



MOD introduces National Defence Forces

(27 June) The MOD is offering SVK citizens an opportunity to join the National Defence Forces (NDF) as a new form of Slovakia's Reserve Forces with voluntary engagement in the defence of the State. The aim of this initiative is to strengthen Slovakia's defence and security resilience by getting our citizens ready to deal with crises, while providing them with attractive benefits, professional training, and trade-specific skills that can be used in both civilian and professional settings.

Act No. 150/2025 Coll. on certain measures to increase the resilience of the Slovak Republic will take effect as of 1 July 2025. This MOD-sponsored legislation will bring changes to the Active Reserves as they will now be replaced by the NDF. The legislation sets out the conditions for the inclusion of reservists in the Operational, Standby and Conscription Reserves, with the fundamental principle of voluntariness governing the entire enrolment process.

On the formation of the NDF, DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák said: "After several months of work, we are now on the verge of establishing the National Defence Forces. They will primarily be intended for SVK citizens who want to spend some of their free time by increasing the resilience of our State and by helping in crisis situations and areas, and who want to improve their physical fitness levels, learn new skills, and complete various challenges that this new MOD project brings." He continued: "The National Defence Forces are open to everyone from 18 to 55 years of age or in exceptional cases up to 65 years of age, and, in principle, to anyone who is interested in being part of the community that is dedicated to protecting Slovakia."

For more information, candidates can follow the guidance on the website at www.noska.sk, contact the Call Centre on 0960 960 960 or the Armed Forces Recruitment Teams. Those interested can request formal inclusion in one of the three reserve components of the Armed Forces as follows:

- OPERATIONAL RESERVES – whose role is to perform the Armed Forces' operational and crisis resolution tasks,
- STANDBY RESERVES – that mainly support crisis management operations and operations in defence of the State,
- CONSCRIPTION RESERVES – who undertake a one-off 14-day training programme for citizens without prior military experience.

The Operational and Standby Reserves will carry out training and tasks for 20 days, plus they must be on standby for another 10 days. On meeting the 30 days per year training and service requirement, they are to receive a payment of €3,000. The Conscription Reserves must undertake training and tasks for at least 14 days to get a half of that amount. In addition, NDF soldiers will be entitled to their Regular counterparts' equivalent of the rank-based gross salary – €1,088 and €653 for members of the Operational and Standby Reserves and members of the Conscription Reserves, respectively. What's more, everyone can receive an incentive payment of up to €1,686 for their specialist trades or for earning additional qualifications, of up to €3,371 for signing up for additional years of service, and of up to €562 for increasing their physical fitness and readiness levels.

The NDF training will be delivered at three training locations – Turecký Vrch Training Area near Bratislava, Martin, and in the surroundings of Michalovce. Preparations are underway for the training of the first intake of reservists, due to start on Turecký Vrch TA on 10 July.

Sts Cyril and Methodius Feast Day celebrations "in a new outfit" at Devín Castle

On Sat 5 July – the Feast Day of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the SVK Gov will be hosting a national event dedicated to the arrival of the two Byzantine Christian missionaries in Great Moravia. This year's celebrations – held under the auspices of the SVK Gov Office and organised by the MOD closely liaising with the Interior and Health Ministries – will feature several innovations. Most importantly, visitors can come down to Devín for an all-day programme of historical, cultural and social entertainment.

In a statement, Ms Karin Silberhorn, Director of the DPM and MINDEF's Office and Event Coordinator, said: "Recognising and honouring the most important landmarks in the history of Slovakia should be in all Slovak people's basic mindset. In addition to the event's culmination with a gala evening in the courtyard of Devín Castle, we have been engaged in preparations for an all-day festival of the Nation's history, arts, crafts, folk traditions, ecumenism, education and period highlights, with special experiences for people of all ages. We want to make people more aware of what this feast is about – what the arrival of the missionaries has meant in terms of advancing education for the Slavs – their writing, languages, and Christianity."

"We are trying to give visitors the greatest possible comfort. There will be free shuttle buses for the public to Devín, from the Nové SND bus stop and from the parking lot at the OC Bory Mall. Public entry will be free and via the Northern Gate only."

The gala evening will be broadcast live on national television (STVR). There will be a large LED screen for visitors to view the programme. Devín will be open to the public from 11:00 to 22:00.

The public can look forward to a medieval settlement where re-enactors, including craftsmen, soldiers, entertainers and housewives demonstrate medieval crafts, art of warfare, theatre, and cookery. Historical re-enactment groups will offer sword fighting, fencing, and a period horse riders' parade. Not to be missed is a Glagolitic script writing workshop, a blacksmith's workshop with coin minting, a falconry show, ecumenical worship services, street puppet theatre shows, and concerts – each visitor will leave the event with a gift.

The British Ambassador to Slovakia, His Excellency Nigel Baker was received by DEPMINDEF Martin Vojštašovič at the MOD in Bratislava on 23 June. Special attention was paid to current topical issues, including to SVK-UK defence and security engagement.

The last evacuation flight from the Middle East landed in Bratislava on the night of 26-27 June, with a SVK military transport aircraft bringing 11 SVK nationals and 7 foreigners from Aqaba, Jordan. A total of 10 flights were conducted over the course of 11 days. According to Foreign Affairs Minister Juraj Blanár, a total of 266 people have been evacuated to Slovakia.

On 25 June, Special Operations Forces Command (SOCOM) Trenčín hosted a ceremony to mark the 6th anniversary of SOCOM's formation on 1 June 2019. The ceremony, opened by CDR SVK SOF Maj Gen Jaroslav Kram, saw the head of the SVK Special Forces presenting selected SOCOM personnel with the SOF Badge for long-time service and exceptional contributions and the maroon berets to those who met the requirements and qualifications to become SOF operatives.

A wildfire broke out within Štrba's cadastral boundary in the High Tatras on the afternoon of 25 June. In response to a Military Aid to the Civilian Authorities (MACA) request, the Slovak Air Force dispatched a UH-60M Black Hawk from Prešov Air Base to assist with the firefighting efforts in the village's affected, difficult-to-reach mountainous terrain. As part of this deployment, the helicopter crew emptied 115,000 litres of water, which equates to 46 Bambl Buckets.

Although the SVK National Soccer Team did not make it to the UEFA U21 Championships Final in Bratislava, Slovakia was represented in the title match – the German and British national anthems were played out by the Slovak Armed Forces Band Banská Bystrica under the direction of its Bandmaster Maj Ján Goliáš – in which England beat Germany to win the U21 trophy again.

As part of the Paris Airshow, airmen of 2 SVK AF BDE Zvolen attended a conference for ground-controlled interception (GCI) operators and air operations specialists who help guide interceptor aircraft and run air operations.

At TC Lešt, the SVK MP Dept's Military Working Dog (MWD) Branch delivered a training course for MWD handlers from Slovakia, Czechia, Germany, Poland and Finland. They completed a series of realistically modelled scenarios – including K9 procedures against armed offenders with the use of training ammunition, detonators and smoke dischargers as well as search operations to find people hidden in difficult terrain.

Lt Col Lukáš Kyrnych from the NFU SVK presented the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) in Gold to AOS Officer Cadets Denis Gurčík, Jakub Škvarek and Matej Malina after meeting the pass requirements for the Bundeswehr's test events.

The SVK AF Centre of Aviation Medicine (SVK AF CAM) Sliac has recently been equipped with state-of-the-art systems such as a diagnostic Canon Aplio ultrasound system and a Roessys X-twin digital X-ray system.

On 24 June, Chair of the Veterans Club Trenčín Col (Res) Ján Skyba and the Club's members visited the Military Retirees Club Liptovský Mikuláš. They were updated on the Club's activities by Lt Col (Res) Peter Kramčík and Lt Gen (Res) Marián Ač, and briefed on the Battle of Liptovský Mikuláš by military historian Col (Res) Oldřich Vaněk. At the war cemetery and the SVK Forces Memorial in Háj-Nicovő, the veterans honoured those who died on operations in a wreath-laying ceremony. The meeting of veterans and military retirees from the Trenčín and Liptov regions was enriched by a music band's performance.

The SNP Museum Banská Bystrica has announced that the Tokajik Tragedy Museum will be closed until further notice, due to the reconstruction of a municipal office building in Tokajik.

The International Military Protestant Convention took place in Gagnières, France. The SVK delegation consisted of military chaplains of the Ecumenical Pastoral Service, members of the Slovak Armed Forces, and officer cadets of the Armed Forces Academy.

Shooter Jozef Gönci, former Dukla Military Sports Centre athlete and Team SVK member, was awarded the SVK Olympic and Sports Committee Badge in Gold in a ceremony at the SVK Olympic and Sports Museum Bratislava. In the past, the two-time Olympian received the World Olympians Association (WOA)'s Olympians for Life (OLY) title and badge. Among the former Dukla athletes to be awarded the SVK Olympic and Sports Committee Badge in Bronze are race walker Igor Kollár and biathlete Martin Otčenáš.

With a great time of 12.74sec, only 0.02sec slower than Slovakia's best record, Dukla athlete Viktória Forster finished 2nd in the 100m hurdles at the Golden Spike Athletics Meeting in Czechia's Ostrava. For the 14th time in her career, she ran under 13sec. This marked her second-best performance ever.

At the European Athletics Team Championships Second Division in Slovenia's Maribor, Dukla athlete Emma Zapletalová won the 400m sprint in a new SVK record of 50.76sec.

With a time of 2:13.82min, Dukla swimmer Tamara Potocká won a bronze medal in the 200m individual medley at the European U23 Swimming Championships in Slovakia's Samorin. Shortly afterwards, she won a silver medal in the 50m butterfly in a new SVK record of 25.86sec.

Dukla slalom canoeist Jakub Grigar secured gold in the men's K1 short salmon at the ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup in Troja, Prague.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents the National Defence Forces (NDF) at 21.05 on Fri.

10th Laugaricio Tank Days



(28 June) Under the aegis of DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, and Chair of the Trenčín Self-Governing Region Jaroslav Baška, the SVK Army-sponsored 10th edition of the Laugaricio Tank Days event unfolded in

Trenčianske Stankovce. President and Commander-in-Chief Peter Pellegrini, Robert Kaliňák, Gen Daniel Zmeko, and official guests joined thousands of lovers of military history and combat vehicles in watching WW2 battle re-enactments, dynamic and static demonstrations of the Slovak Armed Forces, a parachute display team jump, and performances from the Slovak Armed Forces Band, the Guard of Honour, and the SVK Military Police. Not to be missed were flypasts from helicopters and aircraft, both present and past. The official programme concluded with a gun salute from the D-30 howitzer.

SAU delegation to Slovakia



(26 June) Undersecretary for Procurement and Armament at the Ministry of Defense of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (SAU) Maj Gen (Ret'd) Ibrahim Bin Ahmed Al-Suwayed led a delegation of SAU Ministry of Defense experts to Slovakia, to

receive briefings and presentations on the SVK Defence Industry companies' products and projects. As well as holding meetings at the MOD in Bratislava, the Saudi MOD delegation received a tour of the Military Technical and Testing Institute Žahorice. "Slovakia has a long-time expertise in the Defence Industry sector, therefore we welcome the increased interest in our products. This is an opportunity to support our arms industry as a contributor to GDP growth," DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák said.

Memorial flight in honour of Štefánik



(24 June) The Slovak Aviation Federation (SLF) commemorated Gen M. R. Štefánik's last tragic flight from Italy to Slovakia with a memorial flight and service, symbolically titled "Gen M. R. Štefánik's Flight". On their re-

turn flight from Udine-Campofornido Airport (ITA) – from where Gen Štefánik took off in his Caproni Ca.33 on 4 May 1919 – a SLF crew flew the same route as Gen Štefánik took to Czechoslovakia.

The event culminated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Štefánik statue in the departure hall of M. R. Štefánik Airport in Bratislava on 24 June. The MOD was represented at the ceremony by DEPMINDEF Ig- or Melicher.

Czechoslovak Legion in Darney



(29 June) DEPMINDEF Martin Vojštašovič travelled to France's Darney to commemorate the Czechoslovak Legion soldiers who swore the Oath of Allegiance and took over the Colours of the 21st Czechoslovak Rifle Regiment from

the hands of President of the French Republic Raymond Poincaré. On behalf of the MOD, Mr Martin Vojštašovič expressed a deep respect for France and all those who made it possible for Czechoslovakia's statehood and independence to emerge.

CHOD Gen Zmeko in Slovenia



(26 June) SVK CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko paid an official visit to Slovenia, where he met with SVN CHOD Lt Gen Robert Glavaš and DEPMINDEF Boštjan Pavlin, for talks on deepening cooperation on training, exchange of experience, and participation in Alliance activities.

Gen Zmeko visited Slovenia's 15th Brigade, Cerklje ob Krki Air Base, and 430th Naval Division, and Ex Adriatic Strike 2025 DV Day. The meeting confirmed the high level of partnership between the SVK and SVN Armed Forces, in the context of the dynamically changing operational environment and current security challenges.