



Fair cooperation

(10 September) Over 50 companies and organisations of the SVK security and defence industry accepted an invitation to attend a meeting organised by the MOD's Modernisation Department at the Garrison Club in Trenčín. The aim of the meeting was to launch effective cooperation and present the opportunities for SVK businesses to access national armaments projects as well as NATO and EU challenges.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "A strong and dynamic defence industry is a basic pre-requisite for security and peace in the transatlantic region. So far, our balance of participation in EU and NATO projects has been very low. Of all EU countries, not a single grant was awarded to our country from the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) in 2019." For this reason, the meeting focused on the national and international initiatives and instruments which present significant opportunities for the SVK defence industry.

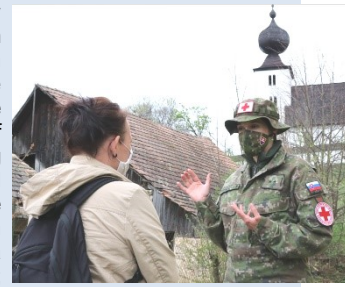
The need to support the domestic defence manufacturing sector is fully recognised by the SVK Government, led by Prime Minister Igor Matovič. In this respect, the SVK Government has made the improvement of the SVK defence industry's research, development and manufacturing capacities a key priority, as set out in the SVK GOV Manifesto.

Director General of the MOD's Modernisation Department/National Armaments Director Jozef Zekucia is aware that joining international initiatives may be technically and administratively challenging for SVK companies. "For this reason, our subject matter experts and representatives of the NATO Support and Procurement Agency and the Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU in Brussels are present at the meeting. We want to be helpful to them and set up an effective way of handling communications among all actors within the defence industrial cooperation in Slovakia and at NATO and EU levels," he said.

During the meeting, Mr Nad' confirmed that genuine support for the SVK defence industry is a key tender selection criterion for the MOD, which the MOD communicates to its foreign partners. He further reminded that the MOD is working towards its ambition to deliver on NATO's 2 per cent GDP spending goal. "Naturally, this is being affected by the economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, SVK companies will be an important part of our defence spending increases," he said, adding that "some companies and different firms linked to the MOD used to suck funds out of Defence – but, with the MOD under my leadership, that era is now over." In this context, the Minister called on all participants at the meeting to engage in active and fair cooperation.

Cash bonus for frontline staff combating Covid-19 pandemic

(9 September) Speaking of the first wave of coronavirus, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "I can confirm that we've decided to pay a cash bonus to 6,972 servicemen and women and civilian employees who were on the frontline in direct contact with those infected. For the MOD, the figure equates to around 4.67 million euros." He continued: "In addition, I want to underscore the excellent way the Ministry of Defence and Slovak Armed Forces presented themselves during the first wave of the coronavirus crisis. We demonstrated to be an absolutely clear and well-functioning cogwheel in domestic crisis management operations and, indeed, we often intervened in such areas where people hardly imagined we would." 90% of the rewarded staff are service members and military policemen, including those who deployed on patrols with members of the SVK Police Corps; those who served in the marginalised Roma communities; those who maintained order and security at MOD-run quarantine centres; and those who assisted in taking swab samples. Also included in the figure are employees of the Central Military Hospital Ružomberok, Training Centre Lešť, Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš, and other Defence establishments, including the Military Hygiene and Epidemiology Office and the Crisis Management Section, SVK MOD.



■ MSgt Radovan Januška has been awarded the **Force Commanders Commendation** by UNFICYP Force Commander Maj Gen Cheryl Pearce in Nicosia, Cyprus on 7 Sept 2020. This is seen as a special acknowledgement of the work members of the SVK Military Police are doing in UNFICYP.

■ A **complex staff rehearsal** involving nearly 100 service personnel began at the main deployed command post (CP) at Jaselské Barracks in Topoľčany on Mon 7 Sept.

■ On 8 Sept, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' visited Dukla Barracks in Bratislava, where he met with the commander and members of **Headquarters Bratislava Garrison** (HQ BA GAR). As part of his away day, he also paid a visit to Vajnory Barracks in Bratislava.

■ The MOD has joined the **City Bees** project in partnership with the Resin Environmental Protection Centre. Beehives for two bee families have been placed within the grounds of the MOD in Bratislava.

■ **2nd Degree Pte Jakub Lendač**, member of 23rd Motorised Battalion Trebišov, helped a motorist – an oncological patient immediately after being involved in a car accident at approx. 11.00am in the area of Krásnohorské podhradie on 11 Sept. He pulled him to safety from the burning car and called the rescue services.

■ Through the Institute of Military History, **two T-34 tanks have been on loan** from the SVK MOD in the village of Kapišová. As symbols of the battles waged as part of the Carpatho-Dukla Operation, they were, until recently, set up in a field within the village's boundary. With the technical assistance provided by members of the CSS Battalion Prešov, the T-34 tanks have been moved to the recently refurbished centre of the village.

■ Of the 15 disciplines at the 55th Pravda - Televízia - Slovnaft Athletics Meeting held in Šamorín on 11 Sept, 5 disciplines were won by SVK National Team sportspeople, while 4 disciplines were won by sportspeople of the **Dukla Banská Bystrica Military Sports Centre**.

■ This week Regina Radio's **Full Field Kit**, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus, among others, on soldier trainees undertaking initial military training in Martin. Please, send your suggestions and opinions to plnapolna@mod.gov.sk. More information on current developments across Defence is also available at www.mosr.sk/obrana, www.mosr.sk/ebulletin/ and on social media networks, including: www.facebook.com/mosr.sk, www.facebook.com/ozbrojenesily/, www.youtube.com/user/MinisterstvoObrany, www.twitter.com/mosr_official, www.instagram.com/ministerstvo_obrany_sr, or www.instagram.com/ossr_sr.

■ The MOD has issued a traffic warning to local motorists as 33 **Allied road movements** are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 14 to 20 Sept 2020. Regular announcements of military movements are available on the MOD's website at www.mosr.sk in the Alerts section.

Credible soldiers

(10 September) According to a new publication by GLOBSEC, 72% of SVK citizens have trust in the SVK Armed Forces. Of all institutions in the country, the SVK military enjoys the highest public confidence rating, whereas its credibility has been very high in the long run. CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko said: "The results of the opinion survey confirm that we are on the right track on cooperation with the public. The deployment of our soldiers and employees of the Armed Forces during the COVID-19 pandemic and flood relief assistance point to the humane nature of our soldiers as citizens in uniform and members of the wider society. I am pleased to say that we've been successful in breaking down the perceived stereotype that soldiers are hidden behind the walls of barracks."



Holocaust victims remembered

(9 September) Exactly 79 years on since the adoption of the so-called Jewish Code of 9 Sept 1941, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' paused to remember the immense human suffering and memory of the victims of the Holocaust and racial violence in a poignant ceremony held in Rybné Square, Bratislava. In his statement, Mr Nad' underscored the significance of the memorial day and pointed to the importance of the ongoing debate on this matter, which is often played down and questioned by different groups. The Jewish Code – the Order on Legal Status of Jews was the most extensive legal norm of the wartime Slovak State. Transports bound for the Nazi concentration and extermination camps began on 25 Mar 1942. Over 57,600 Jews had been deported from Slovakia by 20 October 1942. Nazi-occupied Slovakia saw yet another wave of deportations begin in Sept 1944.

Talks with ambassadors

(8 September) Defence Minister Nad' received the Diplomatic Service representatives of the Republic of Cyprus and the Republic of Kazakhstan at the MOD. Central themes of meetings included the current situation in the field of defence and security, the experience with Covid-19 containment and the MOD's priorities, including the continuing modernisation of the SVK Armed Forces and ways to strengthen bilateral ties. Defence Minister also met with SVK Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway Ms Denisa Frelichová. They mainly spoke about the potential areas of cooperation on exchanging experience from command and control (C2) of military operations and combating disinformation.

Initial military training for future military professionals



(11 September) Serving under the terms and conditions of Preparatory State Service, the soldier trainees and Armed Forces Academy cadets who joined the SVK Army Phase 1 training at the Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin

on 3 Aug 2020 have still two more weeks to complete it. Giving a positive assessment of their efforts to meet the training objectives, Cpt František Kantár, Commander of the Initial Military Training Company, said: "Next up this week is the final Skill At Arms (SAA) practice session on the live firing range at Kamenná Poruba and on the barrier range of Martin Garrison's Sučany Training Ground. Earlier at Sučany, they all undertook 72-hour survival training as the culmination of their tactical preparation. As part of it, half of the company also went through the firing drills, while the other half carried out tactical tasks before swapping their roles." Upon successfully mastering soldiering skills on this 7-week SVK Army Phase 1 training programme, the graduates are set to swear the Oath of Allegiance and attend a passing out parade on the parade square of Martin Barracks on 18 Sept 2020.