



Official visit to Hungary

(22 July) The bilateral security and defence relations between Slovakia and Hungary are set pragmatically, with both sides showing mutual interest in their continuity in the positive direction, as has been the case so far, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď confirmed after meeting his counterpart Tibor Benkő during his first official visit to Hungary. The head of the SVK MOD used this occasion to introduce the new SVK Defence Attaché to Hungary, Col Norbert Tornyai.

One of the results of the meeting is an agreement to reactivate the SVK-HUN Mixed Commission, which came into existence following the conclusion of the Agreement on Good Neighbourhood and Friendly Cooperation between Slovakia and Hungary in 1999. "The Commission's working groups, led by the State Secretaries, will work together towards shaping a more humane policy for service members. Our aim is to cooperate with our partners from Hungary in order to drive improvement of the Service conditions for soldiers," explained Minister Naď. Apart from this, both leaders agreed that the ongoing talks on the cooperation agreement between the SVK Air Force and the HUN Air Force should be completed quickly.

Both Ministers appreciated the cooperation on exercises between the SVK and HUN Armed Forces, for example, consider Ex BRAVE WARRIOR, Ex TOXIC VALLEY, Ex COOPSEC and Ex SLOVAK SHIELD, as well as the TISA project which is aimed at delivering assistance to civilian populations and has a part to play in mitigating the effects of floods along the Tisa River.

Minister Naď also paid a visit to the Slovak Embassy in Budapest, where he met with Deputy Ambassador Mr Róbert Maxián to discuss current political developments in Hungary.

Closer to new 3D radar systems

(24 July) The Ministry of Defence has made progress on the alarming situation with the 3D RL radar systems after Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď changed the conditions of the tender originally announced by the former MOD leadership. This was mainly because of the non-transparent bidding process, due to which the Defence Minister received several official international complaints. Therefore, the acting MOD leadership has published new competitive bidding conditions that are more transparent and beneficial for Slovakia, whilst being fully consistent with the current requirements of the Slovak Armed Forces.

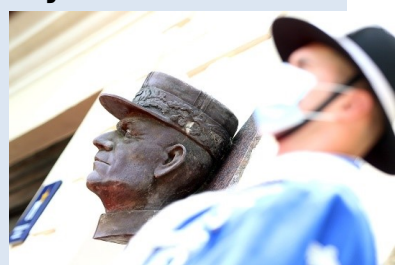
State Secretary Marian Majer handed over the new Request for Government Proposal (RfGP) to representatives of the Governments of France, the Netherlands, Israel, Hungary, Poland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Spain, Italy and Turkey which have the capacity to deliver the required 3D radar systems and which communicated with the MOD about the procurement project in the past. The MOD expects the listed governments to present their bids no later than 30 Sept 2020.

"The cancellation of the entire bidding process and the start of a new one would cost our Armed Forces another 4 years and we cannot afford that," explained Minister Naď.

On the RfGP documentation, State Secretary Marian Majer explained: "The MOD requests individual governments to submit a complex bid for the replacement of all types of the 3D radars – 6 pcs of medium range radars, 5 pcs of short range radars, and 6 pcs of very short range radars, whereas we also want to have a separate offer for each type of the 3D radar." There is a requirement for the SVK defence industry's participation in the process of producing, supplying and repairing the 3D radar systems. The MOD wants to procure a total 17 3D radars worth an estimated €155.090 million, VAT included.

140th anniversary of Gen M. R. Štefánik's birthday commemorated

(21 July) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď commemorated the legacy and paid homage to Gen Milan Rastislav Štefánik, one of the greatest figures of our history, in his native village of Košariská. Also in attendance at the ceremony marking his 140th birthday were Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová, Parliamentary Chairman Boris Kollár, and Prime Minister Igor Matovič. "Through commemorative events like this one, we pay homage to those who have left behind ineradicable traces in our history. At the same time, we thus contribute to raising awareness and bolstering a sense of patriotism in young people," said Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď. He made a special mention of Gen M. R. Štefánik's meritorious service in establishing the interwar Czechoslovak Republic and his key role in building the Czechoslovak Legion by successfully rallying the support of the international diplomatic and military circles. On this occasion, the Defence Minister awarded and presented medals to five WW2 veterans and liberators of Slovakia. The SVK Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal, 1st Grade, was awarded to Pavol Liška, Ján Krutý and Branislav Tvarožek, the SVK Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal, 2nd Grade, to Anna Bergerová, and the SVK Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal, 3rd Grade, to Július Molitoris.



- Acting on the suspicious sell-off of Ministry of Defence land holdings in Tatranská Lomnica, the Ministry of Defence has initiated a financial **audit of MOD-owned joint stock company Horezza**.

- To mark the 140th anniversary of Gen M. R. Štefánik's birthday, "Matica slovenská", a SVK scientific and cultural foundation, held a **commemorative event in Komárno**, with the participation of Director General of the MOD's Human Resources Department Martin Jakal and members of the SVK Guard of Honour.

- On 20-21 July, the Training Centre Lešť hosted **Ex Blue Hope 2020**, a certification exercise for the service personnel deploying to serve with UNFICYP, Cyprus.

- A graduation ceremony for 32 graduates of the **NCO (OR-5) Course** was held at the NCO Club of the NCO Academy.

- Commander of the SVK Air Force Lubomír Svoboda was treated to a preview of the **Knights of the Skies – Czechoslovak RAF Pilots Exhibition** at the Lučenec Town Museum on 20 July.

- The Training Centre Lešť has started cooperating with the SVK Karate and Martial Arts Federation, with which it will deliver **specialist close combat courses** for members of the SVK Armed Forces.

- **HQ 2nd Mechanised Brigade** held a farewell ceremony for the outgoing Command Senior Enlisted Leader (CSEL) of 2nd Mechanised Brigade, Sgt Maj Miroslav Ferenc.

- Based in Cyprus's Nicosia, the Force Military Police Unit (FMPU) organised the **Military Skills Competition (MSC)**. A mixed SVK-UK team won the competition.

- Under the "Find Your Home" Armed Forces Project, members of the Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra prepared a **Homeland Defence Activity and Sporting Day** for kids from the Children's Home in Koliňany and Kolárovo. Similarly, members of HQ 2nd Mechanised Brigade and its Command Support Company prepared a programme for kids from the Children's Home in Svidník and so did members of the Guard of Honour for kids from the Children's Home in Bernelákovo.

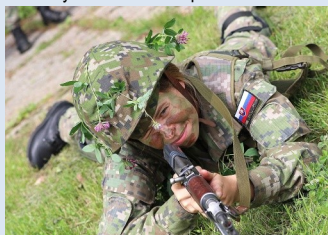
- As part of Phase I of the refurbishment works to the **Death Valley Open Air Museum**, three out of eight T-34/85 tanks were treated with sandblasting before being painted with a new colour.

- The Central Military Hospital Ružomberok provides **COVID-19 testing** even for the persons paying for the coronavirus test every Tue and Fri between 07:00 and 15:00 at the Infectology Clinic, with prior arrangement by phone on 0948 988 237.

- Drivers are advised by the MOD to drive carefully as there will be **4 Allied road movements** involving DEU and POL troops across Slovakia from 27 July to 2 August. Over the same period, there will be several SVK Army trip convoys on the following routes: Martin – Levice, Michalovce – Ľubica and back, Martin – Nitra, Martin – CV Lešť, Zemianske Kostolany – Michalovce and back, Z. Kostolany – Sliach and back, as well as SVK Army rail movements from Z. Kostolany to Prešov and from Z. Kostolany to Kuchyňa.

Future military doctors undergo BMT at Martin-based training facility

(24 July) The Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin is hosting a shortened version of Basic Military Training (BMT) for future military doctors between 13 and 31 July. Chief of the Army and Air Defence Specialties Centre Maj Kamil Bacula explained that the future military doctors will attend the 23rd Officers Course for College Graduates at the Armed Forces Academy. Drill Sergeant of the BMT Company MSgt Ladislav Rechterik emphasised that this is the first BMT programme for future military doctors only. "A total of 15 cadets, 10 women and 5 men, joined Basic Military Training. The training programme was shortened from 7 weeks down to 3 weeks. That is why the training lasts from 05.30 to 18.00 from Monday



to Saturday. The entire training programme is pretty condensed, but I must say that all cadets are motivated to pass it as best as they can. They did very well in the physical fitness test (PFT)," said MSgt Rechterik.

The BMT instructors place great emphasis on their physical fitness, because military doctors and medics must cope with difficult tasks in the field. They started with the 5km run and took the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) the following day. They did very well both in the run and the PFT.

The instructors wish to see the next intake of BMT trainees achieving similar results this August, with extra assignments from tactics, marksmanship, CBRN and topography.

On SVK-ROU cooperation

(20 July) In their discussion of current security and defence issues, including today's challenges in the international environment, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and Romanian Ambassador Steluța Arhire affirmed their interest in further enhancing and deepening the cooperation between Slovakia and Romania in this field at both bilateral and multilateral levels. Speaking of the Defence engagement between the countries, the head of the MOD said: "The close historical ties between Slovakia and Romania and the membership of both States in the EU and NATO create outstanding conditions for seeking even more intense development of the SVK-ROU defence relationship. I am very pleased that today I had an opportunity to present our priorities to Madam Ambassador and that we discussed ways of strengthening our mutual relations in the politico-military field."

Nastya among SOF personnel and kids



(23 July) The 5th SOF Regiment Žilina was visited by members of the DUKLA Banská Bystrica Military Sports Centre on 21 July.

Among the visitors were three-time Olympian Anastasiya Kuzmina and her husband

Daniel Kuzmin, Matej Tóth's physiotherapist SSgt Denis Freudenfeld and North and South Pole marathon runner Daniel Palko. The aim of the visit was to pass on to SOF personnel the DUKLA members' valuable expertise they have developed over their long sporting careers. The first part of the lecture was aimed at service members and provided information on nutrition and the physical and psychological training needed to cope with strenuous situations. The second part of the visit took place in the Hall of Honour and Fame, where Nastya met with kids from the Children's Home in Bytča as part of the "Find Your Home" Armed Forces project fostering partnerships between the SVK Armed Forces and the children's homes in Slovakia.

Gift with a touch of military inspiration

(22 July) The US Embassy in Bratislava provided assistance to the SVK Ministry of Health by gifting personal protective equipment (PPE) to medical staff. The reciprocal cooperation between the U.S. Civil Affairs Team and the Martin-based CIMIC and PSYOPS Centre, operating under the SVK Special Operations Forces, resulted in the gifting of 25,000 PPEs – face masks, respirators, protective gowns, safety glasses, gloves and non-contact infrared thermometers. The products worth US\$30,000 were purchased by the U.S. Embassy from a SVK company and delivered to a Health Ministry warehouse. The PPEs are intended for the Health Ministry medical staff working in the marginalised Roma settlements. This assistance is a positive example of cooperation between NATO partners.