



Parliament greenlights U.S.-SVK DCA

(9 February) Parliament greenlighted the Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Slovak Republic. Of the 140 MPs present, the DCA was supported by 79 MPs. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "I want to thank all MPs for not being indifferent to the security of our country and its citizens. I especially appreciate they did not succumb to the pressure of those who were seeking to undermine our foreign policy direction and our safe and peaceful future in NATO and the EU by raising doubts over the transatlantic partnership. The parliamentary vote confirmed that Slovakia is clear in its mind about who its Allies are." Minister Naď went on to reiterate that the Agreement ramps up the security of Slovakia through deeper defence ties with our strategic partner, whilst fully respecting the SVK constitution and laws. The deal contains interpretation clauses by both countries, which clearly confirm their shared perception of the Agreement, mutual respect for sovereignty and law, and deny any assertions that the Agreement serves as a prerequisite for building U.S. bases or deploying weapons of mass destruction in Slovak territory. "I just want to once again say thank you to the former SVK Governments for starting the negotiations on this Agreement. Also thanks to the initiative of the former Cabinets, today we are a step closer to achieving a higher level of SVK security and establishing the legal framework for intense cooperation with the USA," added the head of the MOD. On 3 Feb 2022, the DCA was signed on behalf of Slovakia by Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, while U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken added his signature to the document for the USA. After formal approval from Parliament, the Agreement still needs to be ratified by the SVK president before entering into force.



European Defence Fund as a chance

(10 February) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď welcomed the new Head of the European Commission's Representation in Slovakia, Mr Vladimír Šucha to the MOD. During their first meeting, they discussed the tasks of the EC Representation in Slovakia. Among them is to encourage and prepare Slovakia's defence businesses to respond to the EDF calls for submission of proposals to get funding for their collaborative projects from the European Defence Fund (EDF). To do that, the Ministry of Defence has set up an MOD Committee for EDF, which is made up of experts from across the MOD, whereas the intent is to extend this initiative to other government departments. Currently, the Committee is working to identify prospective SVK defence businesses, including the priorities of their specialisms (e.g. nanotechnology, geolocation, databases, AI, etc.). Minister Naď said: "Slovakia has quality specialists who are able to prepare competitive projects, as evidenced by the successes of several companies in last year's competitions. The European Defence Fund has a budget of €8bn for 2021-2027. With our support, I believe the funds could also be used for Slovak R&D defence industry projects." Also discussed today was the fight against hybrid and cyber threats and disinformation, as well as support for EU initiatives such as Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). The MOD also welcomes the EC's efforts to process a new European Space Strategy (ESS), in order to incorporate security and defence into the document. Funded from the EU budget, the European Defence Fund (EDF) is the EC's initiative to support collaborative defence R&D across EU MS. Those eligible for EDF funding are the legal entities based in the EU.

Petra Vihová wins Olympic Gold

(9 February) Petra Vihová, member of the SVK National Team and the Dukla Military Sports Centre, won the Gold medal in the women's slalom at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. In her strongest alpine ski discipline, she stood in eighth place after the first run, which kept her 0.72sec off first-place finisher Lena Duerr's (DEU) total time. Yet, she put in a masterful second descent and triumphed in the race. The Žampa bothers performed excellently in the second run of the men's Super-G event and finished among the world's 20 best-placed performers. Of the 87 skiers, only 57 finished the first run of the race, marked by snow and reduced visibility. Thanks to their superb performance in the second run, Adam moved from 21st to 15th place, while his younger brother Andreas moved from 23rd to 16th place. In biathlon, thanks to her three clean shoots, biathlete Paulína Fialková placed an outstanding 10th in the women's 10km pursuit and 14th in the women's 7.5km sprint. Her sister Ivona finished 41st in the women's sprint and moved up five positions to 36th place in the women's pursuit. In luge, Dukla lugers Tomáš Vaverčák a Matej Zmij finished 13th in the men's doubles luge. Luge racer Katarína Šimonáková came in 25th.



- A U.S. delegation, led by Maj Gen Randall Reed, visited the Slovak Air Force as part of the **PHASE III FORCE DEVELOPMENT** programme on 7-9 Feb. They were welcomed to 46 Wing Kuchyňa by DCHOD Lt Gen Lubomír Svoboda and COM Kuchyňa Air Base Col Peter Prokop. While at SVK Air Force HQ Zvolen, the U.S. delegation met with COM SVK AF Brig Gen Róbert Tóth and members of HQ 81 Wing Sliach for talks on the provision of training for F-16 SVK pilots and technicians before and after the delivery of F-16 Fighting Falcon airframes to Slovakia.

- The selection process for the SVK Special Operations Forces (SOF) units – including 5 Special Forces Regiment at Žilina Garrison, 51 Training Base Žilina, 52 Airborne Battalion Trebišov, and for the Cyber Defence positions at SOCOM Trenčín – will take place in the first half of April.

- The General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš delivered a week-long NATO-certified **Initial Joint Operations Planning Course** for the seventh time. The aim of the course was to familiarise the participants with military operations planning in line with NATO STANAGs. The course was attended by representatives of the GEO Defence Staff, specialists from the University of Defence in Brno, two French Army cadets, and eight SVK Army personnel.

- The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to motorists as 46 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 14 to 20 Feb 2022. The MOD stresses that the Allied transit movements have been approved in line with the SVK Public Health Authority-issued coronavirus safety guidelines. Over the same period, the SVK military will conduct road movements from/to: Hlohovec – Sered, Prešov – Trebišov and back, Koliňanský Vrch – Nitra, Nitra – Levice and back, Sered – Lešť and back, Lešť – Hlohovec and back, Trebišov – Moldava nad Bodvou, Moldava nad Bodvou – Prešov, Nemšová – Trebišov and back, Zvolen – Sliach and back, Poprad – Záhorie, Zvolen – Poprad and back, Poprad – Prešov, Sliach – Nitra, Prešov – Michalovce, Veľká Ida – Zvolen, Záhorie – Nemšová, Michalovce – Trebišov, Michalovce – Nemšová and back, Poprad – Veľká Ida, Nemšová – Poprad and back, Trebišov – Poprad, Martin – Voderady and back, Zvolen – Nemšová and back, Močiar – Nemšová and back, Mierovo – Nemšová, Nemšová – Žilina, Martin – Zemianske Kostolany and back, Žilina – Martin, Sliach – Nemšová, Martin – Ružomberok, Ružomberok – Liptovský Mikuláš, Liptovský Mikuláš – Nemšová, Nitra – Zvolen, Zvolen – Mierovo, Zvolen – Zemianske Kostolany and back, Michalovce – Trenčín and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Rožňava and back, Sliach – Trenčín and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Topoľčany and back, Trenčín – Záhorie, Zemianske Kostolany – Trebišov, Záhorie – Ruskov and within the cities of Michalovce and Martin. Also planned for next week are the following SVK military rail movements from/to: Prešov – Zemianske Kostolany, Michalovce – Sása-Pliešovce, and Trebišov – Sása-Pliešovce.

FULL FIELD KIT

The Full Field Kit radio programme, featured on Radio Regina live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, presents basic training at TC Lešť.

Initial training in freezing temperatures at Martin and Lešť

(10 February) The Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin, along with the Training Centre Lešť for the first time, has been hosting the largest intake of junior soldiers (JSs) and professionally qualified officers (PQOs) ever in the history of the Base. These days their initial training is culminating. This is also true of the training platoon led by Capt Martin Červeň at TC Lešť, which has been hosting all officer cadets as well as some trainee soldiers, assigned to six training platoons. The company commander is satisfied with his subordinates' commitment to per-



SVK support for Ukraine

(11 February) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď welcomed the Ambassador of Ukraine to Slovakia, His Excellency Mr Yuri Mushka to the Ministry of Defence. The discussion reflected on SVK-UKR defence and security cooperation in view of current developments on Ukraine's border. Mr Naď said: "Our position vis-à-vis Ukraine is clear and unwavering – we fully support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, as well as its reform process towards the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance."

Strengthening defence capabilities

(8 February) The Slovak Armed Forces welcome all the adopted measures directed towards strengthening the security of the Slovak Republic as a NATO member. The Defense Cooperation Agreements are just such a step. "We are ready to use



every opportunity to strengthen our readiness to conduct the core task that is placed before the Slovak Armed Forces within the meaning of applicable legislation, and the Defense Cooperation Agreement with our strategic partner, the United States of America, is exactly such an opportunity for us as well," said CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko.

Army divers under the ice

(11 February) TC Lešť and Lakes Devičie and Richňava hosted specialist drills for Army divers in the second week of February. The main aim of the drills was to hone the skills of Army divers in diving operations in the wintry conditions and in handling equipment and materiel in the water. As part of their training, the divers also took to the water to test their new gear, including a new underwater scooter.



forming the training tasks. According to his words, their will was also weather tested. "Especially the professionally qualified officers touched bottom, physically and mentally. The freezing temperatures tested their resolve to conduct training tasks – including spending nights in the woods while sleeping in the shelters they have made," said Capt Červeň. On successful completion of the training programme, JSs and PQOs will take the Oath of Allegiance

and pass out of basic training on 25 Feb before embarking on the next stage of their careers.