



NATO SECGEN Mark Rutte highlights Allied cooperation

(20 Feb) NATO SECGEN Mark Rutte along with DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák paid a visit to NATO's multinational Forward Land Forces (FLF) stationed at the Training Centre (TC) Lešť on 20 Feb.

In his remarks addressed to soldiers of the NATO Multinational Brigade Slovakia (MNB-SVK) from Czechia, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Türkiye and the US, Mark Rutte highlighted the smooth cooperation of Allied forces in defending the Alliance's eastern flank.

While at TC Lešť, Robert Kaliňák informed Mark Rutte about local training conditions and showed him around the training facilities and grounds where Allied forces gain valuable experience and hone their warfighting skills. The core role of NATO's FLF multinational battlegroups on the eastern flank is to demonstrate the Alliance's readiness to respond to security threats and, if necessary, to collectively defend its member countries – including Slovakia and its people.

Spending the afternoon in Bratislava, NATO SECGEN Mark Rutte was received by President Peter Pellegrini at the Presidential Palace, and, later, by DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Juraj Blahar at the SVK Cabinet Office for talks on current topics.

SVK Defence Industry at IDEX25

(17 Feb) At the International Defence Exhibition & Conference (IDEX) 2025 at the ADNEC Centre Abu Dhabi in the UAE, the SVK MOD prepared the Slovak National Stand to showcase the products and services by state-owned and private SVK Defence Industry companies.

"We have created a whole new presentation format for our SVK Defence Industry as a means to show what we are rightfully proud of in Slovakia. The current Government defends Slovakia's national interests and supports its arms industry, which has a strong tradition and a good reputation abroad. With steps like this, we are also contributing to the growth of our national economy and better employment opportunities – this will also leave its signature on the growth of people's salaries in Slovakia," DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák said.

At the Slovak National Stand, visitors to the trade show could see the AM-120 Automatic Mortar System and the EVA M2 SPH. While at IDEX25, Robert Kaliňák held dozens of meetings with international representatives to discuss a variety of potential cooperation options.

National Defence Forces Bill

(19 Feb) At its recent meeting, the SVK Government approved the National Defence Forces Bill. Among others, the Bill replaces the Active Reserves with the National Defence Forces and introduces the Gendarme Corps to assist Police Forces in maintaining public order. These measures will bolster Slovakia's resilience in the field of defence and security. Once through Parliament, the Bill will come into force on 1 July 2025.



SVK Military Academy opens its doors to potential candidates

(21 Feb) During an Open Day, the SVK Military Academy (AOS) welcomed almost 700 potential officer candidates who came to explore the facilities on campus and learn more about the study programmes and military jobs.

The event was opened by Deputy Commandant for Education Col Assoc Prof Michal Turčaník. To the guests, he presented the Academy, its educational focus and admission procedure. Staff from the AOS Depts then discussed the academic and technical study programmes and the prospects of the soldier's career. The day included feedback from Officer Cadets (OCs). They introduced the Military Programme and shared personal experiences of their studies. Visitors also spoke with OCs in aviation specialties from the Technical University of Košice (TUKE)'s Faculty of Aeronautics and those in CBRND and medical specialties from the Brno-based University of Defence (UOD).

The Open Day offered various interactive experiences such as the Simulation Centre-generated simulations of military operations and the Physical Training and Sports Dept-delivered measurements to assess the level of physical fitness. The Open Day was enriched with a SVK Armed Forces presentation about selected LF, AF, SOF, DMS and MP units.



■ Officers of the 43rd Czech Defence Staff Course were welcomed by Comd 46 Wng Kuchynia Lt Col Radovan Belás to Kuchynia AB and were briefed on 46 Wng Kuchynia's history, structure and tasks. Col Lopez (ESP A) presented ESPCON's operations there. In the F-16 zone, the guests watched a demonstration of actions against potential intruders and saw prescribed maintenance work being undertaken on Spartan and Turbolet aircraft.

■ The Peace Support Operations (PSO) Training Unit Martin hosted comprehensive training for EUFOR Op Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The theory module covered the history of the conflict, cultural awareness and differences, psychological and medical training, engineering issues, and other topics. The practical module focused on patrolling in the area of responsibility (AOR), meetings with local authorities, and dealing with unforeseen incidents. Both modules were supported by 7 Trng Regt Martin, 6 Sig Regt Trenčín, 57 Ind Det Martin, 82 Jnt Spt Bde Trenčín, English language instructors of DLI Liptovský Mikuláš, and soldiers fresh out of a tour of duty in BiH.

■ The Basic Course for Standby Readiness, Combat Readiness and Mobilisation Specialists, led by lecturers from the Mobilisation Replenishment Unit Poprad's Mobilisation Replenishment & Courses Section, the MOD Personnel and Social Affairs Dept, and 82 Jnt Spt Bde Trenčín, took place at 7 Trng Regt Martin, with the focus on theory and practice in this field. The graduation ceremony was held in the presence of Col Dušan Svitana, Chief of the SVK Armed Forces Planning and Employment Branch in the SVK Defence Staff.

■ Staff from the SVK Military Academy's International Courses Section participated in NATO's Annual Discipline Forum (ADF) and Partnership Training and Education Centres (PTEC) Marketplace on 17-20 Feb in Mons, Belgium. Both events represent the key platforms on defence planning, security studies, and interdisciplinary cooperation. The ADF addresses the latest trends, challenges, and strategies in the field of military and defence planning. The PTEC Marketplace brings together NATO and partner countries' education and training institutions to promote international cooperation and serves as a platform to discuss educational programmes, best practices, and interoperability issues.

■ AOS Officer Cadets (OCs) in aviation specialties at the Technical University of Košice (TUKE)'s Faculty of Aeronautics successfully completed the 5-week Basic Air Traffic Controller (ATC) Course as an integral part of their training to obtain an ATC licence from the SVK Military Aviation Authority (MAA). As well as deepening their theoretical knowledge, they improved their practical skills on the ATC simulator. The next step on the path to the licence award will be the AOS Simulation Centre-delivered ATC Qualification Course.

■ The Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital Ružomberok marked the 110th anniversary of the hospital's establishment, with its official opening on 14 Feb 1915. "The Central Military Hospital builds on its long-standing tradition of providing high quality and compassionate care, which has repeatedly been confirmed by high awards and ratings. For the hospital to remain a vital source of quality healthcare in the region and in Slovakia, we want to keep it developing. This will be positively felt by our patients and employees alike," Hospital Director Marian Krízko MD said.

■ A new episode of the SVK Military Academy's podcast on the 'Security and Defence of the State' Study Programme has been released, with Head of the Military Tactics and Art of Operations Dept Assoc Prof Jaroslav Varcha as a guest.

■ With a time of 20.93sec, athlete Matej Baluch of the Dukla Military Sports Centre achieved a new SVK record on the 200m track and won the Slovak Indoor Athletics Championships. He improved the record set by Ján Volko in 2023 by 0.04sec.

Training management for commanders

(21 Feb) Under the leadership of Comd 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany Brig Gen Štefan Acsai and Exercise Director of 11 Mech Bn Martin Lt Col Jozef Varchol, commanders of manoeuvre platoons were updated on the Training Management Process (TMP) at TC Lešť. The aim was to instruct the Training Management Officers (TMOs) on all aspects of managing training delivery and organising training exercises. The activity was supported by 167 soldiers from HQ 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany, 11 Mech Bn Martin, 12 Mech Bn Nitra, 13 Mech Bn Levice, 14 Log Bn Topoľčany, 14 Trnk Bn Trebišov, 91 Engr Regt Sereď, 902 Engr Bn Michalovce, 54 MLRS Bn Rožňava, 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce, 103 CBRND Bn Rožňava, 71 Com Spt Bn Trenčín, 65 Recce Bn Prešov, and MILMEDCOM Ružomberok. Commander of the SVK Army Maj Gen Ivan Balog concluded that the aim and objectives of the training were met in full.

72-hour winter training

(21 Feb) Logisticians from 14 Log Bn Topoľčany completed 72 hours of intensive winter training, with the Battalion's Transport Company, Repairs Company, Field Services Company, and Mobile Catering Company taking part. On Day 1, the companies completed a road move from their base to their garrison training ground at Lipovník. The Tpt Coy team issued movement orders, rehearsed supply convoy operations, operated radios while on the move, and dealt with unexpected incidents; the Rpr Coy team deployed a mobile workshop to repair wheeled platforms in field conditions; the Fld Svc Coy team set up Supply Class II and V field warehouses to receive, store and issue equipment and materiel; the MC Coy built a fully operational field kitchen to prepare and serve meals. At the conclusion of the training, they all carried out night shoots, with their primary and secondary weapons. All tasks undertaken by the sections under the watchful eye of their leaders were duly completed out in the field.

13 Mech Bn trains at TC Lešť

(17 Feb) Soldiers of 13 Mech Bn Levice underwent intensive winter training at TC Lešť, testing the Mech Coys in defensive and offensive operations, including in fighting in built-up areas (FIBUA). The aim was to maintain high training levels for 13 Hvy Mech Bn Grp's future operations. Drones were used in the training. Navigating through challenging terrain under difficult climatic conditions, the Mech forces practiced their tactical and shooting capabilities during a 96-hour training exercise. This culminated with the Mech Coys being subjected to coordination checks and to a MILES 2000-supported tactical training exercise. They were inspected by Comd 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany Brig Gen Štefan Acsai. Comd 13 Mech Bn Levice Lt Col Miroslav Osif appreciated the exercising troops' collaborative approach and expressed his satisfaction with the training results.

This year's first Initial Military Training culminates in Martin

(21 Feb) This year's first Initial Military Training (IMT) for trainee soldiers and Professionally Qualified Officers (PQOs) has been taking place at 7 Trng Regt Martin since 13 Jan.

Comd 7 Trng Regt Col Pavol Barančík stressed that this is the second largest intake in history and that the young soldiers have been assigned to 10 Training Platoons. Of the 346 recruits, women make up almost 1/3. The novices are now undergoing training with the focus on basic soldiering skills. On Martin Garrison's Sučany training ground and at 7 Trng Regt Martin, they are adjusting to military life and developing physical and psychological resilience in individual and collective tasks under the guidance of commanders and instructors. All sorts of young people – a historian, a documentary journalist, an English teacher, a bank clerk, a teacher, an athlete,



a mechanical engineer, and a construction worker – descended from all across Slovakia on Martin with different life and work experience, education, and ideas about

the Army. Among them were two siblings – Pte Katarína Serbinová, a secondary school graduate in the Personal and Property Security Programme and her brother, Pte Martin Serbin, a computer network technician and a drone operator course finisher. Assigned to the same platoon, they were now executing basic marksmanship tasks out on the shooting range in Sučany. During last week's 72-hour winter training activity, the first five Training Platoons learnt their survival skills on freezing days and nights on the ranges in Sučany. After working through the demands of the IMT training, they will swear the Oath of Allegiance in a ceremony in Partizánske on 7 Mar.