



Highlights **JANUARY 2023**

 **430 km**
of routes assessed as safe
from explosive hazards



Mechanical clearance at Tajalei

 **167,673**
square meters cleared in
the Abyei Area



Markings' preparation

 **26** explosive remnants
of war destroyed



Demolition in Khar Alei

 **65** explosive ordnance
risk education
sessions provided



EORE session in Abyei

 **10** ground monitoring
missions supported



Ground monitoring mission in Tishwin

UNMAS SUPPORT TO THE UNISFA DRY SEASON DEPLOYMENT

In support of the UNISFA dry season deployment 2022-2023, UNMAS teams continue to enable a safe environment for UNISFA and humanitarian organizations personnel, host communities and IDP returnees. UNMAS and its implementing partner TDI continue their operations in the Abyei Area, supporting UNISFA in the deployment of personnel to key areas, ensuring presence and visibility in fulfilling its mandate. The intermittent inter-ethnic armed conflict along the southern border of the Abyei Area, and the consequent increase in the threat posed by explosive remnants of war (ERW) has become a recurring concern for UNISFA and Abyei communities.

Since the beginning of the 2022-2023 dry season deployment, Integrated Route Assessment and Clearance Teams (IRACTs) have split into smaller units and established self-sustained temporary field camps in Agok, Marial Achak and Noong. From these field camps, teams can deploy more rapidly to operations deemed high priority by UNISFA and carry out route assessments, explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), non-technical survey (NTS), explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and battle area clearance (BAC), as requested by the UNISFA Force Mobility Unit. The activities undertaken by these UNMAS teams become a confidence booster for UNISFA troops. Moreover, they also reassure humanitarian aid agencies and returnees of their freedom of movement, in order to operate and live in a safe environment.

In Agok, for instance, the IRACT team was stationed within the UNISFA team site. With the support of the UNISFA GHANBATT, the team conducted NTS, EORE and EOD activities in Agok and surroundings. This led to the location and destruction of several ERW, fired during the recurring conflict between the Ngok Dinka and Twic communities, and which had failed to detonate. Additionally, a number of explosive ordnance have been abandoned during the conflict, becoming a hazard to the returnees who recently fled their homes due to these inter-ethnic conflicts.

Another IRACT team set camp at the UNISFA Marial Achak Company Operating Base (COB), benefiting from force protection by the UNISFA GHANBATT, and conducting route assessment, besides NTS, EORE and EOD activities. Such activities led to the location of several ERW in the abandoned village of Myordol. The items were unsafe to move and destroyed afterward. After the successful demolitions, site remediations were carried out by the team.

The team also took daily trips from Marial Achak to the site determined for the UNISFA TOB in Umkharriet, to conduct clearance. During the NTS, they interviewed several Misseriya cattle herders that had established themselves in areas next to water points. The interviewed cattle herders raised concerns about the security in the region, showed appreciation for the deployment of UNISFA troops in Umkharriet and requested assistance to improve the poor road conditions. The team assessed and released multiple routes and facilitated UNISFA PAKBATT to deploy to the Umkharriet TOB and exercise greater area dominance.

The IRACT team based at the UNISFA MHQ compound in Abyei carried out several route assessments, linking sites such as Abyei - Mabek - Tajalei, Highway - Mijak, Banton - Rumamier, Abyei - Dungop, and Tajalei - Leu, providing accessible links between these areas and UNISFA bases. The wider deployment of UNISFA troops and patrols gives confidence to local communities that they are well protected from surprise attacks.

On 16 January, one of the UNMAS teams visited the village of Awal and interviewed community leaders, as part of a route assessment task. The Awal village chief expressed that **"sporadic armed fighting is ongoing in the southern part of the Abyei Area, and we are glad for the UNMAS teams are visiting our village and opening routes for access by UNISFA. This will improve our safety and security and benefit our people."**

The coordinated effort from UNMAS UNISFA has provided vital services to a community desperately in need of reassurance and access to their most vital resources. Furthermore, the successful completion of the tasks facilitates the dry-season force mobility of UNISFA in a safer environment. The removal of many explosive ordnance has strengthened confidence by UNISFA and Abyei communities to carry on with their daily routines. It ultimately brings greater security to the Abyei Area and enables UNISFA fulfillment of its mandate.



UNISFA Rumamier Battle Area Clearance



Preparing for a route assessment



Marking a waterlogged area



Scan for more information about UNMAS Abyei

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

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