



## SVK-IDN defence cooperation

(10 Oct) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák completed a working trip to Indonesia, where he met with Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto, the soon-to-be inaugurated President-Elect of the Republic of Indonesia. They agreed that building the self-sufficiency of the nations' defence industries is an essential goal at the time of this rapidly changing security environment. In a statement, Mr Robert Kaliňák said: "We discussed issues of great importance to our mutual relations, but especially to Slovakia's development. The defence industry in Indonesia has a very good reputation and, on several fronts, they are very much interested in cooperating with our companies as one of the main suppliers of some highly important new technologies for the Indonesian Armed Forces." The SVK MOD delegation also received a tour of Pindad, Indonesia's largest defence company, which supplies defence products worldwide.

## Effective reserves & recruitment

(11 Oct) During his official trip to the USA, DEPMINDEF Igor Melicher held a series of bilateral talks. In a meeting with Adjutant General of Indiana Maj Gen R. D. Lyles in Indianapolis, he discussed what it takes to build an effective Reserves system and sharing best practices on Reserve Forces. Along with MOD experts, he presented the MOD's vision and ambitions for Slovakia's Active Reserves. The SVK delegation took a tour of local training facilities and infrastructure. On this occasion, Mr Melicher recognised the significance of the Indiana National Guard's long-standing support for the transformation of the SVK Armed Forces.



The DEPMINDEF's visit to the USA also involved discussions with Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Policy Lisa Sawyer at the Pentagon in Washington DC, as well as meetings with UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix and UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Miroslav Jenča at the UN in New York.

## SVK national flag in Spain

(12 Oct) Spain's National Day, observed annually on 12 Oct, is marked with an Armed Forces parade in the centre of Madrid. For the first time in history, the Slovak Armed Forces Guard of Honour (GOH) joined the military parade, carrying the SVK national flag. During the National Day parade, led by King Felipe VI of Spain, SVK soldiers marched alongside the flag bearers from Czechia, Portugal and Slovenia. It is with their counterparts from these countries that our troops serve in the Spanish-led NATO MN BDE TF SVK, which contributes to the strengthening of security on the Alliance's Eastern Flank.



## Defence Staff holds ceremonial gathering on Armed Forces Day

(7 Oct) The SVK Defence Staff (DS) held a ceremonial gathering to mark Armed Forces Day. At the beginning of the event, Col Miloslav Arnold, Chief of the Military Personnel Branch (J1) in the Defence Staff, read out the Presidential Proclamation on Armed Forces Day. After that Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko presented military awards to selected soldiers for their 'outstanding contributions' to Security & Defence. The programme continued with the presentation of commemorative plaques to the units subordinate to the DS for their 'major contribution to and active participation in' the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) 80th Anniversary National Event. In his remarks, Gen Zmeko pointed to the complicated security situation and hence the need to ensure steadfast readiness to defend our citizens and values. In doing so, the Armed Forces stand on the firm pillars of courage, discipline and loyalty, he emphasised.



- The International SOF community came together at the 8th iteration of **GSOE Symposium Europe**, co-organised by SVK SOF in Bratislava. In attendance were DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, Head of SVK Diplomacy Juraj Blanár, SVK CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, and CZE CHOD Karel Řehka.
- On his official visit to Kazakhstan, **DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič** took part in the 10th meeting of the Slovakia-Kazakhstan Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation in Astana. A total of 45 SVK companies were given the chance to forge ties with Kazakh partners.
- **Mi-17M aircrews** from 2 Heli Sqdn of 51 Wng Prešov made use of Kamenka nad Cirochou Training Area to conduct live firings of the S-5 unguided rockets against ground targets. With 7 training sorties amounting to 6hrs and 55min, the aircrews carried out 21 strikes, fired 192 unguided rockets, and used 64 PPI infrared decoy flares. After a full evaluation of their performance, all aircrews were rated as 'Excellent'.
- The Slovak Television and Radio (STVR)'s Promotion Documentary Award went to **Military Forests and Estates**, a state-owned company, for its 'Going to the Mountains with A Sense of Reason' series of four short documentaries: 'Forests and Water', 'Forestry Close to Nature', 'Practical Hunting' and 'Carbon Neutrality'. The documentaries, aired by STVR as part of its 'Haili' Series, are now available on social media channels.
- The Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš hosted the **Military Medicine Conference (MILMEDCON) 2024**, organised under the auspices of the Slovak Medical Society by Military Medical Command (MILMEDCOM), headed by Surgeon General of the Slovak Armed Forces Bng Gen Roman Jantoš, in close coordination with the Central Military Hospital – Teaching Hospital Ružomberok, led by hospital director Marian Krížko.
- 13 Hvy Mech Bn Grp took part in **Ex Lioness 2024**, a battalion-level tactical exercise supported by the MILES 2000 laser-based training system, with the main theme of 'Heavy Mechanised Battalion Group in Attack with Full Preparation'. The training audience at TC Lešť included soldiers from 13 Mech Bn Levice and 1 Mech Bde HQ Topoľčany.
- The **Future of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) in Slovak Armed Forces Conference**, held under the aegis of DCHOD Lt Gen Lubomir Svoboda, took place in Bratislava on 9 Oct. The aim of this pilot project was to provide the space for a discussion of the R&D, production and fielding of new UAS systems in collaboration with the domestic defence industry.
- Air Base Kuchyňa was visited by **Major General Mark Pullan**, DCOS Plans, Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFC-BS).
- **1 Fire Bty from 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce** took part in an intensive training event at TC Lešť. The aim of the training was to test 13 Hvy Mech Bn Grp. A total of 700 soldiers with 100 pieces of combat and combat support equipment took part. Artillerymen of 1 Fire Bty met their ESP FA Bty counterparts from NATO MN BDE TF SVK.
- In Stockholm, SVK Military Police officers attended the **European Commission for Road Safety in Armed Forces (ECRAF) Congress**, bringing together experts on service vehicle safety from 28 EU countries.
- 'Work – Honour, Profession – Duty', the official publication of the Institute of Military History, written by a group of authors led by military historian Igor Baka received the **Slovak Literary Fund Award**. On behalf of the authors, Milena Balcová picked up the award in an awards ceremony at the Zichyho Palace in Bratislava.
- After winning four out of five matches, karateka Roman Hrčka of the Dukla Military Sports Centre took a **silver medal** at the U21 Karate World Championships in Venice.

## Soldiers return from tours of duty

(11 Oct) "You have my respect and recognition. Welcome home and thank you!" With these words, DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič welcomed 259 servicemen and women returning safe and well to their close ones from UNFICYP in Cyprus, EUFOR Op Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO's eFP in Latvia, EUNAVFOR MED Op Iri in the Mediterranean Sea, NATO Mission Iraq, and UNTSO in the Middle East in a homecoming ceremony at 12 Mech Bn Nitra.

## DEPMINDEF visits AOS

(8 Oct) DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič along with an MOD delegation visited the Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš. Mr Vojtašovič was welcomed by AOS Commandant Brig Gen Aurel Sabó, who briefed him on the Academy's history, state of affairs, and vision for the future. He was then given a tour of the Simulation Centre, which is equipped with military and non-military simulators and which provides training, among others, for air traffic controllers (ATCs), as well as visiting the Academy's electronic firing range and physical training (PT) facilities, including the fully refurbished 50m swimming pool.

## Ex Bearded Vulture 2024

(9 Oct) Ex Bearded Vulture 2024, an extensive incident coordination exercise, unfolded across the Nitra region. The exercise, open for participation of Slovakia's state bodies and authorities, Integrated Rescue System (IRS) elements, armed forces and law enforcement agencies, aimed to test their readiness to respond to an emergency, specifically to a radiation incident. Participants included personnel from the District Offices in Nitra, Nové Zámky, Levice and Zlaté Moravce, District Police HQ Nitra, District Fire & Rescue Service HQ Nitra, Civil Defence Chemical Lab, 103 CBRND Battalion Rožňava, Nuclear Power Plant Mochovce, Teaching Hospital Nitra, Regional Public Healthcare Office Nitra, Higher Territorial Unit Nitra, and others. The practical part of the exercise covered evacuation, decontamination, radiation monitoring, and dosimetric checks. The exercise tested the levels of coordination between individual elements and their ability to handle situations that require quick decision-making and putting safety measures in place.

## Falcon 4G Detectors

(8 Oct) DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič took over the second batch of six Falcon 4G laser-based CBRN stand-off detectors. The contract, awarded by the MOD to Liptovský Mikuláš-based SEC Technologies in Dec 2023, for the delivery of 14 Falcon 4G detectors along with accessories, 5 vehicle mount systems, operator and maintainer training was thus deemed fulfilled. The Falcon 4G detector is among the best products in CBRN detection, whereas its potential is not limited to military operations only, but it can also be employed on domestic crisis management operations by the Integrated Rescue System and the 'power ministries' in charge of armed, security, and police forces.

## FULL FIELD KIT

**Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents aviation firefighter training at TC Lešť at 21.05 on Fri with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.**

## MBTs and IFVs cross water obstacles at TC Lešť

(11 Oct) From 30 Sept to 11 Oct, Army drivers practised their skills in crossing water obstacles with BVP-1 and -2 IFVs, T-72 MBTs, and BRDMs as the culmination of their training at the Training Centre Lešť. Drivers of 2 Mech Bde Prešov trained throughout Week 1. Taking it in turns, members of 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany negotiated water obstacles during Week 2. Dep Cdr 21 Mech Bn Trebišov Maj Vladimír Zelený, the officer commanding the training exercise, said: "Crossing wet gaps is an essential capability, and that's why I am pleased not just because the drivers and their commanders have successfully completed all the tasks, but because for many of them it was their first time swimming with their IFVs and fording with their MBTs across water obstacles." The overall performance in swimming of 22 Mech Bn Michalovce drivers was graded as 'No 1'. Within the Brigade, Cpl Peter Ženčák achieved the best time over a water obstacle, and Cpl Matúš Gajdoš of 21 Mech Bn Trebišov was

rated 'Excellent'. T-72 tank driver Cpl Ladislav Ivan had the best results among the drivers of 14 Tnk Bn Trebišov. The mechanised units of 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany were also successful in overcoming water obstacles. IFV drivers Cpl Ondrej Škvarla from 11 Mech Bn Martin, Cpl Erik Špleha from 12 Mech Bn Nitra, and Cpl Adriana Havelková from 13 Mech Bn Levice came out of it with an 'Excellent'. The overall exercise grade was 'No 1'.

