



Remembering the An-24 crash victims in Kosovo

(4 Oct) "I am delivering on the promise I made to all the grieving families and close ones of the victims of the Antonov An-24 tragedy during the remembrance ceremony on Borsó Hill earlier this year. Even though time passes, the pain and the desire to see their loved ones persist. No matter how much we wish them to be here with us, it is not possible. Their loss has forever affected their families, including the military one," said Defence Minister Naď in the presence of the bereaved families as they visited HQ KFOR at Camp Film City in Pristina and the former KFOR base at the village of Shajkovac/Shajkofc in Kosovo. "We have shown our respects to them at the places where they served to benefit the peace and security of all people, while helping them without making any differences between them. We honour their service and memory," the minister added. 42 soldiers (3 women and 39 men) died in Slovakia's worst air disaster on 19 Jan 2006, when their aircraft crashed into Borsó Hill at Hejce, Hungary. It is there the MOD annually holds a remembrance ceremony. Minister Naď decided to declassify the Service Inquiry Report into the Antonov An-24 Accident in 2020. 2004 SVK soldiers served in KFOR on a rotational basis for nearly 11 years, from 1999 to 2010.



ZUZANA 2 SPHs for Ukraine

(8 Oct) Ukraine's defences against Russia's aggression have been strengthened by another two Zuzana 2 155mm self-propelled howitzer (SPH) gun systems. This means Ukraine now has six Slovak-made howitzers in its inventory. They have been produced and delivered to Ukraine under a commercial contract awarded to Slovakia's state-run KONŠTRUKTA-Defence JSC. "Our support to Ukraine is real, effective and tailored to its specific needs. We have provided it with key and truly cutting-edge self-propelled autonomous artillery systems capable of delivering effective deep fire support and saving lives and the existence of an independent and sovereign Ukraine," Naď said, reiterating that the international community, including Slovakia, remains committed to helping Ukraine. In addition to supplying eight artillery systems of this type under the existing contract with Ukraine, KONŠTRUKTA-Defence will also produce an additional 16 Zuzana 2 SPHs for Ukraine. These will be co-funded by Denmark, Germany and Norway.



Paying tribute to the Battle of the Dukla Pass heroes

(6 Oct) Top Defence leaders and SVK military officials, led by State Secretary Marian Majer and CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, commemorated 78 years of the Battle of the Dukla Pass. In ceremonies at the Dukla Memorial and at other focal points of commemoration in Svidník, they paid tribute to the heroes who fought in one of WW2's toughest mountain campaigns. Speaking at the Dukla Memorial, Mr Majer said: "Engaging in heavy fighting across the Dukla Pass, our predecessors endured the scourge of inhuman suffering with admirable resilience. To bring freedom and peace from behind the Carpathians for future generations and to defend their country, they were ready to make the ultimate sacrifice." Following this, the MOD delegation took part in silent wreath-laying ceremonies at the Army General Ludvík Svoboda Statue and at the Soviet Army Memorial in Svidník. The Battle of the Dukla Pass, conducted as part of the East Carpathian Offensive from 8 Sept to 28 Oct 1944, was the toughest operation to have taken place in Slovakia in WW2, as evidenced by the heavy losses on both sides of the front line.



- Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď delivered a keynote speech opening the **Slovak Security Forum (SSF) 2022** on 3 Oct. State Secretary Marian Majer and Director General of the Defence Policy Department Martin Sklenár contributing to SSF 2022's discussion panels.

- During his away day trip to East Slovakia, **State Secretary Marian Majer** visited KONŠTRUKTA - Defence's Repair Workshop Moldava nad Bodvou to see the progress being made both on reconstruction works to the Workshop's production halls, but also as part of the preparations for building a Patria 8x8 AMV XP Service Centre. He also visited ZVS Holding in Snina, where the munition body used in the 155mm artillery rounds for Zuzana 2 howitzers is manufactured.

- On 5-6 Oct, the Trenčín Garrison Club (GAR CLB) and the Training Centre (TC) Lešť hosted the Commander Slovak Army (COM SVK ARMY)'s **Meeting of Commanders**, to take stock of the tasks performed over the first year of the two-year training cycle and to set out tasks for the next training year. In attendance were CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, Lt Gen (Rtd) Jaroslav Vývlek, Maj Gen (Rtd) Ján Salaganič, Maj Gen (Rtd) Jindřich Joch, and CSEL for the Slovak Armed Forces Sgt Maj Marcol Kaniak, and former Com 2 Mech Bde and serving Chief of Staff (COS) for Strategic Planning (J-5) at the Defence Staff (DS) Brig Gen Slavomír Verčimák.

- British Ambassador Nigel Baker**, accompanied by Defence Attaché Col Jonathan Kitson, paid a visit to Slovak Air Force Headquarters (SVK AF HQ) on 5 Oct. Ambassador Baker held an informal meeting with Commander Slovak Air Force (COM SVK AF) Maj Gen Róbert Tóth. Following this, a meeting of the Multinational Aviation Training Centre Steering Group (MATC SG) convened, with Slovakia as the Host Nation (HN) hosting delegations from CZE, HUN and HRV.

- Taking place on Hochfilzen Training Area (TA) in Austria, a **multinational live firing sniper exercise**, led by AUT sniper instructors and snipers of the Jagdkommando Sniper Group, brought together fellow sharpshooters from Slovakia's 5 SOF Regt, Jordan, Italy, Senegal and Austria. The aim of the exercise was to practise live shoots in the mountainous environment.

- For the fourth time this year, trainee soldiers in the Preparatory State Service have joined the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin to undergo **initial military training (IMT)** at 4th Czechoslovak Brigade Garrison. After passing out of the IMT programme, they will take the oath of allegiance on 18 Nov.

- Poland's Minsk Mazowiecki Training Base hosted an independent rehearsal for the command staff of the NATO Multinational Military Police Battalion (NATO MNMPBAT). Members of the SVK, CZE, HRV, GEO and POL Military Police (MP) units drilled procedures for planning operations, designing an Operational Order (OPORD) for COM NATO MNMPBAT.

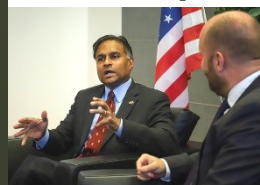
- Com 20 Log Bn Lt Col Vladimír Sobek** has left the Service. In a change of command (COC) ceremony, Lt Col Sobek has handed command over to Maj Jozef Durkot, in the presence of COM SVK ARMY Maj Gen Ivan Pach and Com 2 Mech Bde Róbert Kecsó.

- The first week of October saw **chaplains and deacons of the Bishopric of the Forces and Armed Corps of the Slovak Republic** gathering in Badín, to attend a specialist meeting convened by Bishop of the Forces and Armed Corps Mons František Rábek. Day 1 included the presentation of a programme of activities for the coming period and Chair of the Slovak Bishops Conference (KBS) Commission for the Protection of Minors in the Church Bishop Mons Marek Forgáč's visit to the meeting.

Soldiers at JOB Forum 2022

(7 Oct) Almost 50 domestic and international employers from across Slovakia and over 1,800 secondary school students and job seekers participated in the 12th JOB Forum 2022 in Trenčín's Expo Centre on 6-7 Oct. The SVK military was represented by the SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office. Over 150 visitors to the employment fair expressed their interest in signing up for the Armed Forces, Voluntary Military Training (VMT), the Active Reserves (ARs), and the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy. The JOB Forum is an excellent platform for the Armed Forces to present themselves to the public.

Intense cooperation to continue



(3-5 Oct) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď gave a warm welcome to the new U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia, HE Mr Gautam Rana at the MOD on 3 Oct, reiterating Slovakia's interest in its continued intense bilateral engagement

with the USA as our strategic partner on defence and security. "Russia's invasion of Ukraine with its ramifications for security across the entirety of the Euro-Atlantic area represents a dramatic change of the security landscape. Russia's aggressive actions pose a challenge and a threat to Slovakia and the security of all Allies, while underpinning the need for more effective international collaboration in bolstering the collective defence of Allies, even in the field of information security," Minister Naď said.

Also discussed was the modernisation of SVK defence infrastructure and equipment, on which the USA is the key partner for the SVK military.

On 5 Oct, Minister Naď hosted the new Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to Slovakia, HE Mr Alex Vodicka Winther, along with Deputy Head of Mission Ms Mariann Ruud Hagen.

Internet Battlefield as a contest

(7 Oct) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and the Defence Magazine editorial board launched the 18th MOD Literary Competition in creative writing open to secondary school, college and university goers, putting "INTERNET BATTLEFIELD" in the spotlight as this year's theme. The deadline for sending entries in the Slovak language (between 1,000 and 5,000 letters in length including spaces and typed as DOC, DOCX, ODT or PDF documents) to sutaz@mod.gov.sk is 20 Nov. The five best entries in each category will be available on the MOD's Facebook for an online vote on 28 Nov - 4 Dec. The public will decide the winning entries through Facebook "likes". The first three winners of each category will receive cash prizes.

Combat vehicles and howitzers swim at Lešť

(6 Oct) Combat vehicle and howitzer drivers rehearsed water obstacle crossing drills at the Training Centre Lešť from 19 Sept to 6 Oct. According to Com 21 Mech Bn Trebišov Lt Col Peter Hlebaško, the officer commanding the drills, this marked the culmination of training for Army drivers of BVP-1 and BVP-2 infantry fighting vehicles, T-72 tanks, and BRDM amphibious vehicles. Members of 91 Engr Regt Sereď operated a self-propelled amphibious bridging vehicle to ferry Zuzana 2 155mm howitzers from 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce. This was the first time Zuzana 2s were ferried across water obstacles at home in Slovakia, while our artillerymen serving with NATO's eFP BG Latvia, supported by CZE engineers, were the first to experience the projection of Zuzana 2s across water obstacles on operations abroad.

As part of the Commander Slovak Army (COM SVK ARMY)'s Meeting of Commanders, Maj Gen Ivan Pach inspected the training activity at Lešť, to see first-hand water crossing demonstrations.



"Negotiating 'wide wet gaps' is an important capability for Army units, which is why I am pleased our troops have done well in that. The conduct of training to ferry howitzer gun systems is of equal importance," SVK Army Commander Maj Gen Ivan Pach emphasised. Lt Col Hlebaško concluded: 77% of BVP-1, BVP-2, T-72 and BRDM drivers were rated as Excellent, 20% as Good, and 3% as Satisfactory. According to him, these are good readiness results for 'wide wet gap' crossings, given that training was suspended for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, for some drivers, this was their 'swimming' debut in crossing water obstacles.