



War Veterans' Day

(11 November) To mark War Veterans' Day, Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš, joined by the Chairman of the Committee on Defence and Security of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Anton Hrnko, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, Gen Milan Maxim, and other distinguished guests paid their respects to the memory of war veterans at the World War I Cemetery in Petržalka – Kopčany, Bratislava.

The head of the MOD reminded of the horrors of World War I, which ended 98 years ago – on 11 Nov 1918 at 11:00 am, in the context of the history of mankind. "We have paid homage to the memory of those who laid down their lives during World War I, while at the same time honouring the sacrifice of all war veterans who have fought for peace and our better future. They definitely deserve respect from all of us, and so I am immensely pleased that young people and children from schools have come here, because we need to keep reminding them of the WWI events," underlined the head of the MOD.

Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic Gen Milan Maxim also called to mind our contemporary veterans who continue with traditions. "They operate alongside our Allies in operations, with the aim of protecting lasting peace," he said.

Following the commemoration ceremony, the head of the MOD joined the 3rd Run in Honour of War Veterans, which attracted a total of 111 runners this year. Of them, 50 were members of the SVK Armed Forces, and the others included cadets from the SVK Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš, sportsmen from the Military Sports Club Dukla Banská Bystrica, and students from secondary schools.

The winner of the 3rd Run in Honour of War Veterans in the Soldiers category became Michal Rajniak, of the 5th Special Forces Regiment Žilina, while Lucia Vičáková, of the SVK Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš, was the fastest from among the servicewomen. The Civilians category was won by Alexander Moravčík and Mária Rodáková. The best runners in the Students and Pupils categories were Rudolf Kirchner and Margita Koričárová.

Representatives of the MOD, led by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, Róbert Ondrejčák, remembered War Veterans' Day on 11 Nov in Bratislava's Šafárik Square. The act of remembrance took place at the Western Resistance Movement Members' Memorial. Also in attendance at the event was the British Ambassador to the Slovak Republic, His Excellency Mr Andrew Garth.

The State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, Marián Saloň, and the 2nd Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, Maj Gen Jindřich Joch, commemorated the anniversary marking the end of WWI on 10 Nov at the Murman Heights, Bratislava. At the end of the ceremony military chaplains performed a special ecumenical service of commemoration in memory of the fallen soldiers.

Great start for our female skiers

(12 November) Petra Vihová a Veronika Velez-Zuzulová, of the Military Sports Centre Dukla Banská Bystrica, kicked off excellently this year's World Cup 2016 in the women's Alpine skiing in Finland's Levi. Petra Vihová placed 3rd, while Veronika Velez-Zuzulová finished one notch below. "Last year already Petra and Veronika demonstrated to be among the world's best slalom skiers and now in the very first round of this World Cup season they have proved to be in excellent shape. I extend my cordial congratulations to them and believe that a small crystal globe may end up in Slovakia this year," said Minister of Gajdoš, while looking forward to their outstanding representation in the upcoming rounds of the World Cup.



Minister visits soldiers deployed on Op EUFOR ALTHEA

(8 November) In a visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the SVK Minister of Defence took an opportunity to meet with the Slovak service personnel, based at Camp Butmir, who are currently serving with Op EUFOR ALTHEA. The visit was organised as part of the Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC) Defence Ministers' Meeting, which saw the Ministers visiting Sarajevo as well as meeting with Maj Gen Friedrich Schrötter, Commander EUFOR. Slovak servicemen and women have been contributing to the stabilisation of the security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina for more than 12 years.

Speaking in front of the gathered soldiers, Minister Gajdoš remarked: "I am proud of the share of work you are doing. You are making the best name for us, and with your work results you have proved to be real professionals." Among other things, he was also interested in ways how to potentially improve the working conditions on their tour of duty. Op EUFOR ALTHEA is part and parcel of the EU's comprehensive approach to Bosnia and Herzegovina's security, political, social and economic stabilisation. It fits into the overall mosaic of the EU's stabilisation goals in the Western Balkans region. Launched on 2 December 2004, it came into existence following the transformation of the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR), which had operated in the years 1997 – 2004 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There, members of the SVK Armed Forces have served since the mission's inception. As of today, Slovakia contributes a total of 41 service personnel to EUFOR ALTHEA.



- Attended by the 2nd Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, Maj Gen Jindřich Joch, the Director of the Office of the Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic, Miroslav Wiedemann, the Commander Land Forces, Maj Gen Ondřej Novosad, and other distinguished guests, a **wreath-laying ceremony** to mark the 98th anniversary of the end of World War 1 was held on 10 Nov at the Military Cemetery Trenčín – Zábranie.

- At the invitation of Chief of the General Staff Gen Milan Maxim, Bishop Siemiatycki – **Orthodox Ordinary of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland** Jerzy Mariusz Pańkowski arrived for a visit to Slovakia on 6-8 Nov. During his visit, he met with Gen Maxim, Lt Gen Pavel Macko, and His Beatitude Metropolitan of Czech Lands and Slovakia – Archbishop Rastislav of Prešov.

- To mark the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Ecumenical and Pastoral Service Head Office, Col Bodolík, Chaplain General of the Head Office, presented CHOD Gen Milan Maxim with the **Memorial Medal** for Support of Spiritual Activities in Armed Forces on 9 Nov.

- On 7-11 Nov, BVP-1 Infantry Fighting Vehicle gunners – operators from across all SVK Land Forces units conducted a **combat live-fire exercise** on Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area, aimed at firing the 9M14M Maljutka anti-tank guided missiles.

- The Martin-based CIMIC and PSYOPS Centre, of 2nd Mechanised Brigade, opened a three-week specialist **CIMIC and PSYOPS Course** on 7 Nov, with instructors drawn from the US Mobile Training Teams. The course is being attended by 48 SVK Armed Forces personnel and 4 members of the Army of the Czech Republic.

- On 9 Nov, Maj Gen Miroslav Korba, Commander SVK Air Force, welcomed **US Defence Attaché** Lt Col Jonathan S. Dunn and Air Attaché Maj Adrian C. Patrascu to Slovakia.

- Members of the Military Police – Police Enforcement Department Martin participated in the **Police Drop of Blood** donation event, held on 9 Nov at the Regional Directorate of the Police Corps of the Slovak Republic Žilina.

- On 10 Nov, Brig Gen Miroslav Lorinc, Deputy Commander SVK Air Force, welcomed the **mayor of Sliac**, the deputy mayor of Zvolen, and the village mayors from Sielnica, Veľká Lúka, Vlkánová, Hronsek, Badin to Headquarters SVK Air Force. The aim of the meeting was to discuss ways to deepen cooperation in organising joint activities.

- The Czechoslovak Legionnaire Community, working in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic and the Army of the Czech Republic, organised a **solemn concert in Prague's Rudolfinum** in the eve of War Veterans' Day. The concert was attended by both the SVK and CZE Presidents. SVK CHOD Gen Milan Maxim, too, accepted the invitation to attend, along with 40 SVK Armed Forces members.

On security policy in Bratislava

(8 November) NATO's Assistant Secretary General for Policy Affairs and Security Policy (PASP), Alejandro Alvargonzález, held an official meeting in Bratislava with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, Róbert Ondrejčák, and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Lukáš Parížek. They met on the margins of the meeting of the Security Policy Directors from the EU Foreign Affairs Ministries. Topics of discussion included the cooperation between NATO and the EU, the NATO Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)/Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) Trust Fund for Ukraine, a SVK expert's assignment in Georgia, the dialogue with the North African and Near East countries, and the Security Sector Reform in Ukraine and Georgia.

Gen Milan Maxim in Brussels



(8 November) On 7 - 8 Nov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic Gen Milan Maxim participated in the meeting of the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) in Brussels. Over the course of the EUMC meeting, the Visegrad 4 Chiefs of Defence came together to sign a document outlining the intention to stand up a joint V4 EU Battlegroup in the second half of 2019. High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini informed of the status of affairs relating to the implementation process of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Defence Policy. Then, Jorge Domezq, Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency (EDA), and General Denise Mercier, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT), provided an update on the progress of EU-NATO cooperation in the field of capabilities development in line with the implementation plan of the EU-NATO Joint Declaration.

MOD-wide competitions evaluated

(9 November) The Garrison Club Trenčín hosted a ceremony to announce the results of the 2016 MOD-wide Photo Attack and Gallery MIL competitive displays. 117 authors from across SVK Armed Forces units and facilities took part in the competitions with a total of 341 entries. In the Photo Attack competition, the Soldier & Uniform category winner was Eleonóra Žurková, of the Garrison Club Trenčín; the SVK Armed Forces through a Camera Lens category winner was Capt (Rtd) Ján Fiřma, of the Cultural and Education Activities Centre (CEAC) Zvolen; and the winner of the Freestyle Photography category was Jana Veresová, of the Garrison Club Trenčín. The Judges' Special Recognition Award went to SSgt Aleš Mucha, of the Command, Control and Reconnaissance Wing Zvolen. In the Gallery MIL completion, Lt Stanislava Masárová, of the Land Forces Command Support Battalion Trenčín, picked up the honours in the Painting category, 1st Lt Martina Gromová, of the Military Unit Nováky, won the Utility Arts category, while 14-year-old Júlia Kolárová from the Garrison Club Prešov topped the Children's Works category. Representatives of the specialist boards of judges concluded that the quality of the submitted entries was considerably higher than that in the previous years.

Central European countries reaffirm their interest in security cooperation

(8 November) The Slovak Republic, Czechia, Hungary, Austria, Slovenia and Croatia will consolidate regional cooperation in the field of security in the format of the Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC) countries. This follows from the Joint Declaration on the

CEDC, which was signed on 7 Nov in Austria's Frauenkirchen by SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš and the Defence Ministers from the other countries of the regional cluster. According to the Declaration, the main focus of cooperation is on aligning positions relating to security and defence policy issues.

Peter Gajdoš held talks with the Federal Minister of Defence and Sports of the Republic of Austria, Hans Peter Doskozil, on the sidelines of the CEDC meeting. At their first bilateral meeting, they explored options for defence cooperation. To his Austrian counterpart, Minister Gajdoš introduced the intent of the strategic documents' update, to include the

Defence and Military Strategies of the Slovak Republic and the Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic. Among the topics of discussion was also the new White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic, which comes in response to the most prevalent threats –



extremism, terrorism and migration. The following day on 8 Nov, Peter Gajdoš participated in a meeting of the CEDC Ministers of Defence, held in Sarajevo, together with the Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mrs Marina Pendeš. He appreciated the progress achieved by Bosnian and Herzegovina in its integration process into the European Union, and expressed his backing for the continuity of the reform processes. He reminded that Slovakia will take on the role of the NATO Contact Point Embassy in Sarajevo, effective from 1 January 2017, and provide assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina through its public diplomacy activities, as BiH moves on in its integration process into this elite community.