



Support for domestic defence industry

(23 Aug) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák today attended the official launch event for a new filling line for large calibre artillery and mortar shells at VOP Nováky. This is yet another piece of positive news for the SVK defence industrial base and its modernisation and expansion, which the MOD wants to support and so contribute to the creation of new jobs, an increase in manufacturing capacities, and an overall strengthening of the defence industry sector through high quality SVK products amidst increased global competition from international arms manufacturers.

12 years ago, the MOD leadership leased the company to a Slovakia-based private investor, MSM Martin (today's MSM GROUP), for a long term. Defence Minister Robert Kaliňák appreciates that VOP Nováky is making the economy of the Upper Nitra region stronger. Speaking of the new shell filling line, Minister Kaliňák noted that this Slovak technology is special, saying: "For me, this production line is unique because it is a Slovak product for which a Slovak company has decided. There is great interest in our products even abroad, whether it is in Central Asia or the West, since they are of better quality than foreign ones."

Earlier this year, the MOD invested €10m in the complete replacement of the manufacturing machinery for artillery gun barrels in the 100 - 155mm calibre range at ZTS Špeciál. While this was the first step towards modernising and expanding the Slovak defence industrial base, the MOD is interested in expanding production in all of the companies that fall under the MOD's remit. ZVS Holding, KONŠTRUKTA - Defence, and ZTS Špeciál, which belong to state-owned DMD Group, form the backbone of the State's support within the SVK defence industry.

Cooperation with ROK

(22 Aug) In a meeting at the MOD, Deputy Defence Minister Igor Melicher and Ambassador of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Byeongdo Lee discussed the Deputy Defence Minister's planned visit to the ROK and SVK-ROK cooperation. Both countries have excellent high-level relations and collaboration. With over 100 businesses operating in Slovakia, the ROK is the biggest investor in our country. The two partners spoke about the nations' defence cooperation and technologies with high added value.



Defence Minister meets military personnel rehearsing for SNP 80

(23 Aug) "Let's protect peace, it was born in a difficult way" – this is the message from Slovak National Uprising (SNP) veteran Vladimír Strmeň who has appeared in a video message to the public in the media as part of an MOD's communication & information campaign to put the SNP 80th Anniversary National Event in the spotlight. This will take place in Banská Bystrica on 29 Aug 2024. Ahead of the weekend, Defence Minister Robert Kaliňák and CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko visited Sliach AB to show their support to some 3,000 soldiers rehearsing for the Armed Forces Parade, the Oath of Allegiance, and other tasks in support of SNP 80. In an informal atmosphere, Minister Kaliňák answered the soldiers' questions about the Active Duty Soldiers (Amendment) Bill and the MOD's projects under preparation. Later on Sunday evening, soldiers rehearsed for the parade directly in Banská Bystrica.



- Deputy Defence Minister **Martin Vojtašovič** met Deputy Minister for Investment, Regional Development and Informatisation Ivan Ivančin. At the meeting, they addressed the verification of addressability in calls for informatisation proposals. This year promises to bring better quality data and measures for digitalisation and cyber security.
- U.S. military personnel of 415th Civil Affairs Battalion delivered a series of lectures on civil affairs, the U.S. Army's structure, and the general philosophy of the operational environment during the NATO STANAG 6001 SLP3 English Language Course at the **Defence Language Institute** in Liptovský Mikuláš. The aim was to expose military English learners to native speakers and integrate more military terminology into the course.

- Biathlete **Paulína Bátovská Fialková** from the Dukla Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica won gold and bronze at the Summer Biathlon World Championships in Otepää, Estonia.

- Military personnel of the British Forces Cyprus (BFC) from Sector 2 of UNFICYP organised the **'UNFICYP's Strongest' Challenge**. Across three disciplines, male and female competitors challenged themselves with a deadlift, an overhead press, a relay run with weights. The winners – the Jánošík team consisting of SVK servicemen and a servicewoman – were presented the trophy and medals by Force Commander Maj Gen Erdenebat Batsuuri.

- A ceremony to mark the transfer of Chief of Staff of the **Presidential Guard of Honour** Lt Col Daniel Rubeš into the Reserves was overseen by Chief of the Presidential Military Office Maj Gen Ladislav Dohun at Bratislava's Dukla Barracks on 20 Aug.

- The first museum building to accommodate large size exhibits in Slovakia since 1989 – Large Exhibits Hall 4 (H4) of the **Military History Museum Piešťany** – is just before its final building approval. Work on the visualisation of the entrance hall, a treatment room for small sized exhibits, and office spaces for employees is still underway. An artistic interior design contest for the H4 Gallery to house military exhibits with theme texts, video documentaries, and photos from 1945 to present will follow soon.

1968 occupation remembered

(21 Aug) Deputy Defence Minister Martin Vojtašovič led a tribute for the 56th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's invasion by the Warsaw Pact Armies on 21 August 1968, paying respects to the memory of the victims at the 1968 Memorial Plaque on the Comenius University Building in Bratislava. "Let us honour those who stood up, stood firm and sacrificed what was most precious to them – their lives – now and always," Martin Vojtašovič said and continued: "Let's keep their memory alive and spread their legacy. Thanks to them, we can stand free here today."



Children's camps across Defence

(22 Aug) A number of summer camps for children of military and civilian families have been organised by the units and facilities of the Slovak Armed Forces, Military Academy, Bishopric of the Forces and the Armed Corps, Head Office of Ecumenical Pastoral Service, Military Police, Training Centre Lešť, and other MOD elements during this summer holiday period, some of them with the support of the Military Support Foundation. After a longer period, TC Lešť once again hosted a summer camp for secondary school students. Elsewhere, Defence Minister Robert Kaliňák took time to visit the 'Delta Mission' children's camp in Nemšová.



SVK medical personnel's debut with NATO MNB LVA

(19 Aug) The transformation of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup Latvia into the NATO Multinational Brigade in Latvia (NATO MNB LVA) in the second half of the year has brought the standup of the Multinational Medical Unit (MMU), with a SLOVCON Aid Station assigned to it. In August, SVK medical personnel delivered an educational presentation for the MMU medical staff at Camp Ādaži, where they introduced the Mercedes Benz G-300 Ambulance in use by the SVK Defence Medical Service.

The briefing focused on the vehicle's capabilities in the cabin and superstructure. A practical demonstration of loading/unloading injured or wounded military personnel onto/from the vehicle was met with great interest, as was a demonstration of the medical crew's movement limits in treating patients in the vehicle.

The educational event wrapped up with an extensive discussion, where three SVK military personnel spoke about their own experience of serving as medical professionals.

