



Minister in Prague

(30 Nov) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák held his first bilateral meeting with his Czech counterpart Jana Černochová at the CZE MOD in Prague. In that meeting, a presentation of the new SVK Govt's defence and security priorities was the main theme of their conversation. The Ministers also examined ways to deepen SVK-CZE cooperation in armaments programmes and between defence industries, as well as discussing multilateral coordination of action within the V4, the EU and NATO. Minister Kaliňák informed Minister Černochová that the SVK Govt plans to shore up Slovakia's defences by modernising the Armed Forces and defence infrastructure, stepping up the Armed Forces' operational readiness, enhancing Force Protection (FP) measures, and restoring the national Air Policing (AP) capability. The latter has been paralysed due to the previous government's steps in recent years. "It is inevitable that we manage to renew all our capabilities, this applies equally to technical equipment and ammunition as to other areas that need to be developed significantly," Mr Kaliňák said.

Reaffirming the SVK-CZE special relationship, Mr Kaliňák assured Ms Černochová that the SVK MOD has made it a priority to continue its close defence cooperation with the Czech Republic. He pointed to the possible new avenues of cooperation between the two nations' defence industries, with the aim of encouraging growth tendencies on both sides. To that end, joint action to procure military equipment and closer defence industrial collaboration on the nations' equipment programmes are being offered up for consideration. Praising the substantial contribution the Czech Republic has been making as the Framework Nation to NATO MN BG SVK, Mr Kaliňák said: "I want to thank Czechia for its leadership of the NATO multinational task force stationed at the Lešt Training Centre. Although Spain is due to take over leadership of the Battlegroup next year, our cooperation will remain very strong, even in this field."

The partners also addressed SVK assistance to Ukraine. Minister Kaliňák explained the new SVK Govt's approach to delivering support to the country. This consists in ceasing military supplies from the Armed Forces' own military stocks, while at the same time exploring other practical aid options such as demining, refurbishment of obsolete munitions, and humanitarian and civilian relief.

SVK MP's NCO of the Year

(30 Nov) Trenčín hosted the selection process for the NCO of the Year in the SVK Military Police. After final interviews with all the nominees, the selection board unanimously recognised MSgt Ivan Mančuška, Commander 1st Team, Special Military Police Operations Group Topoľčany, Operations Planning and Preparation Branch Trenčín, as the SVK Military Police's 2023 NCO of the Year (NCOY). This recognition comes for his professional excellence.



Winners of PhotoAttack and Gallery MIL competitions announced

(29 Nov) The winners of the Defence-wide PhotoAttack and Gallery MIL 2023 Competitive Displays, organised by the SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office (PO)'s Educational and Cultural Activities Section, were announced at Trenčín Garrison Club (GC). A total of 204 entries from 68 authors were submitted this year.

In the PhotoAttack competition, the judges evaluated a total of 96 entries from 23 authors. In the Armed Forces category, Pavol Delej, 22 Mech Bn Michalovce, won the top gong, followed in 2nd and 3rd places by Lt Col (Res) Peter Sobek, 103 CBRN Bn Rožňava - Det Trenčín, and Maj Michal Hložka, 71 Com Spt Bn Trenčín. Recognised as winners in the Open category were Pte Michal Mika, AOS, Monika Martičáková, SVK MOD, and Sgt Roman Kavulič, 61 Sig Bn Trenčín - Det Prešov.

In the Gallery MIL competition, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners of the Painting & Sculpture category were Tibor Hladký, Trenčín GC, Andrea Spišiaková, Prešov GC, and Jozef Syrový, Trenčín GC. In the Applied Arts category, Anna Nogová, GC Trenčín, Ivana Sláviková, PO LM, and Judita Žažová, Military Pensioners Club LM, took home 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes. In the Children's Works category, Marek Kosiba, GC Trenčín, took first place, followed by Vivien Viťazová, PO LM, and Nora Blizmanová, GC Prešov.

The Slovak Armed Forces Personnel Office Director's Prize and the Support Programmes Branch (PO) Chiefs Prize went to Sgt Peter Čech, 2 Mech Bde Prešov, and Dana Pašáková, DCM-C Ružomberok.

Lt Col Oľga Jančová Kohárová, Chief Psychologist of the SVK Armed Forces, Katarína Papežová, GC Prešov, and Iveta Hudcová, GC Bratislava, received the letter of thank you and a plaque for promoting educational and cultural events in the Armed Forces.



► On 30 Nov, SVK Army Headquarters Trenčín hosted a farewell ceremony where Maj Gen Martin Stoklasa bid farewell to his colleagues – Chiefs of the Workers' Union Col Peter Gavač and Col Roman Majerčík, 1Lt Michal Hrubín, and MSgts Michal Ziška, Peter Svoren and Igor Poláček. Zuzana Deverová, a civilian employee, has also left after working for the military for 30 years. It has been announced that with effect from 1 Dec, Lt Col Pavol Jankech and Maj Michal Halás have been posted to the SVK Defence Staff (DS), and 1Lt Col Marek Pecúch to the Joint Operations Command Banská Bystrica (JOC BB). Col Imrich Nagy and Col Radovan Matis have reinforced the ranks of SVK Army HQ Trenčín, with effect from 1 Dec.

► Jaselské Garrison Club hosted the 1 Mechanised Brigade Commanders' Conference in Topoľčany on 28 Nov. In the presence of COS SVK Army HQ Trenčín Col Vladimír Minárik, Cdr 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany Brig Gen Alexander Kollárík gave his assessment of the tasks the SVK Army had completed in the second year of the two-year training cycle. The commanders were also briefed on Ukraine's counteroffensive and the newly fielded hC2 command and control system, as well as receiving a presentation of quadcopters by soldiers of 65 Recce Bn Prešov. As part of the programme, military accolades from the Minister of Defence, the Commander of the SVK Army, and the Commander of 1 Mechanised Brigade were presented to selected military personnel.

► As part of the current rotation of the eFP Battlegroup in Latvia, a deployment ceremony for the artillerymen of 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce deploying on NATO's eFP in Latvia was held in the centre of Michalovce and at their base in Michalovec.

► In the presence of Director of the Institute of Military History Miloslav Čaplovič, an unveiling ceremony for the **Stefan Fajnor Jr Memorial** took place on 28 Nov in Senica, marking the SVK WWI hero's 135th birthday and the 105th anniversary of his death. On this occasion, the Záhorie Cultural Centre showed a documentary titled 'Unknown Slovak Heroes 1914-20' and a lecture was given on the Czechoslovak Legion units in WWI.

► Closely working with the SVK SOF's 57 Ind Det, the U.S. Civil Affairs Team (CAT) in Slovakia and medical professionals of 101st Airborne Division paid a visit to Martin City Police.

► 29 Nov marked the zero edition of the Defence-wide **Combat Equipment Recognition Competition**, organised by the SVK Military Topographic Institute, with SVK Army, Air Force, and SOF soldiers in attendance. The competition was focused on the identification of land, air and naval assets and the NATO reporting codes. The winner, a member of 65 Recce Bn, identified 59 out of 60 types of combat equipment.

► Lubičovská Bukovina - Krížne saw the completion of a replica of a **WWII-era partisan storage dugout** used by Slovakia's Resistance forces during the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) in 1944. Construction works to the dugout were completed by UN VETERAN SLOVAKIA Civic Association and 91 Engr Regt Sereď. The site, designed for promoting educational activities on Slovakia's WW2 Resistance tradition and as a shelter for hikers, was officially unveiled by Cdr 91 Engr Regt Col Jozef Kasl.

► To mark the 30th anniversary of the formation of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Armed Forces, the 6th **'Through the Eyes of the Heart' Charity Concert** was held under the auspices of SVK CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko at the Slovak Radio Hall in Bratislava on 30 Nov. The concert was organised by the Head Office of Ecumenical Pastoral Service in the Armed Forces and Armed Corps in cooperation with the Military Support Foundation. All proceeds will go to charity to help serving and ex-service personnel in the Armed Forces and Armed Corps.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents the Union of the Military Civic Associations live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

Military observers complete pre-deployment training

(1 Dec) The Peace Support Operations (PSO) Training Unit, based at the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin, delivered pre-deployment training specifically designed for military observers (MOs) to be deployed to the Middle East and Georgia, offering a whole new aspect of complexity arising out of the missions' mandate. To begin with, the theory module combined the specificities of the missions, the history of the conflicts, cultural sensitivities, mine awareness, specialised manuals for MOs, and working with interpreters. To clarify the key issues in a video-conference, UNTSO and EUMM officers kept



their comments very much to the point. The practical module covered training in first aid for mine incidents, movement in

SVK MP in international training

(27 Nov) International training for the authorities involved in criminal proceedings was held in the surroundings of Michalovce and Zemplínska Šírava, with the aim of exchanging expertise and experience, building a network of experts, and developing cooperation between Criminal Police and Military Working Dog (MWD) units at a national and international level, with a focus on the conduct of searches for weapons and ammunition, explosives, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances with the employment of MWDs. The training audience was from Slovakia, Sweden, Norway, Ukraine, the UK, EUROPOL and the OSCE. Slovakia was represented by members of the SVK Military Police, the Financial Police Authority, and the regional Police HQs. The training has proved that our MWDs are ready to fight crime in real situations.

Masters of winter swimming



(2 Dec) Forming part of the Slovak Winter Swimming Cup, the Slovak Armed Forces Winter Swimming Championships were organised at the Domaša Reservoir by 20 Log Bn Prešov in close coordination with

the Vranov-based 'Otter' Civic Association. The competitors, including 14 SVK military personnel, joined by CZE soldiers of the NATO Multinational Battlegroup in Slovakia, swam the 100m and 50m free style races, with the cold water and air temperatures at 6.7°C and 1°C. Cpl Jan Kolomazník (CZE A), of NATO MN BG SVK, finished 1st in both categories.

AOS's institutional reaccreditation

(27 Nov) The Allied Command Transformation Quality Assurance Team of Experts (HQ SACT QA TOE) conducted a NATO Quality Assurance Institutional Accreditation On-site Visit (QA OSV) at General M. R. Štefánik Slovak Armed Forces (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš, to validate the Academy's implementation of NATO QA standards and to extend its institutional accreditation by another 6 years.

The AOS leadership presented the QA TOE with evidence of the Academy's application of all NATO QA standards according to the following areas: C2, leadership and management, education and training, and contribution to NATO.

ETFs are institutionally accredited by NATO provided that they meet the strict standards as set out in the NATO Bi-SCD Education and Individual Training (E&IT) 075-007. AOS has maintained its "NATO Accredited Education and Training Facility" status since 2018.

unchecked areas, and off-road driving. Based on the pre-deployment requirements, the training culminated with a three-day Final Test Exercise (FTE) on Martin Garrison's training ground at Sučany. While on the exercise, the future MOs were tested on setting up their own team sites, carrying out observation tasks, and conducting mounted and dismounted patrols in their area of responsibility (AOR), where they worked through simulated incident scenarios to test their knowledge and skills necessary for their mission. The last day of the pre-deployment training was dedicated to the final written exam and

interviews to select the best military observers for UNTSO and EUMM.