



## 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.**

**One Patrol Support Team returned to Team Site Tishwin and resumed regular activities.**

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

**All Patrol Support Teams received accreditation and demonstrated their operational readiness.**



Battle Area Clearance training



UNMAS safety induction training

## Stats **SEPTEMBER 2023**

**23,699** Square meters of land made safe from explosive hazards

**404** People received explosive ordnance safety brief and lifesaving messages

**39** Explosive ordnance safety briefings sessions provided among the Abyei Area community members

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

# UNMAS TEAMS ARE ELIMINATING THE EXPLOSIVE THREATS IN THE JOULJOK AREA

In early 2022, inter-communal conflict broke out in the Abyei Area between the Ngok Dinka and the Twic Mayardit Dinka at the Anet settlement. The violent clashes extended to several other locations in the southern part of the Abyei Area, including Agok town and its neighbouring village Jouljok.

As a result from the armed conflicts, contamination caused by Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs) aggravates a significant threat to the displaced people and their safe return home and resumption of livelihood activities. Such explosive remnants of war may be compared to patient soldiers who stay alert and wait for decades to kill or maim people and animals, as well as damage and destroy vehicles or prevent any infrastructural development. It could be a farmer digging in his garden, children playing, herders or cattle while grazing in the field, a vehicle moving on the road or anybody going about their daily activities.

With all reasonable efforts, during the rainy season between June and October, UNMAS teams continue to make the environment safer by eliminating the explosive threat in the Abyei Area and enhancing the protection of civilians, enabling their freedom of movement and voluntary return, or allowing them to resume livelihood activities.

On 19 September, UNMAS received a report from UN Police regarding a suspected explosive item in the Jouljok area. UNMAS immediately tasked its Explosive Ordnance Disposal Response Team to investigate the report. With the support of the force protection provided by the UNISFA Ghanian Peacekeeping soldiers (GHANBATT), the team responded and investigated the suspected item. The item was a PG7 HEAT propelled grenade, fired recently and failed to explode due to malfunction. The propelled grenade was identified as unsafe to move, posing a threat to the local community, and it had to be destroyed on the spot. After the destruction, the team approached the community and notified its members regarding the successful elimination of the explosive threat.

Meanwhile, the message spread among the community and two community members approached the team and reported two other suspected explosives in two different locations in the Jouljok area. Following the received information, the team recovered another propelled grenade (PG7 HEAT) and a hand grenade (F1), abandoned by armed groups fighting in the area. The team destroyed the ordnance, whilst its Community Liaison Officers informed the community members and thanked them for the information shared. Mr Chan Deng, a resident in the Jouljok area, approached the team, recognised them for helping the community by eliminating the explosive threat and said: "Due to ongoing sporadic armed clashes in Agok and its surrounding areas, we have lost everything and we are struggling to bring back to our normal lives. We thank the UNMAS teams for their continuous assistance in eliminating the explosive threats in our area. The safety messages received from the team enhance our knowledge about threats posed by explosive items. This is allowing us to continue our normal life!".

UNMAS Implementing Partner's Team Leader, Mr Alison Mujeree said: "Our work during the rainy season is a challenge indeed. During September 2023, we investigated a significant number of suspected explosive items and eliminated the explosive threats. We apply all reasonable efforts while conducting the Non-Technical Surveys, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Battle Area Clearance and Risk Education activities".

UNMAS has been working in the Abyei Area since 2011 enabling continuous reduction of the explosive ordnance threat in the Abyei Area, which hinders the mission's force mobility, and the safe return of displaced persons to their homes, safe migration, and livelihood activities.



One of the challenges during the rainy season



One of the two rockets found and destroyed in Jouljok



A community-based safety briefing

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

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