

*Rear Admiral (ret)*

*Iuri Alexandru COVALEOV*



Rear Admiral (Ret.) Iuri COVALEOV was born on May 9, 1971, in Tulcea, Romania. He graduated in 1994 from the “Mircea cel Bătrân” Naval Academy, earning a degree in naval radio-electronics engineering. Over a distinguished three-decade military career, he held a wide range of tactical, operational, and strategic roles within the Romanian Armed Forces, rising to the rank of Rear Admiral and becoming a prominent figure in both naval command and military intelligence.

He began his career as Chief of Communications (Signal) aboard a Fast Patrol Missile Boat (Tarantul Class).

In 1998, he was appointed staff officer and Chief of Communications for the Diving Squadron, where he also completed a professional diving course. His experience broadened further when he assumed the role of Chief of the Public Relations Department and Spokesperson for the Navy Staff between 2002 and 2004. He later served as Chief of Cabinet to the Chief of the Navy. During this period, he pursued postgraduate studies at the National School of Political and Administrative Studies, completing coursework at the Faculty of Public Relations and Social Communication.

Continuing his academic and professional development, Rear Admiral COVALEOV earned a Master’s degree in Defence Studies from King’s College London, University of London, in 2007, while also completing the United Kingdom’s Advanced Command and Staff Course (ACSC 10). He went on to receive a PhD in Military Sciences and Intelligence from the National Defence University “Carol I” in Bucharest in 2011.

Following his tenure as Chief of Cabinet to the Chief of the General Staff (2007–2008), he transitioned to the Romanian Military Intelligence Directorate (ROU MID) in 2008. His diplomatic assignments began shortly after, serving as Deputy Defence, Military, Air and Naval Attaché of Romania to the Russian Federation from 2009 to 2013, and then as Defence, Military, Air and Naval Attaché in Ukraine from 2013 to 2018. These postings were followed by senior leadership roles within ROU MID, including Director of Strategic HUMINT (2018–2020), Deputy Chief for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) (2020–2022), and Deputy Chief for

Operations (2022–2024), overseeing key domains such as GEOINT, SIGINT, and international military intelligence engagements.

In parallel with his operational responsibilities, Rear Admiral COVALEOV pursued advanced leadership education. In 2019, he completed the Leadership Postgraduate Course on Current Aspects of National Security at the National Defence College in Bucharest. That same year, he attended a Special Seminar in Regional Security at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Germany. Between March and June 2022, he successfully completed the Executive Master in Strategic Leadership and Digital Transformation at the Center for Higher Defence Studies in Rome.

On December 17, 2024, he was promoted to Rear Admiral (Upper Half) and subsequently retired from active service.

During his tenure in ROU MID, he made significant contributions to the enhancement of Romania's HUMINT, SIGINT, GEOINT, and OSINT capabilities. He played a pivotal role in modernizing the ISR architecture and establishing doctrinal principles for ISR operations within the Romanian Armed Forces. As Deputy Chief of MID for ISR, he coordinated military intelligence in support of troop protection in theaters of operations across the Western Balkans. His in-depth knowledge of the post-Soviet space and the Western Balkans informed his strategic oversight, particularly concerning hybrid threats, vectors of influence, and emerging risks to Romanian, NATO, and EU security.

Since 2019, Rear Admiral COVALEOV has served as an associate professor in the Department of Defense Intelligence, within the Faculty of Security and Defence at the National Defence University "Carol I". In addition to teaching, he has delivered classified briefings, organized and moderated panels, and contributed to inter-institutional dialogue on defence and security matters across Romania.

His distinguished service has been recognized with numerous honors, including the "Order of Maritime Virtue" at both Knight (2004) and Officer (2024) ranks, as awarded by the President of Romania. He also received the "Emblem of Honor of the Romanian Armed Forces" and the "Emblem of Honor of Defence Intelligence".

Fluent in English and Russian, and conversational in French and Ukrainian, Rear Admiral COVALEOV brings a high level of cultural and diplomatic fluency to his work. Known for his strong communication and interpersonal skills, he is highly experienced in navigating complex diplomatic environments. In his personal life, he enjoys hiking, cycling, traveling, and reading. He is married and the proud father of one daughter.