



The future of collective defence

(25 May) The Slovak delegation to the Meeting of NATO Heads of State and/or Government in Brussels, led by the Slovak President, declared the status of its commitments made at the NATO Wales and Warsaw Summits and Slovakia's participation in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) next year. To the Allies, the SVK delegation offered a contribution to building the defence and security capacities of the Republic of Iraq by deploying up to 47 training team members. For the first time, the meeting took place on the new NATO HQ (NNHQ) premises and was attended by the new US President Donald Trump.

Speaking about NATO's eFP, the SVK Minister of Defence explained: "We declared our decision to participate in strengthening NATO's presence in the Baltic States as part of enhanced Forward Presence. As from June 2018, we want to deploy there up to 152 Slovak soldiers, while two troop rotations are being considered. There are talks already underway to specify the Host and Lead Nations under which they will be operating."

The second significant contribution is our active involvement in the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq. "Our contribution is of a non-combat nature. The Slovak soldiers should be tasked to provide advice and training to Iraqi military personnel," remarked the Minister.

Slovak President and Commander-in-Chief Andrej Kiska expressed his satisfaction with the course and outcomes of the NATO mini-summit. On the presence of US President Donald Trump, the SVK President said President Trump confirmed that which is most fundamental and crucial: the unity and significance of the North Atlantic Alliance.

Minister in talks at GLOBSEC

(27 May) The commitments the Slovak delegation signed up to at the Thursday NATO meeting in Brussels are, according to the NATO Deputy Secretary General, Ms Rose Gottemoeller, "an excellent step ahead for Slovakia and an excellent step ahead for NATO". DSG Gottemoeller conveyed this message in a meeting with SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš in the margins of GLOBSEC 2017. She appreciated Slovakia's interest in sending SVK soldiers to Iraq and a SVK unit's planned deployment to the Baltics as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence. Also in attendance at the meeting was the Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy. Defence expenditures were on the agenda too. Ms Gottemoeller appreciated the creation of the NFIU in Slovakia. Both officials also discussed NATO-EU cooperation. Finally, the Minister informed Ms Gottemoeller of the projects Slovakia has been pressing on with as part of several regional international groupings, as well as of the strategic documents the MOD is either drafting or taking part in.

At GLOBSEC 2017 on 26 May, Peter Gajdoš met with the State Minister for Defence Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, Mr Mohammed Al Bawardi. The main topics of discussion included fostering bilateral engagement in the field of security and defence, defence industry cooperation, and the fight against terrorism. The SVK Minister of Defence invited Al Fursan, the UAE Air Force Aerobatic Display Team, to the Slovak International Air Fest (SIAF) 2017 in August. "Also, I would be pleased if you could be represented at the IDEB Defence Fair in Bratislava next year," he said, while recalling the February participation of the SVK Defence Industry in IDEX 2017 in Abu Dhabi.

Remembering Jozef Gabčík ceremonially and sport-wise

(27 May) To mark the anniversary of the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich on 26 May, Slovak President and Commander-in-Chief of the SVK Armed Forces Andrej Kiska promoted Jozef Gabčík posthumously to the rank of Major General. "He distinguished himself with an act of immense bravery and paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom as a young man," said Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš. With the Order of the President of the SVK REP of 1994, the honorific title of "Žilina-based Jozef Gabčík Regiment" was added to the elite 5th Special Forces Regiment. On Saturday 27 May, a record number of 304 runners participated in the 23rd Jozef Gabčík Memorial Run in Žilina. Among those who came to pay tribute at the Jozef Gabčík Memorial were Maj Gen Miroslav Kocian, Deputy Chief of Defence, Maj Adrian Patrascu, US Air Force Attaché to Slovakia, Col (Rtd) Jozef Tuček, President of War Paratroopers Club and founding Commander 5th Special Forces Regiment, General Staff (GS) Col Lubomír Šebo, Chief of Special Forces Branch at SVK General Staff, and Col Miroslav Gardlo, Commander 5th Special Forces Regiment Žilina. Soldiers of the 5th Special Forces Regiment, wearing Army trainers, trousers and T-shirts, turned up for the run for the 5th time already. This year they were joined by members of the City of Žilina Police Flying Squad. The fastest runner on the 11-km-long track was Marek Chrástina of Jablunkov, Moravia. The women's category was won by Adéla Esteinerová of Ostrava. From among soldiers, Capt Silvia Šebastian and Sgt Jozef Bubenik, both local service personnel, were named the fastest runners.



- The SVK MOD issues this notice to inform the public of the upcoming **road and railway movements of military equipment** across the territory of the Slovak Republic, which will run until 3 June 2017. The moves of foreign militaries across our territory are taking place in support of the military exercises in Latvia and Romania.

- The **Military Surgeon Generals** of the V4 countries participated in a regular coordination meeting in Bratislava on 17-19 May. They discussed the V4 cooperation on setting up medical teams to support all EU BGs in 2019, the upcoming exercise Vigorous Warrior 2017 in Germany in September, and common problems related to shortages of medical professionals and material.

- The Personnel Office of the SVK Armed Forces in Liptovský Mikuláš and the Institute of Military History in Bratislava are staging an exhibition of paintings by Jozef Nemeč, entitled **Reminiscences of Military Exercises**, to be on display on the exhibition premises of the Military History Museum's Central Exposition – Museum Section Svidník. During the vernissage, the Director of the Institute of Military History, Col Miroslav Čaplovič, introduced the new Director of the Museum Section Svidník, Capt Miroslav Blahut.

- By taking the SVK Armed Forces Oath of Allegiance and taking part in a ceremonial passing-out parade, 151 soldier trainees finished their **basic military training (BMT)** on 18 May at the Training and Mobilisation Replenishment Base Martin. PV1 Michal Šustek was named the Best BMT Graduate.

- A week-long **training of SVK AF pilots and aircrews** in specialised physical fitness, aimed at military practical climbing, redevelopments, obstacle clearance, orienteering across unfamiliar terrain, and exercises in the water, was held on 15-19 May in Slanské Vrchy, Domaša and Hanušovce nad Topľou. The pilots and aircrews familiarised themselves with different types of movements, tested their endurance and strong will, improved their climbing skills, and practised specialist activities after emergency exit from aircraft.

- Minister of Foreign and European Affairs **Miroslav Lajčák** participated in a session of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers on 19 May in Nicosia. On this occasion, he visited the Slovak soldiers serving with UNFICYP, and met with Col Tim Wildish, UNFICYP Chief of Staff, at UNFICYP HQ.

- At the invitation of the Military Bishop of the French Armed Forces, Mons Luca Ravel, a 206-member delegation of the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps, led by Mons František Rábek, took part in the **59th International Military Pilgrimage (IMP) to Lourdes, France**. More than 20,000 troops from 40 countries attended the military pilgrimage.

- The SVK Armed Forces **Cross Country Run Championships** were held on 18-19 May. A total of 50 runners, from across the SVK Armed Forces units, came together in Sihoť Park in Nitra. Representing the MOD was Lt Col Peter Sobek of the Controls Department (MOD Inspectorate) who snatched a win in the 4-km run in the male U40 category. Overall, he also came in 3rd in the 10-km endurance run, and 2nd in the male U40 category.

- The last **Secondary Schools' Defence Dual** to win slots on the Camp 2017 event unfolded on 19 May in Trebišov. Students of the Košice region tested their knowledge of topography, learned to treat and transport the injured without stretchers, tried their precision in firing at a target, tested their endurance during a shuttle run and an obstacle course run, and crossed a contaminated area with their CBRN suits and masks on while carrying a mock casualty on stretchers. The event culminated with a 12-minute run. The winner was the Grammar School Sobrance team, followed by the teams of Grammar School Trebišov and Secondary Technical Professional School Michalovce.

- The Central Military Hospital (CMH) Ružomberok launched a **new website** at the end of April, making much more information available to patients. Access to the website is easy and fast. On its front webpage, CMH publishes quick notices for patients and visitors, releases news, reports on new medical equipment, and gives instructions for blood donors. The new website is more modern, more clearly arranged, and will provide more useful information for patients, relatives of patients, and professional and lay public. The website also features a complete list of surgery offices and surgery hours.

- The MOD issues this notice to inform the public of an upcoming **observation flight** of an unarmed Russian Air Force aircraft over the territory of the Slovak Republic. Based on the Open Skies Treaty, the aircraft will take off from Sliach Air Base and will carry out an overflight between 29 and 31 May. Over the same period, Slovakia and Poland will be conducting a similar observation flight over the territory of Ukraine.

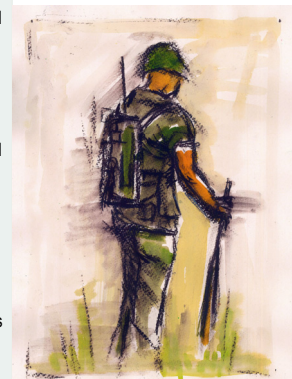
Training of Active Reserves



(26 May) A Sereď-based ceremony, presided by State Secretary Marián Šaloň and CHOD Gen Milan Maxim, saw the soldiers in the Active Reserves (AR) finishing their historically first training since 1993. Aimed at responding to domestic crisis management

incidents, the training prepared 37 reservists, of whom 8 were ex-servicemen, 24 were former Compulsory Basic Military Service (CBMS) soldiers and 5 were Voluntary Military Training (VMT) soldiers. Under field conditions the AR soldiers practised marksmanship, medical preparation, commands and drills, and flood defence capabilities aimed at protecting civilian populations and rescuing drowning people. A key element in the training was setting up ferry crossing points and transporting troops by GSP-type ferries.

Tps through eyes of kids



(23 May) Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš, CHOD Gen Milan Maxim, and the Editorial Board of Defence Monthly came together to announce the results of the 16th Painting and Drawing Competition for primary school (PS) pupils, titled Troops through the Eyes of Kids. The board of judges, made up of painters, SVK military personnel, MOD civil servants and editors of Defence Monthly, assessed a total of 1,533 entries from 176 schools. Melánia Gašparová of Class 2, PS Lesnícka in Prešov, won the Junior Pupils

category with her drawing "Assistance to the Wounded". Klára Bilíková of Class 7, PS Fatranská in Nitra, placed 1st in the Senior Pupils category with her drawing "Soldier". Another official ceremony announcing the results of the competition will be held on 3 June during Children with Armed Forces Day in Lučenec.

Live firing at Baltic Sea



(25 May) The Polish Air Force's Ustka Training Area, located at the Baltic Sea, hosted for the 6th time a live firing exercise involving 2K12 KUB Anti-Aircraft Missile System crews from the Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra. The Officer Commanding the Live Fir-

ing was the Brigade Commander, Col Ladislav Dovhun. As the weather on 24 May turned out to be adverse, State Secretary Róbert Ondrejčák, CHOD Gen Milan Maxim, former CHOD Lt Gen Peter Vojtek, and other distinguished guests did not get to see the live firing at first hand. It was not until the following day that the conditions for firing SRCPWR targets became favourable. Overall, the members of the combat shifts, commanded by Capt Miroslav Škamla and 1st Lt Ivan Sulgan, achieved excellent results. The Officer Commanding the Exercise, Brig Gen Miroslav Lorinc, thanked everyone for their job well done.

MOD competitions 2017

The SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office, working in conjunction with the Editorial Board of Defence Monthly has announced **Defence-wide competitive displays for SVK Armed Forces service members, MOD civil servants and civilian employees, their family members and military pensioners**. The Photo Attack Competitive Display covers the following categories: **A Service-woman in the SVK Armed Forces, SVK Armed Forces through a Camera Lens and Freestyle Photography**. The Gallery MIL Competitive Display features the following categories: **Painting and Sculpture, Utility Arts and Children's Works**. The deadline for submitting competitive entries will be 13 October 2017. The results of the Defence-wide competitive displays will be announced on 9 November 2017.