



## Oath of Allegiance

(18 September) SVK Army Phase 1 Initial Military Training for soldier trainees of Preparatory State Service, officer cadets of the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš and professionally qualified officers was concluded as 284 young soldiers (53 servicewomen) swore the Oath of Allegiance at the Training and Mobilisation Manning Base in Martin. Among those who came to congratulate them were Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, Defence State Secretary Marian Majer and DCHOD Maj Gen Miroslav Lorinc.

Speaking in front of the young soldiers, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "I congratulate the graduates of the 7-week basic training programme on their successful completion of all tasks and challenges they had to take on during their preparation. I wish them every success in their new roles, whether it be serving with units of the Armed Forces or following their studies, and I hope their future service in the Armed Forces will meet their expectations."

While soldier trainees of Preparatory State Service will move on to serve with military units, officer cadets will begin their studies at the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš, where on successful completion of the officer programme they will be promoted to Lieutenant. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the passing-out parade was attended by family members and invited guests only. However, members of the public could watch the live stream of the event on SVK Armed Forces Facebook.

## Clothing for soldiers

(17 September) The MOD has already contracted €12m worth of clothing items for members of the SVK Armed Forces, whereas it plans to make clothing contracts for over another €5m worth of military clothes by the end of this year. By doing this, the MOD leaders are responding to the urgent need to ensure adequate Service conditions for military personnel, even in the field of military clothing. Soldiers can rest assured that additional standard military issue clothes will be delivered still this year. Mr Naď noted that these are the items servicemen and women use every day and they cannot do without them. The purchased clothes will be made available to service members at the Central Issue Facilities and will be distributed across military units on the basis of requests from service members.

## Granit Hotel opened

(18 September) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, Defence State Secretary Marian Majer and Secretary General of the MOD's Service Office Peter Kozák opened the newly refurbished Granit Hotel in Nová Polianka, run by MOD-owned HOREZZA JSC, during an opening ceremony in the High Tatras. With the extensive refurbishment now complete, the hotel will serve the needs of soldiers and the wider public and will offer a range of services, including various health treatments. The overall costs related to the refurbishment amounted to around €6m. The Granit Hotel in Nová Polianka offers 74 rooms with an accommodation capacity of 121 beds (extra beds bring the total number of beds to 134). Today, the hotel provides accommodation, catering and wellness services and also planned for launch are different health treatments such as thermal packs, hydromassage baths and whirlpool baths.

## Ascent of Mt Ďumbier as act of commemoration

(18 September) By taking on Mt Ďumbier and participating in a commemorative ceremony at the SNP Memorial located at the M. R. Štefánik Chalet, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, Defence State Secretary Marian Majer, Secretary General of the MOD's Service Office Peter Kozák and Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security Juraj Krúpa came to show their respect to the legacy of WW2 veterans and that of contemporary veterans who have been on missions and operations abroad. The 2nd annual "veteran" ascent of Mt Ďumbier was also made by service members and representatives of the SVK Veterans Union. A total of 19,500 SVK personnel have so far rotated in and out of international missions and operations abroad. Today, the MOD records over 90 WW2 veterans and 8,000 contemporary veterans. The ascent of Mt Ďumbier was conducted in line with SVK Public Health Authority guidance. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď made the point that this marks an excellent occasion to link history with present realities, thereby sparking off the young generation's interest in Slovak military history and addressing broader aspects of the SVK military's operational duties as part of international crisis management.



- The first half of September saw **Ex Quick Response**, an annual multinational exercise, take place across EUFOR Op Althea's area of responsibility in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was designed to validate EUFOR's ability to deploy the high readiness reserve forces of the nations contributing to the Multinational Battalion. Members of the SVK EUFOR Op Althea Contingent took part in the exercise as well.

- **Ex Tobruq Legacy** is running in Lithuania from 14 to 26 Sept, with the participation of Allied surface-based air defence (SBAD) units from 10 countries, including Slovakia. The main goal is for the multinational task force to practise the SBAD standard operating procedures (SOP) and the interoperability of communications and information services and tactical data lines.

- Meeting in Kráľiky on 14 Sept, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď held talks with Anastasiya Kuzmina, former SVK National Team member, on the **Biathlon Training Centre development project** for the Dukla Banská Bystrica Military Sports Centre. After finishing her professional career, Anastasiya Kuzmina continues to work in the Military Sports Centre.

- Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď met with the **new UK Ambassador to the Slovak Republic**, HE Mr Nigel Baker OBE MVO, at the Ministry of Defence on 16 Sept. Slovakia is interested in continuing the close and enduring cooperation with the United Kingdom in the politico-military field so as to benefit NATO and European defence and security.

- The SVK Parliament backed the proposal for the presence of **four members of the US Armed Forces in Slovakia** to deliver training and consultancy for the SVK Armed Forces, when 109 MPs out of 136 MPs present in Parliament voted in favour of the proposal. The US soldiers will serve in Slovakia for 36 months.

- 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 active reservists undergoing training with the Engineer Battalion Sereď at TC Lešť. Please, send your suggestions and opinions to [plnapolna@mod.gov.sk](mailto:plnapolna@mod.gov.sk). **More information on current developments across Defence** is also available at [www.mosr.sk/obrana](http://www.mosr.sk/obrana), [www.mosr.sk/ebulletin/](http://www.mosr.sk/ebulletin/) and on social media channels, including: [www.facebook.com/mosr.sk](https://www.facebook.com/mosr.sk), [www.facebook.com/ozbrojenesily/](https://www.facebook.com/ozbrojenesily/), [www.youtube.com/user/MinisterstvoObrany](https://www.youtube.com/user/MinisterstvoObrany), [www.twitter.com/mosr\\_official](https://www.twitter.com/mosr_official), [www.instagram.com/ministerstvo\\_obrany\\_sr](https://www.instagram.com/ministerstvo_obrany_sr), or [www.instagram.com/ossr\\_sr](https://www.instagram.com/ossr_sr).

- The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to local motorists as 5 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 21 to 27 Sept 2020. Regular announcements of military movements are available on the MOD's website at [www.mosr.sk](http://www.mosr.sk) in the Alerts section.

## New Director of MI



(16 September) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď announced the appointment of Brig Gen Róbert Kleštinec, Deputy Commander of the Slovak Air Force, as the new Director of Military Intelligence (MI). Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "I have always insisted on

staffing the post of Director of Military Intelligence on the basis of stringent criteria which reflect not just high professional but also high moral standards of candidates, because this is the only way we can ensure that the security services of the State can function transparently. Indeed, the new Director meets the requirements and I believe my decision will be translated into tangible results of Military Intelligence as a whole."

## CHODs meet online

(18 September) Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Daniel Zmeko attended the NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session. Just as in the past, the conference was held virtually via classified teleconference. The meeting of NATO's highest military leaders was attended by the commanders of NATO's both strategic commands. After the opening remarks by Chairman of the NATO Military Committee Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach (UK), NATO CHODs paid their attention to missions and operations and other issues on the agenda included implementing the deterrence and defence concept for the Euro-Atlantic area and reviewing progress on NATO's military capabilities development concept. Speaking after the meeting, Gen Zmeko said: "In my statement, I emphasised the need for close coordination of Allied and national military structures as they work on and implement the said concepts. Equally important, I assured our Allies that the SVK Armed Forces are ready to perform their operational commitments to the benefit of the Alliance in line with approved mandates."

## Military Aviation Day

(17 September) SVK Military Aviation Day was remembered by Maj Gen Ľubomír Svoboda, members of the local self-government and representatives of the Gen M. R. Štefánik Aviation Union, the SVK Pilots Union and the SVK Soldiers Union, as well as by members of the SVK Air Force and other invited guests. SVK Military Aviation Day is related to 17 September 1944 when 20 fighter aircraft landed at Zolná airfield near Zvolen and operated out of the airfield in the enemy's rear areas during the SNP.

## Selection of dogs for SVK Armed Forces and Military Police

(17 September) The Military Working Dog (MWD) Section, Crisis Management, Training and MWD Branch, Military Police Department Vlkanová - Hronek, purchased five new dogs to cater for the needs of Defence. Later this October, the MOD plans to buy more dogs to be trained to search for narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and explosives. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said:

"Military working dogs are an inseparable part in performance of service duties and they also have an irreplaceable place both in domestic and international crisis management." Lt Col Marián Turanský, Director of the Crisis Management, Training and MWD Branch, said: "We have purchased only all-purpose dogs for the needs of the SVK Armed Forces. For example,



they are instrumental to protecting munitions depots and are also deployed at airports. Of the eight dogs on offer, five have been selected by a specialist selection board. They will be placed in quarantine for observation for the next 28 days." Based on the Table of Organisation and Equipment, the total authorised number of MWDs in Defence is 184, with 140 MWDs in service with the SVK Armed

Forces and 44 MWDs with Military Police. However, the number of MWDs in Defence currently remains at 60% of the authorised strength. Service members mostly work with German Shepherds, but Belgian shepherds are also in service. For more information, go to [www.mod.gov.sk/data/att/148097.pdf](http://www.mod.gov.sk/data/att/148097.pdf).