

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH
BY
THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
SMT DROUPADI MURMU
ON CONFERMENT OF THE HONORARY DOCTORATE BY
BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES**

Bucharest: 24 July, 2026

I am deeply honoured to be here today at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, and to receive this prestigious Honorary Doctorate. I extend my sincere gratitude to the Rector, the Senate and the entire university community for this recognition, which I accept with humility on behalf of 1.4 billion Indians, as a reflection of the enduring friendship between the peoples of India and Romania.

Dear friends,

As a student of Political Science and Economics myself, it is especially meaningful for me to receive this degree from a university that has trained generations of Romanians in economic and administrative sciences.

Education has been the single most transformative force in my own life. I was born in a small village, in a family with very limited means. I was the first girl from my village to go to college. That experience taught me, more powerfully than any textbook, that education is the great equaliser: it does not ask where you were born, only how far you are willing to travel.

I had the privilege of working as a teacher for some time, and I saw first-hand how a single classroom, however modest, can change the course of a family's future, and in time, of a whole community's. This conviction has stayed with throughout my years of public service: that education is

not merely a means of individual advancement, but the surest foundation of a just and inclusive society.

Today, as the world is being reshaped by artificial intelligence, digital technologies and other rapid scientific advances, universities like this have even greater responsibility to ensure that knowledge is guided by wisdom, ethics and compassion. India's National Education Policy reflects this vision by promoting innovation, research, creativity and international academic collaboration.

Friends,

India and Romania may be geographically distant, but our civilisations have long spoken to one another, often through our poets before our diplomats. Almost exactly a century ago, in November 1926, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore came to this very city and addressed an overflowing hall at the National Theatre of Bucharest on the unity of the human spirit. He was moved by how deeply the people of this land understood the Indian way of thinking. Your own national poet, Mihai Eminescu, studied the Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita during his student years, and these learnings deeply influenced his writing. The great Romanian historian and writer Mircea Eliade, inspired in his youth by Tagore's visit to Bucharest, travelled to India to study at the University of Calcutta and learnt Sanskrit. Few nations, so far apart in geography, share so intimate a conversation between their greatest minds.

This shared civilisational instinct is what the ancient Indian phrase *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* - the world is one family - seeks to express, and it is the principle that guides India's engagement with the world today: cooperation in place of competition, dialogue in place of discord, and a shared responsibility for our common future.

It is in this spirit that I see the bilateral relationship between India and Romania today. Ours is a friendship based on mutual respect, trust and

shared democratic values. Education has been one of the strongest pillars of this partnership. For decades, Romanian Universities have welcomed Indian students, particularly in medicine, engineering and technology.

I would encourage this university, and other Romanian educational institutions to deepen cooperation through joint research and faculty and student exchanges. I hope that my visit will lead to new academic partnerships and encourage more students and researchers from Romania to engage with India. I am also pleased to announce that India has doubled the number of ITEC training slots for Romania, offering greater opportunities for Romanian professionals for training and capacity building including in emerging areas such as artificial intelligence.

Dear students,

You are the architects of tomorrow's world. Success is measured not only by professional achievement, but also by the values you uphold and the positive differences you make in the lives of others. May you remain curious in your pursuit of knowledge, confident in your abilities and compassionate in your actions, using your talents to build bridges across cultures and contribute to a more peaceful and prosperous world.

I once again thank the Bucharest University of Economic Studies for this great honour. I extend my warm wishes to the Rector, the faculty and the students of this distinguished institution for continued success, and I look forward to the further deepening of the bonds of friendship, scholarship and enterprise between India and Romania in the years to come.

Thank you.