



Minister visits Cyprus

(30 July) To mark 20 years of SVK involvement in UNFICYP, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' arrived in Cyprus to thank SVK troops for their dedicated service to peace and security under the umbrella of the United Nations. In light of its scope and duration, UNFICYP is Slovakia's peak of engagement in international crisis management missions and operations. Mr Nad' said: "Our service personnel have safeguarded the peace, security and status quo in the island's buffer zone under the control of the UN peacekeeping forces for the past two decades already. Over the years of their presence, they have proved their qualities – their commitment to the cause and conscientious discharge of duties. This was best recognised in 2018 when the UN entrusted us with responsibility for the whole of Sector 4. Therefore, on this round anniversary, my thanks go out to all servicemen and women who have served or are currently serving with UNFICYP."

The long-term contribution of SVK troops to UNFICYP was highly appreciated by the Mission's Force Commander, Maj Gen Ingrid Gjerde. The Force Commander joined the Defence Minister in presenting the SVK personnel with the UN Medal and a commemorative coin marking the 20th anniversary of SLOVCON in UNFICYP during a medal parade ceremony at Camp Štefánik in Famagusta.

Mr Nad' said: "According to NATO recommendations, the number of servicewomen in the militaries should constitute 10% of the total strength, and the SVK military has nearly 2% more servicewomen. While UNFICYP recommends that female representation in national contingents should stand at 8% of all personnel, our female service personnel make up 10% of the contingent. This means that there are 24 servicewomen out of the 238 SVK military personnel deployed." He admitted that female representation in higher officer ranks is not quite on the target. "Undoubtedly, it is only a matter of time until we have enough women in higher officer ranks who will fill international appointments in Cyprus," he said.

Still today, the head of the MOD paid a visit to members of the UN Patrol Base 104, located in Sector 4, where the Hungarian contingent was stationed at Camp Szent István in the past. Given the fact that only SVK UN peacekeepers operate out of the camp today, the UN PB-104 has been renamed as Camp Pribina.

While at Camp Pribina, Mr Nad' spoke with soldiers about their current status, working conditions and needs and was interested in the effects of COVID-19 on their operational duties. He thanked them for promoting Slovakia's good name in the international community and wished them every success and a safe return home.

A total of 238 SVK military personnel, of whom 24 are servicewomen, are currently serving with UNFICYP. This is the 39th rotation of the SVK Armed Forces in Cyprus. Operational tours last 12 months. 3,885 SVK personnel have rotated in and out of UNFICYP to date.

Ministers sign SVK-CYP Memorandum of Understanding

(29 July) Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' met with Cypriot Defence Minister Charalambos Petrides for talks on current issues of defence and security, as well as on the SVK MOD's priorities and modernisation projects. The intent to intensify the defence engagement between the countries was acknowledged by both defence ministers as they signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on defence cooperation.

The goal of the MOU is to set the main principles for the delivery of mutual collaboration on defence and security and to drive forward possible areas of cooperation such as joint training and exercises, military technical activities, armaments, and military medicine.

Minister Nad' also met with Force Commander Maj Gen Ingrid Gjerde at UNFICYP HQ in Nicosia. She thanked for the SVK contribution to the Mission and commended Slovakia for assuming full responsibility for Sector 4 of UNFICYP as one TCC in 2018. Among the issues discussed were the pandemic's impact on the mission and the delivery of assigned tasks. Currently, 238 SVK personnel are serving with UNFICYP, as Slovakia marks the 20th anniversary of SVK involvement in Cyprus this year. As part of his official programme in Nicosia, Mr Nad' also paid a visit to the SVK military engineers and policemen who operate out of Camp Taty. He thanked them for holding themselves to high standards of professionalism.



- Members of HQ 2 Mech Bde and Com Sup Coy set off on a hiking trip along with kids from the Children's Home in Svidník to the top of Black Mountain on 22 July. Kids were also treated to military themed activities and contests and were also shown how to set up a fire and how to prepare food in the field.

- The latest edition of *Azimuth 24/7* covers jumps into the Water Reservoir Žilina and alternative insertion techniques by the UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter.

- Lt Col Pavol Tabačár handed over his role as Chief of Staff Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin to Maj Štefan Rybár and took over as Director Supply Base II Martin with effect from 1 August.

- The galleries of the Military History Museum – Museum Section Piešťany reopened to the public on 1 June. In August, the museum will be open for a group of up to 30 people at 10:00, 13:00 and 15:00 from Tue to Fri and for two groups of up to 60 people at 10:00, 13:00 and 15:00 from Sat to Sun. In September, the museum will be open for a group of up to 30 people at 10:00, 13:00 and 15:00 from Tue to Fri for two groups of up to 60 people at 10:00, 13:00 and 15:00 from Sat to Sun. Those who book a time slot in advance on 0903 820 454 will enter the museum first.

- The MOD has issued a traffic warning to motorists as 11 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 2 to 8 August 2021. These will mostly involve US troops transporting material. Over the same period, the SVK military will conduct road movements from/to: Banská Bystrica – Sliach, Zvolen – Trebišov and back, Trebišov – Prešov, Nitra – Levice and back, Sliach – Alekšince, Trebišov – Veľké Ozorovce and back, Kuchyňa – Martin and back, Hlohovec – Sereď, Sereď – Moldava nad Bodvou and back, Zemianske Kostolány – Bratislava and back, Nováky – Malacky, Trenčín – Malacky, Prešov – Zemianske Kostolány, Zemianske Kostolány – Mokrad, and within the cities of Nitra and Martin. Also scheduled are SVK military rail movements from/to: Zemianske Kostolány – Prešov and Zemianske Kostolány – Kuchyňa.

FULL FIELD KIT

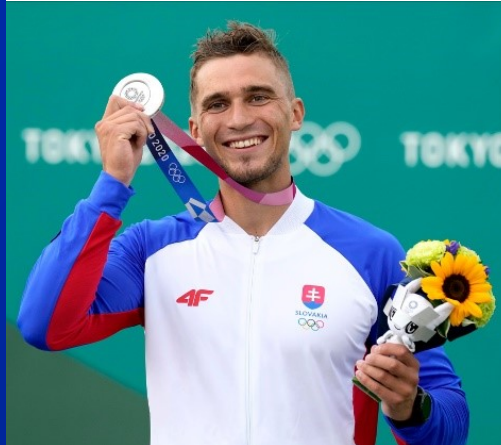
on Radio Regina, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will air an interview with WW2 RAF veteran Army Gen Emil Boček and present the Peace Run across Slovakia.

Jaroslav Nad' visits Slovak engineers deployed on UNFICYP in Cyprus

(29 July) On Thursday afternoon, Lt Col Pavol Kobik welcomed Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad', accompanied by DCHOD Lt Gen Ľubomír Svoboda, to Camp Taty in Cyprus. "Slovak engineers are among the best and most recognised units in the Mission, their professional services are used on a daily basis, and they enjoy an international reputation for excellence," said Lt Col Kobik, who is posted to the Mission Support Centre, UNFICYP HQ, responsible for operations management including engineering services, medical service and logistics. Three sections operate under the Centre – construction, construction equipment, and repairs – with 33 pieces of heavy equipment, tasked with maintaining the patrol roads in the 180-km-long buffer zone between the north and the south of the divided island, repairing helipads, constructing fire defences and fences, and maintaining electrical wiring and water pipes at military camps. The Chief

Jakub Grigar wins Silver in Tokyo

(30 July) Slalom canoeist Jakub Grigar (SVK), member of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica, placed 2nd and won a second medal for Slovakia in Tokyo. Historically, he has won the first medal in the men's K1 canoe slalom at the Olympics, meaning Slovakia's Canoe Slalom collection now counts 15 Summer Olympic medals.



COC ceremony for COM CSS Bde

(29 July) Trenčín Barracks hosted a Change of Command (COC) ceremony for the incoming Commander Combat Service Support Brigade, Col Jozef Ševčík, who already served as COM CSS Bde in 2014 - 2018.

MSF goes ahead despite bad weather

(1 August) The Military Summer Festival (MSF) continued at the Open Air Theatre in Banská Bystrica. Visitors to the festival were treated to an engaging programme of music, discussions with soldiers, static and dynamic displays of military equipment, autograph signing by DUKLA members, including Silver medalist Jakub Grigar. Although the second MSF this year was cut short due to bad weather, it was a strong experience for the audience. Proceeds went to the Light of Hope Charity.

Summer training for cadets

(30 July) Military Training Area Kamenica nad Cirochou hosted intense field training for 67 third-year cadets of the Gen M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy on 19-30 July. The training covered tactical, Skill At Arms (SAA), engineer, platoon commander, and CBRN training.

Engineer of the UNFICYP HQ is a Slovak officer too. Maj Martin Ocilka brings a wealth of expertise from Iraq and Afghanistan to the role. In his opening remarks addressed to the SVK UN engineers, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "Standing in front of you, three words come to my mind: gratitude, responsibility and togetherness." The Minister continued: "Trust in the SVK military and interest in joining the Armed Forces have hit a new historic high. The whole of our country has recently lived to witness our military being deployed on the frontline of the fight against the pandemic at home in Slovakia." He added that SVK soldiers abroad bring special credit on Slovakia and that he has received only the most favourable feedback on the work of our engineers. "I hope you are starting to feel the positive steps we are taking towards modernisation, improvements to infrastructure and clothing. We will do our best, just as you do your best," he said.

