



SVK-HUN above-average ties

(25 January) The defence cooperation between the Slovak Republic and Hungary is above average at the levels of bilateral meetings and international organisations or groupings. This announcement was made by Slovak Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš and Hungarian Minister of Defence István Simicskó, who arrived for an official visit to Slovakia.

On the defence engagement between the countries, Slovak Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš said: "There are several areas of cooperation we are working on. Let me underline our longstanding commitment to Cyprus as part of UNFICYP, where Hungarian personnel operate under Slovak command in Sector 4, and the exemplary cooperation of the Visegrad 4, as well as the cross-border cooperation on the protection of airspace, where we are currently in the process of drafting a treaty between our countries." Head of the Slovak MOD appreciated the reopening of the Office of the Defence Attaché of Hungary to Bratislava. He gave very special thanks to his Hungarian counterpart for Hungary's annual assistance in organising the commemoration ceremony in the village of Hejce.

Reflecting on the collaborative activities, Hungarian Minister of Defence István Simicskó said: "Along with Slovakia we have participated in joint missions abroad and in international exercises, we have our joint HQs, and we have set up the Office of the Defence Attaché of Hungary in Bratislava. We will definitely support our further cooperation." Hungary is currently holding the Presidency of the V4 countries, with Slovakia scheduled to take over the V4 Presidency in July 2018.

The Ministers spoke of the cooperation on PESCO and the EuroArtillery project, which has made it onto the list of the EU's first PESCO collaborative projects. In this project, Hungary has assumed the role of an observer and may become a full-fledged member in the future. Apart from the EuroArtillery project, both countries will cooperate on another 4 PESCO projects. Modernisation was also on the agenda.

Minister Simicskó was received by State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Lukáš Parížek and by Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security Anton Hrnko.

With Ambassador of Indonesia

(22 January) Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic Peter Gajdoš met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Slovakia, Her Excellency Ms Adiyatwidi Adiwoso. This has been her first visit to the SVK MOD since taking up her Diplomatic Service appointment in Slovakia. Their discussions centred on the SVK-IDN relationship and common defence and armaments industry cooperation.

Looking forward to developing stronger ties, Head of the SVK MOD said: "Defence industry cooperation with Indonesia has been grounded in a longstanding tradition. A cooperation agreement would definitely contribute to further enhancing our mutual relations." In this regard, he filled in Ambassador Adiwoso on the potential options for the IDN military to use Lešt Training Area and CBRN Training and Testing Centre Zemiansky Kostofany, and the courses at the SVK Armed Forces Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš for training and education purposes.

Minister Gajdoš briefed Ambassador Adiwoso on the strategic documents adopted by the MOD thus far and the 2018 MOD priorities. He further reflected on the significance of Slovakia's EuroArtillery project within the EU's PESCO initiative, as well as informing the Ambassador of Slovakia's ongoing Chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC).

SVK Security Council and Government endorse the Mobilisation Concept

(24 January) The Slovak Security Council and Cabinet endorsed the SVK Armed Forces Mobilisation Concept, which provides solutions to the decline in the number of reservists, which has been considerable since abolishing compulsory military service. Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš submitted two solutions to generating the reserves. The first alternative is based on the principle of voluntariness, the other one on the principle of liability.

Firstly, the SVK MOD counts on the generation of the reserves on the principle of voluntariness. In practice, this means that the reserves will be generated by the citizens who have completed their active duty service in the Armed Forces or service in the Armed Corps and in the Rescue Corps, as well as by the citizens who have carried out basic military training (BMT) under the Voluntary Military Training (VMT) scheme.

Secondly, the generation of the reserves may be based on the principle of liability. This can be defined as a situation whereby there is not enough interest in active duty service and VMT, and the total trained strength of the reserves has declined so dramatically that it is impossible to fill specified roles in the Armed Forces by reservists. Under such circumstances and at the request of the SVK Government, it will be inevitable for the President to make a decision to mobilise registered citizens for compulsory military training. This means no resumption of compulsory military service. Upon the Government's decision, reservists of selected military occupational specialties (MOS) will, too, be called on for an extraordinary exercise. Currently, there are 518,000 reservists in Slovakia. In addition to the Mobilisation Concept, the SVK MOD also submitted a number of documents on the defence of the Slovak Republic and the security of its citizens to the SVK Security Council and Government for consideration.

- After Slovakia's chairmanship of the TISA Project Steering Group, Maj Gen Miroslav Kocian, DCHOD/COS, and Lt Gen Mykola Kravchuk, COS for Op Spt of UKR GS, signed a Protocol on Handover of Lead Task to Ukraine in Bratislava on 25 Jan. The delegations took stock of the results achieved thus far and set out tasks for the coming period.

- SVK CHOD Gen Milan Maxim visited the **Topographic Institute (TOPÚ) Banská Bystrica** on 25 Jan. He familiarised himself with the Institute's main tasks in 2017 and 2018. The CHOD received a tour of the topographic production facility, with practical demonstrations of map production. At the conclusion of the visit, he presented the TOPÚ officials with a commemorative plaque in observance of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Slovak Republic and its Armed Forces.

- During a ceremony held at Sokolovské Barracks (ISTAR Bn Prešov) on 18 Jan, Ordinary of the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps, His Excellency Mons František Rábek, ushered in Lt Ladislav Jeremiáš as **Senior Military Chaplain** of ISTAR Bn Prešov, while at the same time appointing him as Assistant Military Chaplain of 2nd Mech Bde.

- The Training, Education and Specialised Preparation Section, Specialised Medical and Veterinary Activities Branch, Office of SVK Armed Forces Surgeon General Ružomberok, organised a **First Aid Course** (23-25 Jan), aimed at practical rehearsals of first aid, bandaging techniques, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), at its detached unit in Liptovský Mikuláš.

- Tactical Wing (TW) Sliach members remembered the birth of the most successful Slovakian fighter pilot in the service of the Royal Air Force (RAF) during WWII, **Maj Gen Otto Smik**, during a ceremony on 17 Jan. TW Sliach bears his name in its honorific title.

- SVK military personnel and MOD employees are invited to participate in the **1993-2017 SVK Armed Forces Top Event** opinion poll. As part of the Individual and Team categories, they can vote on the most significant event to have occurred in our Armed Forces over the past 25 years. Three participants will go in the draw to win a book, SVK Armed Forces and their Operational Experience in Afghanistan 2004-2014. For more information on the opinion poll and voting, go to the Sharepoint location: <http://web.gs.mil.sk/sbsp/OdPvAc/ODPaZP/Ider/Lists/Top%20udalos%20OS%2019932017/overview.aspx>.

- The SVK MOD releases this traffic alert to inform the drivers in Slovakia of the upcoming **Allied military movements**, scheduled from 29 Jan – 4 Feb 2018. A total of 19 Allied road moves will take place across Slovakia over the period. They will mainly involve Polish troops transporting materiel. Also planned are movements in connection with the Central European Chiefs of Defence Conference and a round trip military convoy, carrying oversize cargo of equipment, moving along the route between Prešov – Valaškovce.

Residential home for veterans

(24 January) A residential home for elderly veterans is becoming a reality. The SVK MOD will be enabled to do so thanks to the 2018 War Veterans Amendment Act, which was approved by the Government. It allows veterans to live in the residential home along with their spouses or unmarried dependents as partners with whom they share a common household. This is about long-term affordable accommodation for war veterans who have run into difficulty with accommodation. The Act empowers the MOD to pay a share of the cost of accommodation, provided that they are unable to do so out of their own pension. To qualify for a placement, they must meet the criteria set out in the Act. Should there be not enough applicants from among WWII veterans, the MOD is also open to accepting ex-service personnel. To be precise, those who receive a military pension or a military disablement pension with a minimum service period of 15 years and more. The MOD plans to refurbish one of its own existing buildings and transform it into a residential home. As of today, Slovakia registers 173 WWII veterans and over 7,500 contemporary veterans.

Inspection in Topoľčany



(24 January) SVK Chief of Defence Gen Milan Maxim inspected Topoľčany Garrison. Accompanied by Maj Gen Jindřich Joch, Commander Land Forces, and Brig Vladimír Kubáň, Commander 1st Mechanised Brigade, the General was keen to find out about the preparations for the deployment of the SVK eFP unit to Latvia, the training and certification exercise of 12th Mech Bn Grp, the sustainment of the SVK CBRN unit in

NATO's NRF/VJTF, the performance of the bilateral cooperation between the Engineer Battalion Sereď and military units from abroad, as well as about the continuity of the DELOSYS project with the participation of the Multiple Rocket Launcher Unit Rožňava.

MOD to support projects

(28 January) The SVK MOD will again support interesting projects of non-governmental organisations by dividing a sum of 100,000 euros among them. This year, too, civic associations, foundations, special interest associations with legal entity status, non-investment funds and non-profit organisations, registered in the Slovak Republic, which provide services generally beneficial to society, are invited to submit a maximum of 1 project to the SVK MOD. The maximum grant appropriation per project is 50,000 euros, while the minimum grant awarded will be 500 euros. The projects should be forwarded no later than 31 March 2018. For more information, go to www.mosr.sk.

Dukla awards the 2017 Best Sportspeople

(25 January) "I am proud to say that the sportsmen and women of our Dukla Sports Centre are widely regarded as sports elites in the world, be it in summer or winter sports. Our department has made a resolution to provide them with the best conditions for their preparation and training, so that they can stay fully focused on their performance," said Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš, speaking at the award ceremony recognising the best sports personalities of the Dukla Sports Centre in Banská Bystrica.



Marko Mirgorodský, World and European Junior and U23 Canoe Slalom Champion, picked up the Most Successful Junior Sportsman of the Year Award. Tomáš Mráz, canoe slalom coach, was presented with the Junior Coach of the Year Award. Marián Jung, powerboat racer, took the Non-Olympic Sports Award. And Veronika Velez Zuzulová, Petra Vlhová, Matej Falat and Andreas Zampa, the members of the quartet from the Alpine Ski

Championships at St Moritz, were honoured to receive the Best Collective Performance of the Year Award.

The Olympic Sports Award went to slalom canoeist Alexander Slařkovský, European Canoe Slalom Champion and 2017 World Vice-Champion. His coach, Stanislav Gejdoš, took the Coach of the Year Award. Among those inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Military Sports Centre Dukla Banská Bystrica were Jan Železný (javelin thrower), Martin Tešovič (weight lifter), Ladislav Mundil (biathlon coach) and Peter Schlanek (ski jumping coach). The Extraordinary Contribution to VŠC Dukla Award went to Obrana (Defence) Monthly, published by the SVK MOD, and to Ivan Kováč, former sportsman of the VŠC Dukla and sports reporter of Radio Slovakia.

Special thanks was given to biochemist Róbert Mistrik for his crucial role in restoring the reputation of Matej Tóth by explaining the deflections in his Athlete Biological Passport (ABP).