



V4 Defence Ministers hold talks in Banská Štiavnica

(27 Sept) Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' hosted his counterparts from the Visegrad Group for the V4 Defence Ministers Meeting in Banská Štiavnica, to discuss the V4's assistance to Ukraine, defence cooperation, disruptive actions by hybrid actors, and security challenges in the Western Balkans and other regions. Yet, the central theme of the meeting was Ukraine's territorial integrity, which is in the interests of all V4 countries. Minister Nad' emphasised: "We all know who the aggressor is, we all know who the victim is. We all want peace to return to Ukraine as soon as possible. So, we are seeking joint solutions to help Ukraine." Talks in Banská Štiavnica were also focused on a further strengthening of cooperation between defence industry companies, an intensification of joint training and exercises, and the extended V4-plus dialogue with partner countries such as the USA, France, Germany, the UK and the ROK. As Slovakia holds the V4 Presidency till 30 June 2023, V4 defence cooperation – including preparations for the EU V4 Battlegroup (EU V4 BG) to be on standby in the first half of 2023 – was one of the topics. HUN Defence Minister Szalay-Bobrovniczky confirmed his country's contribution to the BG. He emphasised Hungary is against the Russian aggression and considers the defence of Ukraine's territorial integrity as important, as well as pointing to the need to minimise the risk of escalation in the Ukraine war and its spillover into other countries. POL Deputy National Defence Minister Marcin Ociepa stressed the need to deepen V4 engagements and to counter the hybrid threats from the Russian actors in Central Europe.



U.S. FMF funds for Slovakia

(28 Sept) The U.S. will provide Slovakia with a grant of \$200m in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to help modernise the Slovak Armed Forces against the backdrop of Slovakia's provision of technical assistance to Ukraine. Slovakia is one of the highest recipients of military aid from the FMF package which the USA is to share among 18 countries. Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "Slovakia is a responsible ally that has a clear compass of values. We have been active in adopting steps to bolster the defence of us all across the whole of the Alliance. And our support for Ukraine, which has been defending itself resolutely and heroically against the Russian aggression, comes as an important part of these efforts." The MOD will use the FMF funds to procure U.S. defence equipment to strengthen the security of Slovakia, the element of deterrence and collective interoperability. "This is a major opportunity to diversify our military systems, especially the Soviet-type inventory on which we can no longer – and don't want to – be dependent," Minister Nad' emphasised. He also announced an additional \$5.8m in U.S. funding for the Countering Russian Influence Fund (CRIF) projects.

Slovak howitzers for Ukraine

(2 Oct) State-run KONŠTRUKTA - Defence JSC will produce an additional 16 Zuzana 2 Self-propelled Gun Howitzers (SpGHs) for Ukraine. They will be funded by Denmark, Germany and Norway, which have set aside €92m for this purpose. This announcement was made by Danish Defence Minister Morten Bødsko and Slovak Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' in Copenhagen, adding that field artillery systems are a key Combat Support (CS) element in the theatre of operations. The delivery of the howitzers is set to begin from the second half of 2023. Based on another commercial contract concluded earlier in June 2022, Slovakia has already delivered four out of the eight ordered Zuzana 2s to Ukraine.

J. Nad': SVK-HUN defence cooperation sets an example

(26 Sept) Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' welcomed HUN Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky to the MOD for the first time since taking up the role. Their conversation revolved around a further deepening of SVK-HUN defence engagement in different areas. Minister Nad' highlighted the high level of bilateral ties between the countries and their commitment to new forms of cooperation, as in the case of the discussion on Hungary teaming up with Poland and Czechia to protect SVK airspace. The leaders addressed the NATO BGs that stood up in Slovakia and Hungary as the Alliance's response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the current trans-Atlantic processes, and the security developments in the Western Balkans. They lauded SVK-HUN cooperation on international operations, military training and education activities. According to them, there is still potential to be explored in the modernisation of both Armed Forces, which is to be approached as a mutually beneficial collaboration between the defence industries.



- COM SVK ARMY Maj Gen Ivan Pach visited the Armoured Vehicles Eastern Europe Conference in Warsaw on 27-28 Sept. The main topics included the requirements on Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs) and related procurement, training, simulation, maintenance, repairs, fleet management, service support, and operational challenges. Maj Gen Pach joined former DSACEUR Gen Sir Adrian Bradshaw and DCOM HQ ROU ARMY Christian-Daniel Dan in participating in a panel discussion at the conference.

- To mark Slovak Armed Forces Day, a joint concert by military bands and music schools from BA, BB and KE took place at the Slovak Radio Concert Hall in BA on 28 Sept. The performances under the direction of Bandmaster Capt Jozef Hepar were appreciated by Inspector of Military Bands (and initiator of the event) Maj Boris Hokina, CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, State Secretary Marian Majer, MOD employees, and the teachers, parents and fellow students of the young musicians.

- Based on the cooperation between AOS's Electronics Dept and Microwave Systems, the company staged a presentation of its newest ELR 55307 radar. It is designed for monitoring surface movement and protecting the perimeter of sites, as well as tracking UAVs. In attendance were representatives of the Armed Forces, the Police Academy, the industry, and OCs.

- The 29th Professionally Qualified Officers Course opened at AOS Liptovský Mikuláš on 26 Sept. It is being attended by 16 university graduates in the Preparatory State Service and 62 MOD military staff – ORs, NCOs and Officers in the Temporary and Permanent State Service.

- AOS Liptovský Mikuláš is hosting the nine-week-long 27th International Staff Officers Course (ISOC), with 20 SVK, CZE and ROK officers taking part.

- On 29 Sept, AOS's Social Sciences and Languages Dept organised the 20th International Scientific Conference – New Trends in Professional Training of Armed Forces online, with the participation of SVK, HUN, POL and CZE subject matter experts.

- Given the increased interest in the short-term Crisis Management, Integrated Rescue System, and Civil Protection Course (CM IRS CP), AOS has delivered the CM IRS CP course for the second time this year. Its aim was to increase the preparedness of public authorities in the field of hybrid threats. While the first course in May was aimed at GOV and Self-GOV authorities, the second course was aimed at representatives of the ministries.

- The Aviation Medical Centre with Outpatient Clinic has acquired a Neuron Spectrum-64 system to be installed at its Aviation Medical Unit. It will offer more consistent and better analysis of EEG recordings as part of medical assessment of flying personnel, a more complex diagnosis of neurological diseases, as well as complementing preventive medical checks.

- Working closely with the SVK Nurses and Midwives Chamber, the SVK Medical Technicians Chamber and 5 SOF Regt Zilina, the Central Military Hospital Ružomberok delivered a specialist seminar on 27 Sept, with nearly 130 participants receiving information on the SVK Army and SOF medics and personnel on Resolute Support (RS) in Afghanistan and tactical combat casualty care (TCCC).

- The latest Azimuth 24/7 edition, available on the SVK Armed Forces YouTube Channel, reports on the queen of SVK skies – the MiG-29.

- Four SLOVCON members assigned to NATO HQ MND-C Székesfehérvár took part in the NATO Run in Budapest on 25 Sept. Members of HQ MND-C, activated on 3 May 2022, have traditionally participated in the running event since the HQ's standup in 2020.

FULL FIELD KIT
Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents commemorations in Kosovo and at the Dukla Pass live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

Armed Forces Academy (AOS) opens a new academic year

(30 Sept) 125 new Officer Cadets (32 women and 93 men) arrived for a Matriculation Welcome Ceremony at the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš, and started their first year of cadetship and BSC degree studies.

In this academic year, a total of 339 OCs will be specialising in the Academy's study programmes as follows: Security and the Defence of the State; Electronic Weapons Systems; Military Signals and Information Systems; and Weapons Systems, Weapons and their Components. Alongside their military academic study, they will be trained in military skills through the Military Programme. This academic year will also see 140 OCs pursuing studies for MEng and Mgr degrees, plus 59 OCs



A statue of Štefánik in Stará Ľubovňa

(30 Sept) Under its MOD Grant Scheme to protect and cultivate Slovakia's historical and cultural heritage with a focus on military history, the MOD has co-sponsored the design and production of a statue of General M. R. Štefánik, donating €25,000 towards the project to Stará Ľubovňa Town Council. The General Štefánik Statue was unveiled by Jaroslav Nad' in Stará Ľubovňa. The 180cm tall statue, mounted on a granite plinth, is made of patinated bronze.

Stones to mark the SNP Heroes Trail

(28 Sept) The Slovak National Uprising (SNP) Heroes Trail – the main hiking & heritage trail across Slovakia which commemorates the SNP battles in WW2 – will be marked at its start and end by two commemorative stones at the Dukla Pass and in Bratislava's Devín district.

The MOD has supported this project of the Slovak Hikers Club with a grant of €12,000. The Slovak military transported the stones and helped with their installation. Minister Nad' attended an unveiling ceremony for one of the two over a tonne heavy stones in Devín.

Institute of Military History awarded

(28 Sept) The Institute of Military History (VHÚ) received an award from the Monuments and Museum Magazine for its complex restoration of an Aero L-39V Albatros in 2021, conducted by the Museum of Military History Piešťany (VHM) in tandem with Aircraft Repair Company Trenčín (LOTN). For the 31st time, the awards were decided in a vote by the Editorial Staff & Board, the Slovak National Museum, and the Slovak Monuments Board. Out of the 118 nominees, 21 finalists were shortlisted and seven winners were announced in an awards ceremony in Skalica. In the Exhibitions category, VHÚ-VHM's Slovaks in Uniforms 1848 - 2020 Exhibition finished second.

New Director of NATO CI COE

(30 Sept) Director of the NATO Counter Intelligence Centre (NATO CI COE) Krakow Colonel Martin Achimovič (SVK) relinquished command of the NATO CI COE to its new Director, Col

Mariusz Nogaj (POL). The NATO CI COE focuses on developing CI expertise, improving interoperability, and supporting the development, promotion and implementation of new NATO policies, concepts and strategies. It incorporates a new training facility at TC Lešť. State Secretary Marian Majer thanked the outgoing director for his work.

