



## Acquisition of 8x8s

(30 August) SVK Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' and FIN Defence Minister Antti Kaikkonen brought the process of finalising a major modernisation programme for the SVK Armed Forces to a conclusion. By signing the Agreement between the Governments of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Finland on the Acquisition of the Patria 8x8 Armoured Modular Vehicles (AMV) XP, they confirmed Slovakia's purchase of 76 Patria 8x8 AMV XPs in the Slovak Turra-30 turret configuration with the 30mm GTS-30/A cannon. Alongside that, the signing of another two related contracts – a contract between the SVK MOD and Patria as well as a contract between KONŠTRUKTA-Defence (a 100% state-owned JSC) and Patria – took place as the culmination of a series of meetings between experts. In view of the SVK defence industry's stake in the project, this unique and historical success has no parallel in Slovakia, Defence Minister Nad' underlined, saying: „We will not only meet the 40% level of Slovak defence industry content, but we will even exceed this limit – already today I can confirm a nearly 43% stake, yet this may not be the final figure. The Slovak side will have one prime contractor – KONŠTRUKTA-Defence and six main subcontractors. Altogether, over 40 SVK defence companies will be involved in and benefit from the project.”



He reminded that the delivery of the new Patria 8x8 AMV XPs will secure crucial capabilities for the SVK Armed Forces they have not had until now. After the surveillance and precision approach radars for the SVK Air Force bases, 3D Air Defence radars, new Black Hawks and extra equipment for the operational Black Hawks, the MOD has thus finalised another major modernisation project for the SVK military. Finnish Defence Minister Antti Kaikkonen said: „The war in Ukraine has given us a number of lessons learned. Among others, it has shown how important interoperability across partners is. Also thanks to this, we will give our armed forces the ability to cooperate. We will do all it takes to deliver the vehicles on time, so that Slovakia gets the much needed capabilities. I hope this project will be a springboard for our future cooperation.” Mr Kaikkonen confirmed that KONŠTRUKTA-Defence along with many other SVK companies will be part of the project, whereas Finland is ready to transfer its know-how and technologies to enable them to manufacture the vehicles in Slovakia.

„The current price per vehicle is €4.675m, which means delivering €100,000 of savings against the cost of one vehicle quoted by the previous government. Given the time and inflation rate, this a tremendous success,” Mr Nad' explained. He remembered to thank State Secretary Majer, National Armaments Director Zekucia, Defence Policy Dept Director Sklenár, senior military leaders, and all those on the project for a job well done.



## Council of EU meets on Ukraine, Mali and Western Balkans

(30 August) Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' took part in the Informal Meeting of EU Defence Ministers in Prague. Ministers discussed Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its ramifications for the regions key to European security, the measures to boost the efficiency of defence investments, and the new opportunities for the EU's support to Ukraine. On the agenda of the meeting, Mr Nad' said: „The Russian Federation's illegal and unjustified invasion of Ukraine has a global impact and a wide-reaching regional dimension. Therefore, we are mainly talking about our eastern and southern neighbourhood, with the emphasis on the Western Balkans.” Ministers also focused on the future of the EU's missions in BiH and Africa's Mali, as well as addressing the situation in Kosovo. Nad' welcomed the proposal to establish the EU Military Advisory and Training Mission Ukraine (EUATM Ukraine). Specific details of the Mission were presented by HR/VP Josep Borrell. Another part of the discussion was in relation to strengthening the EU's joint defence procurement efforts with the aim of overcoming legislative and other constraints on the EU's joint procurement in the field of defence.



- The MOD celebrated **SVK Constitution Day** on 1 Sept. Referencing the Oath of Allegiance the trainee soldiers swear on joining the Services, Defence Minister Nad' said: „I am ready to defend the Slovak Republic's freedom, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and the inviolability of its borders.” Equally important, they fully commit to performing the tasks inherently linked to the SVK Constitution. For this, he thanked the entire Armed Forces.

- Minister of Economy and Rural Development Samuel Vličan presented the **Silver Medal for Preservation and Promotion of Hunting** to Director General of Military Forests and Estates Ján Jurica in Svätý Anton on 3 Sept.

- SVK military personnel have only until 7 Sept to apply for the **Special Forces Selection and Assessment Course (SFAS)**. SOCOM Trenčín, 5 SOF Regt Žilina, 51 Training Base Žilina, and 52 Airborne Bn Trebišov (to be resubordinated under GAR Liptovský Mikuláš - Mokrad' with effect from the end of 2022) are offering jobs for enlisted personnel, NCOs and officers. The selection process will take place at the beginning of Oct. For more information, go to <https://www.mil.sk/100362/Coan-1>.

- The Ministry of Defence warns that the “call-out notices” for active duty, the instructions for a 14-day voluntary military training programme, and the duty to report the commencement of initial military training to the employer, which are being spread these days, are all **fake news**. In its official statement, the MOD emphasises that “Slovakia has not declared a state of war and there is no reason to call up reservists for military service.”

- **Paulína Bátovská - Fialková**, member of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre, won the bronze medal in the women's sprint race at the Summer Biathlon World Championships in Germany's Ruhpolding in Aug.

- 154 **Officer Cadets** are already into the second month of their studies at AOS Liptovský Mikuláš. Currently, they are undergoing a 7-week initial military training (IMT) programme at the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin, where they are acquiring basic soldiering knowledge and skills. At the end of Sept, they will start their branch-specific study programmes.

- The 51st edition of **Azimuth 24/7**, available on the SVK Armed Forces YouTube Channel, presents recon personnel of 65 Recce Bn on patrolling duties along Slovakia's eastern border: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3D5a3VYw7Y>.

## FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents CBRN specialists on Ex Toxic Valley live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

## 27th International Military Ascent of Mt Kriváň

(3 September) The High Tatra Mountains saw the 27th International Military Ascent of Mt Kriváň organised by the Slovak Soldiers Association on Saturday. „A total of 1,128 people took on the challenge of climbing Mt Kriváň, with Bishop of the Forces Mons František Rábek (73) possibly being the oldest of them,” Lt Col Igor Štefko said. For the 15th time already, this organisational team leader welcomed them to the top of the summit, handing out the Certificate of Participation to everyone who completed the hike. One of them was Col (Retd) Richard Zimányi, Chief of the Military Veterans and Retirees Section of the MOD Human Resources Branch, he said: „I've climbed



Mt Kriváň many times, but the military ascent always lends a special ambiance. I'm happy I've met a lot of veterans here.” Sharing his thoughts, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: „Unfortunately, I was not able to attend this year, but it gives me a great pleasure that the event was supported by the MOD Grant Scheme. I wish to thank the organisers for all the efforts they put into this great event. Thanks to them, friends of the Slovak Armed Forces, serving and ex-service personnel with their families, defence experts and military diplomats could connect and create bonds with each other in an informal and friendly atmosphere.”

## Sgt Valošek saves a human life



(31 August) When an elderly man collapsed in Žilina's Stone Street in the heat of the summer, Sgt Ivan Valošek of MILMEDCOM wouldn't hesitate to help him – largely thanks to his rich military medical experience and training. After a quick assessment, he started

giving CPR to the man. No sooner had City Police guards brought a defibrillator than he used it to restart the man's heart, and then kept up CPR until the Ambulance Service arrived at the scene minutes later.

## Golden Wings Award for Col Uličný



(4 September) „I see the Golden Wings Award as a recognition of my work to the benefit of military aviation from its beginning to the present time, while at the same time being a thank you to my colleagues and the whole of the Slovak Air Force,” DCOS SVK AF HQ Col Adolf Uličný said. He

took over the Award in the Security Forces Aviation category from the hands of State Secretary Marian Majer on the eve of SIAF 2022 in Bratislava. Slovakia's Golden Wings – National Aviation Awards recognises personalities, projects, institutions, societies and other entities for their input into Slovak military and civil aviation. Col Uličný began his career as Combat Air Traffic Controller in Plzeň. He has been a serviceman since 1985 and has helped build the Slovak Air Force since its formation.

## Lt Col Vrbovský recognised



(31 August) DCOM SVK AF Brig Gen Ladislav Dohvun along with DCOS SVK AF HQ Col Adolf Uličný bade farewell to Lt Col Juraj Vrbovský, Chief of Defence Veterinary Services in the Slovak Air Force, with 31 years of service. For his decades-long service, Lt Col Vrbovský has received the SVK Chief of Defence Commemorative Cross 2nd Grade.