

Position Paper

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Country: Romania **Committee:** United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) **Agenda:**
Promoting Consensus on Protection of Civilians Amid Urban Warfare in Protracted Conflict

I. Background

Warfare has moved into cities, and the numbers reflect that shift. When explosive weapons designed for open terrain are used in dense urban environments, the result is not just higher casualty counts but the slow collapse of everything a city depends on — water systems, power grids, hospitals. In protracted conflicts, this damage compounds year after year, and what starts as a military campaign ends up destroying the very infrastructure a population would need to recover once the fighting stops. Romania, as a member of the UN, the EU, and NATO, does not view this as a distant humanitarian issue. Sitting on the edge of an active conflict and having spent the last several years managing large-scale displacement firsthand, Romania sees the protection of civilians in urban warfare as directly tied to its own regional stability.

II. Romania's Position

Romania's baseline position is straightforward: International Humanitarian Law, and specifically the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution under the Geneva Conventions, is not optional in urban settings just because the terrain makes compliance harder. That said, Romania does not believe ceasefires alone solve the problem in protracted conflicts. The humanitarian, logistical, and political strain of a years-long urban war has to be addressed with tools built for the long haul, not one-off emergency measures.

This is not an abstract stance for Romania. Since 2022, the country has functioned as one of the primary transit and host states for people fleeing conflict on its border, running this through the EU's Temporary Protection mechanism while simultaneously keeping the Solidarity Lanes corridor operational for humanitarian and commercial goods. Having lived through what it actually takes to keep a corridor open and a reception system functioning, Romania is skeptical of frameworks that treat host and transit states as an afterthought rather than a load-bearing part of the response.

III. Past Actions and Relevant Frameworks

Romania's positions in this committee are grounded in frameworks it already operates under:

- **UNSC Resolution 2286 (2016)**, protecting medical care in armed conflict, along with the broader body of Security Council resolutions on civilian and infrastructure protection.

- **The EWIPA Declaration (2022)**, the Political Declaration on explosive weapons in populated areas, which Romania has endorsed as a starting point for limiting wide-area-effect weapons in cities.
- **The EU Temporary Protection Directive**, which Romania has applied since 2022 to give displaced civilians immediate status without collapsing its own asylum system.
- **The Solidarity Lanes initiative**, run with the European Commission, which has kept humanitarian and civilian supply routes open despite conflict next door.
- Continued Romanian troop and logistics contributions to **NATO's eastern flank**, and support for **OSCE** monitoring relevant to civilian protection.

IV. Proposed Solutions

Romania's proposals for this committee sit on three pillars, each drawn from what Romania has actually had to manage on the ground rather than theoretical models.

1. Humanitarian corridors as a baseline obligation, not a favor. Too often, corridors depend on the goodwill of whichever party controls the ground at a given moment. Romania wants to see standardized protocols for negotiating and holding corridors open — advance deconfliction between combatants and humanitarian actors, neutral monitors on the ground in real time, and a fast-track reporting line to the Security Council when a corridor is violated. Access should be an obligation under IHL, not a concession that has to be re-earned every week.

2. Real coordination between regional organizations and UN bodies, not parallel efforts. Romania has seen firsthand how much gets lost when regional and UN humanitarian machinery operate on separate tracks. A standing liaison mechanism between OCHA, UNHCR, and regional bodies like the EU, NATO, the AU, and ASEAN would let regional organizations pre-commit logistics, funding, and reception capacity ahead of a crisis rather than scrambling once it hits — something close to what the EU-UN coordination under Solidarity Lanes has already shown can work.

3. Burden-sharing for host and transit states that is predictable, not charitable. States next door to a protracted urban conflict absorb costs that the rest of the international community rarely accounts for until the crisis is already underway. Romania is proposing a dedicated UN trust fund, or an expanded pledging-conference model, that ties support for host and transit states directly to measurable displacement and corridor-management costs — so that frontline states aren't left waiting on ad hoc appeals every time.

V. Conclusion

Romania comes to this committee willing to work with any delegation prepared to move past general statements of concern toward language that actually holds up in a protracted urban conflict. That means real protection for corridors, real coordination between regional and UN actors, and a fair deal for the states carrying the weight of displacement. Romania is ready to sponsor or co-sponsor resolutions that put these three pillars into practice.