Countering the threat posed by IED

The Slovak Republic, as one of the signatory nations to the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-traps and Other Devices as Amended on 3rd May 1996 (Protocol II as amended on 3rd May 1996), by means of Slovak Armed Forces, continuously develops the capabilities in countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices.

Slovak Armed Forces (hereinafter SAF) are permanent member to NATO CIED Working Group, where they contribute to collaborative effort of all partnering NATO allies. The aim of the C-IEDWG is to harmonize various activities in the area of C-IED, and identify shortfalls and requirements for urgent action in the field of standardization. The C-IEDWG is established by the Military Committee through the MCLSB to contribute to the effectiveness of NATO forces through standardization in the field of countering improvised explosive devices as it supports joint and combined operations on land. To improve NATO interoperability, the C-IEDWG advises the MCLSB and through the MCLSB, the Military Committee on countering improvised explosive devices topics and issues. The WG reviews and recommends countering improvised explosive devices concepts, develops doctrine and tactics covering all of these areas from the tactical to the strategic levels, which are essential for current and future NATO operations.

SK as the framework nation, has significantly invested into the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Centre of Excellence (hereinafter EOD CoE) providing modern dedicated facilities that allows the COE to accomplish its mission and have room for future expansion. EOD COE represents focal point of knowledge for Explosive Ordnance Disposal in NATO and the wider community of interest. The Centre benefits the NATO on its specialized field by providing innovative and timely advice, subject matter expertise, unique specialized training & education, original publications and contributions to the lessons learned process. As a NATO Centre of Excellence it offers independent thought, analysis and solutions.

SK national primary authority in providing specialized training focused on mitigation of C-IED threat is a National Training Centre of EOD & CBRN. It is the training and education facility of MOD with the authorization of issue qualification licenses for Bomb Disposal Officers, EOD specialists, specialized personnel working with explosives and ammunition as well as provides the doctrinal environment. The Centre provides specialized expert training and education of EOD specialists, as well as collects, manages and validates identified information about ammunition in EOD information system shared with other NATO partners. The last but not least, National Training Centre of EOD & CBRN provides necessary support to education of experts from Ministry of Interior (police experts, ammunition technician /pyrotechnics) in the undertaking of rapid and effective clearance of improvised explosive devices and other explosive hazards. SAF comprehensively cooperate with the Ministry of Interior regarding the ability to exchange the information on the field of exploitation. In recent years, SVK supported following training capability building activities:

**Ukraine (2016)**

Based on Ukrainian urgent request for “Demining assistance” to NATO HQ, SVK become a resource of Trust Fund delivery for assistance in demining training for the Armed Forces of Ukraine since 2014. This project was a part of the approved and endorsed NATO’s Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine, which supported and implemented recommendations from the NATO EOD and Counter-IED (C-IED) Assistance Plan to Ukraine.
The project was carefully aligned to NATO doctrine and policy on EOD and C-IED and selectively supports civil humanitarian activities in the clearance of explosive hazards, including IEDs.

**Iraq (2017/2018)**

NATO Defense and related security Capacity Building (DCB) package for Iraq includes Countering Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED), Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and demining amongst the seven priority areas. The Slovak Republic through its Mobile Training Team delivered training to support the development of demining capabilities within the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) as a part of the NATO DCB effort in Iraq. The concept of the training consisted of manual and mechanical demining training to the ISF utilizing a “train the trainers” approach that allows ISF to educate personnel in demining domain by their own means according to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

SAF continuously strengthens its capacity to prevent and respond to incidents involving improvised explosive devices. Addressing the threat in an effective, comprehensive and sustainable manner requires efforts by the whole national & international communities, as well as civil society and other specialized organizations. SAF have highlighted the need to further development an understanding of the evolving technical composition and structure of improvised explosive devices deployed in the field. Knowing how the devices work and understanding their component parts are the best steps towards building the necessary capacity that can provide comparative advantages in protecting forces operating in asymmetric environments.

Member States should provide necessary support to relevant international and regional organizations and expert non-governmental organizations in the undertaking of rapid and effective clearance of improvised explosive devices and other explosive hazards.

In conclusion, SAF didn’t have any incident concerning the IED threats, deployed and in our homelands currently. It is a high likelihood that our Forces will be confronted by the IED threat in the future operations.