



Slovaks at sea

(30 September) SVK service personnel are expected to serve on Operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI, which has recently been stood up in succession to Op EUNAVFOR MED Sophia. The proposal to contribute up to five SVK military personnel to the operation has been endorsed by the Government. Once the mandate is approved by Parliament, SVK soldiers can be posted to EUNAVFOR Operational Headquarters (OHQ), starting from 1 November 2020 at the earliest.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Also thanks to our military policemen who served on Op EUNAVFOR MED Sophia in the past, we have expertise and experience from the naval operation. Their role on international teams was appreciated especially by our foreign partners and, if our soldiers are deployed again, I believe we will reconfirm that we are ready to do our share in taking on international security challenges."

As the head of the MOD reminded, members of the SVK Military Police served on Op EUNAVFOR MED Sophia in the years 2017 and 2018. As part of the two six-month rotations, they were members of boarding teams aboard a German Navy frigate. "The Slovak Republic has been in negotiation with Germany over ways to continue this successful cooperation as part of Op IRINI," added the Minister.

The main aim of Operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI is to enforce the UN arms embargo on Libya, supported by air, satellite and maritime resources. In a support capacity, Op IRINI also seeks to monitor and gather information on illegal crude oil exports out of Libya and has a role to play in developing training capacities for the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy, as well as disrupting the business model of human smuggling and trafficking networks in line with international law.

Cybersec discussion forum

(29 September) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď participated via videolink in one of the largest conferences on cyber security in Europe – the 6th edition of the European Cybersecurity Forum (CYBERSEC 2020), a discussion forum organised by the Kosciuszko Institute in Poland.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď appeared on the Information Warfare – Exploitation of History, Religion and Economics in Cyberspace Panel along with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Latvia Artis Pabriks and Director of the NATO Counter Intelligence Centre of Excellence Martin Achimovič.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "This technology has brought unimaginable comfort to people. Thanks to them, a lot of very important issues have become far more simple. However, the dark side of this technology is that it allows easy spread of disinformation, with social media channels being the most common platform or instrument for spreading it." Examples of good practices and the V4's verified procedures for addressing this new dimension of modern warfare in cyberspace were presented as part of the panel discussion.

Minister meets CAN Ambassador

(1 October) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď met Ambassador of Canada to Slovakia Ms Heidi Alberta Hulan at the MOD. During their first meeting, they looked at ways to enhance mutual cooperation in the politico-military field and concurred that the common Euro-Atlantic values create an excellent space for deepening and intensifying it. Ambassador Hulan expressed her appreciation for the SVK contribution to NATO in the Baltics, where currently 152 SVK personnel are performing their duties. As well as presenting the MOD's priorities and goals, the Minister informed the Ambassador about work underway on strategic documents to reflect the current challenges of the changing security landscape.

Doctrine Centre and Organisational Core for Joint Operations Command established

(1 October) A new element of the SVK Armed Forces – the Doctrine Centre and Organisational Core for Stand-up of SVK Joint Operations Command (JOC) – was established by the signing of the Protocols of Establishment in Banská Bystrica, with the participation of State Secretary Marian Majer, CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko and top military leaders. Speaking at the ceremony, Gen Daniel Zmeko said: "By establishing the Doctrine Centre, we are filling one of the gaps in the structure of the Armed Forces. Apart from Armed Forces modernisation and well-trained personnel, what a modern armed forces needs is the development of the doctrinal environment and a rapid response to the changes that the current and future security challenges put before us. In addition, the organisational core for the future Joint Operations Command is being formed here today. This Command will be the answer to the lessons learned from our operations abroad, the experiences of our allies and the expertise from the conduct of operations at the operational and strategic levels. Moreover, it will allow us to make our domestic crisis management more effective, including the fight against the pandemic." During the ceremony, the CHOD appointed Brig Gen Martin Michalko, DCOM SVK Army, as the new Commander of the Centre. As well as designing doctrines, standards and regulations for all services, the new element will be tasked to pave the way for the stand-up of JOC, which will be responsible for planning and conducting all operations. JOC will undertake tasks across the entire spectrum of operations, ranging from domestic crisis management operations, such as disaster relief efforts, to decisive military operations in defence of Slovakia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, while concurrently playing a role in support of international operations and in performance of international commitments.



■ The SNP Central Military Hospital – Faculty Hospital Ružomberok has set up a pavilion for hospitalisation of COVID-19 positive patients on the unused premises of the former clinic. It offers 42 extra beds and 13 patients can be put on ventilators. The new pavilion was officially opened on 2 Oct by Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, Defence State Secretary Marian Majer and Director of the SNP Hospital Brig Gen Vladimír Lengvarský MD MPH.

■ The MOD wants to support the professional development of those college and university students who are interested in security and defence policy as well as developments at home and abroad. The MOD offers **free internship opportunities** in the 2020/2021 winter term. Those interested can forward their applications to staze@mod.gov.sk by 12 Oct. Candidates are also required to send their motivational letter and CV in Europass format. For more information, go to www.mosr.sk.

■ A briefing for the Defence Attachés accredited to Slovakia was held at the MOD on 28 Sept, informing the foreign partners about the priorities of the new Government in the field of defence. Some DAs attended the meeting via videolink. The DAs were briefed by Defence Minister Naď, directors of the MOD Departments and chiefs of staffs from the SVK Defence Staff.

■ As gates of the Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin opened for the fifth time this year, 202 soldier trainees of Preparatory State Service and officer entrants to the Professionally Qualified cadres, including 29 women, began their **SVK Army Phase 1 Initial Military Training** on 28 Sept. They would make 4th Czechoslovak Brigade Barracks in Martin their home for the next 7 weeks.

■ Members of the Military Police Crisis Management (MP CM) Section continued their **water safety and rescue training course**, with a focus on honing their skills in rescue procedures for personnel dropping accidentally out of the boat whilst carrying the full kit and the weapon.

■ The MOD has issued a traffic warning to local motorists as **7 Allied road movements** by US, CZE, HRV and POL troops are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 5 to 11 Oct 2020. The MOD stresses that the movements have been approved in line with SVK Public Health Authority-issued guidance. Over the same period, the SVK Armed Forces will conduct convoy operations from/to: TC Lešť – Sása – Pliešovce, Prešov – Zemianske Kostofany and back, Poprad – Sklené and back, Zemianske Kostofany – Poruba pod Vihorlatom. Also scheduled are SVK Armed Forces rail movements from/to: Sása – Pliešovce – Prešov, Hlohovec – Sása – Pliešovce, Zemianske Kostofany – Prešov and Zemianske Kostofany – Sliach.

FULL FIELD KIT this week

Regina Radio's next Full Field Kit, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus on the training of Air Rescue Service personnel. Please, forward your suggestions and opinions to plnapolna@mod.gov.sk.

A married couple among Active Reserves soldiers specialising in CBRN

(3 October) 16 Active Reserves (AR) soldiers joined the Gemer-Malohont-based CBRN Battalion Rožňava for a two-week training programme on 21 September. Among them were ex-service personnel, Voluntary Military Training (VMT) graduates, former conscripts, as well as a married couple, Pte in Reserve Jana Barusová and her husband Marek. During Week 1, the reservists underwent all arms training at Lešť. As part of Skill At Arms (SAA), they fired the Model 58 Assault Rifle and a pistol. They also went over tactics, topography and other training modules. During Week 2, the reservists familiarised themselves with specialist issues



at the CBRN Training and Testing Centre Zemianske Kostofany. They learnt, among others, about toxic chemical detectors and signalling devices. It is notable that the emphasis was placed on safety procedures and proper use of personal protective equipment. Among the best Active Reserves soldiers were Sgt 1st Class in Reserve Pavol Sedlák, SSgt in Reserve Ján Ticháč, SSgt in Reserve Rastislav Staňa and Pte in Reserve Jana Barusová. They will meet for the fourth edition of the CBRN Active Reserve training next year.

Official bids for 3D radars

(1 October) As at 30 September 2020, the deadline for submission of proposals under the revised tender, the MOD received official bids for delivery of 3D radar systems from the Governments of France, the Netherlands, Israel, Hungary, Poland, the UK, the USA, Spain, Italy and Turkey.

Compared to the G2G competition by the former MOD management, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď changed the tender conditions to be of greater benefit to the SVK defence industry. In practice, this means that the bids giving more options for the SVK defence industry's role in the manufacture and delivery of the radars will receive 20% of the total score in the overall evaluation of bids.

The 42-member Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) will have completed the evaluation process by the end of this month. Following the Defence Minister's recommendation, the final decision on the award of the contract will be taken by the SVK Government.

Director General of the SVK MOD's Modernisation Department and National Armaments Director Jozef Zekucia pointed out that Slovakia had requested comprehensive bids for the replacement of all types of 3D radars – 6 pcs of medium range, 5 pcs of short range and 6 pcs of very short range radars, with a separate offer to be made also for each type of the 3D radars.

The three-dimensional (3D) radar systems will be operated by the SVK Air Force to ensure round-the-clock surveillance, air traffic control (ATC), and a continuous air situational picture (ASP) over Slovakia within the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS). Most of the 3D radars currently in service with the SVK military are beyond the end of their service life.



Changes in SVK Air Force

(1 October) CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko introduced new SVK Air Force commanders. At SVK Air Force HQ, Col Róbert Tóth assumed the appointment of Deputy Commander of the SVK Air Force in succession to Brig Gen Róbert Kleštiniec and Col Ladislav Dovhun took up the appointment of Chief of Staff in succession to Col Pavol Tóköly. In his remarks, the CHOD thanked the outgoing COS for his work so far and wished the newly appointed COS every success in his new role.