



Op ZUZANA 2021



(3 December) On 27 Nov, an Artillery Fire Battery of 21 Self-propelled Artillery Battalion Michalovce began what is a 1,300km road move to Latvia to join in with the NATO eFP BG LVA. The convoy route took the newly fielded Zuzana II Self-propelled Gun Howitzers from Michalovce (SVK) through Orzysz (POL) to Marijampole (LVA) before reaching Camp Ādaži, where the Battery would be based and undertake collective defence tasks for the next six months. Commander Sp Arty Bn Michalovce Lt Col Marek Uchal was the convoy commander and chief of coordination training. Chief of Staff Sp Arty Bn Michalovce Maj Peter Jankaj is the new SLOVCON commander in Latvia.

While still en route to Latvia, members of the Artillery Fire Battery stopped in Poland to team up with an artillery unit of 15 Mech Bde (POL) and test their capabilities on a coordination exercise on Orzysz Training Area. The joint training of SVK, POL and U.S. troops was inspected by Commander SVK Army Maj Gen Ivan Pach and Commander 2 Mech Bde Brig Gen Slavomír Verčimák.

To mark the rotation of SVK artillerymen in a ceremony at Camp Ādaži on 3 Dec, Slovak Ambassador to Latvia HE Mr Ladislav Babčan thanked the outgoing SLOVCON Commander, Maj Michal Németh, for his work and wished the incoming SLOVCON Commander, Maj Peter Jankaj, the best of health and success.

MI Annual Report 2020

(1 December) While reporting to Parliament, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' briefed MPs on the Military Intelligence Annual Report 2020, covering the accomplished tasks, the security developments at home and abroad, and the trends and findings in the field of defence and security over the given period.

Commenting on the report's findings, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "The Report summarises the information recognised as being of exceptional importance for securing the defence and defence capability of our country. Having released it, we are giving the wider public an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the changes in the security environment and the identified threats. I am convinced this can help build its resilience."

Throughout 2020, the Military Intelligence noted the rising trend of threats shifting towards information space and cyberspace, and more frequent and intense cyber attacks and influence operations by different actors in order to polarise society and weaken the legitimacy of state institutions, even due to pandemic COVID measures. The Report is [available online](#).

X-mas from Military Forests & Estates

(3 December) Live Christmas trees from Military Forests & Estates will bring joy and add to the Christmas festivities at over 100 Centres for Children and Families across Slovakia. It is a tradition as part of which this year the MOD-run forestry



company is also distributing packages of premium quality wild game meat to the children's homes. Among the first to receive the presents from Director of Military Forests and Estates Ján Jurica were the centres in Bratislava. The donated Christmas trees and premium quality wild game meat come from the woodlands managed by Military Forests and Estates on behalf of the Ministry of Defence. The company's employees are going to deliver the presents straight to the doors of the centres in the days to come.

Bucharest Nine (B9) Defence Ministers meet for talks in Bucharest

(29 November) On behalf of Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad', Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer attended the Bucharest Nine (B9) Defence Ministers Meeting in Bucharest, Romania. Bucharest Nine (B9), an organisation of nine Central and East European countries which are also NATO members, was established in response to the worsening security situation in Eastern Europe in 2015.

Day 1 of the meeting was dedicated to the conclusions of the 2021 NATO Summit, especially to the decisions having an impact on the Alliance's eastern flank. Ministers therefore discussed the NATO Strategic Concept 2022 and NATO 2030, with emphasis on deterrence and defence, which is also of great importance to Slovakia.

Day 2 of the meeting focused on NATO-EU cooperation in capabilities building, resilience and mobility. Deputy Defence Minister Majer emphasised that it is vital to keep up the motivation to practically cooperate at the high level, saying: "A stronger EU means a stronger NATO, and vice versa."

During the two-day meeting, B9 defence ministers discussed the key issues regarding the defence and security of our region.



- On 1 Dec, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' and Ambassador of the Republic of India to Slovakia HE Mr Shri Vanlalhuma met at the MOD, to discuss the Defence Minister's official trip to India scheduled for March 2022 and ways to take the SVK-IND bilateral defence and security cooperation forward. Mr Nad' will meet Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh during his visit to DefExpo 2022 in India.

- On 29 Nov, SVK Air Force officers Col Adolf Uličný and Col Róbert Tibenský, accompanied by U.S. Air Attaché LTC Gregory P. Christiansen, attended the Slovakia Institutional Capacity Building conference, with focus on Phase II Force Development, discussing future cooperation options for the F-16 programme at USAFE-AFACR, Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

- On 30 Nov, the last surviving Czechoslovak RAF pilot, Gen Emil Boček handed over the **Moral Authority Award** to the latest recipients at the Archbishop Palace, Prague. Among the awardees was the SVK Institute of Military History for supporting and looking after WWII Czechoslovak veterans and for upholding justice, courage, bravery, honour and perseverance to the benefit of Czech and Slovak citizens.

- 51 Wing Prešov was visited by members of the Lithuanian Air Force to share their experience from the acquisition and operation of UH-60M helicopters and the related training of flying personnel and technicians. The visit laid the foundation for forging a new professional relationship, which could provide opportunities for joint training activities at an international level.

- Following the **organisational changes** in the SVK Armed Forces, Supply Base II Martin has been reorganised into 42 Supply Base Martin, Logistics Support Office Martin into 4 Logistics Regiment Trenčín, Supply Base I Nemšová into 41 Supply Base Nemšová, and Repair Battalion Martin (subordinated under CSS Brigade) into 405 Repair Battalion Martin (subordinated under 4 Logistics Regiment Trenčín), with effect from 1 Dec 2021.

- On 30 Nov, Commander 1 Mech Bde Brig Gen Alexander Kollárik bade farewell to CSEL of 1 Mech Bde **Sgt Maj Martin Siekel**, who has been appointed as CSEL of 91 Eng Regt Sereď with effect from 1 Dec.

- A farewell ceremony was held for Service leaver **Sgt Maj Miroslav Štádl**, CSEL of 20 Logistics Battalion Prešov, the last day of November.

- The Peace Support Operations (PSO) Training Unit, Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin, hosted **training for military observers** for UNTSO in the Middle East and EUMM in Georgia.

- 81 Wing Sliac leaders laid wreaths at the Memorial dedicated to Slovak WWII pilot and hero **Maj Gen Oto Smik** to mark the 77th anniversary of his tragic death on 26 Nov.

- The **Military History Museum (MHM) Piešťany** was visited by a delegation from the Internal Audit Branch at the CZE MOD. They were welcomed by Director of the Institute of Military History Bratislava Col Miroslav Čaplovíč at former No. 3 Gen Milan Rastislav Štefánik Air Regiment premises.

- Members of BiH-based EUFOR Althea SLOVCON, led by Lt Col Ján Medved, along with their Czech colleagues hosted a **Joint Slovak and Czech Day** to commemorate Independent Czechoslovakia Day, International Veterans Day and Freedom and Democracy Struggle Day.

- As part of the subject Engineer Support I, third-year **AOS cadets** specialising in the Security and Defence of the State Programme undertook training to develop their theoretical knowledge and practical skills in applying the C-IED measures in the grounds of the Engineer Regiment Sereď.

- Due to the unfavourable pandemic developments in Slovakia, the **study room of the Military History Archives** and the Military History Museums Piešťany and Svidník have been closed from 25 Nov until further notice.

- A graduation ceremony marked the end of the **25th International Staff Officers Course (ISOC)** at the Armed Forces Academy (AOS). The 9-week ISOC course was attended by nine officers ranked Captain to Major from Slovakia, a captain and seven 1st lieutenants from Czechia, two 1st lieutenants from Latvia, and one captain from the Indiana National Guard.

- The latest **Azimuth 24/7** edition, available on YouTube, presents SVK military personnel deployed on Op EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- 53 Field Services Battalion Hlohovec has set up an **Army Recruitment Office**, with the official address: Army Recruitment Office, 53 Field Services Battalion Hlohovec, Dukelská ul. 3613/7, Hlohovec. It is open from 08:00 to 15:00 on Wed. You can also call us on 0960 396 215. For more information, go to [www.regrutacia.sk](#).

- The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to motorists as 13 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 6 to 12 Dec 2021. Over the same period, the SVK military will conduct road movements from/to: Nitra – Levice and back, Sliac – Lešť, Topoľčany – Levice and back, Sklené – Lešť, Hlohovec – Zemianske Kostolany and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Zvolen and back, Sliac – Zemianske Kostolany and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Martin and back, and within the town of Levice.

Bishop of the Forces thanks pilots



(30 November) Catholic Bishop of the Forces Mons František Rábek recognised 22 members of 46 Wing Kuchyňa, led by Col Peter Prokoc, for transporting bishops by a SVK Air Force C-27J Spartan during the official visit of Pope Francis to Slovakia on 14-15 Sept. On behalf of the SVK Bishops Conference and himself, Mons Rábek praised them for displaying the high levels of professionalism during the event.

Training scaled back due to pandemic

(29 November) In view of the measures adopted following the declaration of the state of emergency and the deployment of military personnel and resources in support of hospitals and police forces, based on Government decisions, the Armed Forces are to significantly scale back their exercises and training in the coming period. Yet, the participation of the Slovak armed forces in Ex Combined Resolve XVI in Germany and the rotation of SVK troops in the Baltics with a training exercise in Poland will still go ahead. In the coming period, an extensive element of the SVK Army along with vehicles and equipment will be participating in Ex Combined Resolve XVI in Germany, to test their interoperability with Allied units.

MOD is getting greener



(1 December) As the Ministry of Defence delivers on the Green MOD Concept, its latest contribution to encouraging more environmentally friendly operations across Defence is a new road sweeper. Compared to

the sweepers powered by fossil fuels, the new fully electric road sweeper offers low noise levels, zero emissions, and a two-third reduction in operating costs. The MOD has prepared 18 initiatives with a focus on areas such as energy efficiency, recycling, waste management, process digitalisation, digital editions instead of printed materials, green purchasing, and environmentally friendly transport.

More women in Defence

(2 December) More and more women are getting involved in securing Slovakia's defences. A total of 4,889 women, which equates to 22.9% of all MOD and Armed Forces military and civilian staff, are currently employed in Defence. Of them, 1,879 are female Service personnel and 3,020 are female civilian employees. MOD data shows that more than half of the MOD's positions are held by women, whereas the overall share of women in the MOD's managerial positions is also significant, to be precise, it stands at 46.3%. Today, female Service personnel form 12% of all SVK Armed Forces personnel. Most of them are officers. Currently, 36 servicewomen are serving abroad. Women constitute 10% of the total actual strength of the Military Police.

DUKLA reinforced



(5 December) Emma Zapletalová, SVK Athlete of 2021 and U23 European Champion in the women's 400m hurdles, will start competing in the colours of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica. She has already passed the functional tests at the DUKLA Specialist Medical Facility. Peter Žnava, Emma's coach, is soon to join the ranks of DUKLA in a coaching role. Emma and Peter received a warm welcome from Director of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Matej Tóth. Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' wished the new reinforcements the best of health and every success in their careers.