



Progress reviewed in Luxembourg

(17 June) EU Defence Ministers and Foreign Affairs Ministers met in Luxembourg to discuss current security and defence challenges. During the session of the Foreign Affairs Council, they reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS). A number of themes were discussed during the meeting, ranging from individual EU missions and operations to climatic change and its impact on the security stability of Europe and its immediate neighbourhood.

During the meeting, Defence and Foreign Affairs Ministers agreed on the need to further the practical implementation of the EU Global Strategy, where Defence is the most impactful area. In fact, this process began in 2016 during the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which was appreciated by EU HR/VP Federica Mogherini.

At the meeting, Ministers addressed EU-NATO cooperation, the hybrid and cyber threats faced by EU Member States, and the strengthening of Military Mobility. The discussions will continue at the next EU Defence Ministerial in Helsinki this August.

SVK troops to continue in Baltics

(20 June) Slovak troops will continue to perform their tasks as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in the Baltics. The proposal for Slovakia's continued deployment of up to 152 SVK Armed Forces personnel was approved by the Parliament today. This contribution to NATO's eFP in the Baltics is a confirmation of Slovakia's active membership in the North Atlantic Alliance and it points to the readiness of NATO countries to jointly participate in collective defence activities. Currently, Slovak troops are serving with the Canadian-led Battlegroup on Ādazi Training Area in Latvia.



Inquiry into 4x4 tender

(17 June) In the interest of ensuring maximum transparency of the tender and dispelling any doubt about it, the Ministry of Defence has lodged a request with the Office for Public Procurement to initiate an inquiry into the international tender – restricted procedure for procurement of 4x4 platforms. In doing so, it wants to distance itself from the politically motivated, unjustified statements and attacks that the tender conditions have been tailored to one bidder only.

As a result of the decision above, the MOD also extends the period for bidders to submit their requests to participate by 30 days starting from the date it lodged the request for inquiry with the Office for Public Procurement, i.e. no later than 17 July 2019. If the statement that the procedure applied is unlawful proves to be true, the Minister of Defence is ready to cancel the tender. Nevertheless, the MOD strictly refuses any attempts to undermine the international tender and the criteria that fully and completely mirror the operational requirements of service personnel.

Tobruq Legacy 2019: Slovak missiles roar over Baltic Sea

(17 June) the LIVEX phase of Ex Tobruq Legacy 2019 culminated with live firing at the Ustka Training Range, located on the coast of the Baltic Sea, Poland. Visiting the exercise along with Deputy Commander of the Slovak Air Force Brig Gen Róbert Kleštinec at the invitation of Officer Commanding the Exercise (OCE) Brig Gen Štefan Mordacz, DCHOD/COS Maj Gen Miroslav Lorinc highly praised the level and extent of the exercise.

Ex Tobruq Legacy contributes significantly to enhancing the interoperability of NATO SBAD forces. Over 4,800 personnel with 1,200 pieces of equipment from 20 countries took part in the exercise unfolding at four training centres in Poland. During the LIVEX phase, 13 different SBAD systems from 8 countries fired 200 anti-aircraft (AA) missiles at various aerial targets. Deputy Commander of the Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra Lt Col Jozef Paňko, who is in command of the Slovak task force in Poland, appreciates the results the Slovak IGLA MANPADS operators achieved under daytime and nighttime conditions. Other assets from the Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra were deployed on the exercise as well, including the ST-68 MSK radar, of the S-300PMU system, and the 2K12 KUB 2M Surface-to-Air Missile System. Exercise Tobruq Legacy 2020 will be held next year in Lithuania.



- The SVK MOD will recommend that the Slovak Government sign a Government-to-Government Agreement with the State of Israel on procurement of 17 3D RL medium, short and very short range radar systems. This proposal will now pass through inter-ministerial consultation.

- As part of the North Atlantic Alliance's NATINAMDS, two MiG-29 Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) interceptors were scrambled from Sliac Air Base on the evening of 23 June 2019 to establish contact with an Italian civilian airliner that had lost all communication, while it was transiting the territory of Slovakia on its flight route from Milan to Charkov.

- On 18 June 2019, Commander of 1st Mechanised Brigade Col Ivan Balog welcomed CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko to Topoľčany. The aim of the meeting, which was also attended by Commander of the Slovak Army Maj Gen Jindřich Joch, was to discuss the priorities of the SVK Armed Forces for the upcoming period with members of 1st Mechanised Brigade and Command Support Company. The official programme of Gen Zmeko then continued with his visit to 13th Mechanised Battalion Livec.

- MWD handlers from 10 different armed corps and units from Slovakia, Czechia and Hungary met in Krpáčovo for the 5th time to attend international cooperative training for MWD handlers. The training of nearly 70 MWD handlers and 80 MWDs was led by Maj Peter Soltés, Chief Canine Officer of the SVK MOD/Chief of the Canine Section, Training and Canine Branch, Military Police Department Vlkánová-Hronsek.

- The Trenčín Garrison Club hosted the main planning conference for Slovak Shield 2019. It was attended by members of the SVK General Staff, SVK Army, HQ AIRCOM, 5th Special Forces Regiment, Training Centre Lešť, Logistics Support Office, NFIU, Military Police, Office of the SVK Armed Forces Surgeon General, and foreign military representatives from Czechia, Hungary, Poland and the USA.

- Members of HQ 1st Mechanised Brigade and Command Support Company Topoľčany underwent railway troop movement training. The field phase was divided into 6 workstations, with focus on the provision of railway movements by guards and movement officers, the railway movement rules and safety measures, and the procedures for loading, anchoring and unloading vehicles and equipment.

- The Training and Canine Branch, Military Police Department Vlkánová-Hronsek, prepared a debut course for the Military Police Active Reserves in the second and third week of June. Active reservists familiarised themselves with MP rules and regulations, learned how to use equipment, weapons and vehicles, and worked on marksmanship theory and practice.

- Commander of the SVK Army Maj Gen Jindřich Joch announced a selection of service personnel to staff the positions of human intelligence (HUMINT) officers in the Intelligence Support Company, ISTAR Battalion Prešov. More information is available at <http://www.mil.sk/85612?pg=1>.

- Drivers are asked by the MOD to drive carefully as there will be 44 Allied road movements from 24-30 June 2019. They will mostly involve U.S., CZE, HRV and POL troops. SVK Army convoys will also ferry oversized cargo on the Martin – TC Lešť – Sereď route and there will also be SVK Army road movements on the routes: Hlohovec – Kamenica nad Cirochou and Rožňava – Trenčín.

Soldiers support Floorball League

(18 June) the nation-wide finals of the SVK Floorball League culminated in Košice. For the first time, the competition was joined by 240 members of the Slovak Armed Forces in order to encourage the nation's youth to do sports, live a healthy lifestyle and stir up their interest in military jobs. As part of the finals, there were close quarters combat (CQC) demonstrations and civil defence activities. The SVK Floorball League project was joined by a total of 100,000 pupils and students divided into 570 teams from primary schools and 127 teams from secondary schools. The Armed Forces were represented by 20 teams who competed in the regional tournaments in Banská Bystrica, Galanta and Prešov.



Minister visits Camp 2019

(22 June) Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš met with the secondary school students undertaking a 48-hour military training dubbed Camp 2019. This is meant to be a reward for 40 winners who had made it through the regional rounds of the Students' Defence Duals series and the Štúr's Pen School Magazine Competition. Camp 2019 offers signal, marksmanship, tactical, topographical and medical training. Apart from this, students familiarised themselves with the basics of CBRN Defence, crossed obstacles in the mountains, and practised survival in crisis conditions.

New SVK AF personnel

(17 June) After completing their full-time studies at the Aviation Faculty, Technical University of Košice, graduates of the University attended a graduation ceremony at the State Opera House in Košice. Col Ľubomír Matka, Deputy Commandant for Military Affairs, of the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy, announced the promotion of four graduates to the SVK AF rank of Lieutenant. Daniel Hilgart and Jozef Mário Jusko achieved the best results during their MSc Eng studies and were awarded the Highest University Honours – Red Diploma. Following the graduation, the newly promoted lieutenants reported to stations of the SVK Air Force. The Slovak Armed Forces will continue to cooperate with the Aviation Faculty, Technical University of Košice, in the years to come.

NATO Air Force Armaments Group Steering Committee meets at Lešť

(19 June) Under the auspices of Director General of the Modernization Department (SVK MOD) National Armaments Director Col Vladimír Kavický, the NATO Air Force Armaments Group (NAFAG) Steering Committee held working sessions at the Training Centre Lešť on 18-20 June 2019. Slovakia is expected to become a full-fledged member of NAFAG in 2020. The main aim of the meeting was to set NAFAG's priorities for the coming period, with the focus on developing and researching the Electronic Warfare (EW) and Electronic Counter Measure (ECM) techniques used by aircraft to suppress enemy air defences (SEAD).



The Slovak Armed Forces have performed tasks in support of NAFAG, especially by organising Exercise MACE in 2012, 2014 and 2018 in Slovakia. The exercises saw operators of

SBAD, radar and electronic intelligence (ELINT) systems and crews of tactical aviation carrying out activities in an active electromagnetic jamming (EJ) environment. Based on the results of the cooperation between the Slovak Armed Forces and the NATO Air Force Armaments Group thus far, Col Mark Elson (GBR), Director of the Aerospace Capabilities Group 3 (ACG3) and Sub-Group 2 (SG2), has recommended that the Slovak Republic be accepted as a full-fledged member of NAFAG.

Slovakia has accepted this offer. Thanks to this, the Slovak Armed Forces will gain access to the SG2's databases, with the aim of putting the expertise on the EW and ECM techniques into practice. As a result, the newly fielded and future air assets of the Slovak Air Force (UH-60M helicopters, C-27J transport aircraft, and F-16 fighter jets) will be better protected against enemy SBAD systems.