



## New dimension of support for SVK Defence Industry

(16 Oct) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák's words that the responsibility for defending the EU and NATO's eastern border remains exclusively with the EU and NATO Member States were confirmed at the NATO Defence Ministerial on 15 Oct in Brussels. We are delighted to be part of the European defence projects such as the "Drone Wall", as these open up new avenues for funding and technological collaboration.

While in Brussels, Robert Kaliňák joined the Defence Ministers from Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Finland, Hungary, Türkiye, and the UK in signing the Letter of Intent concerning Cooperation on the NATO Fires Centre of Excellence, while Italy had acceded to the initiative earlier.

Slovakia has become a leader in the prestigious NATO Fires Centre of Excellence. This is hailed as a major success in Slovakia's efforts to establish the NATO FCOE, a recognition of the SVK Defence Industry's expertise and potential, and a milestone in the Military Technical and Testing Institute Záhorie's aspiration to achieve NATO COE status.

The NATO FCOE will focus on developing Field Artillery (FA) capabilities and the integration of FAC2 systems across Allied forces. Slovakia is to become the first smaller country and only the seventh to have two NATO COEs in the entire Alliance.

"For Slovakia, this is a huge success and proof that we have been a reliable and stable partner in the Alliance. Our role in this project will strengthen both regional and Alliance-wide cooperation by bringing new opportunities for the professional growth of Slovak and Allied soldiers alike. This also sends out a message to all subject matter experts that the SVK Defence Industry is viewed positively by the world community," Mr Kaliňák said.

## Closer to new combat uniform

(16 Oct) In the presence of SVK and HRV MINDEFs Robert Kaliňák and Ivan Anušić, representatives of the SVK MOD and Croatia-based firm 'Agencija Alan' signed a contract for the supply of textiles for the new Personal Clothing System – Combat Uniform (PCS-CU) for Slovakia's Armed Forces, on the margins of the NATO Defence Ministerial in Brussels. "For us, this is a turning point. I believe we will be able to present the soldier's brand new combat clothing system to the people of Slovakia by the end of 2025. Our cooperation with Croatia underscores the importance of fostering strategic partnerships to benefit from considerable savings in the modernisation of the Armed Forces," Mr Kaliňák said. The fabrics to be supplied by Croatia's Alan Agency will be owned by the SVK MOD and will be made continuously available to the SVK Defence Supply Chain (DSC) companies to sew all items of clothing for the standard issue combat uniform for the SVK Armed Forces.



## Ordination of Padre Pavol Šajgalík as Bishop Military Ordinary

(18 Oct) Padre Pavol Šajgalík received his Episcopal Ordination and became the new SVK RC Ordinary of the Armed Forces and Armed Corps at Bratislava's Incheba Exhibition & Convention Centre, in the presence of PRES and CINC Peter Pellegrini, DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Nicola Girasoli, and some 1,500 guests from home and abroad. His predecessor, Bishop František Rábek, who had served as the head of the Ordinariate since its establishment in Mar 2003, was the main consecrator. In his remarks to the audience, Minister Kaliňák said that he was also present at the installation ceremony of Bishop Rábek as Military Ordinary for Slovakia 22 years ago, and that since then he had viewed his activities across the GOV ministries in which the Ordinariate under his leadership worked as "extremely beneficial and useful" – for which he sincerely thanked him. "Although we are not all Christians, we all care about beauty and goodness," Bishop Šajgalík said in his inaugural speech. There are currently over 70 priests and deacons of the Ordinariate working across the MOD, MOI, Prison & Court Guard, and Fire & Rescue Services. The new Bishop of the Forces – a former Police Chaplain (2004-2019) – is returning to the Ordinariate after leading the Zurich-based Slovak Catholic Mission to Switzerland (2019-2025).



- The Spanish military personnel serving in Slovakia celebrated 'Fiesta Nacional de España' or Spain's National Day on 12 Oct with a flag raising ceremony, a field mass, and a military parade at Camp Riečiky, TC Lešť. In attendance at the ceremony were Allied military and civilian authorities.

- SVK Air Chief Brig Gen Adolf Daubner took part in the NATO Air Chiefs Symposium (NACS) 25-2 at Ramstein AB in Germany, with the key theme: "Accelerating Air and Missile Defence for 360-Degree Security". NATO and Partner Air Chiefs discussed matters related to the current challenges of airspace protection, Air Command and Control (Air C2), and coordination and interoperability among Allies.

- The new Bishop of the Armed Forces and Armed Corps, Monsignor Pavol Šajgalík, took over St Sebastian's Cathedral in Bratislava's Krasňany during the Pontifical Holy Mass on 19 Oct, thus taking full spiritual and pastoral responsibility for the faithful of the SVK RC Ordinariate. The new Bishop was welcomed by Dean of the Cathedral Don Jozef Slivoň. At the end of the Mass, Mons Šajgalík appointed Col Stanislav Varga, a former Police Chaplain of Trnava, as Vicar General.

- The 60th Apostolat Militaire International (AMI) 2025 Conference – bringing together Catholic military chaplains and associations – was held in Manila, the Philippines, with Slovakia represented by Military Chaplains Capt Erik Vozár and Capt František Krušínský.

- Personnel from the SVK MP Dept's K9 and Trng Branch partook in the French Gendarmerie-organised International Military Working Dog (MWD) Handlers' Seminar with a display of K9 products. The aim of the seminar was to promote professional cooperation between armed forces and manufacturers/suppliers of K9 items and equipment.

- 47 SVK MP personnel from the NATO Multinational Military Police Battalion (MNMPBAT) joined their CZE, HUN, GEO, HRV, POL MP colleagues for Ex Sharp Lynx 25 in Croatia on 13-26 Oct. The aim was to test the MNMPBAT's readiness to perform joint ops and foster a spirit of cooperation. A shooting competition took place during the exercise. Amidst strong competition of some 60 participants, the SVK MP personnel confirmed their excellence in marksmanship by placing 2nd and 3rd in the first event, 3rd in the second event, and 1st and 3rd in the metal target event.

- A synthetic disaster response exercise, organised by the AOS Simulation Centre in Liptovský Mikuláš (LM), centred around the theme: A freight train carrying the highly toxic benzene derails and catches fire, and a dangerous chemical substance leaks near a residential area and a retirement home in the LM City Borough of Liptovská Ondrašová. Emergency responders were from LMs's District Office, City Council Office, Fire and Rescue Service, and Police, as well as from the SVK Red Cross, SVK Railways, and a private coach operator. Mayors of regional municipalities and Ministry of Interior (MOI) officials were present as observers.

- The 29th SVK Military Police Director's Combat Shooting Competition/19th 'Lt Col Luboš Belák' Memorial Shooting Competition took place at MP Dept Vlkánová - Hronek. A total of 46 shooters took part, including from across Slovakia's Military Police, Army, Air Force, Training Centre Lešť, Police, Prison & Court Guard (ZVJS), and Mountain Rescue Service, as well as from CZE MP. The winning title went to WO1 Ondrej Bahýl (ZVJS). The team event was won by WO3 Ondrej Bahýl (ZVJS) and WO1 Ondrej Bánovský (ZVJS). Lt Adam Lajka (POL) was named Fastest Shooter, and MStgt Jaroslav Folta (MP) was named Best SVK MP Shooter.

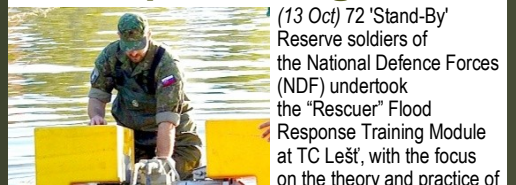
- 7 Trng Regt Martin hosted the Basic Stand-by Readiness, Combat Readiness, and Mobilisation Specialists Course, delivered by instructors from the Force Mobilisation Unit (FMU) Poprad, SVK MOD Personnel and Social Welfare Dept, and 82 Jnt Spt Bde Trenčín.

- The Slovak National Uprising (SNP) Museum Banská Bystrica has announced that the Museum and its permanent exhibition in Nemecká will be closed on 1-2 Nov and will reopen on Tue 4 Nov. While the Museum's galleries remain closed, the Museum's 1944 SNP Multimedia Exhibition and the Open Depository remain open to the public. The opening hours are from 9:00 to 16:00.

## CTBTO's field test exercise

(14 Oct) Closely working with the SVK Nuclear Regulatory Authority and the SVK Academy of Sciences ('SAV') Institute of Earth Sciences, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Preparatory Commission conducted a field test exercise using seismic and non-seismic techniques at the cave site at Čachtice, with the participation of experts from the seven CTBTO signatory countries, SAV experts, and observers from the SVK MOD, DS, and Verification Centre. The test applied a mixture of geophysical mapping techniques – that can create a 3D image of the subsol profile in the area of deployment – which the CTBTO will use during an onsite inspection (OSI) as a verification measure to ascertain whether or not an underground nuclear test has taken place.

## Flood response training for NDF



(13 Oct) 72 'Stand-By' Reserve soldiers of the National Defence Forces (NDF) undertook the "Rescuer" Flood Response Training Module at TC Lešť, with the focus on the theory and practice of

flood operations. The participants mastered the principles of building flood barriers and providing first aid under the guidance of the Fire and Rescue Services. The aim was to prepare the reservists for an effective response to floods, in cooperation with professional rescue services.

## Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

(16 Oct) Czechia's University of Defence and Slovakia's MOD Personnel and Social Welfare Dept and 'Gen Štefánik' Armed Forces Academy (AOS) joined together to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda – initiated by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) – with a professional and scientific conference on 15-16 Oct. This exchange of experience on the current status of the implementation of international and national WPS commitments took place at AOS for the first time, with representatives of SVK, CZE and POL academia and defence ministries responsible for WPS in attendance. Among the guests were also senior officials from the CZE Defence Staff and the SVK Police Presidium.



## Air LIVEX phase of Ex Strong Together 2025

(17 Oct) On 13-20 Oct, Slovakia hosted Ex Strong Together 2025 (STTO25) – the largest Command Post Exercise/Live Exercise (CPX/LIVEX) with ops to defend Slovakia – which saw international participation from the Armed Forces of Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and Spain.

In the Air LIVEX phase of STTO25, a large focus was placed on practicing regional defensive air ops in cooperation with NATO Allies and offensive and defensive Air Defence (AD) ops, as well as on the seamless coordination of air ops with Army and SOF forces out on the training ranges – all this with the emphasis on aligning with NATO procedures. On the exercise, Czechia was represented by



AH-12 Viper attack helicopters from 221 Heli Sqdn Náměšť nad Oslavou and Saab JAS-39 Gripen fighter jets from 211 Tac Sqdn Čáslav. Hungary participated with JAS-39 Gripen fighter jets from 1 Tac Sqdn Kecskemét. The Spanish Army Aviation Unit in Slovakia took part as well, operating the NH-90 Caiman and HA-28 Tiger helicopters.

For SVK F-16 pilots from 81 Wng Sliač, this was the first opportunity in history to practice SOPs and capabilities at home on an exercise with our partners from NATO countries. Ground

Controlled Interception (GCI) personnel from 2 SVK AF BDE Zvolen went through the most current and relevant SOPs for safeguarding SVK airspace and conducting air ops, with the F-16 and JAS-39 aircrews flying into action against a variety of threats.

Elsewhere, SVK UH-60M helicopter pilots along with their CZE and ESP colleagues flew close air support (CAS) missions in support of ground forces out at Prešov AB and Valaškovce AWR,

supported by recce teams from 22 Recce Regt Prešov and JTACs from 5 SOF Regt Žilina. To bolster the protection of SVK airspace and airports, AD assets from 11 SVK AF BDE Nitra were activated. The Brigade's task was to coordinate AD system crews and intercept aircraft and helicopters within the designated airspace.