive the Alliance's legitimacy based on the new membership requests of the new Europe; He studied the PfP process and the dilemmas of our partners, especially those of Ukraine and I think that his expertise is more important than ever today, when NATO is facing the russian challenge – what i called, analysing the strategic dilemmas of the Alliance, „the challenge we didn't know about” or „the second war of Crimea”.

But let me add that Peter Volten's career as a professor of International Relations and International Organisations represents a very solid argument for our ceremony today. During the last 10-15 years he published important contributions on the theoretical paradigms and conceptual challenges in international relations or on what he called „an autonomous european / continental international relations approach”. That's why we – at the National School – were honoured to invite him this month as a guest professor of IR & IO for our master degree programs!

Let me conclude by saying that professor Volten's academic career, his experience as a practitioner in the Netherlands and in ECE, his research contribution – see all his books and reports or the awards he received – let me mention that in our country, in 2004 – when Romania joined the Alliance – he was awarded the National Order „Pour le merite” in the rank of Commander – represent solid arguments for the present decision of the Senate of the National School.