



Armed Forces Day

(22 September) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, Chief of Defence Daniel Zmeko, State Secretary Marian Majer, and Secretary General of the SVK MOD Service Office Peter Kozák together with professional soldiers celebrated the biggest military holiday – the Armed Forces Day – in Brezová pod Bradlom.

On this occasion, the Defence Minister expressed his gratitude to all professional soldiers for their devoted service to fatherland and confirmed that the current MOD leadership would continue to improve the conditions of professional service in all aspects. "Today, on 22 September 2020, we can say we have come a long way. The historical Hurbanean warriors and today's professional soldiers share the same sense of heroism and thankfulness. Just as several thousands of volunteers then fought to be able to live freely in their fatherland, today we can see heroism again – in our soldiers who perform their tasks to maintain peace and security on a day-to-day basis," Defence Minister Naď stated. "The way they responsibly approach their duties and risk their lives both abroad and in Slovakia, always facing challenges head-on, is a proof of their determination and perseverance, for which I am very thankful to them," he added.

The head of the MOD also confirmed that together with the CHOD they were seeking solutions to help professional soldiers in fulfilling their everyday tasks as much as possible. He said: "I do think about it every single day and together with Chief of Defence Daniel Zmeko we are trying to find solutions to help you, to stand by your side. I believe that half a year after the new SVK MOD leadership came to power, you gradually start to feel the changes. And I also believe that this time next year, when we celebrate the Armed Forces Day again, we will be able to say very honestly that we have moved on and that you have become even more proud to serve in the department we all love so much."

"It is a great honor for me to speak again to professional soldiers on the occasion of the SVK Armed Forces Day at the very spot where the first battle took place 172 years ago, in which the Slovaks turned their desire for freedom, democracy and justice into actions. They won thanks to their willpower – the most important thing that every soldier carries in his heart; and I am convinced that we as descendants of this tradition have always had a strong willpower to win," CHOD Daniel Zmeko stated. Expressing his appreciation for people's trust in the SVK Armed Forces, he said: "There is no such obstacle that would prevent us from fulfilling our mission." Due to the current pandemic situation, the MOD leadership decided to carry out the ceremony without public participation.

Deployment to EU Missions in Africa

(24 September) The Parliament endorsed a proposal for deployment of the members of the Slovak Armed Forces to the EU military training missions in Mali and the Central African Republic. The Slovak troops will be ready for deployment as from 1 October 2020. The Slovak Republic will deploy 15 professional soldiers to Mali and 4 soldiers to the Central African Republic. Our troops will operate at the individual missions' headquarters and prospectively they will engage in training, mentoring and military education of the local armed forces. Said resolution underlines that Slovakia is a responsible member of the EU, able to respond to a call for greater cooperation within the EU.

International Exercise Brave Warrior 2020 in Hungary

(26 September) The 15-Day International Exercise Brave Warrior 2020 took place in Hungary, involving 42 members of the 22nd mechanized battalion Michalovce supported by three members of the command support company of the 2nd mechanized brigade. The exercise, which took place in the Hungarian largest training area Várpaloga – Veszprém near Lake Balaton, was focused on synchronisation, coordination and harmonisation of the activities of the units involved on the level of the battalion task force and served to enhance cooperation between the operational and tactical units in a multinational environment. The exercise, which was held under strict hygienic conditions with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic, involved not only the Hungarian and Slovak units but also the Romanian and US troops.

The joint live-fire exercise was the culminating training event of the exercise, with the mechanized, reconnaissance and tank units taking part, along with the artillery units and the air force. The training centre provided favourable conditions for practising defensive activities and for coordination of the NATO countries' troops when performing tasks together in a multinational environment.



■ On 21 September, the Personal Office of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic terminated the **selection procedure** for admission of the university graduates of the officer course to the preparatory state service as student officers and officer cadets, starting from 28 September 2020. Three hundred and eighty five (385) out of one thousand two hundred and sixty seven (1 267) applicants successfully fulfilled conditions for admission to the preparatory state service. Currently, selection procedure is under way for admission to the preparatory state service as student officers, starting from January 2021, with eight hundred and eighty four (884) applicants having already filed their applications.

■ The MOD State Secretary Marian Majer was a member of delegation of the Slovak Prime Minister Igor Matovič, which on 24 September negotiated with the **President of Ukraine** Volodymyr Zelensky. The negotiation resulted in the signing of the intergovernmental agreement with Ukraine, which will enable the landing of international flights at the Uzhgorod airport.

■ In the 2020 Slovak Cup series, **Eliška Mintálová** has become the most successful in women's kayak (K1) in the total of six races and Martin Halčín has been the best in men's kayak, both of them from the Military Sporting Centre Dukla Banská Bystrica. In C1, the best from Dukla was Alexander Slařkovič, who gained silver, and Monika Škáchová occupied the bronze place in women's category.

■ Members of the tank battalion and 21st mechanized battalion in Trebišov provided for the surface preparation of the **tank T-34/85**, which was loaned to the municipality Dargov by the Military History Institute Bratislava, and coated the tank with a new layer of paint.

■ The radio program **Full Field Kit** broadcast by radio station Regina on Fridays at 21.05 hrs and repeated on Saturdays at 00.30 hrs presents, inter alia, information on training of the active reserves in the CBRN battalion. We will see how they coped with their tasks in Zemianske Kostolany. Do not hesitate to send your tips and ideas at plnapolna@mod.gov.sk.

■ The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to local motorists as 7 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place from 28 September to 4 October 2020. Over the same period, the SVK Armed Forces will conduct convoy operations from/to: Martin – Sučany and back, Kamenica nad Cirochou – Michalovce, Liptovský Mikuláš – Sučany and back, Koliňanský vrch – Nitra and back, Martin – Sliac, Sliac – Kuchyňa, Trenčín – Prešov, Training Center Lešť – Rožňava, Nemecká – Hlohovec, Prešov – Zemianske Kostolany, Sliac – Trenčín and back, Trenčín – Ruskov, Sklené – Ruskov, Prešov – Trebišov and back, Nitra – Veľké Zálužie and back, Nováky – Military Technical and Testing Institute Záhorec, and Zemianske Kostolany – Nitra and back.

Active Reserve at Vododrom in Training Center Lešť

(23 September) For the fourth time, members of the Engineer Battalion based in Sereď train soldiers listed in the Active Reserve. However, due to Covid-19, the dates of the training were shifted this year. Maj Rastislav Dubovecký, Deputy Commander of the Engineer Battalion, explained: "45 members of the Active Reserve started their 2-week training on 14 September. Due to health and personal issues, two of them had to quit. The aim of the training is to improve working skills for selected positions, in particular pontoon company specialties. I am very pleased with their approach. They have made a good and well-coordinated team; those with more skills and experience are helping the recruits." The 5th year students of



the Armed Forces Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš participated for the first time. Providing they complete at least 75 per cent of the training, members of the Active Reserve get a yearly incentive contribution in the amount of EUR 600. In compliance with the existing law, according to the length of the training, they also have the right for a proportional part of rank salary. In addition, the MOD will reimburse employers for wage costs during the absence of their employees, compensate self-employed persons participating in the training for their loss of profit, and provide reimbursement for health and social insurance contributions. After the engineers complete the training, the preparation of the Active Reserve for other specialties will start, e.g. CBRN from the Rožňava Battalion.

Solidarity with Ukraine

(26 September) Minister of Defence Jaroslav Naď and Minister of the Foreign and European Affairs Ivan Korčok, on behalf of the SVK Government, sent a letter of condolence to their Ukrainian counterparts. In the letter they expressed their sincere condolences, solidarity and support in relation to the crash of the AN-26 aircraft of the Ukrainian Air Force that took place in the East of Ukraine and in which dozens have died. The military AN-26 aircraft crashed down on Friday 25 September at 7:50pm when it was approaching the runway near the town of Chuhuiv in the Kharkiv region in the eastern Ukraine, and immediately after the crash it started to burn. 26 of 27 persons on board lost their lives.

Transatlantic Defence

(22 September) At the significant event of the Washington think-tank CEPA – CEPA Forum, the MOD State Secretary Marian Majer contributed to the joint discussion with the topics as follows: disturbed future, shared vision: mapping of the new transatlantic decade. In the panel discussion with his V4 counterparts, M. Majer participated on-line in the discussion concerning future of the transatlantic defence.

Jackal Cave 2020

(25 September) Two Slovak helicopters Black Hawk and 15 members of the Helicopter Wing Prešov took part in the 12-day long exercise Jackal Cave 2020 held at the airbase in the vicinity of Pápa, Hungary. They performed the air support tasks for the special operations forces deployed to fight against the peer or near-peer adversary. Besides the Hungarian special operations forces, also the professional soldiers from the Slovak 5th Special Forces Regiment took part in the exercise.

Tobruq Legacy 2020

(26 September) The two-week long exercise Tobruq Legacy 2020 held in Lithuania involved representatives of ten countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, the United States) and four NATO entities (AirCom Ramstein, CAOC Uedem, CAOC Torrejon, NFIU Lithuania). Preparation of the exercise was all the more difficult as some countries had to cancel their participation after the applicable actions and measures had been adopted in connection with Covid-19. That was also why the representatives of the Slovak Air Force were asked to provide expert and technical assistance to facilitate C2 services (command and control). As for the Slovak Armed Forces, altogether 15 specialists on air defence and C2 systems from the SVK Air Force Headquarters, Control of Air Operations Brigade Zvolen and Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra took part in the exercise and their performance was evaluated highly positively by the Director of the exercise. The VIP Day, which was held on 25 September at the airbase Šiauliai, was also attended by the commander of the Slovak Air Force Maj Gen Ľubomír Svoboda.