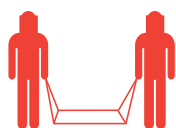


Highlights May 2019

**UNSC RESOLUTION
ADOPTED ON UNISFA 2469**



7 ERW DESTROYED



**5,650 m²
ASSESSED AS SAFE
FROM EXPLOSIVE HAZARD
THREATS**



89 MRE SESSIONS



Weapons and ammunition destruction at Dukra



Battle Area Clearance of the former military trench in Abyei town

On 14 May, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a new resolution on UNISFA, S/RES/2469, extending the mission's mandate until 15 November. UNMAS marked this new resolution on 15 May by destroying weapons and ammunition previously confiscated by UNISFA peacekeepers. In total, 14 confiscated weapons, 258 rounds of ammunition, and 21 magazines were destroyed. UNISFA Acting Head of Mission/Force Commander, Major General Mehari Zewde Gebremariam, Deputy Force Commander, Brigadier General Mulu Girmay Gebrehiwot, Chief of Staff, UNPOL, along with National Monitors from Sudan and South Sudan took part in the destruction event. An additional event to mark the new resolution was organised the same day with both female and male volleyball teams within the local community of Abyei. Teams were provided with T-shirts and volleyballs to promote the theme of "Abyei Free from Weapons and Ammunition" and "Safe Ground."

In May, the UNMAS Integrated Clearance Team (ICT) and Integrated Road Assessment and Clearance Teams (IRACTs) continued with clearance operations in the Abyei area. UNMAS ICT was based in Diffra, IRACT 1 in Noong, and IRACT 2 in Abyei. The teams assessed 5,650 m² of land as free from explosive hazards of which 1,401 m² was for manual mine clearance (MMC) in Lopong and the remainder for Battle Area Clearance (BAC) of a former military trench in Abyei town. Six Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) were located and destroyed in the Abyei area in May. In addition to this, one ERW recovered in April was also destroyed in May. The MMC task in Lopong was completed and closed on 8 May 2019.

With its four Patrol Support Teams (PSTs), UNMAS is dedicated to support all the Ground Monitoring Missions (GMMs) in the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ). In total, twenty-six GMMs took place and were supported by the PSTs in May. In JBVMM Sector 1-Gok Machar, the PSTs continued patrols at TS-11 Safahah/Kiir Adem and TS-12 at Sumayah/War Abar. Nine GMMs were conducted in each of the TS on 2, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27 and 30 May. In JBVMM Sector 2-Kadugli, one PST continued to be on standby in El Amira while waiting for a decision to move forward to the new TS-22 at Abu Qussa/Wunkur. Due to an upcoming rainy season, security concerns and presence of armed elements of the SPLA-IO, the TS-22 could not be established at the planned location, thus UNISFA decided to withdraw from El Amira. The team redeployed on 24 May and reached Kadugli HQ on 28 May. The PST at TS-21 Tishwin continued to support JBVMM GMMs. In May, eight GMMs were conducted from Tishwin TS to the North Outer Limit and to the South Outer Limit of the SDBZ at the Higlig-Bentiu border crossing corridor on 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, and 28 May 2019.

During the month of May, UNMAS intensified MRE through direct presentation and public information sessions. In total, 89 MRE sessions were conducted, reaching a total of 2,153 men, women, boys and girls in the Abyei area. Additionally, UNMAS provided three landmine and ERW awareness induction training sessions to 44 UNISFA staff officers and military observers (40 males and 4 females).

On 29 May, UNMAS also participated in the UNISFA celebration of the International Peacekeepers' Day.

Field Story: Making Communities Safer

Throughout the month of May, UNMAS teams carried out Mine Risk Education (MRE) and Non-Technical Survey (NTS) tasks in the central sector of the Abyei area, focusing on Noong and its surroundings. Upon deployment to Noong and setting up camp within the UNISFA compound, the Integrated Clearance Team commenced activities in the geographical area of Makir village. No permanent villages were found; however, the nomadic Misseriya cattle herders had raised several temporary settlements in the area, which is situated on the Misseriya migration route.

From afar, the settlements looked abandoned; nonetheless, upon closer inspection, the team observed large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep in the distance, and several herders looking for water for their livestock. The landscape appeared bare, lacking treasured grass and water as far as the eye could see. With the support of the Force Protection Unit commander, the team identified one of the populated settlements, nestled under few of the existing trees.

The team approached the settlement with caution, as the Misseriya culture limits interaction between men and women, and visits to the settlement while the men are out with the cattle are frowned upon. Aware of the sensitive nature of the situation, the UNMAS Liaison Officer greeted the community in Arabic from afar, and waited for the community members to approach the team on their own accord. Upon being granted permission to carry out its activities, the team conducted a targeted MRE session, engaging the audience and explaining the different risks inherent to the various activities of the community members.

As the team was wrapping up the MRE session and asking the community for any information on areas where they could not go because of dangerous explosive hazards, the village chief had arrived and requested to meet the team. After briefing the chief on the MRE activities that the team had been undertaking in the village, the chief informed the team that he had knowledge of an explosive device in the area, which he recently encountered. The chief agreed to show UNMAS the way to the device and guided the team to a safe distance from an RPG warhead, placed deep inside a makeshift nest of thorn branches. Such local marking of encountered explosive hazards prevents the community from both removing the item and coming across it by accident.

The team thanks the chief and the community for their time, and proceeded with preparation for removing and destroying the ERW. Once the community members returned back to their settlement, a demolition was carried out and the item was destroyed on the site, putting an end to a potential fatality or injury and making the area safe for the nomadic cattle herders and their families.



Sheep on the move looking for water



Safety briefing carried out and MRE leaflets given out



RPG war-head exposed once thorn bushes removed

**IF YOU SEE AN ITEM OF CONCERN, DO NOT TOUCH IT!
CONTACT UNMAS IMMEDIATELY!**

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**NEEDS
DRIVEN.
PEOPLE
CENTRED.**

The United Nations Mine Action Service is the United Nations entity on explosive hazards and the coordinator for mine action within the United Nations system. UNMAS provides critical support to the protection of civilians, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief and development, allowing UN personnel to rapidly deploy, and refugees and internally displaced persons to safely return to their homes. UNMAS is hosted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. UNMAS supports the UNISFA mandate, ensuring Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM) freedom of movement as well as the identification and clearance of mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) in the Abyei Area and the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ).