



Homecoming after tours of duty

(21 Oct) Having completed their tours of duty abroad – from the Baltic Sea, Latvia, Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Cyprus, through Mali and the Central African Republic, to Iraq and other Middle East countries, 215 SVK military personnel gathered for a Welcome Home Parade at 21 Mech Bn Trebišov. Also there to see the safe return of the soldiers were Defence Minister Nad' and Chief of Defence Gen Zmeko, who gave them their "Welcome Home!", in the presence of military families.

"Our soldiers' tours of duty abroad are the personification of a reliable and constructive Slovakia as a recognised partner within international organisations. In this way, we are building a safer world, which, in the context of the military aggression just across our borders, is even more important than ever before," Jaroslav Nad' said, thanking the soldiers for representing not just the Slovak Armed Forces, but also Slovakia.

In his remarks, Gen Zmeko highlighted the wide range of duties our troops undertake whilst on deployment, often in diverse, uneasy conditions.



Medals for PTP men

(21 Oct) In ceremony at the Commemorative Plaque dedicated to the members of the Technical Auxiliaries Battalions (PTP) in Košice's Main Street, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' took a moment to remember the thorny lives and paths of the "PTP men". Labelled as "politically unreliable" by Czechoslovakia's communist regime, these citizens were used as forced labour in 1950-1954, mostly for dangerous, heavy load work in coal mines, quarries, building sites, forests, etc. Some 60,000 men passed through the PTP camps. "Thousands of young men were the victims of the hideous machinery of political violence, and their families were affected too. The military forced labour camps trampled on so many destinies – the communist totalitarian regime crippled them physically and mentally, taking away not only their hope for a dignified and peaceful future, but often their lives. May their indomitability and perseverance be an inspiration to us," Mr Nad' said. To mark this occasion, he presented seven surviving PTP members with the Slovak Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal.



Farewell to UKR Ambassador

(18 Oct) Defence Minister Nad' hosted Ambassador of Ukraine to Slovakia Yuri Mushka for a farewell call. Ambassador Mushka is now retiring from the Diplomatic Service appointment in Slovakia, which he has held since Jan 2017. They spoke about the current situation in Ukraine, the potential scenarios of how the war could play out, and the different forms of cooperation and assistance for Ukraine. Minister Nad' commended Ambassador Mushka for his dedication and pro-active approach to driving forward the SVK-UKR bilateral relationship and expressed the need for continuity of this excellent cooperation. In his opinion, though, the situation will remain extremely complex for Ukraine over the coming period. Minister Nad' wished Ambassador Mushka plenty of strength and resolve in the face of his future professional and personal challenges. "I'd like to thank Ambassador Mushka for his exemplary work benefiting the SVK-UKR friendship, which has always been backed by his professional and human input," Mr Nad' said. Ambassador Mushka thanked Slovakia for its assistance and support.

State Secretary Majer appreciates the quality of SVK-CZE cooperation

(19 Oct) State Secretary Marian Majer attended the Future Forces Forum (FFF) opening ceremony in Prague. At FFF 2022, State Secretary Majer met for talks with CZE Deputy Defence Ministers František Šulc, Daniel Blažkovec, and Jan Jirěš. Mr Majer underlined that international cooperation and coordination is crucial today, even on modernisation and development of security forces as demand is high but availability is limited. He appreciated the ability of Allies to cooperate effectively on strengthening collective security – whether through sharing information or managing joint procurement programmes, as with Slovakia and Czechia partnering on the contract for CV90 MkIVs. According to Majer, this is SVK-CZE cooperation at its very best since the split-up of Czechoslovakia. FFF 2022, organised on 19-21 Oct, included over 20 panel discussions with NATO expert groups and the Future Forces Exhibition with over 200 exhibitors.



- On 20 Oct, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' updated the C-in-C of the SVK Armed Forces, **President Zuzana Čaputová** on the status of the SVK Armed Forces, the evolving developments in Ukraine, and other defence and security matters.

- The Non-commissioned Officer Academy (NCOA), part of the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation (TMFG) Base Martin, opened the **NCO Course (OR-9)**, in the presence of CSEL for the SVK Armed Forces Sgt Maj (OR-9) Marcel Kaniak. Passing the course is established as a requirement for promotion to the rank of Sergeant Major. The course, which is taking place on 17 Oct - 9 Dec, is delivered by NCOA instructors and external lecturers at the Martin base and across SVK military training units and facilities.

- Members of 1 Coy of the SVK Presidential GOH underwent **tactical training** on Turkish Hill TA. To maintain their training currency, focus was on basic tactical section- and platoon-level drills in coordination with recon patrols. The activity tested the commanders' ability to make a realistic appraisal of enemy activity and respond with decisive action.

- After formal approval from COM TMFG Base Martin Col Pavol Barančík and the administrator of the Military Support Foundation, it was decided that the 2% donated by soldiers from their income tax would go towards **new equipment for the Base's gym**. The improved training conditions will help with functional fitness in local military personnel, attendees of career progression and specialist courses, trainee soldiers, and police officers in Martin.

- Bishop of the Forces and Armed Corps Mons František Rábek has appointed 1Lt Stanislav Dulák as the **new Military Dean** of the Slovak Army in Trenčín, taking over from Military Dean Lt Col Juraj Šitaš. Padre Dulák has worked with the Bishopric at Hlohovec and Trenčín Garrisons since 2017, as well as serving as a chaplain on NATO's eFP in Latvia.

- As part of the 15th anniversary celebrations of the formation of the Polish Special Operations Forces, Poland's Lubliniec - Posmyk hosted the 26th **Run for Commando Knife** under the auspices of the first COM POL SOF. Gen Włodzimierz Potasiński. Two 5 SOF Regt members represented the SVK SOF in the 15km run (with a mass start) attracting 800 runners.

- Dukla's weightlifter Sebastian Cabala became a three-time **U20 European Champion** in the 73kg category at the Junior & U23 European Weightlifting Championships in Albania's Durrës. With his overall performance of 309kg, he has broken four Slovak senior weightlifting records.

- Dukla's sporting shooter Ondrej Holko finished an excellent fifth after collecting 627.2 points in the rifle event with 60 shots in the prone position at the **ISSF World Championships** in Egypt's Cairo.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents an interview with the Director of the SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

Initial Phase 1 and trade-specific Phase 2 training for new soldiers

(18 Oct) Initial military training (IMT) is ongoing for 139 trainee soldiers at the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin. They are now into Week 3 of the seven week-long IMT education and drilling programme – which is about getting them ready for their service in the Slovak Armed Forces. On successful completion of basic training, the junior soldiers (JS) will attend a passing out parade, take an oath of allegiance, and will be promoted to the rank of Private (OR-1). After that, they will head off to respective Phase 2 training establishments for trade-specific training for a period of 3 weeks - 6 months. This marks the fourth intake of trainee soldiers this year. Those interested in entering the Armed Forces can go to www.budemvojak.sk to find out the upcoming dates for screening IMT candidates.

Exercise European Shield

(18 Oct) Ex European Shield kicked off across a number of SVK military training areas, grounds and facilities. It will see SVK soldiers training side by side with NATO and Ukrainian troops. The aim of the exercise is to ensure greater alignment of tactics and procedures and to exchange experience. On the exercise, the forces will focus their efforts on the conduct of different types of operations. In addition, Slovakia, as a host nation, will test its planning capabilities. The logistics of the exercise will be handled by all the participating countries. Up to 900 troops are taking part, including some 200 UKR soldiers.

Future sappers alongside regulars

(17 Oct) 901 Engr Bn Sereď, part of 91 Engr Regt Sereď, hosted specialist training for Class I and III Engineer Units, with the participation of 4th- and 5th-year AOS cadets specialising in the Security and Defence of the State Study Programme (G30 MOS). The training covered instruction and drill on route clearance, counter-improvised explosive devices (C-IEDs), convoy movements, and engineer tactics. Apart from this, EOD experts led specialist training on C-IED, in theory and in practice, for sappers, where they were joined by 3rd-year AOS cadets following the Security and Defence of the State Study Programme (G10, G20, and G30 MOSs). In addition to familiarising themselves with C-IED measures, they drilled SOPs for IED searches in dangerous areas and spaces.

Military Scuba Diving Course

(19 Oct) At their aquatic training facilities – the Mojmirovce swimming pool and Lake Black Water, 91 Engr Regt Sereď saw service members of the Slovak Armed Forces on the Military Scuba Diving Course taking to the water under the watchful eye of Chief Military Diving Instructor and Supervisor MSgt (OR-8) Michal Ščepko. For two weeks, tasks for the trainee divers included the familiarisation and use of diving equipment, search and recovery of military objects, underwater navigation from point to point, and the application of different combat swimming techniques. Cold water, poor visibility and complex requirements put their physical and mental resilience to the test.



logistics trades. Most recently, Martin Garrison's Sučany training ground hosted final training activities for soldiers assigned to the mechanised units, the guards of honour (GOH), and the military bands, with a focus on combat drills, individual tasks in a mechanised section, debusing from vehicles, and the provision of security at the designated transit points. Pte Simon Polkan and Pte Zuzana Tomáščíková, assigned to the Presidential GOH and 11 Mech Bn Martin respectively, were the best of the intake. They will be promoted from OR-1 to OR-2 as they report to their units.