



Exercise Renegade 2016

(21 November) As part of Exercise Renegade 2016, soldiers put on a demonstration for members of the government of incident response arrangements against a potential encroachment into airspace by an airspace violator. They were simulated by the Slovak Air Force in collaboration with the Police Corps of the Slovak Republic, and the 5th Special Forces Regiment Žilina and other rescue-security components performed missions in their support. Besides Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš, Minister of Transport, Construction and Regional Development Ārpád Ārsek and Minister of Environment László Sóllymos came to Kuchyňa Airfield to watch the demonstration of the incident response action as well. As part of the event held in the grounds of the General M. R. Štefánik Transport Wing Kuchyňa, a specialised training session on the Renegade Concept was organised for the government members.

Minister Gajdoš accentuated that the protection of Slovak airspace is provided round the clock. "The SVK Air Force must, therefore, regularly practise incident response action against an incursion into airspace by an airspace violator, while operating alongside the other components which will be involved in such a response in the event of a real emergency. So we also used this opportunity to show a demonstration of incident response action to the government members who, acting in compliance with applicable legislation, will be obliged to deputise for me in my absence and to decide on a course of actions to be taken against the violator," explained the head of the MOD. Maj Gen Miroslav Korba, Commander Slovak Air Force, added that the Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) duties are performed by the SVK Air Force on a 24/7 stand-by basis. "As part of the exercise today you have had the chance to see for yourselves that we are 100 per cent ready for that," he said.

The Slovak Air Force delivers uninterrupted protection and defence in support of securing the inviolability of Slovak airspace within NATO airspace (NATINAMDS – NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System).



Minister in discussion with students

(25 November) In his discussion with students at Milan Hodža Bilingual Grammar School in Sučany, SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš addressed issues relating to security, defence and the main tasks of the SVK Armed Forces. Also, he answered questions on how to join the ranks of active duty soldiers and on the Armed Forces' modernisation. By doing so, the Ministry of Defence wants to deliver on its pledge to raise awareness of patriotism and civil defence issues as spelled out in the Government Commitments Manifesto, and to forge closer cooperation with schools. Among other things, the Minister of Defence informed the students of the updated White Book on Defence of the Slovak Republic, introduced the Voluntary Military Training and Active Reserves projects, and explained the role of the SVK Armed Forces in international crisis management operations and missions abroad. The lecture and discussion were organised in cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic Centre.

Meeting of State Secretaries from V4 countries

(26 November) A meeting of the State Secretaries of the Ministries of Defence from the V4 countries in the format of the Senior Body was organised under the Polish Chairmanship of the Visegrad Group (July 2016 – June 2017) on 24-25 November in Szczecin. The main tasks of the Senior Body, delivered through the V4 Defence Cooperation Action Plan, are to determine the direction of defence cooperation; to identify areas of common interest; and to exercise continual oversight over the performance of assigned tasks. The Senior Body meets twice a year and makes recommendations to the Ministers of Defence on further steps to be adopted with the aim of advancing the defence cooperation of the V4 countries. Representing the Slovak Republic at the meeting was State Secretary Róbert Ondrejcsák. "We discussed the cooperation on implementing the conclusions of the July NATO Warsaw Summit and of the EU Global Strategy, as well as how to make the Common Foreign and Security Policy more impactful," he summarised. The State Secretaries took part in a briefing at the Headquarters NATO Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE), where they familiarised themselves with the HQ's activities before meeting with professional soldiers from the V4 countries. Then they joined a discussion at the 12th Polish Armed Forces Mechanised Brigade Command.



- At the invitation of Gen Milan Maxim, **Gen Josef Bečvář**, Chief of the General Staff of the Army of the Czech Republic, paid a visit to Slovakia on 23 November. Both Chiefs of the General Staff exchanged their experience in the delivery of state border protection. The meeting in eastern Slovakia also featured a demonstration mission to secure the Green Border with Ukraine.

- On 23 Nov, the Stationary Communications and Information Systems Base (SCISB) was visited by State Secretary **Róbert Ondrejcsák**. Col Peter Schvarzbacher, Commander SCISB, briefed him on the tasks of the SCISB, specialist personnel manning-related issues, technology upgrades, and future challenges.

- The **selection process for the Best Soldier** from among the Other Ranks and NCOs in the Training Year (TY) 2016 got underway at Bratislava Garrison on 22 Nov. The jury named Sgt Lukáš Kameniar, Sentry – Specialist of 2nd Company, SVK Armed Forces Guard of Honour, as the Best Non-Commissioned Officer, and Cpl Tomáš Schenk, Senior Sentry, of 2nd Company, SVK Armed Forces Guard of Honour, as the Best Soldier in the Other Ranks.

- A **remembrance ceremony** in honour of Czechoslovak pilot Lt Col František Max, who died tragically on 20 Nov 1969, was held in the presence of his family and members of the SVK Armed Forces and the Army of the Czech Republic in the Military Forests at the Transport Wing Kuchyňa on 21 Nov. The ceremony was led by Staff Military Chaplain Capt Slavko Ganaj, of Transport Wing Kuchyňa.

- On 24 Nov, the **Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade (AAMB) Nitra** was visited by General Staff (GS) Col Vladimír Barca, Commander 25th Anti-Aircraft Missile Regiment Strakonice, escorted by an Army of the Czech Republic (ACR) delegation. Col Ladislav Dovhun, Brigade Commander, briefed him on the Brigade's structure and tasks. The commanders signed a cooperation agreement in an effort to develop the Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) capabilities of the SVK Armed Forces and the ACR.

- On 21 Nov, the Armed Forces Academy (AFA) Liptovský Mikuláš opened a three-week **Basic CIMIC and PSYOPS Course**, led by AFA and SVK Armed Forces instructors. The course delivers the basics of CIMIC and PSYOPS Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) -specific education for members of the CIMIC and PSYOPS Centre. The course is being attended by 25 members of the CIMIC MOS and 21 members of the PSYOPS MOS.

- Acting as the officer in command of the exercise, the Commander of the Combat Support Company, of 21st Combined Mechanised Battalion Trebišov, directed a **live-fire exercise involving the OT-90 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs)** on Poruba Garrison Range on 23 Nov. The exercise was aimed at honing the gunners-operators' habits and skills in firing the turret-mounted weapon system at disappearing and moving targets. All gunners-operators coped with the conditions of the exercise very well.

- On 19 Nov, the UNFICYP Headquarters organised a **football tournament**, where, among others, also three Slovak teams presented themselves: the Camp General M. R. Štefánik team, the Nicosia-based Engineer Platoon team, and the Mobile Force Reserve team who won the tournament. The Slovak soldiers thus built on the recent success of the Camp General Štefánik team at Sports Day in Sector 1.

Anniversary in Prešov

(25 November) State Secretary Marián Saloň and Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic Gen Milan Maxim attended the ceremony marking the 24th anniversary of the formation of the Colonel General Ján Ambruš Helicopter Wing Prešov. Gen Maxim presented a medal to the Commander of the Helicopter Wing as an expression of his satisfaction with the tasks accomplished by all Wing members. The Helicopter Wing was established at Prešov Air Base on 23 November 1992. Since then it has been subject to numerous reorganisation schemes. On 31 October 2003, the President of the Slovak Republic conferred upon it an honorary title of "Colonel General Ján Ambruš Air Base". To mark the anniversary, an open day event was held at the Helicopter Wing on 25 Nov.



Cadet crowned champion

(19 November) Pte Lucia Vičáková, a 3rd-year cadet of the Armed Forces Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš, rose to become the Champion of Slovakia with the time of 15:57 at the Slovak National Cross Country Running Championships held in Šamorín on 19 Nov. Coming in first ahead of others by 1 minute and even overtaking Olympian Iveta Putalová, she won the women's 4 km runners category. "We ran along a grassy track with a sandy section, and obstacles took away a lot of energy from us. Throughout the run I did not go through any crisis, and what helped me a lot was a recent 10-day intense training session in the High Tatra Mountains," said Lucia, for whom this is the first Champion of Slovakia title.

Metrologist of the Year 2016

(25 November) The Trenčín Garrison Club hosted a specialist gathering of metrologists from across Defence. The Chief Metrologist of the SVK Armed Forces, Imrich Repka, familiarised the participants with the Training Year (TY) 2016 work results. He informed them of the preparations being underway to draft a new MOD Directive on Metrology Support in Defence and of the plans to cooperate with Czech partner organisations and the Armed Forces from across the NATO countries. For his merit in advancing and developing metrology, Milan Papaj, a long-time employee of the Metrology and Testing Centre Žilina, was presented with the Metrologist of the Year 2016 Award.

Military Chaplains in visit to Headquarters SVK Land Forces

(24 November) The Ordinary of the Ordinariate of the Slovak Armed Forces and Armed Corps, Mons František Rábek, and the Chaplain General of the Ecumenical Pastoral Service Head Office (EPSHO) in the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps, Col Marian Bodolló, paid a visit to the Headquarters SVK Land Forces Trenčín on 24 Nov. They were interested to receive information on the status of affairs in the field of spiritual services and on the manning levels of military chaplains across the SVK Land Forces. To mark this event, Mons František Rábek celebrated a Holy Mass at the local chapel. In attendance at the Mass were, along with other believers, the Commander SVK Land Forces with his deputies, the Chaplain General of EPSHO, and the Dean of EPSHO at the Headquarters SVK Land Forces. The service was followed by a ceremonial lunch, during which Maj Gen Ondřej Novosad, Commander SVK Land Forces, presented plaquettes to both representatives of the Churches and expressed his gratitude



for their outstanding long-time cooperation with the SVK Land Forces.