



Visiting troops in Kosovo

(21 Dec) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák along with PRES and CINC Peter Pellegrini and CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko paid a visit to SVK soldiers serving with the NATO-led KFOR peace-keeping mission in Kosovo to say thank you for their work. Minister Kaliňák said that SVK soldiers have brought great credit on themselves and have made an excellent name for our country in Kosovo. He confirmed that the Western Balkans remains a long-term priority for Slovakia. He further informed that the President and he talked with KFOR leaders about KFOR's current state and future prospects. He added that they would like to expand the presence of SVK troops there with a company.

The SVK soldiers in Kosovo were also visited by their family members. At the Memorial to the SVK Fallen Soldiers, the delegation paid tribute to the memory of the SVK troops who died in the plane crash near the Hungarian village of Hejce, while returning home from the KFOR mission on 19 Jan 2006.



Tatra trucks and munitions

(16 Dec) A new filling line for large-calibre artillery shells was put into operation at ZVS Holding in Dubnica nad Váhom, with DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák attending the official launch ceremony. This most advanced facility of its kind in Europe will greatly contribute to increasing the company's production capacity.

The new manufacturing machinery allows for the production of artillery shells in calibres ranging from 81mm to 155mm – in two shifts a day, seven days a week.

"The new filling line will ensure that Slovakia becomes a leader in the number of large-calibre ammunition produced. This will put us in the top five ranking worldwide, and perhaps in second place in Europe. This clearly speaks to the way we are helping the Slovak economy," the Minister emphasised.

While at ZVS Holding, Robert Kaliňák along with Czechoslovak Group (CSG) representatives also informed that Tatra Defence Slovakia has secured a contract from a Southeast Asian customer to make 4,000 Tatra military trucks, worth more than €1bn. These will be produced by CSG's MSM Land Systems in Moldava nad Bodvou in the next four years.

"The production of Tatra trucks is returning to Slovakia on a large scale. The move will bring 300 jobs to Moldava nad Bodvou. I believe this contract will be followed by other contracts in the future," the head of the MOD emphasised.

SVK and CZE MINDEFs agree on enhancing bilateral cooperation

(18 Dec) The Czech Republic will continue its Air Policing missions over Slovakia even in 2026, CZE MINDEF Jaromír Zúna and SVK DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák agreed on that and signed the Air Policing arrangements for SVK airspace during a phone call. Kaliňák also congratulated Zúna on his new role as Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, and praised his wealth of expertise and experience. "I see him as a long-time top professional, and his record of senior appointments in the Czech Armed Forces is a guarantee of his professional competence. From his knowledge, we can draw a lot of inspiration for joint defence projects," he said, adding that he thanked the CZE MINDEF for his prompt response and signing the agreement to make Czech Air Force aircraft available for Air Policing scrambles over Slovakia next year too. "This was one of his first tasks in the role of the Minister of Defence," he said. After Slovakia grounded its fleet of MiG-29s, Allies stepped in to protect SVK airspace, which is currently safeguarded by Poles, Czechs and Hungarians. Meanwhile, Slovakia is awaiting delivery of F-16 fighter jets. Their delivery was delayed due to the pandemic. The manufacturer has delivered seven aircraft to date. The other three were due to arrive last Thursday, but their arrival was delayed due to bad weather. Slovakia ordered 14 F-16s at the end of 2018.



- At Bratislava's Political Sciences Dept, Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University, Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko delivered a lecture on SVK Defence and led a follow-up discussion with students about the democratic control of the Forces, current security threats, the war in Ukraine, technological innovations in the Forces, and the role the Forces play in protecting the State's freedom and territorial integrity.

- A graduation ceremony to mark the completion of the 23rd Higher Command and Staff Course (HCSC) – organised by the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Education Centre – was held in the Academy's Auditorium on 12 Dec. 57 MOD officers joined the HCSC course on 1 Sept 2025. The course was delivered by the AOS Academic Staff, experts from the Defence Staff and individual Armed Forces branches, and external lecturers from the MOD, the University of Defence in Brno, and members of the TC Lešť-based NATO MN BDE TF SVK.

- Military Medical Command (MILMEDCOM) Ružomberok became the venue for bilateral talks with representatives of the Military Medical Section at the CZE MOD, with the focus on commitments to NATO and the EU. The talks were followed by practical demonstrations in Lipovský Mikuláš. Both sides confirmed their willingness to continue their close cooperation on medical and veterinary capabilities, thus once again strengthening the strategic partnership between the SVK and CZE Forces.

- Members of the SVK Military Police travelled to Czechia to attend annual joint training for Air Marshals, with the aim of aligning with tactical standards and increasing interoperability in handling security incidents in the air and after an aircraft's emergency landing.

- The Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Chapel hosted a traditional pre-Christmas event on 17 Dec, with AOS representatives, officer cadets and employees in attendance. The programme, moderated by Dean of the SVK RC Ordinariate Lt Col Tomáš Huda, was prepared under the direction of the Academy's military chaplains.

- On 16 Dec, Cdr 2 AF Bde Zvolen Col Patrik Paulovčík presented the Children's Teaching Hospital and Polyclinic in Banská Bystrica with a generous donation of 5,200 euros, raised by the Brigade members in a Christmas fundraiser. The soldiers also donated material gifts, bed linens, pillows and other necessities to the hospital, as well as bringing small gifts to the child patients to make their Christmas enjoyable.

- Peter Chorvát from the Military-Historical Research Dept of the SVK Institute of Military History gave two lectures at the Faculty of Urban Science of Meijo University in Japan's Nagoya, introducing Japanese students to topics such as the Czechoslovak Legion – the first Czechoslovak resistance force abroad, the formation of Czechoslovakia, the military context of the country's defence in the 1930s until its collapse in 1939, and the formation of the Slovak State. Peter Chorvát also held bilateral talks with Japanese colleagues on possible further areas of cooperation.

- Taking place in the Marián Gáborki Arena in Trenčín on 16-17 Dec, the "Laugo Cup" Ice-Hockey Tournament 2025 saw AOS Officer Cadets claim second place. Officer Cadet Alexej Kanás was named the best goalkeeper of the tournament. Gold went to the military ice-hockey team from 82 Jnt Spt Bde Trenčín.

- Demonstrating a clean shooting performance with a time of 19:41.1, biathlete Paulína Bátovská Fialková from the Dukla Military Sports Centre took an excellent fifth place in the women's 7.5km sprint at the Biathlon World Cup in France's Annecy - Le Grand-Bornand. She was 16.2sec behind winner Hanna Öberg (SWE) and only 5sec behind second-place finisher Dorothea Wierer (ITA). On Sat 20 Dec, she also seized fifth place in the women's 10km pursuit race. She was only 2.8sec away from bronze. She has become the first SVK biathlete to qualify for next year's Olympic Games in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo.

With its last 50th issue in 2025, the SVK MOD EBULLETIN bids farewell to its readers as it closes after 14 years of service. You will be able to find current information on the Slovak Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces on internet websites and social media channels. Thank you for your attention over the years. We wish you a very Happy Christmas and New Year 2026!

Work begins on new hospital



(17 Dec) Construction works on the new General Milan Rastislav Štefánik National University Hospital officially began in Bratislava's Vajnory on Wed 17 Dec, DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák along with Health

Minister Kamil Šaško announced during a press conference at the construction site after tapping the foundation stone.

The General Milan Rastislav Štefánik National University Hospital will be built on a piece of land owned by the SVK MOD. The construction of the hospital will be financed from a combination of funding, including from the Recovery Plan, 2% of GDP on defence, and, to a lesser extent, from the public budget.

MN BDE TF SVK: Transfer of Authority



(18 Dec) The Training Centre Lešť hosted a formal Transfer of Authority ceremony for the Spanish-led NATO Multinational Brigade Task Force Slovakia on 16 Dec. In the presence of

DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič, Col Ángel José Espiga Gómez officially handed command of the NATO MN BDE TF SVK over to Col José Manuel Sánchez Arribas.

The ceremony saw the award of the Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic Medal (3rd Grade) to the outgoing commander and the handover to the incoming commander of the Battlegroup Standard as a symbol of command, continuity and responsibility.

Children at MOD



(18 Dec) On Thursday at the MOD, DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák and CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko met with two dozen children whose deceased parents served in

the Armed Forces. Through the Military Support Foundation, military and civilian personnel in Defence provided funding for their experiential trip to Tenerife, their stay in Brezová pod Bradlom on Armed Forces Day, as well as contributing towards the cost of their driving licences just ahead of Christmas.

NATO ACO CSEL Zoltán Kaszab visits Slovakia

(19 Dec) NATO ACO CSEL Chief Warrant Officer Zoltán Kaszab was welcomed to Bratislava by CSEL of the Slovak Armed Forces Sgt Maj Imrich Fekete for a bilateral engagement at the SVK MOD on 19 Dec. The meeting focused on key areas to develop the NCO Corps and strengthen interoperability across NATO structures.

During a presentation, they covered the modernisation of the Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) education system – which includes innovating career courses and adapting teaching to current security challenges – while emphasising the development of leadership abilities, professional skills, and the readiness of NCOs to operate in a demanding operational environment.

Another critical topic was building Slovakia's National

Defence Forces and increasing their preparedness for crisis scenarios. Their discussion also focused on the ability to



quickly and effectively coordinate and engage forces in addressing security threats at home and abroad.

Both partners paid special attention to international cooperation in military education and training for NCOs and Other Ranks (ORs). This cooperation significantly contributes to sharing experiences, harmonising standards, and improving the quality of training. NATO ACO CSEL Chief Warrant Officer Zoltán Kaszab also received briefings

on the Slovak Armed Forces and their contributions to international operations and missions as clear evidence of our Forces' professionalism, reliability, and interoperability readiness.