



Russia unleashes war against democracy

(27 February) In response to the influx of refugees from Ukraine, the SVK Government declared an emergency situation in Slovakia. The aim of the emergency situation is to create the conditions for the adoption of necessary measures to mitigate the consequences of a mass influx of foreigners to Slovakia.

Prime Minister Eduard Heger stressed there was no reason to panic or worry, saying: "The declaration of an emergency situation is the lowest level of threat. This is just for the state authorities to be able to coordinate steps with each other as Ukrainians come to Slovakia."

After today's Cabinet session, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď informed that Slovakia has taken further concrete steps to give aid to Ukraine and protect its eastern border through the stationing of a NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Battlegroup in SVK territory. He also warned of disinformation and lies spreading in a dangerous and coordinated way.

Slovakia is to provide Ukraine with over €11m worth of military materiel. The aid package includes 10m litres of diesel, 2.4m litres of aviation fuel and 12,000 pieces of 120mm munitions. Jaroslav Naď stressed that Slovakia is sending exactly what Ukraine has requested. "We are putting precise measures in place in order to help Ukraine. A donor conference took place yesterday. As a result, 27 out of the 30 NATO Member States are supporting Ukraine," he remarked.

The head of the MOD has also informed that preparations are underway to stand up the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup Slovakia, saying: "We are thus joining Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. After consulting with German Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht, we have agreed that Germany will make a robust contribution to the NATO eFP BG SVK by setting up the highly sophisticated, modern and effective Patriot Missile Air Defence System in order to protect SVK territory."



The minister has also announced that negotiations with the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia have entered their final phase. In addition to this, Slovakia has requested the United States to consider deploying the Sentinel passive sensors in a bid to protect NATO's eastern flank.

In the coming weeks, the minister will submit to the SVK Government and Parliament a request for approval of the presence of approx. 1,200 Allied troops in Slovakia for the purposes of standing up the NATO eFP BG SVK, to safeguard both NATO and SVK territory. 300 SVK military personnel will join the NATO battlegroup to be embedded within SVK Armed Forces Command structures and stationed across the SVK Military Training Areas (MTAs).

Because of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, negotiations are underway to end the operation of Slovakia's Russian-made MiG-29 fighter jets and to end the services provided by Russian technicians. "The negotiations are in their final phase, so far I can say that our airspace will be protected by a geographically close ally," he said. Minister Naď called on citizens not to succumb to lies. Warning of a well-coordinated system of scaring people by SMS messages on the mobilisation of civilians and the penalties for those who fail to register for service, he emphasised: "It is a lie, civilians are not being called up for service as part of the Reserves, let alone as part of conscription. Security agencies will track down and deal with the originators and those who spread such lies."

After the Cabinet meeting 27 Feb 2022, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď confirmed Slovakia would provide Ukraine with additional military materiel worth €4.5m. The materiel includes air defence systems and anti-tank missiles. "These are exactly the types of munitions the Ukrainian side has requested and we can supply them from the munitions depots of the Slovak Armed Forces," he said.

Slovakia is to provide the aid package following the conversation between the SVK prime minister and the UKR president, and between the SVK defence minister and the UKR ambassador.

Defence Minister Naď emphasised: "It holds true that if we can help again, we will take responsible decisions, just as any friendly country should do to stop the aggressor that has invaded a country. Today, this is about the Ukrainian people fighting for their country and the future of the whole of Europe."

Prime Minister Eduard Heger appreciated the EU's coordinated approach, saying: "We are acting in line and in coordination with all EU Member States. Our unity and cohesion is very high. I want to repeat one issue – we want peace. This is the most important thing."

Record numbers of junior soldiers pass out of basic training at Martin base

(25 February) Having taken the Oath of Allegiance, 463 trainee soldiers and PQOs (incl. 84 women) completed their 7-week-long initial military training and passed out on the parade ground at the Training and Mobilisation Replenishment Base Martin. This marks the highest number of junior soldiers swearing the Oath of Allegiance on a single day since the formation of the fully professional Slovak Armed Forces. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď expressed his gratitude for the junior soldiers' resolve to serve their nation during this worst security situation Europe has faced for the past nearly 30 years, saying: "Over the existence of the independent, free and democratic Slovak Republic, we have not been witness to such a huge and unprecedented security threat that we are experiencing now in these moments. Not far away from our border, there is a war going on in Ukraine – at our brothers', friends', neighbours', Slavs'." Mr Naď continued: "Servicemen and women, we all are proud of you that you have chosen this profession, especially in these difficult moments. I hope you will not be called on to lay down your lives for our country. Nevertheless, we realise we will look on you as a last resort, if necessary. We all rely on each and every one of you and offer our thanks to you." After completing their initial military training, they will move on to branch-specialised training at Phase 2 training establishments. On completion, they will take up their appointments at respective military units. The PQOs will pass through the Professionally Qualified Officers Course before reporting to their units in order to serve as officers in the Officers Corps.



- Speaking after Sunday's Government meeting in response to Russia putting its nuclear deterrence forces on high alert, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said Putin should not consider using nuclear weapons, because this would result in a world conflict.

- In response to the news that the EU is to provide Ukraine with combat aircraft, the MOD noted that there are no plans to supply the SVK AF MiG-29 fighter jets to Ukraine. No such negotiations have taken place.

- On 27 Feb, Prime Minister Eduard Heger confirmed that Slovakia has offered Bratislava as a venue for peace talks between Russia and Ukraine.

- 27,679 Ukrainian refugees had crossed into Slovakia from Ukraine by 27 Feb, mostly using the Vyšné Nemecké (13,645) and Ubl'a (10,715) border crossings. Parliamentary Chair Boris Kollár visited the border to see for himself the situation and needs of refugees.

- Foreign Minister Ivan Korčok has announced that soldiers from five NATO countries will come to Slovakia. "Slovenia, Czechia, the Netherlands, the USA and Germany have shown readiness to provide their units," he said.

- Slovakia will help Ukrainian refugees with accommodation and temporary refuge. Ukrainians can be granted temporary refuge right at the border crossings. This is closely associated with entitlement to a work permit, health insurance and benefits in material need. Another package includes a financial contribution to whoever provides private accommodation to Ukrainian refugees, be that a natural person, a legal entity, a hotel owner, a local government or a charity.

- The Health Ministry has informed that asylum seekers and temporary refuge seekers are entitled to urgent and essential health care.

The scheduled air siren test, which is conducted every second Friday in line with the Civil Defence Act, will not be conducted throughout March due to the situation in Ukraine.

- The latest *Azimuth 24/7* edition, available on YouTube, presents the 96-hour winter reconnaissance training of 65 Recce Bn.

- Based on the request from SVK MP and 2 Mech Bde Prešov, the International Courses Branch at the Armed Forces Academy organised the Decision Making Process at Tactical Level Course. The aim of the short-term course was to familiarise participants with the procedures and principles of operational planning at the level of Battalion in line with NATO APP-28, with focus on military terminology in English.

- The MOD has issued a traffic warning to motorists as 12 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 28 Feb to 6 Mar 2022. Over the same period, the SVK military will conduct road movements from/to: Dubnica nad Váhom – Martin, Trenčín – Sliach, Moldava nad Bodvou – Sliach and back, Záhorie – Dubnica nad Váhom, Zemianske Kostolany – Trenčín and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Trebišov, Prešov – Zemianske Kostolany and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Bratislava and back. More military movements will be planned and conducted in accordance with the current needs of the Slovak Armed Forces.

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 Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the reactions of the international community and the Slovak Armed Force.

CHOD Gen Zmeko cuts short his visit to USA due to deteriorating security situation

(27 February) CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko began his visit to Indiana on 21 Feb. The SVK Armed Forces and the Indiana National Guard (INNG) have been cooperating successfully through the State Partnership Programme for the past 28 years. Gen Zmeko met Indiana governor Eric J. Holcomb, to discuss SVK-U.S. defence cooperation. Governor Holcomb pledged his full support. At the Joint Forces HQ, he then talked with Adjutant General of Indiana Maj Gen R. Dale Lyles about the participation of INNG personnel in Ex Slovak Shield 2022 and the training activities of SVK soldiers in the USA. Also discussed were the INNG operations as part of the State Partnership Programme in which the SVK military could participate, cooperation between the U.S. Air Force and the SVK Air Force, and cyber defence collaboration. On Day 2 of his visit, Gen Zmeko met the newly appointed director of the Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) James Hirsch, to discuss FMS-related issues, especially F-16 Block 70 fighter jets,

Estonia is our ally

(23 February) Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer received the Ambassador of Estonia to Slovakia, HE Mr Toomas Kukk at the MOD. The security developments in Ukraine and Europe as well as SVK-EST defence and security cooperation were the themes of their discussion. Slovakia and Estonia tend to have similar or very close positions on issues of transatlantic cooperation. Mr Majer asked for Estonian know-how on the implementation of the U.S.-Estonian DCA, which was signed in 2017 and on the basis of which Estonian defence infrastructure received funding from the USA.

On Slovakia's eastern border

(26 February) Based on the SVK Government's decision, the SVK military has deployed 580 soldiers in support of police, customs and financial administration forces in the four sectors of Slovakia's eastern border. Our soldiers, including five tactical CIMIC teams, are performing assigned tasks at nine border locations and



crossing points. CHOD Gen Zmeko inspected some of the deployed units on 27 Feb.

Making plans for Ex Toxic Lance

(21 February) CBRND specialists from Slovakia, Czechia, Hungary and the United States gathered at 103 CBRND Battalion Rožňava to make plans for Ex TOXIC LANCE 2022. Exercise participants will be able to practise a wide range of capabilities from detection to decontamination with live chemical warfare agents from 28 Mar to 8 Apr at the Training Centre Lešť and the CBRND Training and Testing Centre Zemianske Kostolany.

Container handler operator course

(21 February) 53 Field Services Battalion Hlohovec hosted the historically first course for operators of the recently fielded MAGNI HTH 35.12-V/A-N telescopic container handlers. The course, attended by soldiers of 53 FS Bn Hlohovec and 20 Log Bn Prešov, both subordinate to CSS Bde Trenčín, was successfully completed by all participants.



the invasion of Ukraine on 24 Feb, Gen Zmeko met with COM US CENTCOM Gen Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr. and DCOM US SOCOM Rear Admiral Collin P. Green for security consultations before returning home.