



Another Spartan arrives

(9 April) The second C-27J Spartan transport aircraft touched down at Kuchyňa Air Base, with the aircraft being officially taken on charge (TOC) with the SVK Air Force's Transport Wing Kuchyňa.

SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš said: "I am very pleased that we have brought the procurement of the Spartan transport aircraft to a successful end. Our Armed Forces are once again adequately and technically equipped to perform air transport tasks of greater scope and complexity. This means we can gradually manage to transport our troops and materiel independently. Of course, the aircraft will also be ready to perform domestic and international crisis management tasks." He added that the first C-27J Spartan airlifter, which has been in service with the SVK Air Force since the end of last year, is already transporting equipment and material to the SVK personnel deployed on a tour of duty in UNFICYP, Cyprus.

According to SVK CHOD General Milan Maxim, the Spartan crews will have been trained, at the latest, by September 2018, so that they can make the best of all of the aircraft's capabilities.

General Secretary of the MOD's Service Office Ján Holko emphasised that the modernisation of the Armed Forces will proceed in line with the Long-Term Defence Development Plan. "We have made the plan available to the public to become familiar with it, whereas the plan envisages defence investments worth €30 billion up to 2030," he said.

Tender for radars scrapped

(12 April) The international tender for the procurement of 3D radars will be officially terminated in the coming days. The notice of termination has been sent to Slovak and EU Journals and the bidders will be notified as well. "Considering the fact that the tender has not been brought to a successful end over the past almost 3 years, we want to procure the radars through a Gov-to-Gov Agreement. In the coming days we are going to put forward this proposed solution to the SVK Cabinet," said Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš at a press conference with journalists.

The MOD plans to enter into Gov-to-Gov negotiations on the most convenient offer with 6 countries in an effort to purchase 3D RL medium, short and very short range radars. This follows from the SVK Armed Forces' requirement for a complex solution to Ground-Based Air Defence (GBAD) radar systems.

During the press conference, Minister Gajdoš along with other MOD and SVK Armed Forces officials updated media representatives on the progress of the SVK military's other modernisation projects. On the supersonic aircraft, the negotiations with the USA and Sweden are still underway, whereas the Minister confirmed that he will submit the proposed solution to the SVK Air Force's supersonic fleet to the Cabinet no later than 29 June 2018. At about that time the MOD will also submit the IFV 8x8 proposal to the Cabinet. Following control trials and testing under extreme climatic conditions in Finland, the IFV 8x8 prototype is now undergoing military trials. On the 4x4 tactical vehicles, the procurement process continues with the technical and economic parameters of the submitted bids being analysed. Media representatives were also informed of the MOD's ambition to add another 25 pieces of the 155 mm Zuzana 2 Self-Propelled Gun Howitzer to the SVK Armed Forces' arsenal of weapons. In the coming months Slovakia will take delivery of another two UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters.

Minister Gajdoš meets with Italian CHOD General Graziano

(9 April) NATO-EU cooperation forms the main pillars of the partnership between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Italy in the field of defence. Slovak Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš and Italian Chief of Defence General Claudio Graziano concurred in this opinion during today's meeting at MOD Main Building in Bratislava. General Graziano is visiting Slovakia at the invitation of SVK CHOD Gen Milan Maxim. Topics of discussion were dominated by bilateral defence cooperation, especially PESCO's EuroArtillery project, and active involvement of both countries in international crisis management operations. The Minister underlined Italy's contribution to help fund the Slovak demining project in Iraq as well as the regular appearance of Italian pilots at the Slovak International Air Fest (SIAF) at Sliač Air Base.

In light of the historically most extensive modernisation of the SVK Armed Forces, Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš informed General Graziano of the MOD's systematic approach to modernisation in line with the new strategic documents. On armaments, he underscored the cooperation with Italy on delivering another C-27J Spartan transport aircraft to Slovakia. SVK CHOD Gen Milan Maxim presented Gen Graziano with the SVK CHOD Commemorative Cross, 1st Grade. On Day 2 of their visit to Slovakia, the Italian delegation visited Tactical Wing Sliač.



- The main joint training activity of the SVK Air Force in the field of training commanders and staffs will be Exercise AIR SHIELD 2018, a command staff exercise with partial deployment of troops to military training areas, to be held on 1-12 Oct 2018. To validate the preparations and to initiate the operational planning process, the SVK Air Force's HQ AIRCOM hosted a **complex staff rehearsal**, directed by DCOM SVK AF Brig Miroslav Lorinc, on 9-12 Apr.

- Col Michal Migát, Director of the SVK Military Police, Lt Col František Hámor, Director of the Police Operations Branch Prešov, and Maj Marián Markus, Senior Leading Officer of the Criminal Investigation and Documentation Section, came to the Armed Forces Academy on 10 Apr to deliver lectures to participants of the **15th Higher Command Staff Course** on the mission and tasks of the SVK Military Police and combating crime within Defence.

- Prešov-based Sokolovo Barracks hosted the 6th edition of the 2nd Mechanised Brigade's **Best Radio – CIS Operator Competition** on 12 Apr. Taking part in the competition were 15 contestants drawn from the Brigade and its subordinate battalions. PFC Erik Komarc, of Self-Propelled Artillery Unit Michalovce, placed first, followed by PFC Jozef Hamrac, of Self-Propelled Artillery Unit Michalovce, and PFC Matej Gergelčík, of Command Support Company (2nd Mech Bde Prešov).

- Col Marian Bodolló, Chaplain General of the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps Ecumenical Pastoral Service, paid a **pastoral visit to members of the Resolute Support (RS) mission** in Afghanistan from 30 Mar to 7 Apr. He led Worship Services at the Chapel of Kabul International Airport, familiarised himself with the operational tasks of the Slovak Contingent's National Support Element (NSE) and visited SVK personnel at the RS Headquarters Kabul. He also signed the documents on SVK humanitarian aid for an elementary school in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan.

- Students from 10 secondary schools from across the Trnava Region met at the Secondary Business and Services School Trnava on 6 Apr to battle it out at the **2018 Defence Challenge**. The team from "Ivan Kupec" Grammar School of Hlohovec came out as the overall winner.

- The third event of the **Defence Challenge** series for secondary school students was held at Secondary Air Technical School in Trenčín on 11 Apr. A total of 11 teams from across the Trenčín region participated in the event. The team from "Ludovít Štúr" Grammar School of Trenčín defended their title.

- The SVK MOD wants to alert the drivers in Slovakia to take caution, as there will be **15 Allied military movements** across Slovakia over the period from 16-22 Apr 2018. They will mainly involve CZE and POL troops. Drivers should also pay attention to the movements of SVK Armed Forces convoys along the routes: Sliač – Trenčín; Training Centre Lešť – Zemianske Kostoľany; Martin – Training Centre Lešť; Trenčín – Turecký Vrch; Prešov – Training Centre Lešť; Levice – Training Centre Lešť; Training Centre Lešť – Hlohovec; Training Centre Lešť – Pliešovce; and Prešov – Valaškovce.

SVK soldiers are proud to have trained yet another group of ISF personnel

(15 April) Working under NATO's training and capacity building in Iraq (NTCB-I), Slovak military instructors are proud to have trained yet another group of Iraqi

Security Forces (ISF) personnel. 16 course members have recently graduated successfully from the Mechanical Demining Instructor Course, with a focus on operating the Božena 4 Light Demining System as the key training asset.

The course allowed the ISF participants to familiarise themselves with the principles of planning and conducting mechanical demining training. They received detailed instruction on individual types of demining devices, their functionalities in standard and emergency modes, the safety precautions for operating and handling the Božena 4 Light Demining System,



and first aid. In the field phase, the soon-to-be instructors trained hands-on with the Božena 4 Light Demining System and ran train-the-trainer sessions, including the planning process for mechanical demining tactics.

All course members met the standards expected of them and passed the final test. Speaking at the graduation ceremony, the Commandant of the IABDS School, Brigadier Ghanim thanked the Slovak instructors for making the course a success and delivering quality training to the ISF personnel.

At the beginning of March, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg paid a visit to Camp Basmaya, where he also inspected the demining course being delivered by the SVK instructors.



Thanks go out to SVK AF

(10 April) CHOD Gen Milan Maxim, accompanied by Commander SVK Air Force Maj Gen Ľubomír Svoboda, visited the SVK Air Force's HQ AIRCOM Zvolen. He thanked the staff for their job well done with due responsibility during his tenure as CHOD. He awarded the Plaque commemorating the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the SVK Armed Forces to Transport Wing Kuchyňa, C2S Wing Zvolen, Tactical Wing Sliač, and the SVK Air Force's HQ AIRCOM. He then presented the nominated HQ senior staff with the SVK CHOD Commemorative Cross and the SVK CHOD Badge for their exemplary performance of duties.