



## Zuzana 2 SpGHs for Ukraine

(1 June) KONŠTRUKTA - Defence, the state-owned and MOD-run company, signed a commercial contract on the delivery of eight Zuzana 2 SpGHs to Ukraine. "The conclusion of the contract was preceded by weeks of intense negotiations. Thank you to the company's leadership and my colleagues at the MOD for their quick action on this key issue. The situation in Ukraine demands our maximum commitment, expertise and sincere interest, and we do not miss out on these at the MOD and its subordinate organisations," Minister Nad' said. He also thanked UKR Defence Minister Olexii Reznikov for his personal involvement. The award of the contract is a great success for the SVK defence industry, bringing in significant opportunities for the company's growth. Speaking of the contract, Director General of KONŠTRUKTA - Defence Alexander Gurský said: "It is an important contract. On the one hand, we are going to show our capabilities, expertise and professionalism in the manufacture of military equipment, but at the same time it is an important moment for our employees. Thanks to the contract, they will now have a guarantee of employment."



## Ukraine has confidence in us

(30 May) Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' and his Ukrainian counterpart Oleksii Reznikov met over video call, to discuss the developments in Ukraine and the different forms of additional aid from Slovakia. "Ukraine can continue to count on our assistance. Nobody knows when this sad and senseless conflict will end. Nevertheless, one is for sure – the democratic world stands united to help the innocent Ukrainians. In the forms and volume of its aid, Slovakia is one of the leaders. Ukraine has great confidence in us. In these crucial moments as quite literally lives are at stake, we must do everything we can not to disappoint," Mr Nad' said. The two leaders spoke about the delivery of the Zuzana II SpGHs to Ukraine. Minister Reznikov thanked Slovakia for its humanitarian and military aid, helping to save thousands of Ukrainian lives. He also commended SVK Chief of Defence Gen Zmeko for his interest in and recent visit to Ukraine.

## Defence Cooperation Committee

(31 May) This year's first meeting of the SVK-CZE Defence Cooperation Steering Committee (DCSC) took place in Modra, Slovakia. The Slovak MOD was represented at the meeting by Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer. The DCSC working groups addressed a range of issues such as new collaboration opportunities for defence planning, military operations and exercises, and MOD-run companies and agencies. Topics covered also included military education, logistics, armaments and airspace. Previously, the DCSC met in Prague in Nov 2019. The committee meets if needed at least once a year alternately in the Slovak and Czech Republics.

## Slovak Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko pays visit to Ukraine

(30 May) Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko met his Ukrainian partner Gen Valeriy Zaluzhnyy in Ukraine. During the SVK military delegation's visit to Ukraine on 26-29 May, members of the delegation familiarised themselves with the current situation and visited UKR troops fighting on the frontline in the Kharkiv region. On his return to Slovakia, Gen Zmeko said: "The determination of the Ukrainian soldiers and people must be an example for the Western world. But without military assistance in the form of weapons and munitions, determination alone cannot defeat the aggressor." They also saw first-hand the effects of combat operations with evidence of systematic violations of the international law of war. In the Kharkiv region, they witnessed the Russian Army's indiscriminate artillery strikes on civilian targets with considerable casualties. "We have been closely following the operations of the Ukrainian Armed Forces since the outbreak of the war. Their results, coupled with the facts gathered during our trip, will be used in our planning processes and we'll adjust our training procedures according to them so as to get us better prepared for the defence of our country," added Gen Zmeko.



- On 31 May, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' held his first call with Hungarian Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky. The phone conversation marked the first working contact with Defence Minister Szalay-Bobrovniczky and the first opportunity to underpin the importance of cooperation between both countries. The two leaders addressed the current situation in Ukraine, the bilateral projects including the SVK military's participation in the NATO HQ MND-C in Hungary, and the modernisation programmes of the SVK and HUN militaries. Slovakia takes over the V4 presidency from Hungary on 1 July 2022.

- On 30 May, Deputy Defence Minister Majer met Estonian Ambassador to Slovakia HE Mr Toomas Kukk at the MOD. They spoke about Estonian and Slovak aid for Ukraine and the forthcoming NATO Summit in Madrid. Majer congratulated Ambassador Kukk on 5 years of NATO's eFP BG Estonia.

- At the Bulgarian Partisans Memorial on Bratislava's Vajanský Embankment on 30 May, Deputy Defence Minister Majer and Bulgarian Ambassador Vassil Petkov paid respects to the memory of Bulgarian citizens who died in the Slovak National Uprising. The ceremony coincided with Christo Botev Day. Christo Botev, a Bulgarian national hero and poet who died fighting the Turkish rule, is a symbol of Bulgarian independence.

- The Slovak Air Force HQ hosted SVK-POL consultations on the protection of SVK airspace. The POL delegation was led by Deputy Commander of the Air Component Brig Gen Piotr Krawczyk, while the SVK side was represented by senior staff of the SVK AF HQ led by Commander Slovak Air Force Maj Gen Róbert Tóth, members of 2 SVK AF Bde Zvolen, representatives of the MOD's Legislation and Law Department and Defence Policy Department, and members of the Military Aviation Office.

- To mark International Children's Day, an Open Doors day was held across a number of the SVK Army's barracks. The young visitors and their parents were treated to live demonstrations of combat vehicles. They were also allowed to try out weapons and take a seat in military, police and firefighting vehicles.

- After a two-year pause over coronavirus, the Make-A-Wish Fun Run 2022 charity event took place at SHAPE. It was attended by the Slovak SHAPE community, members of the Permanent Delegation to NATO in Brussels, and Slovak Ambassador to NATO Peter Bátor and his family. The participants ran 697 laps and covered 278.8km. Out of the 48 teams, the Slovak team placed 7th.

- The Trenčín Garrison Club will host two day camps for kids of service personnel and civilian employees from across Trenčín Garrison, starting from 11 to 15 July and from 18 to 22 July 2022. Primary school kids, grades 1 to 8, are eligible to attend. More information is available on the internet.

- Wrestlers Tajmuraz Salkazanov, Boris Makoev and Akhsarbek Gulaev represented the Dukla Military Sports Centre excellently at the Bolat Turlykhanov Cup in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan. Salkazanov won the men's 74kg category, and Makoev and Gulaev placed 2nd and 3rd in the men's 86kg and 79kg categories, respectively.

### FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme focuses on the work of the Training and Mobilisation Replenishment Base Martin live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

## Future artillery gunners undergo branch-specialised training in Martin

(5 June) 194 new military professionals swore the Oath of Allegiance and completed a passing out parade to mark

the end of their initial training at the Training and Mobilisation Replenishment Base Martin on 20 May. Since then, they have moved on to branch-specialised training. Field artillery specialties training is led by artillery instructor Sgt 1C Juraj Pastucha. Specifically, he is responsible for training new soldiers on mortar and anti-tank operations for Mech Bns, 54 MLRS Bn Rožňava, and 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce. "The four-week Phase 2 training covers



the theory, components and technical capabilities of mortars and anti-tank weapons. Soldiers are also trained on the PAB-2A artillery device. I've never seen soldiers take such a keen interest in training. I'm pleasantly surprised at that. They want

to learn as much as possible about weapons handling and operation, and duties in firing positions. They ask a lot of

questions. This is very encouraging for us. It is the best prerequisite for getting them prepared for their roles during Phase 2 training," said Sgt 1C Pastucha. According to him, among those displaying most initiative during the training are Pte Peter Chachafák and Pte Vladimíra Kišíková. Peter is predestined for the Michalovce-based battalion and he is already looking forward

to operating the Zuzana SpGH. Vladimíra, a multiple SVK champion handball player on the Michalovce handball team, is happy with her next role as a mortar operator at 21 Mech Bn Trebišov. The future artillery personnel will complete their branch-specialised training at Martin base on 17 June.

## Hosting partners and friends

(4 June) GLOBSEC, held on 2-4 June in Bratislava, offered an interesting programme with many distinguished guests in attendance. On 2 June, Minister Nad' hosted Greek National Defence Minister Nikolaos Panagiotopoulos for talks at the MOD. The two consulted closely on defence and security affairs, especially on options to assist Ukraine in the wake of Russia's aggression, SVK-GRC defence cooperation, and the situation in the regions seen as key to European security. They also assessed NATO's processes in progress. Mr Nad' expressed his full solidarity for Greece and support for the European community's united position on resolving the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, especially against the backdrop of the current security situation in Eastern Europe.

On 3 June, Minister Nad' welcomed Swedish Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist to the MOD. In his statement, he said: "I'm very delighted that Sweden and Finland have made the decision to join NATO. We highly appreciate this historic step – not only politically, but also militarily. Indeed, the substantial capabilities Sweden brings will boost the Alliance's ability to deliver collective defence and deterrence."

That same day, Mr Nad' also had the pleasure of hosting Bulgarian Defence Minister Dragomir Zakov for talks. "We are faced with similar threats, we must come to terms with a multitude of hybrid menaces, but we also need to modernise our armed forces," said Minister Nad', citing their solidarity for the sorely tried Ukrainian people as proof of the Slovak and Bulgarian geopolitical anchor.



On 2 June, Deputy Defence Minister Majer met with Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central and Eastern Europe Ms Robin L. Dunningan. The sides directed their conversation to the new assistance package for war-torn Ukraine, SVK-U.S. defence and security collaboration, and NATO cooperation.

On 3 June, Majer met First Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia Lela Chikovani. The two spoke about SVK-GEO defence ties, including defence industry cooperation, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its impact on the security situation in Europe, and would not avoid discussing the current developments in Georgia. Like in Ukraine, some of Georgia's territory has been occupied by the Russian Federation since 2008.

That same day, he also met with State Secretary of the Ministry of National Defence of Romania Simona Cojocaru. Their conversation covered Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its implications for the security situation in Europe, SVK-ROU defence ties, the NATO Madrid Summit in June, the two nations' deployments on international crisis management operations, and new opportunities for joint training and inter-force collaboration.