



Minister at V4 meeting

(27 March) SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš participated in the Visegrad Group (V4) Defence Ministerial in Budapest. Along with other representatives of the MODs, Ministers agreed on the need to coordinate their joint positions and to promote a strong regional cooperation. They also discussed the preparations for the NATO summit in July 2018.

SVK Minister of Defence said: "We realise that the success of our region is based on cooperation. We support increasing investment in defence, modernisation, and closer NATO-EU cooperation. We expanded on our views on the transformation of the defence capacity building package for Iraq, where our soldiers are serving, to a non-combat mission, which will be proposed at the upcoming NATO summit." Adding that Slovakia is committed to supporting the approach that pays equal attention to the defence of NATO's southern and eastern flanks.

V4 Defence Ministers concurred in the need to step up NATO-EU cooperation. They devoted their attention to new EU initiatives and the military mobility project. Special attention was paid to the need to finalise the governance rules for PESCO projects. In this connection, Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš underscored the first success of the Slovak EuroArtillery (Indirect Fire Support) project and invited the V4 members to join the project.

In light of the upcoming Slovak V4 Presidency, which Slovakia will take over from Hungary in July 2018, he introduced its priorities. Slovakia has an ambition to coordinate the V4 positions towards a greater strengthening of EU cooperation. It will also support the exchange of experience in PESCO projects, the joint protection of airspace, and the preparations for the V4 Battle Group, to be on stand-by shortly after the end of the SVK V4 Presidency, i.e. in the second half of 2019.

Central Europe is united

(28 March) The results of the Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC) Ministerial confirm that the states of Central Europe are united on defence and security. They agreed to maintain continuity of cooperation, with emphasis on strengthening their response to and preventing security threats. In this connection, they discussed holding another multinational exercise, aimed at containing illegal migration flows heading towards EU borders, and the current and future PESCO projects. A joint participation of the CEDC countries in PESCO was on the agenda as well. Minister Gajdoš introduced the successful SVK EuroArtillery project, whereas Slovakia wants to make the best of its expertise in the development and manufacture of mobile artillery systems.

During the meeting with his Hungarian counterpart, Peter Gajdoš and István Simicskó expanded on the joint operations of SVK and HUN troops in Sector 4 of UNFICYP. In this respect, Slovakia intends to take over all key positions in Sector 4 in line with UN SC Resolution 2398 (2018).

Slovakia marks the 14th anniversary of its accession to the North Atlantic Alliance

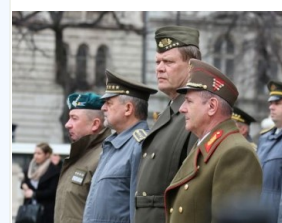
(29 March) The Slovak Republic marked the 14th anniversary of its accession to the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO). Since 29 March 2004 it has been a member of the international community of 29 states, which provides highest security guarantees. Slovakia entered the Alliance along with Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania and Slovenia.

SVK Minister of Defence said: "Over the past 14 years we have become a well-respected ally. We have been taking maximum efforts to follow through on our commitments and we will do our best to contribute not only to strengthening collective defence but also to enhancing our self-defence, as required by Article 3 of the Washington Treaty, so that we are not only a consumer but also a contributor to security."

In this context, he underlined the importance of the commitments from the NATO Wales Summit, to increase spending on defence and modernisation, which the SVK Government committed itself to in its Government Manifesto. To that end, the SVK MOD worked out the Long-Term Defence Development Plan with an Outlook to 2030. Based on this, the SVK MOD is now delivering the modernisation of the SVK Armed Forces.



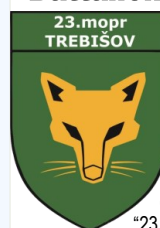
General Maxim in Budapest



(27 March) Chief of the SVK General Staff Gen Milan Maxim took part in a regular meeting of the V4 CHODs in Budapest at the end of the HUN V4 Presidency. The delegations took stock of the preparations for the V4 Joint Logistics Support Group HQ (V4 JLSG HQ), they agreed on the preparations for the stand-up of the EU V4 Battle Group (EU V4 BG) in 2019, and familiarised themselves with the final draft of the V4 Training Catalogue.

Day II of the meeting was dedicated to the demonstrations of capabilities at V4 SIGHT 2018, which tested the readiness of the V4 SOFs in Hungary's Szolnok. The CHODs saw for themselves the readiness of the SOFs to conduct SOF operations in today's challenging battlefield environments. The next meeting of the V4 CHODs is planned for June 2018, as Slovakia takes over the V4 Presidency.

Battalion has a new unit insignia



(28 March) Based on Ordinance of the Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic No. 17/2018, 23rd Motorised Battalion Trebišov was given a new distinctive unit insignia (DUJ). The Gothic shield in the green field features a golden head of a fox, with the inside of its ears, its eyes, and the contours of its nose in black. The top of the crest reads the name of the unit, abbreviated "23. mopr", in silver colour in the first row and the location of the unit is written in capital letters in the second row.

Conference MILMEDKON 2018

(27 March) The Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš hosted a Surgeon General of the SVK Armed Forces' specialist conference – MILMEDKON 2018. It focused on the topics of pre-hospital care, traumatology, intensive care, surgery, cardiology, pharmacology, assessment medicine. It was attended by nearly 350 serving and ex-members of the SVK military medicine branch, rescue services and a delegation from the Army of the Czech Republic.

Among the presenters were Brig Gen MUDr Zoltán Bubeník, Director of Military Medicine Agency, MUDr. Marián Kollár, President of the Slovak Medical Chamber, Iveta Lazorová, President of the Chamber of Slovak Nurses and Midwives, Imrich András, Secretary General of the Slovak Chamber of Medical Rescuers. The Surgeon General presented nominated medical professionals with Commemorative Badges and Letters of Thank You for their contribution to the development of military medicine, for their long-time performance of duties and exemplary representation of military medicine.

Trebišov-based tankies fire tanks at Kamenica nad Cirochou



(23 March) As part of the sustainment training for the National Commitment (NC) – Mechanised Brigade, members of the Tank Company of Combined Mechanised Battalion Trebišov conducted a tank firing exercise on Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area. The main aim was to fire the primary armament – the 125mm battle tank gun, the 14.5mm insert weapon, the anti-tank NSV 12.7mm machine gun; and to throw grenades; and to fire small firearms.

During the training the tankies were inspected by Commander SVK Land Forces Maj Gen Jindřich Joch, who was accompanied by SVK Armed Forces CSEL Sgt Maj Vladimír Beluš and DCOM Mech Bde Prešov Col Norbert Hrib.

Although exercising in spring, the tankies were still faced with winter conditions and had to come to terms with a snowstorm, fog and cold. The tankies did well in driving their tanks and underwent training with an explosive demining device. The entire crews, including drivers and commanders, then took turns in firing the insert weapon. The culmination of this year's training of Trebišov-based tankies will be a tactical exercise on Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area later this November.