



Highlights

UNMAS responds to all requests from UNISFA.

The Mine Action Service continues to provide and maintain 16 mine-protected vehicles for UNISFA troops under a right-of-use agreement.

All confiscated weapons and ammunition were successfully destroyed.

UNMAS is supporting UNISFA Vietnamese Engineers in clearing areas for extraction of sand and roads construction.

Six communities in the Abyei Area have a presence of Community Liaison Officers who make their community members aware of explosive hazards.



Community Liaison



Weapons destruction



UNMAS accreditation process

Stats **AUGUST 2023**

3,632 Square meters of land made safe from explosive hazards

510 People received Explosive Ordnance Risk Education lifesaving messages

48 Explosive Ordnance Risk Education sessions provided

89 Newly arrived UNISFA personnel aware of safety procedures if they encounter explosive hazards

UNMAS TEAMS ILLUMINATING THREATS AND ENHANCING THE SAFETY OF THE ABYEI COMMUNITY

As the rainy season sets in from the month of May and carries on up to the month of October in the Abyei Area it creates its own challenges for the United Nations Interim Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

The main challenge is movement inside the area of operations due to heavy rain and flooding. Many roads are not accessible at all during this period, which makes logistic support to team sites and company operating bases (COB) extremely difficult. Long standing tribal clashes in the Abyei Area necessitate routine patrols and force mobility by the UNISFA contingents, which are also challenged by the wet conditions. Air assets are the primary means of support in these circumstances, which rely heavily on well maintained and readily available helicopter landing sites (HLS) at team sites and COBs.

To alleviate tribal tension between residents of Rumamier and Marial Achak, UNISFA Community Liaison Office (CLO) facilitated peace talks in conjunction with the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief, other sub-chiefs, the Nuer Chiefs, and respective youth leaders. Talks were planned to be held on the 09 August at Rumamier, however road conditions did not allow movement by vehicles of the delegation.

Prior to the planned talks, UNMAS was tasked to conduct clearance of an old HLS which could be used to fly the delegation in to implement these crucial peace talks. Since the HLS location could not be reached by road from Abyei, the team would have to deploy by air, but with the added challenge of not having a safe HLS to land on!

On 9 August, UNMAS team with the necessary equipment required for the clearance, and a Force protection unit (FPU) from Ghanaian Battalion, were airlifted from Abyei to Rumamier to conduct clearance of a nearby HLS where the talks were due to happen the same day. After an aerial reconnaissance, followed by a close quarter risk assessment, the team safely disembarked the helicopter with required equipment a few inches from the ground to carry out the task. The team then moved from the drop off point (DOP) to the proposed HLS on foot some 1.8 km from the DOP as per the tasking given. Upon reaching the proposed site for the clearance task, it was found to be extremely flooded and overgrown with vegetation. Following brief satellite phone communications back to UNMAS, and with the go-ahead from UNISFA Aviation, the team went back to the DOP in order to do a clearance of the HLS site where they had disembarked, to allow the returning helicopter a safe site to land on. The team cleared 480 sqm by means of Battle Area Clearance Surface Search. The task was conducted relatively quick, despite the difficult conditions, and successfully allowed a safe landing of the incoming helicopter with the peace talks delegation.

Following the arrival of the delegation, the UNMAS team returned to Abyei, and the peace talks were held between the indigenous Ngok Dinka's, the Nuer settlers from Unity State and the Ruweng Community from the Ruweng Special Administrative Area of S. Sudan, aiming to calm the tensions in this area.

The successful HLS clearance, through an innovative and rapid approach by UNMAS and Aviation, under extreme and unknown conditions at Rumamier will allow UNISFA to access this area during the rainy season in future, which can further enable sustainable peace.



Moving to the clearing site



Preparation of the HLS



Visual search



Welcoming the peace talks delegates and heading back to Abyei

IF YOU SEE AN ITEM OF CONCERN, DO NOT TOUCH IT!

CONTACT UNMAS UNISFA IMMEDIATELY!

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