



Queen Anastasiya

(12 April) Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš congratulated Anastasiya Kuzmina, member of the Dukla Banská Bystrica Military Sports Club (VŠC Dukla), on her world champion title in the women's sprint race in biathlon during their meeting at MOD Main Building today. On the occasion of her career's end in individual disciplines and for her brilliant performance results, he awarded her the Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal, 1st Grade, a prize of 5,000 euros, and a spa package for her whole family in an MOD-owned spa facility. He also recognised the work of her coach and husband Daniel Kuzmin and that of her entire support team.

Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš said: "Of course, I fully respect Anastasiya's decision to finish her career in individual disciplines. At the same time, she has my admiration as she finishes as a real queen, i.e. at the top of her career. Despite this, I believe that we are not saying good-bye to her and that she will continue to reckon on her family from the VŠC Dukla. Naturally, I am also happy with her decision to help our Dukla team in team disciplines." At the same time, he said that for him the most powerful moment came during the last but one race when, after gaining the world champion title, she fulfilled her dream of hitting all of the 20 targets.

Anastasiya Kuzmina said: "10 years have already passed since I was first able to represent the Dukla Banská Bystrica, and I want to re-emphasise that the Military Sports Centre has its traditions and its successes, and I am very pleased to have contributed to the Centre to have even more sporting successes, as well as making it more visible in the world also thanks to the support of the SVK MOD." She went on to say that today's meeting with the Defence Minister, her big fan, made her day.

Director of the VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica Lt Col Roman Benčík said that Anastasiya Kuzmina is among those who have met the tasks and goals of the Military Sports Centre – to collect as many medals as possible at world-class sports events. "We have prepared several alternatives for Anastasiya's next career, be that as a coach for youth or working as part of management and marketing in our centre. The decision is hers," he emphasised.

Anastasiya Kuzmina has been a member of the Dukla Banská Bystrica Military Sports Centre since 2009. She added the world champion title to her successes in the last season when she triumphed in the women's 7.5km sprint race at the 2019 Biathlon World Championships in Sweden's Östersund. She placed 3rd in the overall rating of the Biathlon World Cup in the 2018/2019 season, when she won 4 podium placements and stood on the winners' podium three times. Among her greatest sporting successes are 3 golds and 3 silvers from the Olympic Games and the complete first 3 placings on the winners' podiums at the Biathlon World Championships.



OSCE Dialogue on Military Doctrines

(10 April) The OSCE Dialogue on Military Doctrines, an expert seminar organised on the initiative of Austria with substantial support by Slovakia as the OSCE chair country and in collaboration with Switzerland's OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) Chairmanship, took place in Vienna on 8-9 April 2019. Providing support to the event was a common commitment of the SVK MOD and the SVK Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs during the Slovak 2019 OSCE Chairmanship, one rooted in our long-standing active support for the agenda of forging close military ties as part of the OSCE's politico-military dimension.

The event was opened by AUS Chief of Defence Staff General Robert Brieger. On behalf of the Slovak Republic, Director of the International Relations Department Bohuš Kuchta presented a speech in which he underpinned the priorities of the Slovak 2019 OSCE Chairmanship in the politico-military field and underscored the importance of close military ties with their potential impact and leverage on the formation of the security environment in the OSCE region.

Slovakia as the OSCE chair country was actively involved in the Dialogue. Appearing on the 'Military Doctrines and Exercise Scenarios' panel were Col Norbert Hrib, of the SVK General Staff, and Col (Rtd) Vladimír Zikmund, of the SVK Army HQ, who presented the SVK military's position on the subject matter. In their presentations, they focused on exercise scenarios in the context of today's geopolitical developments and security threats, on the concept design of military doctrines and their impact on the use of armed forces, as well as on the creation of military doctrines with regard to hybrid threats.



■ The 74th anniversary of the liberation of Martin was commemorated by city residents and SVK military personnel at the Partisan Cemetery in Martin-Priekopa on 11 Apr 2019. In attendance at the ceremony were Chief of Staff Supply Base II Lt Col Štefan Oravkin, soldiers of Martin Garrison, local state government and self-government officials, participants of anti-Nazi resistance operations in WWII, and members of the Slovak Anti-Nazi Fighters Union.

■ The new British Defence Attaché accredited to Slovakia, Col David Catmur met with Commander of the Tactical Wing Sliac Col Martin Kuterka at Sliac Air Base on 10 Apr 2019. The aim of the visit was to outline the future UK-SVK Defence cooperation and strengthen international military ties.

■ An act of commemoration to mark the 74th anniversary of the liberation of Trenčín was held at the Memorial to the Tortured on 10 Apr 2019 in Brezina, Trenčín. In attendance were participants of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) and anti-Nazi resistance operations, delegations of the regional and local self-governments, members of the Slovak Anti-Nazi Fighters Union and the Veterans Club. Representing the SVK Armed Forces were service personnel of Trenčín Garrison, led by DCOM SVK ARMY Brig Gen Karol Navrátil.

■ Training of the 12th Mechanised Battalion members to be deployed on enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) role to Latvia culminated in a company-level tactical live fire exercise as Phase 2 of the Combat Readiness Evaluation (CREVAL) process at the Training Centre Lešť, where soldiers tested their marksmanship skills and the ability to conduct defensive and offensive operations.

■ On 6 Apr 2019, 45 first-year officer cadets of the Slovak Armed Forces Academy visited Brezová pod Bradlom, following in the footsteps of General Milan Rastislav Štefánik. They began their educational trail in Košariská and went on to Brezová pod Bradlom, where they visited the Dušan Samuel Jurkovič Museum. They walked from Košariská to the Tomb of General Štefánik on Bradlo Hill, re-treading the historical path. Cadets were accompanied by Dean of Ecumenical Pastoral Service Capt Viktor Sabo and Evangelical Chaplain Zuzana Durcová of Košariská. They led an act of commemoration and prayers to mark 100 years of General Štefánik's tragic death.

■ Drivers are asked by the MOD to drive carefully as there will be 27 Allied road movements, mostly by POL troops, scheduled for 15-21 Apr 2019. This week a SVK Army convoy will ferry oversized cargo on the Martin – Trenčín route. There will also be SVK Army road moves on the Dubnica n. Váhom – Rožňava and Hlohovec – Koliňanský Vrch routes.

Ex Toxic Lance 2019 involving four armies in finals

(14 April) An international CBRN exercise, involving armed forces from the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and the United States of America, took place on 1-14 April 2019 at the Training Centre Lešť and the CBRN Training and Testing Centre Zemianske Kostolány.

Commander of the CBRN Battalion Rožňava Lt Col Oliver Toderiška expressed his satisfaction as the quality of the exercise improves gradually, attracting more international partners.

"Besides CZE and POL CBRN specialists, taking part in the exercise this year are also representatives of the Indiana and Texas National Guards and United States Army Europe. Next year we would like to expand the training audience by inviting a HUN CBRN platoon. Its representative is already participating as an

Training of Active Reserves is over

(12 April) This year's first training programme for active reservists culminated at the Training Centre Lešť. On 1 April 2019, 10 men and 4 women reported to 21st Combined Mechanised Battalion Barracks in Trebišov, to attend training for mechanised infantry roles, with particular focus on tactical training at Lešť until 12 April 2019.

Reservists at Lešť attended training for basic combat skills without the use of combat vehicles, a sports day, and section-level training with the use of combat vehicles. Not to be missed was a live fire exercise, where they fired small arms. Apart from training with 21st Combined Mechanised Battalion Trebišov, active reservists will also be trained across several trades at the CBRN Battalion Rožňava, Engineer Battalion Sered', and Military Police Department Vikanová-Hronek.

Tatra Freedom exercise series



(12 April) A second exercise of the Tatra Freedom exercise series took place practically across the whole of Slovakia on 8-12 April 2019. Over 220 personnel were involved in the exercise, with nearly 30 assets from the SVK Air Force's C2S Wing Zvolen. Members of the C2S Wing Zvolen and the Radar Surveillance Company Michalovce were the primary training audience. Michalovce-based troops transported their equipment to the Biela Hora Tactical Drills Range, from where they carried out radar surveillance tasks. Lt Col Miroslav Mišovic, Commander of the Operations Centre, C2S Wing Zvolen, stressed that the Tatra Freedom exercise series represents a training activity which perfectly tests the ability of the SVK Air Force and SBAD components to defend the Slovak Republic.

A wide range of simulated scenarios inspired by real life circumstances were played out during the main phase of the exercise. They included responding to industrial accidents, chemical leakage incidents, terrorist threats, and intruders trespassing on military installations. Also involved in the initial phase of the scenarios were members of the Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra.

Spring Challenge 2019

(12 April) Ex Spring Challenge 2019 took place in Poland's Krakow in the second week of April. It was a Battlegroup command post exercise, with the training audience drawn from the Visegrad 4 countries. 33 SVK soldiers attended the exercise. The V4 EU BG will continue its training on Ex Common Challenge in May and on Ex Autumn Challenge later this year. Nearly 2,500 personnel from POL, HUN, SVK and CZE will be assigned to the V4 EU BG, to be on stand-by in the second half of 2019.

observer in this year's exercise."

Over 300 troops from 4 countries attended the exercise.

Members of the Texas National Guard enriched others with their skills and capabilities for search and rescue operations in collapsed buildings during natural disasters.

According to Lt Col Toderiška, among the most frequently used training facilities at the Training Centre Lešť were Jakub Village Range, Water Obstacle Range, and Oremland for fighting in built-up areas (FIBUA).

CBRN specialists honed their knowledge and skills in CBRN detection, analysis and decontamination and underwent training with real combat chemical substances at the basic and follow-on levels at the unique CBRN Training and Testing Centre Zemianske Kostolány.

