



THE AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN PRESS REGARDING THE TSAR'S VISIT TO CONSTANȚA IN JUNE 1914

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Abstract: The historical events in the first part of 1914 catalyzed an intense political discussion either for maintaining in or retreating Romania from the Triple Alliance. The appointment of I.I.C. Brătianu, known for his political orientation in favor of the Entente, as Prime Minister in the early 1914 created a favorable ground for Franco-Russian diplomatic actions. However, the event which produced the most hectic agitation in the German and Austro-Hungarian diplomatic circles regarding the progress the Entente powers were achieving in Romania was the visit of the Russian tsar to Constanța on June 14, 1914, continued by the talks between Brătianu and Sazonov in the coming days. Although the official circles justifiably maintained a reserved attitude, the press of the Great Powers in the Triple Alliance commented extensively and openly on the special significance of the visit made in Romania by Tsar Nicholas II and the Russian Foreign Minister Sazonov.

Keywords: Triple Alliance, Tsar Nicholas II, Sazonov, Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Constanța visit

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The years leading up to the First World War, beyond the worrying events in the Balkans, brought to light the serious problems the Great European Powers were facing. The two recently ended Balkan wars had demonstrated the antagonism of their interests. What happens in this new context is an increase in mistrust, an acceleration of the arms race and military numbers, as well as a multiplication of crises in different parts of the globe, which will generate a warlike psychosis in Europe¹. Therefore, the concern of the Great Powers towards the Romanian state increases considerably, Romania being able to affect the European balance, because the defense plans of the Triple Alliance were made by taking into account the cooperation of the Romanian army.

A reorientation of the Romanian foreign policy began to take place after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, made by Austria-Hungary in 1908², continuing with the events of the summer of 1913, when the attitude of the Viennese government deeply displeased the Romanian state. The existing hostile direction disfavoring the double monarchy among the Romanian public opinion was determined mainly

by the situation of the Transylvanian Romanians. The relations between Romania and Germany were not affected in any way by the Balkan crisis, but the tensions between Romania and Austria-Hungary caused concern in Berlin. At the same time, Romania's relations with Italy evolved, given that both states showed the same tendency to break away from the Triple Alliance, without reaching a coordination of diplomatic actions in this regard. Romania's relations with the Entente, especially with Russia and France, have improved timidly in the direction of a political rapprochement, without, however, major achievements.

The year 1914 triggered the great competition for maintaining or breaking Romania from the Triple Alliance. The Central Powers had made desperate efforts to maintain the unchanged direction of Romania's foreign policy. The Austro-Hungarian diplomacy, on the advice of Germany, sought to regain the sympathy of the Romanian public opinion³ and to achieve an improvement of the Romanian-Austro-Hungarian relations. To this end, the sending at the end of 1913 of a new Austro-Hungarian minister to Bucharest, in the person

of Ottokar Czernin, a close collaborator of the heir archduke Franz Ferdinand, a follower of a reconciliation with Romania, was meant to dispel the misunderstandings between the two states. At the same time, negotiations were launched between the Hungarian Prime Minister, Count Tisza, and the representatives of the National Party of Romanians from Transylvania, regarding the rights of the Transylvanian Romanians.

The failure of the initiatives of Ottokar Czernin and the Hungarian Prime Minister Tisza amplified the state of mind in the Romanian society, which was hostile to an alliance of Romania with Austria-Hungary. The Great Powers of the Entente sought to take full advantage of this situation, given that they had long wanted Romania's separation from the Triple Alliance system. For this purpose, Russian and French diplomacies proved to be particularly active. The appointment of Ion I.C. Brătianu, whose political orientation was favouring the Entente, as Prime Minister in early 1914 created a favorable ground for French and Russian diplomatic actions. Brătianu was convinced that in the close future the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy would collapse. As such, Romania had to be prepared to act in order to achieve the completion of national unity⁴.

Among the Great Powers of Entente, Russia was most interested in weakening Austria-Hungary's influence in the Balkans. The Danubian monarchy was Russia's main rival in this part of Europe, and this is why the Tsarist Empire could become a precious ally of Romania. For this reason Brătianu considered that Romania, in order to maintain the territorial status quo established in the Balkans through the peace of Bucharest, had to act in the direction of a rapprochement with Russia and the Entente. But Romania could not openly side with the Entente or make public its removal from the Triple Alliance, which was one of the largest military forces on the European continent. As a result, Brătianu chose the path of the diplomatic game which involved, on the one hand, seeking the necessary support of the Entente in order to complete its national unity without reaching, on the other hand, an open rupture in relations with the Central Powers⁵.

In turn, Russia sought to attract Romania and the other Balkan states on Entente's side and to turn them into a fulcrum of its fight against the threatening expansion of Germany and Austria-Hungary into the Balkans and the Middle East. The idea of achieving this goal, which also facilitated the solution for the problem of free passage through the straits, also motivated Sazonov's decision to introduce the improvement of the Romanian-Russian relations⁶ in the Russian foreign policy program, which was elaborated at the beginning of 1914.

As such, there can be noticed an intensification of the Romanian-Russian political relations at the beginning of 1914. The rapprochement between Romania, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro, the talks held in Bucharest in January-February 1914 by Venizelos and Pašiči to create a Balkan unit, Prince Ferdinand and his wife Maria, accompanied by Prince Carol, visiting Petersburg (March 1914), the project of a marriage between Prince Carol and Grand Duchess Olga, the eldest daughter of Tsar Nicholas II, and Princess Elizabeth with the heir to the Greek throne – all these were evidence of a certain

direction in Romania's foreign policy, causing concern among the Austro-Hungarian and German governments⁷.

However, the visit of the Russian tsar to Constanța on June 14, 1914, continued by the talks between Brătianu and Sazonov during the next days, produced a hectic agitation in German and Austro-Hungarian diplomatic circles regarding the progress that the Entente powers were making in Romania. At the initiative of the Romanian government there had been prepared for almost two months the establishment of high-level diplomatic contacts between Romania and Russia. Even though initially the Romanian government proposed the Russian side to planify a visit to Romania for the Foreign Minister Sazonov, in the end both sides accepted the alternative suggested by the head of the Russian diplomacy. Therefore, the exchanges of opinions were going to be made at the time of an official visit that the Tsar would make to Romania. In order to avoid an undesirable reaction of the Central Powers towards Romania, the visit of the Russian sovereign was to be officially presented as a courtesy, made at the end of the stay that the Russian imperial family made in Livadia (in Crimea), as a reply to the one carried out by King Carol I in Petersburg in 1898⁸.

At present times, we know almost in detail all the moments of the Russian tsar's visit to Constanța, as well as the political significance of the meeting between the two monarchs. At that time, however, the content of the talks was largely shrouded in mystery, despite the persevering concerns of Bucharest-accredited diplomats and journalists to get to know more. Therefore many most fanciful speculations were issued, especially in the press. The fact is explicable because, under the appearance of its protocol character, commented very generously in the newspapers, the tsar's visit to Constanța masked the long political conversations between the statesmen of the two neighboring countries.

Although the official circles still maintained a justified reserve, the press of the Great Powers of the Triple Alliance commented extensively and openly on the special significance of the visit of Tsar Nicholas II and Russian Foreign Minister Sazonov to Romania. As was natural, the press of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy followed with an even greater concern the visit of the imperial family to Constanța.

The correspondence from Petersburg sent to the newspaper *Neue Freie Presse* on June 3, entitled "The Meeting in Constanța. Russia's hopes," published in the above-mentioned newspaper on June 7, stated that for several years the Russian diplomacy had been working to improve Romanian-Russian relations. This aspiration of Russian diplomacy was clearly manifested during the Balkan wars. The fact that the Romanian government accepted the mediation of the Romanian-Bulgarian territorial dispute to take place in Petersburg (March-April 1913) was seen as a great triumph of Russian diplomacy. The Russian Foreign Ministry headed by Sazonov maintained this course of foreign policy even during the Second Balkan War and after its end, and the meeting in Constanța represented an intensification of the friendly feelings shown by Russia towards Romania.

The article further showed that 36 years of Romania's



resentment towards Russia's attitude in 1878 "caused Russian politicians headaches." However, the meeting in Constanța had much greater significance than the restoration of undisturbed friendships with "a neighbor as unequal as Romania." The purpose of the tsar's visit was to permanently separate Romania from the Triple Alliance and, implicitly, to attract it to the side of the Entente. In recent years, Russia had sought to improve its diplomatic position and strengthen its military forces. Was Russia aiming to start a war? The correspondent concluded his article with the following question: it was clear that, by alienating Romania from the Central Powers, Russia would have strengthened its position in the event of an European war. But Russia said it did not want to go to war. Then why these unsettling actions?⁹

In an extensive article entitled "Reserved Attitude in Bucharest," the same Viennese newspaper showed that the tsar's visit to Constanța was an act of great political significance. It was the first time that Emperor Nicholas II of Russia stepped on Romanian soil, even though in 1898 King Carol paid a visit to Petersburg for a meeting with the tsar. Romania's well-known connections with the Central Powers, the close relations between the Courts and the governments of Vienna and Bucharest were somehow the reasons why the tsar postponed his visit for so long. More than ten years ago, when a son was born to the Romanian Princely Couple on August 5, 1903, and was given the name of Nicolae, the tsar was asked to be his godfather. The Emperor of Russia accepted, but more out of consideration for his cousin Maria, the Crown Princess of Romania, and sent as his representative not a Grand Duke, but one of his aides.

Therefore, the author was wondering how strong at that time was the desire in the tsar's court to attract Romania to Russia and how strong was the change that took place in the feelings of Russian political circles towards Romania, because during only one year Russia favored Romania's interests in the Balkans, it also pursued a dynastic alliance, the Romanian Princely Couple and Prince Carol paid a visit to Petersburg and now the tsar and his family were visiting the Romanian king.

Further on the correspondent communicated, completely misinforming the Austrian public opinion, that the Romanian people showed a very pronounced reservation towards the upcoming visit. The official press releases, showing in "twisted phrases" the great importance of this visit, did nothing but "cool down" the public opinion even more. "It is characteristic for the mature political judgment and for the healthy mind of the Romanian people that it is restrained from any enthusiasm, from any exaggerated expectations." There was the hope, expressed by some independent newspapers, that the tsar's visit will have as consequences the improvement of the fate of the Bessarabian Romanians.

In the end, it was appreciated that it was difficult to foresee the consequences of this visit on the line of conduct of Romania's policy, but the conditions in which the Romanian-Russian rapprochement took place left no doubt that Romania was preparing for new directions¹⁰.

In the main article, also published in the newspaper *Neue Freie Presse* of June 9, 1914, the same idea was repeated, that only Romanian political circles manifested imperialist ambitions and not the people themselves, because "the Romanian peasant, pressed by the needs of life, would set completely different targets for the state than the expansion of the territory," which could only be achieved through terrible wars which would fall like a plague on humanity. The newspaper expressed its belief that the old King Carol, who had to stifle the pain of losing Bessarabia, would not be won over by a fundamental change in foreign policy. But – it was further shown – history has proven that alliances based solely on the will of the princes or on treaties concluded between governments did not withstand the whirlwind of serious crises. The hostile state of mind towards the Double Monarchy existing among the Romanian society was attributed to the maneuvers undertaken by French and Russian diplomacy. Further on, there were acknowledged the mistakes made by the Austro-Hungarian diplomacy towards Romania during the Balkan crisis. "The mistakes that were made in Vienna deserve a whip that only history can weave." But, as it was further stated, the hypocrisy of the Romanian politicians, who showed their hostility only towards the Double Monarchy and did not dare to say a word about the oppression of the Romanians in Bessarabia, was no less repulsive. Finally, there were insinuated some subtle threats, stating that decision-makers in the Danubian Monarchy were already deliberating on the measures needed to strengthen security along the Transylvanian border. Romania was warned that Russia had not given up on its Dardanelles dreams; therefore, without the alliance with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the Romanian kingdom could not prevent the transformation of its territory as a passageway towards the straits for the Russian armies, could not maintain its independence and could not stop the closure of the straits¹¹.

On June 11, in the same newspaper, the correspondence from Bucharest was published under the title "The Meeting in Constanța and Its Importance for the European Peace." It was considered that, despite the attempts to present the visit as a simple courtesy, the presence of Sazonov, the leader of Russian foreign policy, was a sign that important issues were to be discussed, without being able to point the specifics of the talks. It was suspected that Russia would try to persuade Romania not to renew the military convention with Austria-Hungary, without trying to replace it with a Russian-Romanian one, but only to obtain from Romania the assurance of a free-hand policy in the future. The fact that King Carol received the Austro-Hungarian Minister Czernin in Constanța before Sazonov's visit was considered a sign of the Romanian monarch's desire to publicly confirm the existence of friendly relations between Austria-Hungary and Romania¹².

One day later, the same newspaper published an article commenting on the impression made by the tsar's visit to the diplomatic circles in Vienna, showing that the forthcoming meeting between the two sovereigns was calmly commented on in the diplomatic world. Russia wanted to give the visit

the character of an event of great political importance, but King Carol had a reserved attitude. This time it was declared that it was customary for the foreign minister to accompany the tsar on such solemn visits. The newspaper informed its readers that in Romania the tsar's visit was seen as a great honor, but public opinion kept its temper. There was a belief that Romania will not change the course of its policy for the time being. The assurances given previously by the Crown Prince on the occasion of his visit to Berlin left no doubt about Romania's intentions. At the end of the article, it was stated that Romania's relations with the Triple Alliance changed only in one respect: they no longer passed through Vienna to Berlin, but vice versa¹³.

The newspaper *Reichpost*, associated with the Christian Social Party, in a feature article published on June 13, also stated that Romanian public opinion saw nothing else in the tsar's visit than the recognition of the gratifying fact that Romania has gained international esteem and friendliness. It is stated that, as the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy considers itself a sincere friend of Romania, "we look without envy at the successes of our neighbor country, because the successes of Romania are also successes of our policy, which has always aspired to support Romania in its progress and development." As a result, the tsar's visit will not change anything, regardless the ways it was presented, and there were given assurances that the celebrations in Constanța will not arouse any dissatisfaction in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy¹⁴.

Instead, in the opposition newspaper *Die Zeit*, in a feature article published on June 13, entitled "The Bulgarian Ghost," accusations were made against the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Leopold Berchtold. His statements about the falsity of the news regarding a cooling of relations with Romania were refuted by the visit that Foreign Minister Sazonov and the Tsar of Russia were making to the King of Romania. However, it was considered worrying that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy continued to run after the ghost of friendship with Bulgaria, supporting even a few days before, at an inopportune moment, a Bulgarian loan on the German market, a gesture that also displeased decision-makers in Germany. The newspaper showed that maintaining friendly relations with Romania will be in the future, as in the past, absolutely incompatible with friendly relations with Bulgaria, as the Romanian kingdom wanted, unlike Bulgaria, to preserve the results of the peace treaty from Bucharest, meaning its territorial gains and those of Serbia and Greece as well. Hence the communion of interests between the three states, which was considered to be more than a formal alliance. Just as, after 1878, Count Andrassy took advantage of the mistakes of Russian diplomacy in order to attract Romania to Austria-Hungary, Sazonov knew how to take advantage of the mistakes of Austro-Hungarian diplomacy in order to attract Romania to Russia. In the past, Russia's mistake was the abduction of Bessarabia, at that time the mistake of Austro-Hungarian diplomacy was the attitude towards Bulgaria. This mistake made the meeting in Constanța possible¹⁵. The newspaper *Deutsches Volksblatt*, published on June 14, noticed that the

European press reflected the belief that the tsar's visit would not determine a new orientation of Romania's foreign policy. Neither the attitude of the Romanian press, nor that of some political circles in Romania, unfavorable to Austria-Hungary, could not influence the fact that, regarding Romania, any policy unfavorable to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was excluded. It was also stated that the public opinion from Romania was against an alliance with Russia, as Romania, even if it managed to expand its territory by incorporating Transylvania and Bessarabia, would still be exposed to great dangers from a victorious Russia in an eventual European war. Romania still could not have escaped the preponderance of the strong neighbor if the balance of power established between Austria and Russia had been unbalanced in favor of the latter. Therefore, it was appreciated that Romania's point of view, in the matter of a future European war, was that it should be prevented if possible; this goal could not be achieved unless Romania remained faithful to the Triple Alliance and Austria-Hungary. The newspaper attached great importance to the role played by Romania at that time in international relations, showing that if Romania did not promise support to Russia in a future European war, Russia would not dare to trigger it if it had to fight against Romania. Therefore, the author of the article concludes, the key to European peace is in the hands of Romania¹⁶.

In connection with the statements of some Russian politicians that Russia did not seek at that moment to obtain from Romania the conclusion of an offensive alliance, but was satisfied only with a declaration of neutrality in case of war and possibly with the promise that Romania will not renew the military agreement with Austria-Hungary, it was expressed the belief that Russia will not get any of this, due to the fact that it was considered that Romania's attitude in the future war will be determined by its interests, not by its sympathies. Given these considerations, Romania's interests demanded that Austria-Hungary would be undefeated in a war with Russia. Hence, the impossibility for Romania to declare itself neutral.

The newspaper did not agree with the statements published in some Viennese periodicals that, following the latest events, Austria-Hungary would have lost its influence over Romania, in favor of Germany. If for the moment this statement was considered to express a truth regarding Romania's diplomatic relations with the Triple Alliance, it was unjustifiably stated that in reality Austria was playing at that time, as will happen in the future, a much more important role in Eastern affairs than Germany. Thus, it was appreciated that Austria was a much more serious adversary in the Eastern issue than Germany could ever be, as Germany was considered to be less interested in the affairs of the European East. Therefore, only the Danubian Monarchy could counterbalance Russia's preponderance in this area. Germany was also of some importance to Romania, considering that it supported Austria in matters of Eastern Europe. All these were proving, in the author's opinion, that the visit to Constanța could not bring Russia any diplomatic victory, even if the Russian diplomacy's hopes were high in this regard¹⁷.



The analysis of the speeches held by the two sovereigns at the meeting in Constanța, as made by the newspaper *Neue Freie Presse* in its article of June 15 titled “Impression Produced by the Speeches in Constanța,” presented the Tsar as demonstrating that Russian foreign policy had the main objective of attracting Romania in the sphere of Russian influence by exploiting the favorable public opinion manifested in the Romanian kingdom. The King of Romania manifested himself in a reserved manner, while the tsar was overly flattering. The Tsar’s speech was a very friendly and amiable critique of the king’s policy up to that time. He said that only the alliance with Russia was natural, taking into account the favorable public opinion in this regard and the fact that this alliance corresponded to the community of faith. This toast was an attempt to subject the king of Romania to double pressure, both from public opinion and from the powerful neighbor to the east. At the end of the article, it was appreciated as most probably that an alliance with Russia would not be reached after this meeting in Constanța, but it was considered that, following this speech of the Tsar, the foreign policy of Romania, so clear and secure before, was becoming much more difficult¹⁸.

The opposition newspaper *Die Zeit*, in the article of June 15, 1914, entitled “The Tsar of Peace in Constanța,” also referred to the speeches delivered in Constanța, stating that the ideas can be summarized in the following words: “peace and stable balance in the Balkans.” The King of Romania, referring to the Hague Peace Congress, addressed the tsar as a protector of peace who appreciated the role played by Romania during the last two Balkan wars. The peace, balance and flourishing of the Balkan peoples were stated by the Romanian king as goals of the Romanian foreign policy. The guest expressed his hopes that the peaceful development of Romania will not be disturbed. In other words, it was appreciated in the mentioned periodical, the respective speeches were also a warning to Bulgaria, which, if it sought to review the peace in Bucharest, would have to face not only the alliance between Romania, Greece and Serbia, but also Russia.

At the end of the article, it was shown that an offensive alliance about which false prophets kept talking was not done, and there was no such intention. The tsar did nothing but take advantage of the opportunity offered by the inexperienced Austro-Hungarian diplomacy to become a supporter of peace in Bucharest and to diminish the influence of Austro-Hungarian diplomacy, suspected of revisionist tendencies¹⁹.

The *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung* issue of June 15 in 1914 also asserted that no risky statements should be made regarding the meeting in Constanța. Although Russia wanted to strengthen ties with Romania, it was natural for each state to seek to live in the best possible relations with its neighbor. On the other hand, there was no doubt that, although Romania gladly welcomed Russia’s gestures of friendship, it had no interest in abandoning the direction of its foreign policy until then. It was considered that in fact Romania, wanting to maintain its independence and influence in the Balkans, could not tie its hands through an unilateral policy; it had to maintain its freedom to maintain old friends, even though it

made new friends²⁰.

Also, in the reports from the Romanian Legation in Budapest it is specified that the visit from Constanța was commented especially by the opposition and independent newspapers²¹. Thus, the unofficial newspaper *Pester Lloyd* limited itself to publishing on the first day after the visit on the second page the telegrams and translations of the speeches, emphasizing the importance given by the two sovereigns to maintaining peace. The main newspaper of the government, *Az Ujsag*, tried to induce the idea that in this occasion the Tsar saw “Romania’s effort not to upset Austria-Hungary,” which was a satisfactory fact, but diplomatic attention should have focused more on Sazonov’s mission to Bucharest. The clerical newspaper *Alkotmány* noted that Romania avoided expressing feelings in order not to upset the Double Monarchy, despite the fact that Western newspapers presented the visit as representing a change in Romanian foreign policy.

Budapest Hirlap considered that the tsar’s visit would have huge consequences on international relations because a rapprochement of Romania with the Entente would have changed the balance of power between the two political-military blocs. The same newspaper concluded with the hope that “with all the wanderings so far” Romania and the Double Monarchy will have a better relation in the future. *Mag Hirlap*, the newspaper of Count Andrassy, believed that it was not excluded that Romania would abandon the collaboration with the Triple Alliance to which it owed everything, and found as its main reason the equivocal policy of the Monarchy in the Balkans. The opposition newspaper *Pesti Napló* took the opportunity to strike at Count Berchtold, who was considered the main culprit for the loss of relations with Romania. The same newspaper considered that the Monarchy suffered an humiliation unworthy of a great power by running after Romania’s friendship and expressed the hope that the ruling circles in Vienna will realize that the balance of power between the Great Powers has changed with this visit.

Pisces Hirlap (also an opposition newspaper) found that this visit must have been painful, especially for the heir Archduke who believed himself sure of Romania’s alliance. The independent newspaper *Neues Pester Journal* considered that King Carol’s meeting with the Tsar was a demonstration against the Triple Alliance and that a Balkan alliance protected by Russia posed the greatest danger to the Monarchy.

The opposition newspaper *A Nap* considered that the Tsar’s visit to Constanța was a new reason for concern regarding the security of the Transylvanian rule and highlighted the need to strengthen and complete the defend against a Romanian attack. The Romanian Foreign Minister was informed that, in general, the government press did not pay much attention to the tsar’s visit to Constanța, that there was a state of satisfaction, that the speeches of the two sovereigns did not contain any hint directed against the Monarchy, while opposition newspapers regarded Romania as already allied with Russia and attributed this change to the wrong policies of Berchtold and Tisza²².

In conclusion, we see that the Austro-Hungarian press commented extensively and openly on the special significance

of the visit of Tsar Nicholas II and Russian Foreign Minister Sazonov to Romania. If the official newspapers were very reserved in their comments on the meeting in Constanța and limited themselves to reproducing the speeches of the two sovereigns without commenting on them, the politically affiliated newspapers, especially those of the opposition or the independent ones, commented more extensively this visit. All the newspapers acknowledged the political importance of this meeting and the fact that Romania had become the arbiter of the *status quo* in the Balkans. Naturally, Romania was repeatedly reminded that its progress and leading position among the Balkan states was due to the support provided by the Triple Alliance and not by Russia. There were also some improper accusations in the Hungarian and Austrian press about the fact that the Romanians forgot about Bessarabia and that they wanted to help the Russian Empire to take the straits, thus becoming political and economic vassals of the tsar. As the content of the conversations at that time was largely shrouded in mystery, much speculation was made in the press. It was expressed, following the analysis of the speeches

made by the two sovereigns during the meeting in Constanța, either the belief that Romania will not achieve a radical change in its foreign policy and that Russia has registered a failure, failing to break Romania from the Triple Alliance, or the firm conviction that Romania was already Russia's ally.

In reality, the results of the meeting in Constanța were the following: Romania approached Russia, receiving unofficial assurances that it will be supported in fulfilling its national demands; the decision-makers of the two states have pledged to work together to maintain the *status quo* established in the Balkans, including the regime of freedom of trade through the straits. Sazonov's attempts to obtain a declaration of neutrality from the Romanian government in the event of an European war were unsuccessful, with Romania avoiding any precise commitment to Russia.

The tsar's visit once again highlighted the Romanian government's desire to better shape the new orientation of its foreign policy, which would be stressed until the signing of the military alliance with the Entente and the ensuring of the Great Union.

Notes:

1. Constantin Hlihor, *Istoria secolului XX* (Bucharest: Comunicare.ro, 2002), 21.
2. Glenn E Torrey, *România în Primul Război Mondial* (Bucharest: Meteor Publishing, 2018), 17.
3. Ema Nestovici, *România și Puterile Centrale între anii 1914-1916* (Bucharest: Editura Politică 1979), 26-28.
4. Nicolae Ciachir, Gheorghe Bercan, *Diplomația europeană în epoca modernă* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984), 448.
5. The historians Ghe. N. Căzan, Șerban Rădulescu Zoner are of the same opinion, considering Brătianu's statement conclusive regarding Romania's interests: "we must be prepared to receive our brothers from Transylvania without anyone being able to oppose them in. In this sense, Russia's support can help us." See Ghe. N. Căzan, Șerban Rădulescu Zoner, *România și Tripla Alianță 1878-1914* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979), 393.
6. Ester Uribes, "La rencontre de Constanța du 14 Juin 1914," *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* VII, no. 2 (1968): 235-236.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Nicu Pohoăț, *România și Tripla Înțelegere* (Bucharest: Cavallioti 2003), 263; Ion M. Oprea, *România și Imperiul Rus. 1900-1924*, vol.I (Bucharest: Albatros, 1998), 62.
9. *Arhiva Ministerului Afacerilor Externe* (further as M.A.E.), vol. 24, Reports from Viena, 1914-1916, f. 55-58.
10. *Ibid.*, f. 58.
11. *Ibid.*, f. 60-62.
12. *Ibid.*, f. 66-68.
13. *Ibid.*, f. 72.
14. *Ibid.*, f. 68-69.
15. *Ibid.*, f. 70.
16. *Ibid.*, f. 74.
17. *Ibid.*, f. 75.
18. *Ibid.*, f. 84-85.
19. *Ibid.*, f. 93-94.
20. *Ibid.*, f. 95.
21. *Idem.* vol.7, Reports from Budapest, 1914, f. 133-136.
22. *Ibid.*, f. 137.

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