

***CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE BEGINNINGS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS
BETWEEN ROMANIA AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC FROM 1968 TO 1970***

Bogdan Iulian Ranteș, PhD Student, "Valahia" University of Tîrgoviște

Abstract: The proposed subject aims to analyze a less studied topic by specialists, the beginnings of Romania's relations with Central African Republic in the period 1968-1970. This range has a special significance because the two countries established diplomatic relations in early 1968, placing the foundations of a collaboration that lasted more than a decade. 1970 was another milestone in strengthening relations between the two countries, the most important event of that year was the first visit of the President of the Republic of Central Africa, Jean Bedel Bokassa, in Romania. In this paper will be analyzed the steps that led to the establishment of these relations, especially diplomatic and economic, being presented the most important events that formed the basis of their development from this period. The focus is on the party level and state visits from delegations of the two countries and their results. The paper also presents some aspects of the discussions that took place between officials of the two countries during the visits. In order to achieve this approach have been used some documents belonging to the Department of Foreign Relations of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party who are preserved under the custody of the Central Historical National Archives and numerous articles published in the two Romanian central newspapers of that time Scântea and Romania Liberă and also, from the weekly magazine of foreign policy Lumea.

Key words: Nicolae Ceaușescu, Jean Bedel Bokassa, economic relations, diplomatic relations, Romanian Communist Party

The relations between Romania and the states of Sub-Saharan Africa represent a topic less studied by the researchers and specialists from our country. However, in the sixties and seventies years of the XX century, one of Romanian communist leadership major aim was to establishing bilateral relations and to help as many new states emerged from the ashes of former colonial empires. In the early sixties the main countries in this part of Africa with whom our country entertained close bilateral relations were those who gravitating into the orbit of the Soviet Union: Ghana and Guinea. Things have changed after the coming to power of Nicolae Ceausescu in 1965, when Romanian foreign policy directions have broadened in this space. Then, new diplomatic relations were established in 1966, evidenced by a further close cooperation, with other states that were not influenced by communism, as the two

Republics of Congo (Brazzaville and Kinshasa) or with the Central African Republic, since 1968, which is the subject of this paper.

Central African Republic is a country located in the center of the black continent, exactly halfway between the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Since the nineteenth century this region was conquered by the French, and was incorporated in the territorial structure of French Equatorial Africa named Oubangui-Chari. The first movements of the local peoples against the colonial rule appeared in the interwar period. In the early 30s of last century there was a bitter revolt of local tribes, hardly suppressed by the French. Unlike other colonies in that region, in this territory were no strong liberation movement, which was obtained without much effort from locals. The first step towards independence was conducted in 1958 when the territory Oubangui-Chari was proclaimed a republic within the French Community, as the Central African Republic. On 13 August 1960, the African state it became independent. The first president of this country was David Dacko, who ruled the country until 1965, when he was removed from power after a coup organized by a part of the army led by colonel Jean Bedel Bokassa. Later he became the new president of the country.¹

The way the two countries reached to establish diplomatic relations

Regarding the relations of Romania with this state, they have begun in the same year of the African state's independence, which was recognized by our country on the same day through a telegram from the President of the Council of Ministers of the RPR, Chivu Stoica, addressed to the Central African leader, David Dacko². Also, the newspaper *Scanteia* was published a Agerpress information which present a brief history and economic potential of the new state³. However, there were Romanian who reached its territory long before this event. From an information gathered by experts to prepare Ceausescu's visit to the Republic of Central Africa in 1972 we find that in the years 1930-1931 Institute of Speleology in Cluj held a wide scientific expedition in the Sahara desert region, that is part of this country. The

¹However, the real founder of the African state is considered Boganda Barthelemy, who established the first political party in Central Africa called Social Evolution Movement of Black Africa (MESAN), and then became a deputy in the French National Assembly. In 1958 he became head of Central Africa (Oubangui-Chari) within the French Community, creating the first government of this country. Boganda never got to enjoy his country's independence, because he died in 1959, after a plane crash

²*Scânteia*, year XXX, no. 4914, 16 august 1960, p.3

³*Scânteia*, year XXX, no. 4912, 14 august 1960, p.4

same document also states that the same region has been explored in 1938 by two Romanian geographers, NN Orghidan and Victor Tufescu⁴.

However, relations between the two countries were formalized only on 6 February 1968, at their leadership being Jean-Bedel Bokassa and Nicolae Ceausescu. In the joint communiqué drafted on this occasion stated that "*Desiring for a better mutual knowledge and developing cooperation between the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Republic of Central Africa, the two governments decided to establish diplomatic relations at embassy level*"⁵.

From an explanatory secret note from 5th Direction-Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated 5.09.1968, we find that, on June 10, 1968, the Central African ambassador in Israel informed the Romanian side of his government's desire to send to our country an official economic delegation. According to the same document, the request was approved by the Permanent Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in July 24⁶. Shortly afterwards, the Ministry of Foreign Trade sent the First Economic Secretary of the Romanian Embassy from Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), named Marin Periș, to Central African Republic between July 23 to August 8⁷. He met with the President and with Foreign Affairs Minister of the African state. During this visit, the Romanian official conveyed the verbal permission from the leadership of the Romanian Communist Party in planning the visit of the Central African Republic's delegation. In the talks, Bokassa decided to send a delegation to Romania composed from three ministers and experts from all economic ministries. The situation was communicated to the Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu, through a letter sent to him, dated 7 August 1968. The African state leader reported that:

*"I have long maintained, while I was in province with my entire government, with your special envoy, and our exchanges of views were imbued with sincerity and cordiality. I fully agree with much enthusiasm by your government's desire to cooperate with Central African Republic. To this end, we will be glad if Your Excellence and the Romanian Government would accept a mission of goodwill to come to Bucharest soon, together with the authorities of your beautiful country, to establish cooperation between our peoples."*⁸

After exactly one month, the first delegation of the African state who visited Romania arrived in Bucharest. According to information taken from the news agency Agerpress by the

⁴ Romanian Central Historical National Archives, fond Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party, Foreign Relations Department, folder no. 17/1972, f. 62

⁵ *Scântea*, year XXXVII, no. 4602, 6 February 1968, p. 5 (Author's translation)

⁶ RCHNA, fond CC of RCP, Foreign Relations Department, Alphabetic-Nicolae Ceausescu, folder no.8/A, ff. 13-16.

⁷ *Ibidem*, f. 14

⁸ *Ibidem*, f.12 (Author's translation)

newspaper *Scanteia*, the officials from Central African Republic were led by Minister for National Economy, Louis Alazoula and were greeted by several officials of Romanian economic ministries.⁹ The visit was held from September 7 to 14, 1968, and representatives of the Central African Republic have signed a series of contracts with the Romanian side, especially in the economic domain, visited several industrial companies in our country and met with Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu. Thus, following negotiations between the two sides, three agreements were signed between Romania and the Republic of Central Africa. The first of these was a commercial agreement which regulated the mutual deliveries of goods within 13 September 1968 13 September 1973. Under this contract Romania export to the African, inter alia, industrial machinery, agricultural tractors, trucks etc. Instead, from Central African Republic imported cotton, coffee and cocoa.¹⁰ The other two agreements aimed at cooperation in the economic, scientific, technical and cultural domains. The governments of the two countries have agreed to give each other the most favored nation clause in trade and strive to capitalize the opportunities for cooperation in mining, industrial or agricultural building. Regarding scientific and cultural agreement, it provided to support cooperation and exchange of experience between scientific and research institutions, to establish and extend links between higher education institutions and between institutions of culture and art.¹¹ On September 13, 1968 Central African delegation was received by Nicolae Ceausescu at the headquarters of the RCP. The meeting was attended by Romanian Foreign Minister Corneliu Manescu, Minister of Mines, Bujor Almășan and Ministers of Construction Industry and Forest Economy. At the beginning, topic of discussion was the agreements signed between the two parties and the Romanian objectives that were visited by guests. Later, it was passed to analyze the level reached by the relations between the two countries. About this Ceausescu said that:

"Romania starts in relations with all countries on the principles underlying its entire policy of equal rights, mutual respect, sovereignty and of a fair and equal cooperation in all fields. We believe that only on this base, among other countries can establish cooperation and peace. We attach great importance to the development of the African independent states. We believe this will create conditions for the welfare of the peoples of this continent but also will help establish a climate of cooperation and peace in the world. In this spirit we appreciate the relations between Romania and the Republic of Central Africa. We hope that the beginning that was made by Romanian mission visit in your republic

⁹*Scântea*, year XXXVIII, no. 7819, 8 September 1968, p. 5

¹⁰*Official Bulletin of RSR*, no.11 from 26 January 1969.

¹¹ Vasile Gliga (coord.), *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol.III, București, Editura Politică, 1973, p.48

and especially by your visit to Romania will be a good start and that will be followed by positive results for both countries."¹².

In response, the Central African delegation leader, Louis Alazoula, brought into question the importance of the visit of the Romanian representative in Kinshasa, Marin Periș the country. About this he stated that:

*"This visit, which drew the first milestone, triggered particular interest because even before this visit we heard about your country via radio, TV, press and I want to emphasize that Mr. Periș was considered special envoy of the Romanian government, and the president Bokassa immediately demanded relevant forums to move for concrete actions of cooperation with Romania. Our president stressed that a keen interest, both himself and the people of the Central African Republic, for this people faraway, but that, after all the information we have, seems to understand us better and we can work together in the future."*¹³

On September 14, 1968, the Central African state delegation left Romania and was led by several Romanian officials belonging to the economic ministries. Before departure, head of the delegation of the Republic of Central Africa, Louis Alazoula, made a press statement spoke about the main purpose of that visit, which was to lay the foundations for solid cooperation in several areas, with Romania.¹⁴

At the end of the visit, the Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu, sent a letter to Central African counterpart, Jean Bedel Bokassa, expressing his satisfaction with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states at the embassy. He was also lauded the visit of the delegation led by Louis Alazoula and his satisfaction that the two countries signed three agreements.¹⁵

The last stage of relations between Romania and the Republic of Central Africa in 1968 took place in December, when a government delegation from our country has visited the African state. It was invited to participate at the festivities for the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic. During the visit, the Romanian delegation enjoyed special attention, being received by Central-African State President, Jean Bedel Bokassa. Also, there were talks with the Foreign Minister and other officials of the African state. In the discussions were analyzed development prospects of bilateral relations in various

¹² RCHNA, fund CC of RCP, Foreign Relations Department, folder no. 130/1968, f. 4 (Author translation)

¹³ *Ibidem*, f. 5 (Author's translation)

¹⁴ *Scântea*, year XXXVIII, no. 7826, 15 September 1968, p. 5

¹⁵ RCHNA, fund CC of RCP, Foreign Relations Department, Alphabetic- Nicolae Ceausescu, folder no. 8/A , f. 19-20.

fields, the implementation of the agreements signed and expanding existing contacts at higher levels.¹⁶

The year 1969 marked a temporary stagnation of the relationships between the two countries. This was mainly due to the emergence of internal problems in the Central African Republic, culminating in the attempt to overthrow Bokassa's regime through a coup led by Colonel Alexandre Banza. He had originally been a close ally of the president and even had a role in the 1965 coup that brought him to power. He later served as Minister of Finance in early 1969 but was dismissed last dead line. In this context he decided to launch another coup that would remove Bokassa from power. In order to carry out the plan he relied on the support of several Central-African military leaders. The coup was planned for April 9, but was betrayed at the last minute by one of his closest men.¹⁷ The trial took place on 12 April, and according to a briefing from Scanteia, sprawling found irrefutable evidence as a proclamation to the army, an appeal on the population and a future government list.¹⁸ Following the trial, Colonel Banza he was sentenced to death and was executed the next day.

Romania's relations with the Central African Republic in 1970

Year 1970 witnessed important moment in relations between the two countries and in foreground was the visit performed by President Bokassa in our country from July 11 to 15. Until then it has been an important event that preceded this visit, the opening of the Embassy of Central Africa in Bucharest on 21 June 1970. From one information presented in newspaper Scanteia dated June 27, 1970 we learn that a day earlier, President of the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu, received Alberto Sato, who has presented his credentials as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Central Africa in our country.¹⁹ During discussions at the event, the new ambassador took first speech transmitting a message from President Bokassa. He later talked about the international situation at the time, praising Romania's policy in this respect and stating that:

"In a deeply troubled world in which selfishness take before mutual assistance and cooperation in which huge resources are used for simple prestige, instead of being employed to suppress people's

¹⁶ Vasile Gliga(coord.), *op.cit.*, p. 49

¹⁷ Brian Titley, *Dark Age: The political odyssey of Emperor Bokassa*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University, 1997, p.43

¹⁸ *Scânteia*, year XXXVIII, no. 8035, 14 April 1969, p. 4

¹⁹ *Scânteia*, year XXXIX, no. 8468, 27 June 1970, p. 1

miserias, the gulf separating rich nations to poor countries deepens and widens every day, the hatred and war destroys thousands of lives, is comforting and encouraging to ever find a nation - I called the Socialist Republic of Romania-driven by noble ideals and realistic range to a policy of friendship and cooperation with the governments of all countries loving justice and peace, in strict compliance with the principles of national sovereignty and independence, equal rights, non-interference domestic and mutual benefit (...) resulting from this policy, Excellence, respect, admiration and trust that hundreds of countries does not cease to manifest Romanian leaders."²⁰

After that, the ambassador's speech focused on the problems facing his country and the evolution of relations between Central African Republic and Romania, considering that our country should have a role in the stages of development of African state. The second part of the ceremony was reserved for the discourse of Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu. He wanted to thank the ambassador for the message received from President Bokassa, and then also spoke about relations between the two countries, calling into question the visit that was to perform in Romania the Central African leader.

The most important event in the history of relations between our country and the Central African Republic in 1970 was the visit of the president Jean Bedel Bokassa to Romania in the range 11 to 16 July. The invitation had been made to the African leader since 1968 and he confirmed the desire to make this visit in a letter sent to Nicolae Ceausescu dated from May 27, 1970.²¹

Exactly in the arrival day of General Bokassa in Romania, on July 11, the newspaper *Scanteia* was published on the front page an article entitled *Welcome President of Central African Republic, General Jean Bedel Bokassa* which were presented some information about who was to arrive in our country but also about the state he represent²². The first part of the article was presented a brief biography of the special guest. Afterwards, they were presented some aspects of domestic and foreign policy of the African state, and the last part was dedicated to analyze the level of the two countries relations.

Arrival Ceremony of the delegation led by Bokassa was amply shown by the two Romanian daily newspapers in their numbers from July 12 1970, both of them used the same text. Regarding its content it should be noted that the language used was a propagandistic one, being described some aspects that highlight the importance and the grandeur of this visit. To highlight this, the text mentioned:

²⁰*Ibidem*, p. 7 (Author's translation)

²¹ RCHNA, fond CC of RCP, Foreign Relations Department, Alphabetic- Nicolae Ceausescu, folder no.8/A, ff. 21-22.

²²*Scântea*, year XXXIX, no. 8482, 11 July 1970, p.1 (Author's translation)

*"Framed by the state flags of the two countries, the official pavilion were frontispiece portraits of President of the Republic of Central Africa, General Jean Bedel Bokassa, and President of the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu. On large banners were inscribed Welcome His Excellency the President of the Republic of Central Africa, Jean Bedel Bokassa! And, live the friendship between the peoples of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Republic of Central Africa!"*²³

According to an information presented in the same newspapers we find out that, shortly after arriving at Otopeni Airport Central Africans guests visited the Palace of the Council of State Protocol, where they were received by Nicolae Ceausescu around 15.00. This meeting was not limited only to simple cordial talks, the two leaders taking advantage of it to decorate each other. The Ceausescu handed over to Bokassa order "*Star of the Republic Socialist Republic of Romania*" first class, while receiving the "*Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Central Africa*"²⁴. After this meeting, the officials were directed to the Black Sea where they visited several resorts stopping in Mangalia, where they camped. Day of 13 July was extremely busy for Bokassa and his companions. In the first part of it was held the first round of official talks between the two leaders and afternoon guests visited several objectives in Bucharest making and a drive through several districts of the Romanian capital. The delegation of the Central African Republic filed a wreath at the monument of the heroes of the struggle for freedom of the people and the homeland, for socialism. Regarding the official talks, they lasted an hour and fifty minutes, was carried out between the hours of 10.30-12.20. For Romania, took part in the discussions, besides Ceausescu, leaders and representatives of Ministries who held the Economic sectors, Agriculture and Foreign Affairs²⁵.

In early discussions Bokassa wanted to thank Ceausescu for the welcome given, believing that this was the most beautiful of all his visits made by then. Because of this Central African leader has communicated to Romanian President that he remains one more day in Romania, although on July 15 he was expected in Cairo. After praises and thanks of this type of meetings Ceausescu mapped out the directions in which the talks were to be held, first addressing bilateral issues and then international ones. The beginning belonged to Bokassa, who said, among other things, that: "*We came here with the whole Central African Republic to put it at your disposal. You will have total priority, because we know you, to give us as*

²³*Scântea*, year XXXIX, no. 8483, 12 July 1970, p.1 and *România Liberă*, year XXVIII, no. 8000, 12 July 1970, p.1 (Author's translation)

²⁴*Ibidem*, p.5

²⁵ RCHNA, fund CC of RCP, Foreign Relations Department ,folder no. 39/1970, f.2

many tips to help us, said to us what to do and what not to do. This language that I use here, use it for the first time since being president and not anywhere else I've used. We've used for the Romanian people, because we know this people."²⁶

Subsequently, President of Central African Republic has made a brief presentation of his country, focusing particularly on soil and subsoil resources, the most important being diamonds, uranium and wood. Then he read an aid memoire which established the directions of the relations with Romania. At the beginning it was deplored geostrategic position of the Republic of Central Africa, the biggest drawback being that had no outlet to the sea. This, primarily, affect trade in the country, which is achieved with very large losses for the African state. Therefore, Bokassa considered, as a priority in the development of his state, the construction of a 1300 km railway that would cross the entire country. In this equation Romania was invited to support this project, with the promise that will receive other benefits in return. He has also been asked for help in other areas such as mining, where Romanian specialists required to be sent for prospecting the soil, in wood processing industry, in agriculture, education and technology. Another demand made by Bokassa was that Ceausescu supporting him to build a cement factory in the African country.²⁷

The last request of Central African leader was to be created at Bangui, a Romanian Commercial Permanent Missions, this being conditioned by signing long-term commercial treaties between the two countries. In his response, Ceaușescu said that Romania does not have great financial opportunities and that many of Bokassa's requests could only be achieved in cooperation with other socialist states or non-socialist.²⁸

The only requests approved by the Romanian leader was providing a part for financing of railway and sending Romanian experts to help the Central African government to discover new deposits of various minerals from the soil of African state, especially uranium, copper, bauxite, diamonds and iron. On hearing these words, Bokassa responded enthusiastically that "*And this is enough for us*"²⁹. Finally, Ceausescu had concluded that all these issues must be presented experts of the two countries to be analyzed. Regarding the second topic of discussions established at the beginning by Romanian leader, namely the international situation, he considered that they will talk about it on another occasion, but still some aspects to be mentioned in the common joint statement, such as the fight against colonialism, noninterference in the internal affairs of other states, and more. However, Romanian leader

²⁶*Ibidem*, f.5 (Author's translation)

²⁷*Ibidem*, f. 9

²⁸*Ibidem*, f.13

²⁹*Ibidem*, f.14

wanted to bring up some aspects of the Romanian foreign policy, presenting the principles that guide it and the stage of our country's relations with major world powers of the time.³⁰

At the end of the first round of official talks between the two leaders, Ceausescu gave an official dinner in honor of his guest, President Bokassa. During this time they have spoken and toasts. In his speech, Romanian leader stressed that:

*"Our countries are located in different geographical areas, at many thousands of kilometers away from each other; however, the fact that both peoples are struggle for the affirmation of lofty ideals of freedom and justice, of peace and progress makes them feel close, to cherish each other, lasting feelings of friendship. Events full of cordiality and warm welcome which makes you, everywhere, the population of Romania is a vivid illustration of those feelings, to express a desire to develop friendship and cooperation between our countries in the interests of both peoples, the general cause, peace and international understanding."*³¹

Another aspect touched by Nicolae Ceausescu during the toast was the fighting against colonialism and how Romania has supported this. Instead, in his toast Bokassa spoke about the satisfaction that met Ceausescu and the Romanian people who showed admiration. Then he drew some directions of domestic and foreign policy of his country.

In the fourth day of their stay in Romania, Central African delegation visited several goals from the country. The first destination was the city of Pitesti where guests passed through the Petro-Chemical Plant, wood processing factory and one brewery. From the city of residence of Arges County, Africans were directed towards Brasov, where they visited there a few industrial factories.³²

On July 15, 1970 was held a second round of official talks between Jean Bedel Bokassa and Nicolae Ceausescu. This time it took only half an hour between 18.00-18.30. Meanwhile, the two leaders spoke less, giving the word to ministers who were involved in joint negotiations. The first who spoke were foreign ministers, Corneliu Manescu, respectively Nestor Kombot-Naguemon. They notified Presidents that had drawn finished joint communiqué of the two parties who would be made public at the end of the visit. Both ministers noted that in its drafting complied with all directives were received from Ceausescu and Bokassa. In the end, spoke Corneliu Burtică, Minister for Foreign Trade, who announced that following

³⁰*Ibidem*, f.18

³¹*Scânteia*, year XXXIX, no. 8485, 14 July 1970, pp. 1, 5 și *România Liberă*, year XXVIII, no. 8002, 14 July 1970, pp. 1, 5 (Author's translation)

³²*Scânteia*, year XXXIX, no. 8486, 15 July 1970, p. 1

negotiations at his ministry was developed a new aide-memoire, which were established areas and ways in which the Romanian state would help Central African Republic.³³

After the end of the meeting Bokassa's turn came to give a dinner in honor of Nicolae Ceausescu after a few days ago the Romanian leader had done the same. It was held at the Palace of Spring and attended by all the members of delegations who participated in the discussions. In his toast, Bokassa thanked Romanian officials for the hospitality they showed, saying that he was delighted with the reception being made and pleasantly surprised by the similarities of the two countries towards certain international events of that period. Ceausescu also spoke about the same themes: the international situation and the development of relations between the two countries.³⁴

The same day, at the Ministry of Transports, was signed an agreement regulating civil air transport. The document stipulates, among others, the establishment of a direct air-line Bangui-Bucharest.³⁵

Central African Republic delegation visit led by President Jean-Bedel Bokassa ended on July 16, 1970 when they left the country aboard a private jet. Upon departure, guests were led by a group of Romanian officials headed by Nicolae Ceausescu himself. The two leaders traveled together from Spring Palace, the residence of Bokassa during his visit to the airport in an open car, being greeted by Romanian citizens in the direction of the road. Before leaving Central African leader gave a statement exclusively to *Lumea* magazine, in which it reiterated the similarities between the two countries regarding some international events over the prior period and the cooperation between them.³⁶ Also, the same magazine published a comprehensive story about Bokassa's visit in Romania, under the signature of Dumitru Constantin. He presented detailed steps of that visit, analyzing African leader travels by various targets in our country, but also the discussions and negotiations that took place between the two sides and their results.³⁷

On 19 July 1970 the two Romanian central newspapers have published the Joint Communiqué on the visit to Romania of the President of the Central African Republic, General Jean Bedel Bokassa. In it were presented all the activities that guests have deployed

³³The full text of it, written in French, is found at ANIC, fond RCP, Foreign Relations Department, folder no. 39/1970, ff. 25-44

³⁴*Scântea*, year XXXIX, no. 8487, 16 July 1970, p.5 and *România Liberă*, year XXVIII, no. 8004, 16 July 1970, p.5

³⁵*Official Bulletin of RSR*, no. 19/11.02.1971

³⁶*Lumea*, year VIII, no. 29, 16 July 1970, p. 5.

³⁷Dumitru Constantin, *Vizita Președintelui Republicii Africa Centrală*, in *Lumea*, year VIII, no. 29, 16 July 1970, p. 4

in Romania, from visiting different objectives in our country until talks between the leaders. Regarding this last aspect the statement allocated an important place to the views of two leading international situation at the time, although, as I mentioned above, discussions on the subject had never held between the two, according to official transcripts of conversations. Thus, the official communiqué stated that Ceausescu and Bokassa had talked about many international issues such as the situation in Africa, anti-colonial struggle, some concern about the armed conflicts that jeopardize international peace, the situation in Vietnam, the situation in the Middle East or in Europe.³⁸

Back in his homeland, Bokassa sent a letter to Ceausescu, dated July 30, 1970. With this, the President of the Republic of Central Africa Republic thanked his Romanian counterpart on his behalf, the Government and Central African people for the warm welcome that our state's authorities have done him and his delegation. It also believes that this was a proof of friendship and marked the cooperation ties existing until then between the two countries.³⁹

The last stage of Romania's relations with the Central African Republic in 1970 was spent toward the end. Then there was a private visit to our country of Central African Vice-President, Antoine Guimali. On November 26, 1970 he was received by Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu. On 19 December the same year, Guimali sent a letter to Nicolae Ceausescu show their gratitude by the "nice" receiving that took part in Romania, him and his wife.⁴⁰

In conclusion, this period was one in which Romania and Central African Republic have established lasting cooperation, subsequently materialized in several official visits and treaties signed between the two countries. A close friendship was bound between the presidents among them were many similarities, the most important being that both took the power in 1965. During this period (1970-1976) African leader made several official and unofficial visits to our country while Nicolae Ceausescu was honored to be the first president of a European country who visited the Central African Republic in 1972.

³⁸*Scântea*, year XXXIX, no. 8490, 19 July 1970, p. 1, 5 și *România Liberă*, year XXVIII, no. 8006, 19 July 1970, p. 1, 5

³⁹ RCHNA, fond CC of RCP, Foreign Relations Department, Alphabetic- Nicolae Ceausescu, folder no.8/A, ff. 22-23

⁴⁰*Ibidem*, ff. 24-25

Bibliography:

I. Documents

Official Bulletin of Socialist Republic of Romania, no. 11/ 26 January 1969, no. 19/ 11 February 1971

Romanian Central Historical National Archives, fond Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party, Foreign Relations Department, folders no. 130/1968, 39/1970, 17/1972 and Alphabetical Nicolae Ceausescu, folder no. 8/A.

II. Press

Lumea magazine, numbers from 1970

România Liberă, numbers from 1960, 1968, 1970

Scânteia, numbers from 1960, 1968, 1969, 1970

III. Books

Calafeteanu, Ion (coord.), *Politica externă a României: dicționar cronologic*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1986.

Gliga, Vasile, Turcu, Constantin (coord.), *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol.III, Editura Politică, București, 1973.

Titley, Bryan, *Dark Age: The political odyssey of Emperor Bokassa*, McGill-Queen's University, Montreal, 1997