



Poland is ready to protect Slovak skies

(29 April) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď welcomed Polish Minister of National Defence Mariusz Blaszczak to the Ministry of Defence in a full military honours ceremony. Aside bilateral defence cooperation issues, they discussed the ongoing security situation in the Eastern Europe region in the wake of Russia's belligerence against Ukraine. No sooner will the SVK MiG-29 fighter jets be grounded than Poland will be ready to protect SVK airspace. "I'm very pleased that once the legislative measures which we are going to start working on immediately have been put in place, Poland will be looking after the security of our airspace until the ordered F-16 fighter jets arrive in Slovakia from the USA," said Mr Naď, noting that the primary aim is to have Polish aircraft operating out of a Polish base. The defence ministers concurred that bilateral defence and security cooperation between both countries is highly intense. In addition, they highlighted an equally very high level of collaborative efforts within V4 and NATO structures. The partners identified another possible area of cooperation – the defence industries.



Continued support for Ukraine

(26 April) At the invitation of U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď attended multilateral talks on support for Ukraine at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. In his remarks, Mr Naď confirmed that Slovakia is determined to continue to provide Ukraine with humanitarian and military aid. Also in attendance at the meeting was UKR Defence Minister Olexii Reznikov.

Mr Naď said: "Ukraine, which has been defending itself with perseverance against the Russian Federation's unprecedented aggression, needs strong and long-term support from the international community. Our neighbours' ongoing fight for the freedom of their country and the lives of their citizens must not go unheeded without a response in the form of solidarity." He updated the conference on Slovakia's €130m worth of aid to Ukraine, including on the S-300 air defence system and the possible sale of Zuzana 2 SpGHs to Ukraine. To this end he noted that "discussions on the contract are at an advanced stage, and, if it goes ahead, we are ready to give priority to supplying the equipment to Ukraine before it is delivered to the SVK Armed Forces." Adding, "Slovakia still owns different Soviet-era equipment, which offers up options for giving timely support to Ukraine."

He singled out ways in which Slovakia can offer assistance to Ukraine over the longer term, including through commercial repairs of UKR equipment at SVK defence companies and training courses. Slovakia continues to provide humanitarian response to Ukraine. It has done so since the very first day of the conflict. Today, the delivery of humanitarian aid is getting more effective thanks to a logistics hub.

Changes announced to SVK Armed Forces Command with effect from 1 May

(28 April) Brig Gen Peter Babiar has been appointed Deputy Chief of Defence/Chief of Staff (DCHOD/COS) in succession to Maj Gen Štefan Kovács, who is leaving the Service after nearly 37 years of service. During today's ceremony, Defence Minister Naď and Chief of Defence Gen Zmeko bade farewell to Maj Gen Kovács, as well as appointing Brig Gen Peter Babiar as his successor and Col Martin Remeš as Commander of the Strategic Crisis Management Centre of the SVK Defence Staff, in succession to Brig Gen Tibor Králik. Gen Zmeko went on to thank Maj Gen Kovács for his work and saluted his life-long personal engagement. At the same time, he wished the newly appointed leaders the very best in their future decisions. Maj Gen Kovács was congratulated by the defence minister as well. "Although difficult times bring new opportunities, the one all-important thing we wish is to live in peace as we witness the horrors of war in our close neighbourhood," said DCHOD/COS Brig Gen Babiar. The new top appointments of SVK Armed Forces Command along with the SVK Government-proposed post extension for Gen Zmeko as Chief of Defence ensure continuity of direction and development in the way the Slovak Armed Forces move forward, while making it possible to accomplish the assigned tasks and to maintain the high trust of the Slovak public in the men and women of the Slovak Armed Forces.



- Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď thanked German Ambassador Barbara Wolf and Dutch Ambassador Gabriella Sancisi for their help and support in the form of force contributions to NATO's eFP BG Slovakia, including for the assets their soldiers are manning and operating. Thanks to this mark of solidarity, 126 NLD and 238 DEU troops are deployed to Sľač Air Base along with a Patriot air defence system.

- Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer received a delegation from the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) led by DCAF Director Ambassador Thomas Guerber. Central themes of the meeting included mutual cooperation on enhancing security sector governance and reform (SSG/R) – particularly in the context of Russia's belligerence in Ukraine.

- On 25 Apr, Roman Catholic Bishop of the Forces Mons František Rábek paid a visit to Nitra to meet with chaplains and lay members of the Bishopric. The meeting centred on the theme of the 2021 - 2023 Synod – "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission", as announced by Pope Francis.

- 2nd Mech Coy teamed up with Log Sup Ptn, part of 12th Mech Bn Nitra, for **intense 96-hour training** on tactical and logistical operations during a simulated stabilisation operation at Nitra Garrison's training ground at Koliňanský vrch. The training culminated with a 36-hour tactical exercise.

- 5th-year officer cadets of the **Armed Forces Academy**, following the Mechanised and Tank Troops Programme, will undertake placements at 12th Mech Bn Nitra between 19 Apr and 6 May. Under the guidance of experienced company commanders and supported by the Officer and NCO Corps, they will participate in a complex CP rehearsal, Skill At Arms (SAA) lessons and shooting drills, a mortar live fire exercise, tactical training, and a course on platoon leadership.

- On 26 Apr, 11th Mech Bn Martin mortar crews underwent a **live fire exercise** with training mortar shells. The crew led by Sgt Milan Kudera was named the Best Mortar Crew. On 27 Apr, 12th Mech Bn Nitra mortar units took part in a live fire exercise with training mortar shells at TC Lešť.

- Alex Barto, judoka of the Dukla Military Sports Centre, placed 9th at the **European Judo Championships** in Bulgaria's Sofia. In his second match, he defeated last year's world vice-champion Tommy Macias (SWE). In the match to get in the quarter finals, he fought decently against the world No. 1 judoka Matthias Casse (BEL).

- To ensure continuity of highly successful cooperation, VŠC Dukla has extended the contract for Olympic golden medalist **Petra Vihová** for another four years.

FULL FIELD KIT
presents the **joint training of CZE and SVK paratroopers at Lešť** as part of **NATO's eFP BG on Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.**

TC Lešť is ringing to the sound of Modular rocket launchers

(28 April) Members of 1st Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) Battery, part of 54th MLRS Battalion Rožňava, exercised at the Training Centre (TC) Lešť for the last two weeks of April. Their efforts culminated with the Battery platoons firing training rockets from the Modular MLRSs at the end of the month. "Due to pandemic restrictions for the past three years, live fire exercises like this could not take place. For us, the deployment to this training area and firings are an important part of our preparation for Ex Dynamic Front to be held in Germany in July. It is, so to say, a national certification exercise," stressed Commander MLRS Battalion Lt Col Ján Hric. Apart from Rožňava-based MLRS crews, the exercise



traditionally involved senior artillery officer cadets of the Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš, led by Head of the Military Tactics and Operational Art Dept Col (Rtd) Jaroslav Varecha.

3rd-year, 4th-year, and 5th-year officer cadets acquainted themselves with individual roles in manning the MLRS. In addition, they tried out firing the vz. 52 82mm mortar. "Practical assignments like these are irreplaceable for our cadets. Thanks to them, they can gain a much-needed insight into and realistic experience of military life. Our thanks go out to commanders of the artillery units from Rožňava and Michalovce, because they have gone out of their way to help us train artillery officer cadets – their future colleagues," concluded Col (Rtd) Varecha.

Minister meets trade unionists

(28 April) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď met Emmanuel Jacob, President of the European Organisation of Military Associations and Trade Unions (EUROMIL), as well as representatives of the SVK Soldiers Association at the MOD. To ensure all rights and interests of military personnel are protected, Mr Naď intends to appoint a Service Complaints Ombudsman and to support the Association's activities to shape the development of social welfare provision. Also discussed was the upcoming 125th EUROMIL General Assembly to be held at Garrison House Trenčín on Friday 29 April.

Deputy Minister in visit to Czechia

(29 April) Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer made an official trip to the Czech Republic, to participate in a series of meetings at the Czech Ministry of Defence and to appear on a discussion hosted by the European Values think-tank. He confirmed Slovakia's interest in even closer cooperation between the countries during the upcoming SVK V4 Presidency and the CZE Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of this year. His official trip continued with a visit to AERO Vodochody AEROSPACE.

Complex CP rehearsal



(29 April) Training activities of HQ 12th Mech Bn Nitra concluded with a complex command post rehearsal at Nitra Garrison's Koliňanský vrch training ground ahead of Slovak Shield 2022. Over the course of four days of intense training, HQ

members, supported by the HQ Platoon (CSS Coy), practised planning defensive operations as the Battalion's main command post (MCP) was in full swing. Special attention was paid to taking down, redeploying and setting up the MCP as quickly as possible. The commander of 12th Mech Bn Nitra said all objectives were met, expressed his satisfaction with the training event, and appreciated the high level of professionalism by all exercising troops.

Students and MP personnel

(25 April) Military Police (MP) personnel from the Police Operations Zvolen, led by Maj Ľuboš Drevenák, prepared a programme for students from J. G. Tajovský Grammar School at the SNP Museum in Banská Bystrica. The students familiarised themselves with a variety of MP tasks, to include patrolling, investigating offences, securing and documenting footprints. They took the opportunity to try on MP clothing and handle equipment. As part of practical demonstrations, MP investigators made good use of different scenarios to present how to detect, document and investigate criminal activities, focusing on the basics of legal and criminal liability.