



President visits MOD

(27 March) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď met with President of the Slovak Republic and Commander-in-Chief of the Slovak Armed Forces Zuzana Čaputová at MOD Main Building. On this occasion, he presented the MOD's new prospects and priorities as well as the MOD's options for additional support to the SVK Government in the fight against the spread of COVID-19. In attendance at the meeting was also Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko and the newly appointed State Secretary of the SVK MOD, Marian Majer.

President and C-in-C of the SVK Armed Forces Zuzana Čaputová appreciated, above all, the priorities of the new MOD leadership, whereas she stressed that high demands need to be placed on transparency and efficiency of defence spending with regard to Armed Forces modernisation. She also highlighted the assistance the SVK MOD and Armed Forces have been providing in this exceptional emergency. "I must note with satisfaction that the SVK Armed Forces are ready to assist in this complicated situation in which we find ourselves. From all the information I have received, I can conclusively state that the Armed Forces have a very professional approach. For this, I want to say "Thank You" to all members of the Slovak Armed Forces at home and abroad," she said. As well as executing assistance tasks in this exceptional emergency, the Armed Forces carry on delivering the defence and security of Slovakia uninterrupted, she reminded.

Head of the MOD Jaroslav Naď thanked the President for accepting the invitation to visit the MOD. "I will take every effort to keep Madam President as Commander-in-Chief informed of all the positives and problems occurring across Defence in a prompt, comprehensive and open manner," he said. On the spread of COVID-19, he praised the Armed Forces' quick and effective assistance response. "We are trying to help across a broad spectrum of activity, ranging from the airlift capability under NATO's SALIS programme to unloading and distributing medical supplies from airport to the central warehouses of the State Material Reserves Administration and on to end users," he said. During the meeting, both leaders discussed the military medical capabilities the defence department can offer. "28 army doctors are already working in civilian hospitals and we still have over 300 medical professionals available. Additionally, we are providing cutting-edge ambulances in support of the civilian health service," he added. "We are working to begin COVID-19 testing within Defence. Starting from Wednesday, we should test 100 people a day, we have capacity for that, and at the beginning of next week we are launching the training of new medics under the Voluntary Military Training project," said the Minister, emphasising that the MOD has taken delivery of 30,000 FFP3 respirators to be distributed to all SVK Armed Forces personnel.

Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko said: "In response to coronavirus, the SVK Armed Forces have scaled down their activity. Yet, this move has had no impact on their functioning, nor on their core task. The Armed Forces stand ready with full vitality to undertake all tasks, including domestic and international crisis management ones."

Defence Minister addresses personnel serving abroad via video call

(26 March) Speaking by video call from the MOD, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko addressed service personnel currently serving on international crisis management operations abroad, including with NATO's RESOLUTE SUPPORT in Afghanistan, eFP in Latvia, UNFICYP in Cyprus, and EUROFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On this occasion, he thanked them for their commitment and resolve to help towards restoring peace and security in the crisis regions and he was interested to learn about the current state of play in their areas of deployment, the present state of health of soldiers, and the morale of SVK Armed Forces members. During the video call, he also set out the priorities of the new MOD leadership and updated them on the spread of COVID-19 across Slovakia. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "I am proud of our service personnel who have an excellent reputation in the world and their service has brought credit on the Slovak Republic. I will do the utmost I can to ensure they have decent Service conditions on missions abroad as well as at home once they return to Slovakia." Currently, a total of 495 members of the SVK Armed Forces are serving on international crisis management missions and operations abroad and 148 service personnel are working within NATO and EU structures.



■ **Peter Kozák** took over as the new Secretary General of the Service Office of the SVK Ministry of Defence on Thur 26 Mar 2020. On the recommendation of Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, he was appointed to the role by the Cabinet on 25 Mar. Secretary General Ján Holko resigned from the post that same day. Peter Kozák has, until recently, worked as Director of the Legislation Branch at the Ministry of Environment. Earlier in the past, he worked for 7 years in the Ministry of Defence, mostly in the field of legal services. The new Secretary General pursued legal studies and completed his PhD in International Law. He is a member of the Slovak Society of International Law (SSIL) at the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

■ On Sat 28 Mar 2020, a Slovak Air Force Let L-410 Turbolet aircraft **transported medical supplies** to Slovak soldiers currently deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

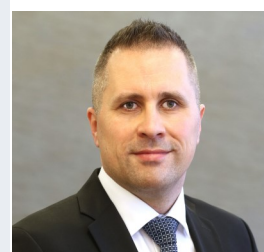
■ There have been the first **two confirmed cases of COVID-19** across Defence. Namely, a serviceman from the Ministry of Defence in Bratislava and a civilian employee from the Helicopter Wing in Prešov. Both sources of the infection have been identified. The individuals affected require no hospitalisation and are in self-isolation at home.

■ The Slovak National Uprising (SNP) Central Military Hospital – Faculty Hospital Ružomberok has set up a **mobile testing team** to collect samples from patients with suspected COVID-19 infection. The mobile testing team has been operational from 07:00 to 15:30 since 26 Mar and its area of responsibility covers the Liptov and Orava regions.

■ The Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic, the Chief of Defence, and the Defence Magazine Editorial Staff have announced the 19th edition of the MOD Fine Art Drawing and Painting Contest under the name **"Soldiers Through the Eyes of Children"**. Primary school pupils can thus express their ideas about the work and life of servicemen and servicewomen through art. For more information, go to <http://www.mosr.sk/46758-sk/ziaci-zakladnychskol-sa-mozu-aj-tento-rok-zapojiť-do-vytvarnej-sutazevojaci-ocami-deti/>.

■ Drivers are advised by the SVK MOD to **drive carefully** and with caution as the SVK military will conduct return road movements, ferrying oversized cargo from Hlohovec to Nemecká, scheduled from 30 Mar to 5 Apr 2020. Over the period, the SVK military will also move equipment and material from Vlkonová to Zemianske Kostolany by rail.

New State Secretary appointed



(26 March) Marian Majer has been appointed the new State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic. His appointment to the post has been approved by the SVK Cabinet, on the recommendation of Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď. He is returning to the MOD where he previously worked

as Director of the Office of State Secretary, Director General of the Defence Policy, International Relations and Legislation Department, and Director General of the Control Department – Defence Minister's Inspectorate.

In the past, he was also employed in the non-governmental sector as an analyst of the Central European Policy Institute (CEPI) and the Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA). More recently, he worked as Director of the Slovak Security Policy Institute (SSPI). He began his professional career as a journalist working for the TA3 TV News Channel (2001) before joining the SME Daily Newspaper (2002-2004) as an international news editor. He studied history and politics at the Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University in Bratislava, where later on he earned his PhD in Theory of Politics. He also attended several study programmes in Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom.

Sale of a building stopped

(26 March) The new MOD leadership will not allow the sale of a building owned by Military Forests and Estates, a state-owned enterprise (SOE), in Malacky. The SOE has planned to sell off the office building only to rent it from its new owner. This move has since long been criticised publicly by the current head of the MOD, Jaroslav Naď. The priority of the current MOD leadership is to introduce a transparent defence procurement process which will facilitate checks on the spending of funds and resources from the defence budget. "In this way, too, we want to make sure these processes are implemented economically, purposefully and transparently," he added.

Full Field Kit this week

Live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat Regina Radio's Full Field Kit, aimed at all soldiers and civilians, you will receive information on how soldiers are helping citizens during the COVID-19 outbreak and we will remember the 16th anniversary of Slovakia's entry into NATO. We appreciate your comments, suggestions and opinions. Please, write to us at pinapolda@mod.gov.sk.

SVK Armed Forces personnel assist with delivery of medical supplies

(25 March) 74 tons of medical supplies were flown from China to Slovakia. Service personnel from HQ Bratislava Garrison (HQ BA GAR) assisted with the unloading and delivery of all supplies to the warehouses of the SVK State Material Reserves Administration (SSHR). Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Today at Bratislava Airport, Armed Forces personnel have been helping with the delivery of medical supplies to aid the fight against coronavirus. I am extremely pleased that at present our soldiers provide mainstay support to SVK citizens who can count on them." He explained that members of the SVK Armed Forces have, so far, carried out assistance tasks on



joint patrols, working closely with SVK police forces. The medical supplies were transported by a heavy airlift transport aircraft under NATO's Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS) programme. The consignment comprised personal protective equipment (PPE), such as protective face masks, gloves and protective suits. Based on a request to speed up the distribution of the supplies, the SVK military has deployed UH-60M

Blackhawks. One of such medical transports took place on 27 March, when supplies from the State Material Reserves Administration warehouses in Slovenská Ľupča were flown to medical facilities in Bratislava.