

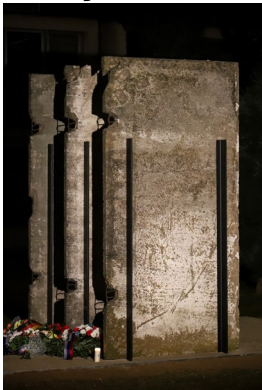


## Strategic Compass

(15 November) EU Defence and Foreign Affairs Ministers attended the Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) to exchange views on the EU's Strategic Compass in Brussels. The aim of the meeting was to hold political discussions on the first draft of the Strategic Compass, as submitted by HR/VP Josep Borrell. In his statement, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "The EU's Strategic Compass is here to navigate us through difficult times, even from the perspective of defence and security and with the use of joint tools and procedures. Nevertheless, its efficiency will depend on the unity and will of individual EU Member States to participate in implementing it. While supporting this initiative, Slovakia has been involved actively in discussing the Strategic Compass to help deliver the best quality output for us all." The EU's Strategic Compass has an ambition to be a fundamental document in support of the EU's CSDP. The first draft is the outcome of a year-long debate and over 30 thematic proposals tabled by the EU Member States. Slovakia has supported some of the proposals. The head of the MOD pointed to the need to continue consultations on evaluating the strategic environment and shared threats and challenges. "The Compass can only navigate us forward, when we have a single map and see it in the same way," he emphasised. The next round of discussions on the EU's Strategic Compass will be at the European Council.

## Berlin Wall symbolically in Nitra

(16 November) Ahead of Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day and the 32nd anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď attended an act of remembrance in Nitra, in the presence of MOD leaders, local authorities, German Ambassador to Slovakia HE Ms Barbara Wolf, representatives of the SVK Political Prisoners Confederation, and members of academia. Speaking at the Freedom Memorial ceremony, he called on the gathered audience and wider public to return to the values people struggled for in the squares and streets of Slovakia's cities on 17 Nov 1989. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "The November Revolution showed the strength and unity of our society struggling for freedom and democracy. As we remember the then enthusiasm with expectations of better tomorrows to come, today we should start doing our part to make that happen, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others. These include the right to health among others." Mr Naď remembered to thank SVK military personnel for transporting the fragments of the Berlin Wall to Nitra. On 17 Nov, Mr Naď attended an act of remembrance at the Memorial to the Executed and Tortured Political Prisoners of Communism at Vrakuňa cemetery in Bratislava.



## Four inaugural SVK F-16 student pilots graduate from F-16 Basic Course

(15 November) Commander of the SVK Air Force Brig Gen Róbert Tóth paid a visit to the United States to witness the graduation of the four inaugural SVK Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon pilots from the F-16 Basic Course, which was delivered at Morris Air National Guard Base in Tucson, Arizona. The graduation ceremony took place at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson. At the ceremony, 162nd Wing Commander Brig Gen Jeffrey Butler addressed the inaugural SVK Air Force F-16 class of graduates, thanked them for their commitment and results, and praised Col Tomáš Novotný for being the godfather of the pilots. He underlined that he greatly valued cooperation with the Slovak partners. Speaking as the Distinguished Visitor Guest Speaker at the event, Brig Gen Róbert Tóth highlighted the importance of this step in the process of modernising the Slovak Air Force and conveyed his Thank You to ANGB Command and the course instructors for supporting our pilots and their families.



- Petra Vihová, Matej Tóth, Adam, Andreas and Teo Žampa, Jakub Grigar, Elena Kaliská, Monika Chocholíková and other sportsmen and women of the **Dukla Military Sports Centre** have called on the wider public to get vaccinated against Covid-19.
- Ordinary of the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps **Mons František Rábek** and other Catholic bishops have joined the call for people to get vaccinated against COVID-19. We are convinced that vaccination can help a lot by stopping the pandemic and saving thousands of human lives. The vaccine will protect you and others against the risks of COVID-19.

• In the second week of Nov, a **joint SVK-CZE training exercise** took place at the Training Centre Lešť, with the training audience from the SVK Army's Mech Bn Martin and the CZE Army's 71 Mech Bn Hranice na Morave. On the exercise, small tactical teams engaged in operations in built-up areas (OBUA).

• The Crisis Management, Training and Canine Branch at the Military Police Department Vikanová hosted **skills improvement training for MP crime investigation technicians**. The aim of the training was to improve their skills in locating and documenting finger prints and making a plaster of Paris cast of shoe prints.

• Also thanks to the MOD's support, The Better Times Civic Association has **reconstructed the bunker** located at the Freedom Cycling Bridge in Bratislava's Devínska Nová Ves. The bunker was used throughout the world wars and served as one of the many checkpoints along the Iron Curtain well until 1989. "On behalf of the MOD, I can say that we plan to continue supporting meaningful projects like this one to preserve our historical memory," said Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer.

• The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to motorists as 11 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 22-28 Nov 2021. The MOD stresses that the Allied transit movements have been approved in line with the SVK Public Health Authority-issued coronavirus safety guidelines. Over the same period, the SVK military will conduct road movements from/to: Martin – Vyšný Komárnik, Vyšný Komárnik – Prešov, Prešov – Martin, Trenčín – Michalovce, Ruskov – Sklené, Zemianske Kostofany – Sereď and back, Sliach – Trenčín and back, Zemianske Kostofany – Poprad and back, Zemianske Kostofany – Sliach and back, Trenčín – Ruskov, and within the town of Levice.

## New military policemen graduate from Initial Specialist MP Course

(19 November) The Crisis Management, Training and Canine Branch at the Military Police Department Vikanová hosted a graduation ceremony for graduates of the Initial Specialist Military Police Course, which took place between 23 Aug and 19 Nov. Director of the Military Police Col Valentin Cebo hailed the hard work of the 16 course participants and their dedication to meeting the challenging theoretical and practical course objectives. "The main aim of the course was to provide the course participants with knowledge, skills and competences necessary to execute the tasks of Military Police personnel," said Col Cebo. He recognised the best



## Petra Vihová wins slalom in Levi



(21 November) On Sunday, Petra Vihová, member of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica, won the women's World Cup (WC) slalom in Levi, Finland. She repeated her yesterday's victory. So far, she has won five slalom races at the ski resort, with four consecutive wins.

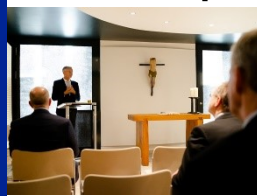
Overall, this marks her 22nd victory in the WC. She has claimed 47 podium placements, with 22 1st places, 14 2nd places, and 11 3rd places.

## MOD Security Internship Programme



(19 November) Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer welcomed participants of the MOD Internship Programme named "Security Academy", saying: "This is a semester-long education programme designed for a close group of students and fresh college graduates with a keen interest in security and defence policy. It is great that in Slovakia and Czechia we have a lot of young people who are interested in these topics, and I believe many of them will find employment in government institutions."

## Protestant chaplains meet in Berlin



(16 November) Berlin hosted a two-day meeting of European Protestant chaplains serving in the armed forces. Due to the pandemic, the meeting was hybrid, with an audience of 21 chaplains from 15 countries. Substituting for Chaplain-in-Chief Col Viktor Sabo, Dean and Director of the Central Office of Ecumenical Pastoral Service in the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps Capt Dávid Vargaštok took part in the event. Alongside introducing their spiritual services, military chaplains discussed their engagements during the pandemic, spiritual services in Afghanistan, cooperation with other religious groups, ethical education of soldiers, and joint courses, training activities and meetings.

participants on the course: Capt Erik Vozár, Capt Juraj Bartolen and PFC Marek Kolesár. While as part of the theory module, the participants gained knowledge of the legal regulations governing police operations, as part of the practical module, they were trained in all aspects of standard MP procedures, practised techniques for entering buildings and facilities, directed and controlled traffic, and drove service vehicles with the right of way. They also familiarised themselves with the procedures for investigating and documenting a variety of incidents, crimes and offences, including security and traffic offences.