



Celebrations at Devín

(5 July) Slovak Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš and Prime Minister Robert Fico, joined by other members of the SVK Government and Parliament, took part in nation-wide celebrations in honour of St Cyril and St Methodius Day at Castle Devín, Bratislava. He thus paid tribute to the message of the Brothers of Thessaloniki on the occasion of the 1154th anniversary of their arrival in Great Moravia.

"St Cyril and St Methodius Day is among the most significant public holidays we commemorate because the Brothers of Thessaloniki devoted themselves to cultivating the spiritual riches of our ancestors. These celebrations mark our historical, cultural and educational heritage and, just as importantly, the formation of our national identity," noted SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš.



Minister in visit to President

(3 July) Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš and Chief of Defence Gen Milan Maxim informed SVK President Andrej Kiska, the Commander-in-Chief of the SVK Armed Forces, of the measures that have been put in place in the cases of the missing Army munitions. The President appreciated the information provided so far by Head of the MOD on the conclusions of the inventory checks at the munitions depots and called on those involved to resolve the situation in a thorough manner and to bring those responsible to justice.

"Immediately after discovering the discrepancies at the Kubrá Munitions Depot, I ordered a full inventory of all munitions and weapons. Never ever has such detailed physical inventory been carried out to date. There is every indication that the missing munitions may have been stolen a few years ago rather than over the past few months. Moreover, circumstantial evidence points to a long-term theft, which was enabled through the wrongly set-up security guard system," noted Minister Gajdoš. He went on to explain that the flawed system had been launched in 2006 when, with the full professionalisation of the SVK Armed Forces, the responsibilities for guarding, storing and handling munitions had passed from the military on to civilian contractors.

In response to the incidents, the measures adopted with immediate effect included reinforcing security guards at the munitions depots and personnel handling and issuing munitions. "I tasked the Chief of the General Staff, who is responsible for overseeing the security guard system, to transfer the entire system of guarding, storing and handling munitions from civilian contractors to professional soldiers, just as it should be," emphasised the Minister.

P. Gajdoš: Academy prepares high quality officers

(7 July) Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš and DCHOD/COS Maj Gen Miroslav Kocian attended a passing-out parade for officer cadets and a graduation ceremony for graduates of full-time Bachelor of Science (BSc) programmes at Milan Rastislav Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS) in Liptovský Mikuláš. A total of 54 officer cadets, of whom 7 were servicewomen, were promoted to Lieutenant, the first officer rank on commissioning. The Minister expressed his conviction that the passing-out parade is a milestone in one's life, never to be forgotten. He further expressed his hope that their education is not yet over and that they will continue to study in Magister (Mgr) and Master of Science (MSc) degree programmes. To the junior officers, he reminded that if they are to stay abreast of the latest advances in the dynamically evolving military environment, they must continue their personal development throughout their entire careers. For the concluded academic year, the Best Graduate of the Academy title went to Lt BSc Martin Daniel, who was presented with the Armed Forces Academy Sword. Following the passing-out parade and the graduation ceremony, the soldiers reported to their military units and organisational elements across Defence already on Monday (10 July). As a priority, they were mainly posted to SVK Land Forces units as commanders of platoons. The graduates of the BSc programmes received the BSc degree and were promoted to Lieutenant. They can now continue their studies in three-year external Mgr/MSc degree programmes (i.e. National Security and Defence; Electronic Weapon Systems; Military Signals and Information Systems; and Weapon Systems, Weapons and their Components).



- CIS Mobile Base (CIS MB) Ružomberok reorganised its internal organisational structure without a change to its overall manning levels in the modified table of organisation and equipment (MTOE). As of 1 July, CIS MB changed its name to **CIS Deployable Base (CIS DB)**. Also, with effect from 1 July, Maj Peter Berník was appointed Chief of Staff CIS MB, Lt Col Miroslav Miškovič, COM CIS MB, was promoted to Colonel and Maj Miroslav Miškovič, DCOM CIS MB, was advanced to Lieutenant Colonel.

- As part of the bilateral defence engagement between the Slovak and Dutch Armed Forces, a **live fire exercise using the 122mm RM MODULAR** multiple rocket launcher (MRL), combined with experimental tests on the MULTI MISSION RADAR of the Netherlands, took place on 3-4 July. Primary exercising troops were members of the MRL Detachment (1st Mech Bn Rožňava), and among the observers were selected SVK Armed Forces Fire Support (FS) specialists and Radar Surveillance (RS) specialists. 7 members of the Dutch Armed Forces participated in the testing phase.

- Delegations of the Czech and Slovak Armed Forces, representatives of the Czechoslovak Legionnaires Association, veterans, and other officials participated in an **unveiling ceremony** on 2 July to mark the unveiling of the reconstructed Brothers' Tomb near Kalinivka, Ukraine, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Czechoslovak Legion's first major engagement on the Eastern front – the Battle of Zborov. Representing the SVK Armed Forces was DCHOD Lt Gen Pavel Macko.

- **Pte Lucia Vlčáková**, a 3rd-year student of the Armed Forces Academy (AOS), participated in the 70th Slovak Republic Athletics Championships on 1-2 July at Štiavničky, Banská Bystrica. She placed 3rd in the women's 800m run, scooping the bronze medal, and finished 4th in the women's 1500m run, while at the same time taking state examinations and grappling with an illness during the same week. The athlete plans to continue her external studies at AOS and to devote herself to athletics under the umbrella of the Military Sports Club Dukla Banská Bystrica.

- The 22nd Mechanised Battalion Michalovce hosted a 22nd Mechanised Battalion Commander change of responsibility ceremony and a Self-Propelled Artillery Detachment change of command ceremony on 29 June, in the presence of Brig Gen Martin Stoklasa, Commander 2nd Mech Bde Prešov. Maj Vincent Csery took over command of the 22nd Mechanised Battalion from Lt Col Lubomír Rapca, who was discharged from service with effect from 1 July.

The SVK Ministry of Defence announces the upcoming movements of Allied military assets across Slovakia, which are scheduled to be carried out from 10 to 16 July 2017. They will include 14 Allied road moves, 2 SVK Armed Forces road moves, and 1 railway movement heading from Hungary to the Czech Republic for Exercise TOBRUQ LEGACY 2017. The U.S. Army will also continue to move their assets across Slovakia in support of Exercise SABER GUARDIAN 2017.

Repair and Transport Companies on specialist tactical exercise

(3 July) A specialist tactical exercise for the Repair Company and the Transport Company, Combat Service Support (CSS) Battalion Prešov, was held at Dukelské Barracks and on Ruská Nová Ves Garrison's training ground and range on 27-28 June. The aim of the exercise was to verify the units' task performance levels through repair and production activity, administrative support, and transport tasking in favour of the 2nd Mechanised Brigade units as part of National Commitments (NC) 2013 – Mech Bde. The Repair and Transport Companies conducted convoy road moves and provided comprehensive support to the areas of their deployment and related security and defence arrangements. For both companies, command posts and camps were set up, and so were the workstations for equipment



maintenance, recovery, transfer and repair. During the exercise, lines of communication (LOC) were established and transport tasks were undertaken. In addition, soldiers handled unplanned tasks, such as responding to a mortar attack, an ambush on the camp, or a CBRN alert. The specialist tactical exercise was directed by the CSS Battalion Commander, Lt Col Daniel Draganovský, CSM Lubomír Mihálik was in command of the Inspection Unit, and Lt Michal Kachan

commanded the Initial Scenario Team. The intense training put the Repair and Transport Companies to the test, as well as their abilities to plan and run national logistics support in favour of the SVK Armed Forces and NATO, while being sustained in an area of deployment. Also tested was the ability to conduct all-arms engagements, repair works, and transport missions.

Graduation ceremony in LM

(6 July) Liptovský Mikuláš (LM)-based General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS)'s Assembly Hall hosted a graduation ceremony for the graduates of two- and three-year-long 2nd level external academic study programmes. A total of 62 graduates successfully completed their studies, of whom 42 military professionals and 1 civilian student received the Master of Science (MSc) degree, while 10 military professionals and 9 civilian students received the Magister (Mgr) degree. The MSc degree holders completed their studies in the following accredited study programmes: Military Signals and Information Systems; Armaments and Assets in Service with Armed Forces. The Mgr degree holders finished their studies in the National Security and Defence study programme. During the graduation ceremony, the Commandant (Rector) of AOS, Assoc. Prof. Ing. Jozef Puttera, CSc., handed over diplomas to the graduates and recognised the best achievers in individual study programmes with material gifts.

Exercise New Horizon 2017



(9 July) SVK Armed Forces soldiers and SVK Interior Ministry personnel will be practising collaboration efforts during a simulated state of war from Monday (10 July) to Thursday (13 July). The activity

will see soldiers, policemen, fire crews, rescuers, representatives of local authorities and others engaged in tasks they must be able to perform in defence and protection of the Slovak Republic. The training exercise, dubbed New Horizon 2017, with the training audience drawn from the SVK Armed Forces, SVK Police Corps, Fire and Rescue Corps, the Red Cross and other components will be held under the auspices of the 2nd Mechanised Brigade on Garrison Veľké Ozorovce's training ground, located in the district of Trebišov. Taking part in the exercise will be approx. 200 troops and 100 members of other components, supported by 50 pieces of different assets.

Talks in Brussels

(4 July) The Chairman of the EU Military Committee (EUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, received the Chief of the Office of the SVK Military Representative to NATO/EU in Brussels, Maj Gen Ondřej Novosad, during an office call on 28 June. Later on 4 July, Maj Gen Novosad met with the Director General of the European Union Military Staff (DG EUMS), Lt Gen Esa Pulkkinen. He informed both partners of the SVK Armed Forces' support for the implementation plan on security and defence. He reassured them that the SVK Armed Forces are committed to supporting the current steps and initiatives to boost the EU's military capabilities. The partners appreciated the SVK Armed Forces' approach to the areas of common interest, especially to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations and missions. Also in attendance at the meetings was the SVK Deputy Military Representative to the EU, Col Erich Hrehuš.