

Statement on progress with AP landmine clearance in South Sudan.

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear participants allow me to express my sincere gratitude to you all for organizing this important meeting.

Thank you for permitting me this opportunity to update you on the significant progress that South Sudan has made with regards to its treaty obligations. I would like to show a series of slides which I hope will demonstrate to all, not only the clear progress that is being made, but more importantly to demonstrate that our plans for an Article Five extension request are well underway and based upon a realistic assessment of the remaining contamination.

SHOW SLIDE ONE

First of all, I wish to update you on the progress made in 2018. Over the course of last year, 49,850,337 square metres that was previously considered to be mined was removed from the national contamination database. The overwhelming majority of this came about through a focus on re-survey and on the cancellation of exaggerated hazards that lay in areas where fighting prevented the return of survey teams. Greater freedom of movement has resulted from the revitalized agreement on the cessation of hostilities and thus we have benefited from a peace dividend.

Similarly, the number of anti-personnel minefields was reduced from 220 to 147.

I should note that throughout this recent fighting there was no new use of anti-personnel landmines, and that all such allegations have been proved to be false.

SHOW SLIDE TWO

South Sudan's efforts to properly define its contamination ahead of its extension request submission has continued to produce dividends. When I spoke to you in November last year the combined mine contamination estimate was a little over 38 square kilometres, by the end of 2018 that figure stood at 29.8 square kilometres. Thus we may demonstrate an ever increasing degree of definition of the actual problem in our country.

SHOW SLIDE THREE

Mr President, please permit me to show a selection of maps that better indicates the progress that we are making.

This map shows how by the end of last year the number of confirmed and suspected anti-personnel minefields had been reduced to 147 and an estimate of contamination of 29.8 km²,

But what is evident is that not only has the overall contamination been reduced, we can show that across much of the country, that part shown in dark green on this map, has been cleared of all known contamination. Similarly the “Payams” (our third level of administrative district) shown in light green have only either spot items of UXO remaining or are home to on-going low level conflict. Together these account for more than 80% of the country. Furthermore those Payams shown in yellow which represent a further 10% of the country have just one clearance task remaining, and the remaining 10% of hazards is largely concentrated in the south of the country.

SHOW SLIDE FOUR

This next map gives another indication of how far clearance in South Sudan has progressed. This map which dates to the end of March shows how across the entire country just 201 minefields (both AP and AT) remain from a total of almost 2,000 that have been recorded since the start of the programme.

SHOW SLIDE FIVE

This slides shows the Equatoria region where the majority of the clearance requirement remains, but again shows that even there fewer than ten percent of the recorded minefields now remain. Unfortunately, although the peace agreement signed last September is holding across the remainder of the country, fighting continues in Equatoria and until it abates accessing and clearing these remaining minefields will be difficult.

Our efforts to further define the exact extent of contamination will continue. The three largest hazards that remain on our contamination database account for more than ten square kilometres. So we are confident that more survey work will yield significant reductions to the remaining contamination.

Show SLIDE SIX

Next I would like to address our needs and challenges. The years of fighting have impacted upon the style of clearance work that has been done, and the majority of teams are now light and mobile, and not properly scaled to undertake area clearance work in the most efficient manner. In short we have surveyed away the fat and now need to tackle the meat of the problem. But to do this we will need to reconfigure the existing capacity into fewer but larger demining teams and for this we will need your continued support.

Secondly, of course, we need peace, and in particular stability in the Equatoria region of our country.

SHOW SLIDE SEVEN

I hope that the evidence presented today will give you confidence when our extension request is submitted. The details of it shall be presented later in the year, but at this point in time I am confident that my country shall be asking for a five year extension to allow it to complete the clearance of all known hazards in the country.

Without further ado I would like to thank you very much for your attention and consideration of our needs.

Jurkuch Barach Jurkuch

Chairman of National Mine Action Authority

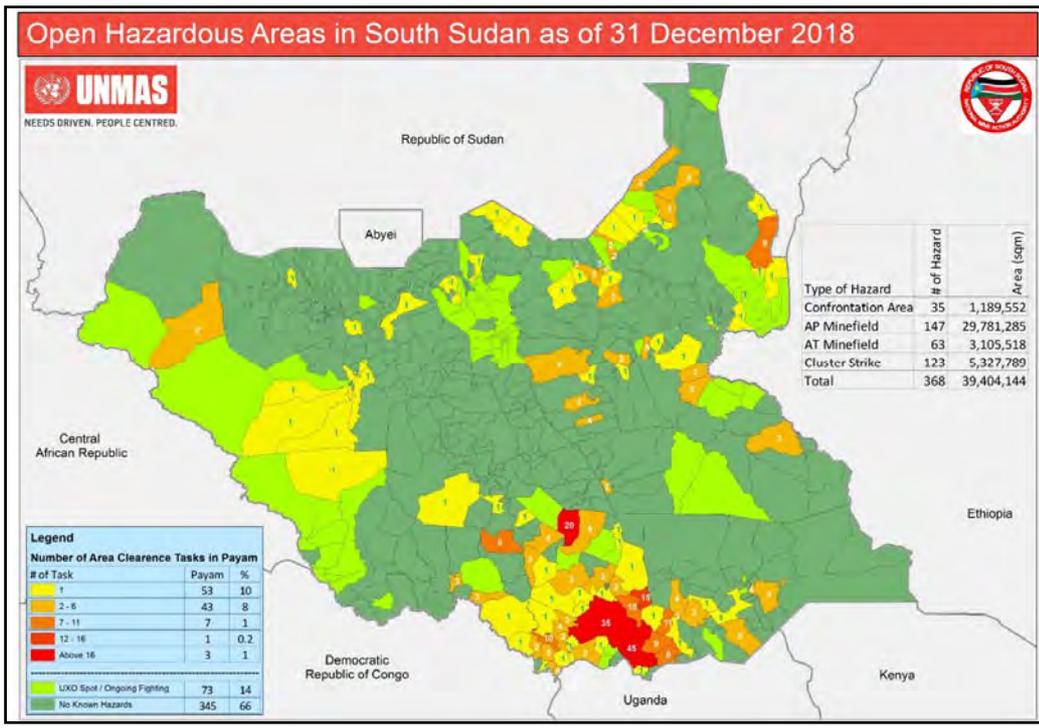
Summary of Progress made

- Current deadline: 9 July 2021
- Request for extension for a period of 5 years until 9 July 2026

Contamination in total (at 31 December 2017)	210 areas 79,631,722m ²
Progress made	<p>10 New tasks reported 222,765m² 30 Reports reclassified as M/F 1,514,128m² Existing hazards expanded by 1,457,765m²</p> <p>16 Tasks declassified no M/F 466,323m² 82 Tasks Cancelled re-survey 50,486,532m² 15 Tasks cleared 2,075,892m² Area reduced 16,348m²</p> <p>Combined reduction 49,850,437m² 63 tasks</p> <p>1,166 Anti-Personnel Mines destroyed 23,149 other devices destroyed</p>
Remaining challenge	69 CHA 3,276,155m ² 78 SHA 26,505,130m ²

Summary of remaining Contamination as at 31 December 2018

Hazard Type	#	Area (m ²)
AP and Mixed Minefields	147	29,781,285
AT Minefields	63	13,037,898
AT only	53	3,105,518
C/M	123	5,327,789
Battlefield	35	1,189,552
Total	368	39,404,144

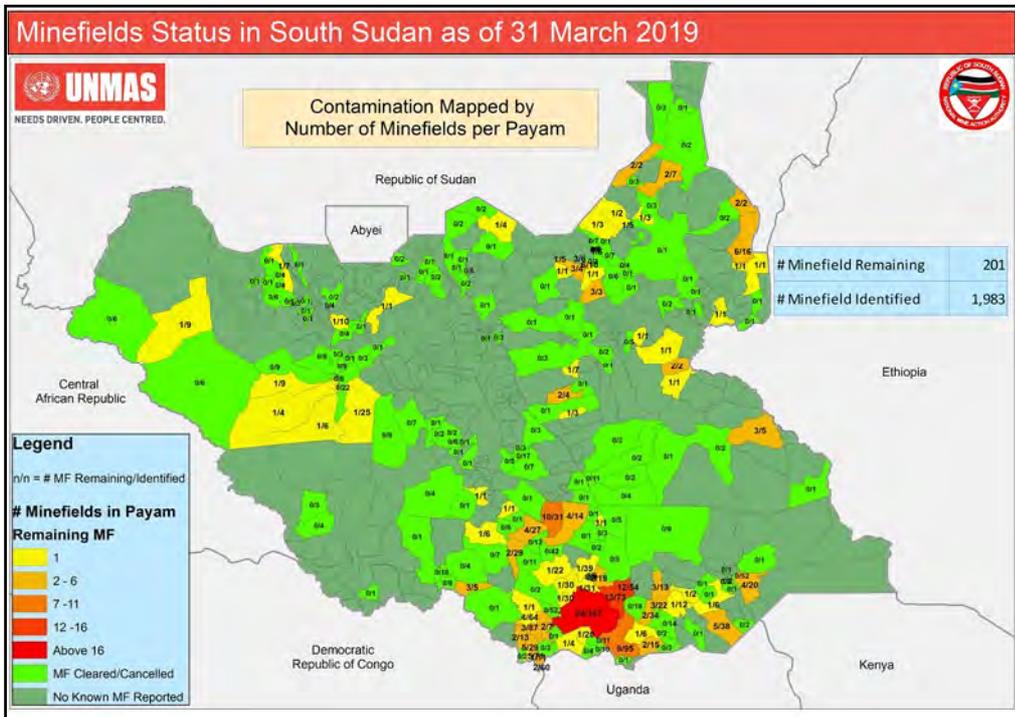


Dark green No Known Hazards

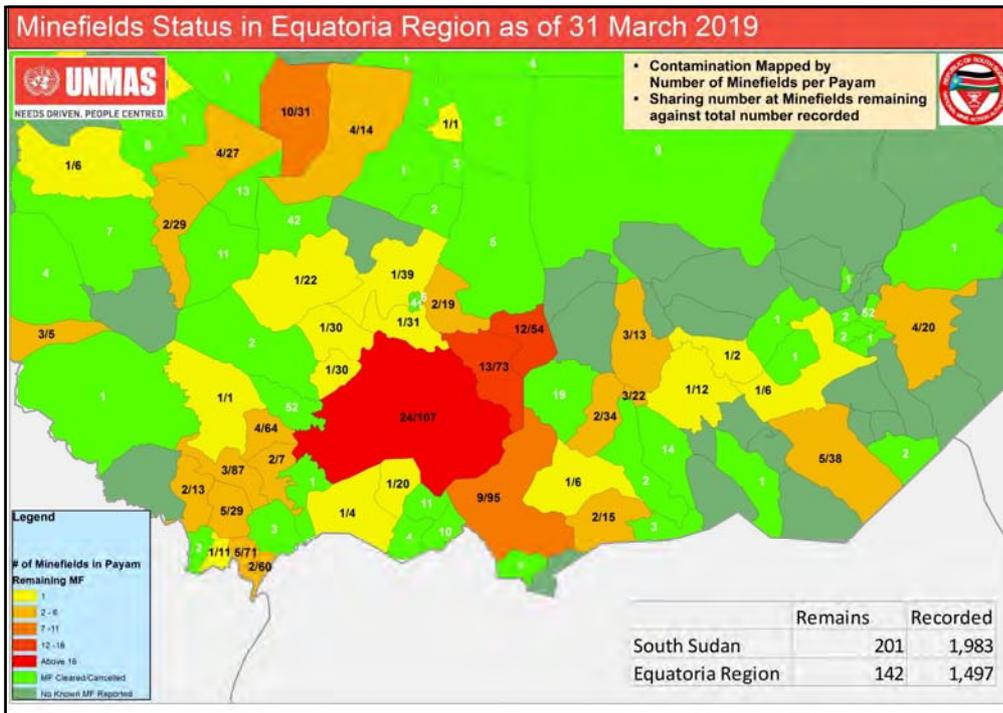
Light green spot UXO or on going fighting

Yellow just one clearance task remaining in the district

Together these account for 90% of South Sudan



Across the country 90% of all recorded Minefields have been cleared



The residual problem is concentrated in the Equatoria region.

Unfortunately fighting continues in this part of the country

Challenges and Needs

Challenges	Needs
Re-configuration of existing clearance capacity to more efficiently address mined areas	Sustained Funding
NGOs need support to scale up for clearance requirement	A demining force of 650 field personnel is needed
Re-survey of large hazards in hard to reach areas	Improved Security – South Sudan has never been completely at peace, there is fighting and insecurity in the ae where the greatest contamination remains
Database challenges	

Plan / Timeline [for addressing remaining challenges]

- South Sudan is currently undertaking re-survey of areas that for years had been hard to access – of note just three suspected areas that all date to 2003 account for 40% of all remaining contamination. Effective re-survey of these areas is expected to lead to a significant reduction in the estimate of contamination on 2019.
- South Sudan plans to submit a five year extension request. It is currently finalising the details of that request and will share them shortly.
- Achieving a lasting peace in the country is the greatest impediment to the resolution of the landmine problem in South Sudan