



Cooperation is inevitable

(14 July) The security and rescue components' cooperation within domestic crisis management is inevitable and each joint exercise enhances the units' readiness, concluded SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš while visiting Exercise New Horizon 2016 on Devičany Training Area. Members of the SVK Armed Forces, the Military Police, the SVK Interior Ministry's components and the Slovak Red Cross practised joint responses to crisis situations of non-military nature.

"We've had the opportunity to see the cooperation and coordination of armed forces with other security and rescue components, because their cooperation in the event of a crisis situation is inevitable. Such inter-ministerial exercises are the best way for them to synchronise procedures in near-real conditions. We will continue with such exercises," remarked SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš. He reminded that Exercise New Horizon 2016 comes part of the Exercise Slovak Shield 2016 series, under which this year soldiers will be practising a full spectrum response to a conflict's escalation, transiting from the state of peace to the state of war.

The Chairman of the Committee on Defence and Security of the Slovak National Council, Mr Anton Hrnko, appreciated the opportunity to witness the coordination of the ministries' respective components that come under the authority of the defence and security committee. "Our task is to create legislative and other conditions for the security system to be up and running. This exercise, too, has demonstrated that cooperation of the components is much needed. I am pleased that coordination among them is functional," he said.

As Chief of the General Staff of the SVK Armed Forces Gen Milan Maxim reminded, troops are being trained primarily for combat. However, Exercise New Horizon also made it possible for them to try out a different side of things, i.e. assistance to other soldiers and civilian populations. "The one of the decisive assistance tasks is: to help citizens. Our soldiers were given the opportunity to see respective components preparing for joint action, and to grasp how they can be helpful," explained Gen Maxim.

The Commander of the SVK Land Forces, Maj Gen Ondřej Novosad, made an assessment whereby all of the participating components had fulfilled the set goals of the exercise. "The main objectives included achieving coordination, executing command and control in performing assistance tasks in the face of non-military threats, and ensuring the defence and security of the region where we were executing the tasks," he said.

Under Exercise New Horizon 2016, over 230 exercising troops practised preparing, building and protecting a camp to temporarily house displaced residents from endangered villages. In doing so, and in an effort to build a civilians evacuation control centre, they used over 50 pieces of equipment and 20 containers.

MSC Dukla sportsmen and women to dominate Slovak Olympic team at Rio 2016

(17 July) Sportsmen from the Military Sport Club Dukla Banská Bystrica (MSC DBB) completely bulldozed their opponents at the Junior World Championships in Krakow. Whitewater kayaker Jakub Grigar became the World Champion in the under 23 Men's K1 category. Another great success was scored by whitewater canoeist Marko Mirgorodský who won the World Champion title in the Men's Junior Canoe Single (C1). SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš spoke with them by telephone to extend his congratulations. Sportsmen and women from the MSC DBB have 19 seats on the SVK Olympic Team to compete at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, enjoying the highest number of representatives on the Slovak delegation. Among those with confirmed Olympic Qualification spots at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio are Dana Veldáková (Triple Jump), Jana Veldáková (Long Jump), MSgt Martina Hrašnová (Hammer Throw), Mária Gáliková (20km Walk Race), Mária Czaková (20km Walk Race), Matúš Bubeník (High Jump), Marcel Lomnický (Hammer Throw), Cpl Anton Kučmín (20km Walk Race), MSgt Matej Tóth (50km Walk Race), Martin Tištan (50km Walk Race) and Sgt Dušan Majdán (50km Walk Race). At Rio 2016, whitewater slalom kayaker Jakub Grigar will compete in the K1 category, MSgt Peter Gelle (K1) and Vincent Farkas (C1) will participate in the Canoe Sprint events. At sport shooting events, we will be represented by SSgt Juraj Tužinský (Air Pistol, Pistol); at swimming events by Katarína Lístopadová (100m Backstroke and 100m Butterfly) and Pte 1st Class Tomáš Klobučník (100m breaststroke); at road cycling events by Cpl Patrik Tybor (Mass Start Race); at weightlifting events Pte 1st Class Ondrej Kružel (Men's + 105kg). From the last Summer Olympic Games, the MSC DBB brought home a total of 7 Gold, 5 Silver and 4 Bronze Olympic medals.



- On 15 July, SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš signed a book of condolence, which was made available by the French Embassy, to convey his **deepest sorrow to the families of the victims who died in the terrorist attack in France**. He also sent a letter of condolence to French Minister of Defence Jean-Yves Le Drian.

- On 12 July, Minister of Defence P. Gajdoš met the **Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden**, Her Excellency Mrs Helen Eduards. They discussed the possibilities of cooperation between the countries, the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU, as well as the proposal of the White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic.

- On the same day, the Minister of Defence met with the **Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia**, His Excellency Mr Sani Dermaku, to discuss cooperation between Slovak and Serbian soldiers in the UNFICYP peacekeeping mission in Cyprus and assistance to Serbia in the migration crisis. The Minister suggested that Serbia should consider sending an observer to Exercise Slovak Shield, to be held this autumn.

- On the occasion of the **Defence Attaché of the French Republic** ending her term of office, Col Christine Chauvieu was received by Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš on 12 July. He thanked her for the work done during her assignment in Slovakia, and awarded her with the Minister of Defence Medal.

- On 12 July, on the occasion of the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU, a **ceremonial reception** for members of the European Union Military Committee Working Group (EUMCWG) and the EUMCWG/Headline Goal Task Force (EUMCWG/HTF) was held under the auspices of Col Erich Hrehuš, Chief of EU Cooperation Section and Deputy Military Representative, at the premises of the Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU in Brussels. It was attended by the Chairman of the EUMCWG, Brig Gen Juan Manuel Ortí Pérez, and the Chairman of the EUMCWG/HTF, Col Jean-Louis Nuremberg. Under the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU, Lt Col Juraj Tuma took up the appointment of Deputy Chairman of the EUMCWG/HTF.

- On 10 July, two members of the Prešov-based Helicopter Wing from among technicians departed for **Afghanistan** – 1st Lt Marek Jurko and Sergeant 1st Class Martin Grec. The Deputy Commander of the Helicopter Wing, Lt Col Erik Kropuch bid farewell to them in the Hall of Honour at the Helicopter Wing Prešov. For a period of at least four months, they will be serving with the Air Advisor Team (AAT), which has been tasked to train the flying and technical personnel of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces on Mi-171 and Mi-24/35 helicopters.

- On 12 July, members of the Multiple Rocket Launch System Unit (MRLS Unit) held the **3rd Annual Memorial Run** to commemorate the members of the SVK Armed Forces who perished on international crisis management operations outside of the Slovak Republic. As the fastest one to finish the 7,160-meter-long track with a total elevation of 94m, running nearby the Slaná River and in the surroundings of Hill Sedlo with a trigonometric point, was 1st Lt Peter Sediak with a time of 27.32 min.

- On 7 July, the new Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Cyprus and Head of Mission of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, Mrs Elizabeth Spehar handed out UN medals to members of the Blue Berets in Nicosia. This was the last medal award ceremony for the **UNFICYP Force Commander, Maj Gen Kristin Lund** before leaving the mission. On Monday 11 July, she participated in the medal award ceremony in Sector 4. Maj Gen Lund bid farewell to soldiers and thanked them for their work. The Commander of Sector 4, Lt Col Paňko, wished much success to Maj Gen Lund.

MOD presents White Paper on Defence of SVK REP to media representatives

(12 July) Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš, SVK MOD State Secretary Ivan Mačovsky and SVK Chief of Defence Gen Milan Maxim introduced the White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic to journalists, explaining what continuity consists in and what basic differences there are in relation to the White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic of 2013. They stressed that the document is about setting a political and strategic framework with an outlook to 2030. The proposal on the updated White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic comes in response to the fundamental change in the security landscape. Our main aim is to strengthen the defence capability of the Slovak Republic, with emphasis on the SVK Armed Forces' readiness and combat viability. At the same time, we are meeting our commitment to being more open to the public, which is in line with the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, where defence is considered to be a matter for all citizens," said Minister Gajdoš, while noting that the MOD seeks to pursue a new quality of public communications. He reminded that last week the proposal of the updated White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic had been introduced to the SVK security community, the Security and

Minister at Camp 2016



(July 15) Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic Peter Gajdoš visited Lešť to meet with participants of the 48-hours-long survival course, dubbed Camp 2016. The camp was organised by the SVK MOD for winners of the voluntary military training campaign

and for students of the secondary schools cooperating with military recruitment groups. Journalists could also participate in the event. The attendees underwent topographical, medical and physical training. They also tried building simple protective structures, using individual CBRN protective clothing, moving across the battlefield under fire, orienteering in terrain, planning movements, folding clothing and assembling equipment. A total of 14 men and 8 women completed Camp 2016.

Turkey is our partner

(16 July) The Slovak Republic condemns the attempted military coup and violent takeover of power in Turkey, fully supports the democratically elected government, and calls for a quick return to constitutional order. Such are the results following a meeting of the National Security and Analytical Centre Council, as informed by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Robert Kaliňák, Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš, and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Miroslav Lajčák. The officials confirmed that Turkey is an important partner for the European Union as well as an Allied partner for Slovakia in NATO. The Slovak security components are at high readiness and meetings of the National Security and Analytical Centre will continue. In connection with the situation in Turkey, Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš convened a meeting of the Crisis Staff's emergency component.

Slovak Warthog 2016



(13 July) During Exercise Slovak Warthog 2016 at Sliač Airport, SVK Chief of Defence Gen Milan Maxim met with members of the Indiana National Guard (ING) from the US. He appreciated the joint training

on calling in air strikes and conducting operational missions with air support. Together with the ING, members of the 5th Special Forces Regiment demonstrated to General Maxim the SOPs for guiding the L-39 trainer aircraft and the A-10 Thunderbolt to ground targets. Col Gus Noel delivered a presentation of the A-10C Thunderbolt and its special weapon systems.



Defence Industry Association of the Slovak Republic, and it had as well been forwarded to the members of the Committee on Defence and Security of the SVK National Council, the three previous successive defence ministers, the two previous successive MOD State Secretaries, and the two previous successive CHODs. He went on to emphasise that there is a space to hold discussions and to project potential remarks into the proposal. General Milan Maxim noted that Slovakia, with its entry into NATO, made a commitment to share the responsibility for maintaining security in the world and this requires commensurate capabilities. "It is the White Paper that sets out the strategic direction and framework for developing the SVK Armed Forces' capabilities well until 2030," he explained. Adding that, it will be vital, upon adoption of the White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic, to formulate a long-term SVK Armed Forces development plan with a list of concrete projects and deadlines. The proposal of the updated White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic will be subject to the inter-ministerial review process until 20 July and be submitted for deliberation to the SVK Government by the end of July.