



Security and cooperation

(11 Sept) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák hosted Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó as he was visiting Bratislava for a meeting of foreign ministers from five Central European countries in the Central 5 (C5) format – Czechia, Hungary, Austria, Slovakia, and Slovenia. They spoke about SVK-HUN defence ties, today's security challenges, the war in Ukraine including the attacks on the Družba oil pipeline, the developments in the Western Balkans and the Middle East, and migration issues. According to Minister Kaliňák, bilateral ministerial meetings support mutual dialogue and cooperation, as well as enable a better understanding of the visions for building a functional and modern Armed Forces. He can see opportunities for our collaboration with Hungary on armaments, defence industry, training, and operational duties on missions and operations abroad.

Summer School of Diplomacy

(10 Sept) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, SECGEN Peter Krajčirovič and POLDIR Robert Bestro warmly welcomed the participants of the Štefan Osuský Summer School of Diplomacy to the MOD. In



an almost-two-hour discussion, Mr Kaliňák introduced and presented the day-to-day "business as usual" of the MOD, diplomatic relations in the field of defence & security, NATO meetings, and recent foreign policy issues. "I am convinced that one day many of you will become experts that our state administration bodies need," Mr Kaliňák said. As part of the programme, the group of young diplomats visited the NATO Force Integration Unit Slovakia (NFIU SVK) at Vajnory Barracks for a series of briefings on the NFIU's tasks and the Allied Forces' operations under NATO's collective defence umbrella.

NATO Committee on Reserves

(11 Sept) A working meeting of the NATO Committee on Reserves (NCR) was convened under the auspices of the SVK MOD for the first time in Bratislava on 8-11 Sept. The NCR – composed of national specialists who make recommendations on Reserve matters – shares information and expertise on effective Reserves models from Allied Nations. DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič attended the NCR event, where he made the opening remarks and presented Slovakia's Reserve Forces (RF) – the National Defence Forces (NDF) – as a step critical to making the nation's defence more modern and efficient.



NDF pass-out parade

(14 Sept) On completion of their NDF training programme, another 92 passers-out took the Oath of Allegiance on the parade square at Turkish Hill TA. While 47 reservists completed their training at Turkish Hill TA, 45 passed their training at 13 Mech Bn Levice.



Slovak Armed Forces "Best Artilleryman" Competition 2025

(8 Sept) The first decade of Sept saw the Slovak Armed Forces "Best Artilleryman" Competition 2025 unfolding across Kamenica nad Cirochou TA, with 44 artillerymen from across the Armed Forces taking part. Day 1 assessed their theoretical knowledge in a comprehensive test on the use of reconnaissance to pinpoint enemy forces, the employment of Field Artillery (FA) batteries in combat, and fire control and firing operations. Day 2 covered all the practical disciplines such as working with optical sighting systems, navigation and map reading, calculating the elements of fire, as well as laying the guns in the direction of fire. The 15 best competitors made it to the finals to face live firing tasks from the HD-30A howitzer systems. There could only be one winner and it was MSgt Jaroslav Pastucha, Arty Crs Instr of 7 Trng Regt Martin, who came out on top to be crowned "Best Artilleryman of 2025", followed by Capt Július Borák, Arty Ops Chf of 54 MRLS Bn Rožňava, in 2nd place, and Lt Erik Pacsmár, Plt Cdr of 54 MRLS Bn Rožňava, in 3rd place. ESP artillerymen took part in the competition – with their Forward Artillery Observer (FAO) team and Battle Staff (BS) members monitoring the progress and organisation of the competition. At the invitation of the SVK CHOD, personnel of the Cyprus National Guard – which has since 2002 been equipped with the Slovak-made 155mm Zuzana 2000 SPHs – were present as observers as well.



- The new Director of the Defence Language Institute (DLI) Liptovský Mikuláš, Maj Nikola Tokárová gave a warm welcome to the Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy Bratislava, Gavin Vessey when he visited the DLI facility in Prešov. As well as introducing the work of a diplomat, Gavin Vessey led a discussion with the students of the intensive SLP1 and SLP2 English Language Courses on current world affairs. At the end of his visit, he gifted English books to the students and wished them lots of success with their studies.

- UNFICYP Force Commander Maj Gen Erdenabat Batsuuri awarded UN medals to 110 SVK peacekeepers, serving in Sector 4, for their service to peace in Cyprus.

- Director of the MOD Military Aviation Authority Office Nofal Kattan attended the graduation ceremony for the SVK soldiers on the Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Operators Course. In his remarks, Nofal Kattan stressed that modern technologies, combined with the soldiers' discipline and readiness, form the foundation of a resilient defence force.

- Tactical battlefield first aid drills for combat life savers (CLS) of 11 Mech Bn Martin, 12 Mech Bn Nitra, and 13 Mech Bn Levice were held on the ranges at Martin Garrison training ground in Sučany. The aim of the 24-hour drills was to test the capabilities of the first aid teams to provide battlefield first aid to mechanised battalions in conditions as close to real operations as possible.

- Members of 13 Mech Bn Levice completed rail operations training. The introduction centred on deepening their theoretical knowledge of transporting tracked and wheeled vehicles by rail. The training continued with practical tasks at a railroad in Levice, with the focus on the military drivers lining up their vehicles on the loading ramp and on the vehicles' commanders out on foot at the front guiding their drivers from flatbed to flatbed – before placing the wheel chocks and strops to secure the vehicles for rail movement.

- For the first time ever, 902 Engr Bn Michalovce celebrated its 25th birthday with Engineers' Day at Kamenica nad Cirochou TA on Sat 13 Sept. The event was co-organised by 902 Engr Bn Michalovce, Ecumenical and Pastoral Service (EPS), Military Support Foundation, Kamenica nad Cirochou TA, and Military Forests and Estates.

- The All-Arms Observers (AAO) Course was held at the SVK Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš, organised by the Education Centre's National Courses Section and led by the Military Tactics and Operational Art Dept. During the intensive 30-hour programme, SVK soldiers acquired theoretical knowledge and practical experience in artillery fire support, tactical preparation, and target location determination. Successful graduates earned their internationally recognised All-Arms Observer Qualification according to NATO standards. The most successful course graduate – SSGt Roman Novák – received the Best All-Arms Observer Certificate and a commemorative coin.

- As part of its Central European Defence Cooperation – Language Platform (CEDC -LP) Presidency this year, the Defence Language Institute (DLI) organised an English Language Teaching Methodology seminar at the Granite Hotel Smrekovica from 8 to 11 Sept. SVK lecturers presented English teaching methods, approaches and experiences to their colleagues from the CEDC-LP countries. During the seminar, topics were presented on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) during both classroom teaching and self-directed study, as well as practical tips for creating AI prompts for language learning.

- The Dukla Military Sports Centre organised the 4th Soccer Tournament for Departmental Sports Facilities in the Dukla Sports Hall in Banská Bystrica. After winning four matches, the Dukla team made it to the finals, where they lost to the SVK Olympic & Sports Committee + Journalists team by a narrow margin of 3:2 in a dramatic battle for 1st place. The National Sports Centre team placed 3rd.

- Dukla wrestler Tajmuraz Salkazanov (SVK) won 3rd place at the World Wrestling Championships 2025 in Zagreb, defeating Yones A. Emamichoghaei (IRN) 3:1 in the 74kg category.

- Dukla karateka Roman Hrkča (SVK) won silver in the Senior Men's Kata category at the prestigious Budapest Open. Ingrid Bakos Suchánková did very well in the Senior Women's Kumite -68kg by winning a valuable 3rd place.

- At the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, Dukla race walker Dominik Cerný (SVK) finished 7th – the best result for SVK Athletics at the World Champ since Matej Tóth's gold in 2015. Dukla athlete Hana Burzalová achieved a historic 12th place – the best result for SVK women in the World Champ's history. Michal Morvay withdrew from the 25km walk race due to health problems.

TOVY25: Slovakia at the centre of international CBRN security training

(11 Sept) The CBRND Training and Testing Centre (CBRND TTC) Zemianske Kostoľany has been the venue for the 13th edition of Ex Toxic Valley 2025 (TOVY25), an international chemical warfare agent (CWA) collection and assessment training exercise, running on 8-19 Sept in Slovakia. Having built an exceptional reputation in the EU and NATO, the exercise welcomed more than 250 participants – Sampling and Identification of Chemical Agents (SICA) and Mobile Laboratories (MOBLAB) teams – from 18 nations.

Notable attendees at the opening ceremony for Ex TOVY25 included the Chief of Operations in the SVK Defence Staff, Brig Gen Ferdinand Murín, and the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy Bratislava, Heather Rogers.

Using realistic training scenarios on the exercise, the SICA teams are engaging simulated threats – detecting and sampling CWAs for laboratory assessment. Ultimately, this training is a vital factor in improving their readiness to respond to real CBRN incidents. As TOVY25 incorporates interdepartmental and inter-agency cooperation as preparation for a joint response

Ever stronger SVK-CZE partnership



(10 Sept) The CZE MOD played host to a meeting between DEPMINDEF Igor Melicher and CZE POLDIR Jiří Šedivý. The main topics of discussion were strengthening SVK-CZE defence cooperation, the EU's defence agenda, and joint NATO activities. Igor Melicher praised the CZE contribution to the NATO MN BDE TF SVK and thanked for the Czech Air Force's air policing in SVK airspace. The meeting testified both to the good ties between the nations and to continuing intensive cooperation between the SVK and CZE MODs.

SVK-ARM cooperation options



(8 Sept) DEPMINDEF Igor Melicher received Secretary of the Security Council of the Republic of Armenia Armen Grigoryan at the MOD in Bratislava. He praised the Armenia-Azerbaijan

peace deal and the launch of a new process that opens up the possibilities for deeper cooperation in the South Caucasus region, expressed his support for Armenia's EU integration efforts, offered lessons learned from Slovakia's accession path to the EU, as well as presenting the SVK Defence Industry capacities.

First Patria Ambulance delivered

(8 Sept) The first Patria 8x8 AMV XP vehicle was delivered as the Ambulance variant to the SVK Armed Forces, only to be handed over to MILMEDCOM Ružomberok. Designed to provide battlefield casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) and emergency medical care (EMC) for 3-5 patients, the Patria Ambulance – equipped with extensive medical equipment as the Emergency Ambulance Service vehicles – can be used in environments contaminated by chemical warfare agents (CWAs), in support of the Integrated Rescue System's ops, and in flood-affected areas thanks to its swimming capability. The SVK military aims to have 9 Patria Ambulances in service by the end of the year.



TOVY25: Slovakia at the centre of international CBRN security training

to crises, members of Slovakia's Fire and Rescue Services, Chemical Testing Laboratory, and Interior Ministry's National Anti-Drugs Agency took part too. "Ex Toxic Valley is not only about international coordination, but also about strengthening our CBRN specialists' capabilities to keep our military units and civilian populations safe and secure," Lt Col Roman Sústrik, one of the exercise organisers, said.

