



Anniversary of Kragujevac Mutiny

(14 June) On his official visit to Serbia, SVK Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš marked the 100th anniversary of the mutiny of Trenčín-based 71st Inf Regt soldiers in WWI, known as the Kragujevac Mutiny. It was the largest and most tragic revolt in the Austro-Hungarian Army in WWI. After it was crushed in 1918, 44 Slovak soldiers were convicted and executed. Reflecting on the tragedy, Minister Gajdoš said: "The modern world often forgets the horrors that armed conflicts bring with them. Today I have paid tribute to 44 Slovak soldiers who rose up against war and oppression 100 years ago, even though they knew what consequences would follow if they failed..." While still in Serbia, Head of the MOD also paid tribute to the civilian casualties of WWII at the Broken Wing Memorial.

Defence Minister in Serbia

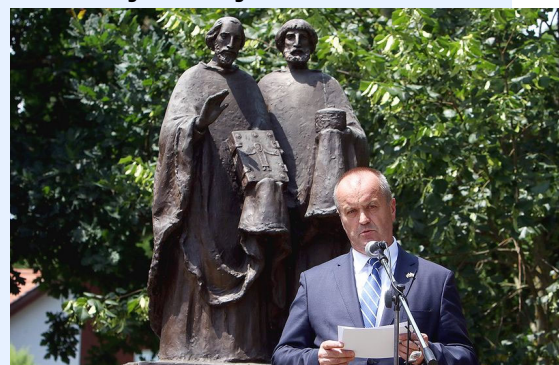
(15 June) SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš continued the second day of his official visit to the Republic of Serbia. In addition to having an office call with his counterpart Aleksandar Vulin, he also met for talks with 1st Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Ivica Dačić and Deputy Speaker of the Serbian National Assembly Vladimir Marinković. He took stock of current political and security developments in the Western Balkans region, reiterated Slovakia's support for Serbia's EU integration efforts, as well as discussing areas of common interest in furtherance of bilateral defence cooperation. SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš said: "Slovakia perceives Serbia as a strategic partner and at the same time as a significant factor of security and political stability in the Western Balkans. Serbia's position is important especially today when it is clear that diverse extremist forces are on the increase in Europe, threatening long-standing stability and European values." He added that EU enlargement is among Slovakia's key foreign policy priorities, whereas our country is ready to help Serbia practically by sharing expertise in the field of education, public diplomacy, and security sector reform.



During the meetings, Serbian partners praised the SVK position on Serbia's pro-European direction and Slovakia's sustained support for the principle of preserving Serbia's territorial integrity. They also appreciated the joint SVK-SRB deployments on international crisis management missions and operations, giving a positive assessment of the SVK-SRB collaboration in UNFICYP, Cyprus. Minister Gajdoš reiterated the offer for SRB troops to participate in training at the CBRN Facility Zemianske Kostolany and in the Armed Forces Academy-delivered International Staff Officers Courses (ISOC) in Liptovský Mikuláš. They also spoke about the possibility of third parties, including Serbia, participating in PESCO, which Slovakia is highly open to, bearing in mind the added value the third parties may bring to PESCO.

Minister commemorates the 1155th anniversary of St Cyril ad St Methodius

(16 June) Minister Gajdoš commemorated the 1155th anniversary of the arrival of St Cyril ad St Methodius in Great Moravia. The village of Zalavár in Hungary was among the places where St Cyril and St Methodius served during their mission to Great Moravia. Now in its 7th year, the commemoration and meeting of the SVK and HUN Military Ordinariates was also attended by HUN Defence Minister Tibor Benkő, Mons František Rábek and Mons László Bíró. The event also saw the first bilateral meeting between Peter Gajdoš and Tibor Benkő since the appointment of Tibor Benkő as Minister of Defence of Hungary. Topics of current relevance included bilateral security and defence cooperation and the priorities of the SVK V4 Presidency, which Slovakia will take over from Hungary as early as next month. The Ministers also spoke about the MOU on the Participation in UNFICYP, Cyprus which is currently being drafted.



- SVK air defenders tested their capabilities on NATO's largest exercise in Europe – **Tobruq Legacy 2018**, which was held on Várpalota Training Area in Hungary on 4-14 June. This year marks the 4th iteration of the exercise. A total of 22 NATO countries, 6 international organizations and NATO HQs took part in the exercise. Slovakia was represented by 142 SVK military personnel.

- On 12 June, **CHOD Lt Gen Daniel Zmeko** paid his first visit to Trenčín Garrison since taking up the appointment of Chief of Defence. As part of his tour of the garrison, he called on commanders at the SVK Land HQ and the SVK Armed Forces Logistics Office. 3 days later, he visited the SVK Air Force's HQ AIRCOM Zvolen.

- Liptovský Mikuláš-based SVK Armed Forces Academy hosted the **Joint Logistics Support Group (JLSG) Course and Exercise** under NATO's aegis on 4-15 June. Taking part in the activity were 117 service personnel from CZE, SVK, POL, HUN, GRC, NLD, CAN, AUT, BIH, BGR, HRV, ITA, LVA, ESP, GBR and DEU. The aim of the activity was to prepare military personnel for the JLSG HQ in support of EU and NATO operations. The JLSG Course and Exercise were part of preparations for Ex Capable Logistician 2019.

- On 13 June, Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade (AAM Bde) Nitra hosted a meeting of the **Chief of Defence Military Council**, chaired by Lt Gen Daniel Zmeko. The key issues on the agenda included the SVK Armed Forces Draft Doctrine; the updated tasks aligned to the SVK Government Manifesto Commitments for 2018-2020; the scheduled training and exercises in 2019; and the provision of clothing and equipment for service personnel.

- On 12-13 June, 23rd Motorised Battalion Trebišov carried out the first **live fire exercise** since its formation. The live firing tested 6 sections, of 1st and 2nd Motorised Companies, on Trebišov Garrison's Poruba pod Vihorlatom firing range.

- Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš received the **Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Slovakia, HE Mr Leszek Soczewica**, who visited the MOD on 11 June at the end of his Diplomatic Service appointment. Both officials gave their assessments of bilateral cooperation and outlined the way ahead to deepen it. They also touched on the modernization of armed forces and the deployments on international crisis management missions and operations.

- The SVK MOD wants to alert the drivers in Slovakia to take caution as there will be 25 road and 7 rail **Allied movements** across Slovakia over the period between 18-24 June 2018. The former will mostly involve US and POL troops, and SVK military convoys transporting oversized cargo of equipment along the routes: Martin – Sučany; Trebišov – Training Centre Lešť; Trebišov – Veľké Ozorovce; Viničné – Turecký Vrch; Michalovce – Prešov; Sereď – Martin; Hlohovec – Nemecká; and Sereď – Piešťany.

Saturday Dialogues on defence

(16 June) The aim of the MOD is to procure 3D radars in order to cater for the SVK Armed Forces' specific requirements in a timely manner. Even 3 years on, the international tender has never reached a successful end. Based on analyses, the Gov-to-Gov sales have proved to be the most effective and transparent method of purchasing defence assets, insofar that deliveries and prices are guaranteed by the selling government. This method of procurement rules out any form of corruption. This statement was made by Minister Gajdoš who appeared on the SVK TV and Radio's Saturday Dialogues. The MOD objects to the claims that an open tender is the only transparent method of procurement.

The MOD will also submit a document with a proposed solution for supersonics to the Security Council and the Cabinet by the end of June. "The Cabinet must decide. We can only work with official bids and lobbyist information is not and cannot be relevant to us," stressed Minister Gajdoš, noting that an unclassified document on the supersonic fleet will also be forwarded to the Cabinet, so that the "advantages" of the final solution can be clearly visible.

MPs satisfied with inspection

(15 June) The SVK MOD is to discontinue the criminal complaint against Milan Krajniak MP. This announcement was made by General Secretary of the Service Office Ján Holko who said: "A whole lot of false information on the procurement of the 8x8 IFVs has risen to the forefront of the [media and public] consciousness. As a result, we suggested that a parliamentary inspection be conducted by MPs at the MOD, with the participation of Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security Anton Hrnko and Milan Krajniak MP as a member of the Committee." Based on the outcome of the inspection, Milan Krajniak MP confirmed that the only way to deliver on the Long-Term Defence Development Plan in a non-corrupt manner is to implement the 8x8 IFV project via a Gov-to-Gov sales agreement. "Moreover, we agreed that what was falsely stated by Mr Krajniak to be a 20% kickback was, in fact, a business profit margin, which is, however, considerably below the claimed 20%," added Ján Holko.

Ex Fire Rescue 2018

(15 June) Training Area Lešť hosted Ex Fire Rescue 2018 on 11-15 June, involving over 190 military firefighters and 35 firefighting and medical assets. The main aim of the exercise was to practise and align the procedures of fire crews in executing specialist activities and rescue actions during a firefighting response; to exercise and sharpen the crew leaders' skills to exercise command and control of fire and rescue teams; and to set up an incident response post. The exercise was attended by members of the SVK Air Force's Fire and Rescue Services, medics of the SVK Armed Forces Surgeon General Office, representatives of the Interior Ministry's Integrated Rescue System, and fire crews of the CZE Army's Military Firefighting Services from Prague, Stará Boleslav, Vyškov, Čáslav, Sedlec, Vicensice, Pardubice and Libavá.

Training of additional Active Reserves soldiers in Sereď

(11 June) The Engineer Battalion Sereď today launched the training of additional Active Reserves soldiers. 40 active reservists, of whom 6 (including 1 woman) are graduates of Voluntary Military Training (VMT), 10 are ex-service personnel, and 24 are graduates of compulsory military service (national service), will exercise their basic skills and capabilities mainly at the Training Centre Lešť over the next 2 weeks. Active reservists will practise mobility and countermobility operations and fortification works, i.e. building shelters and trenches. The training also includes



negotiating water obstacles with the use of standard engineering assets. The training will run until 22 June 2018. Through the 2018 Conscription Amendment Act, the MOD is planning to make participation in the Active Reserves training programme even more attractive. Salaries, travel costs, premiums for social and health insurance for employees will be reimbursed to employers, and so is true of the self-employed. Soldiers in the reserves holding the rank one below or two higher than their own rank required for a specific position are also allowed to enter the Active Reserves.