



## **The Republic of South Sudan**

### **Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions**

***Statement by South Sudan***  
**Geneva, 1 November 2015**

Mr. President, Co-Presidents, Distinguished Delegates, Dear Colleagues,

Mr. President, allow me to begin by congratulating you upon your election as president. We have no doubt you will steer this conference towards meaningful conclusions.

On behalf of the South Sudanese government, my delegation would like to brief this meeting on progress made in implementing the Ottawa Convention in South Sudan. One of the focuses of my statement is an attempt to respond to some emerging questions with respect to compliance in South Sudan.

Mr. President, from the onset, I would like to reiterate the full commitment of South Sudan to all obligations under the Ottawa Convention. As a country that is among the heavily contaminated and a country that continues to see new casualties, we commit ourselves to full implementation of the convention.

To stress the current threats posed by AP landmines in South Sudan, allow me to share with you the statistics of casualties of the recent past. We are saddened to announce that we have received reports of 69 victims between June 2014 – October 2015. 17 of the 69 were killed and the 52 were injured. Still the threat of more injuries persist until we finalize clearance, country-wide.

Mr. President, allow me to take this opportunity to highlight progress made in the area of mine risk education despite the persisting challenge of new casualties. A total of 567,627 boys, girls, women and men have been reached with our mine risk education outreach program. The breakdown of this is; 189,666 boys; 159,538 men; 107,080 men and 113,342 women. While targets remain high, there is work in progress with this respect.

**Mr. President, With respect to Clearance of mined areas,** in the same period of June 2014 to October 2015, the total area released is 13,909,766 Square meters. The total stretch of roads opened is 2,428km. There are over 10 companies and NGOs on ground working to release more of the lands contaminated by landmines in South Sudan. However, progress in clearance has been notably undermined by the inaccessibility conditioned by the recent armed conflict in the country and heavy rains.

While the heavy rains are affecting vast parts of the country, the conflict posed a particular clearance challenge in the northern states of Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile.

However, with recent developments in the peace process, which saw the Government and the armed opposition sign a peace agreement, there are hopes that security will soon improve, paving way to bolster our clearance efforts. We shall do all that is within our capacity to rid South Sudan of mines, but we also need the continued support of the international community if we are to meet our clearance target.

**Mr. President, With respect to Destruction:** The total devices destroyed across South Sudan within this period are as follows;

- 1,976 Anti personnel landmines,
- 562 Anti tank landmines,
- 31,363 Unexploded Ordinance and
- 356,059 Small Arms and Light weapon Ammunitions

**Mr. President, in regard to Victim Assistance,** my government through the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare continues to provide some assistance to victims. There is a functioning rehabilitation center in Juba to provide assistance to victims. Particularly, am glad to announce that, with the meager resources at hand, we are currently providing support to a total of 792 victims. This includes some 741men, 37 women, 3 boys and 11 girls. However, it is important to note the victims receiving support at the rehabilitation center also includes victims of other accidents including from weapons during the recent armed conflict. Thanks to ICRC for their continued support in running the center with my government.

**Mr. President, regarding the reports alleging new use of mines in South Sudan,** Indeed we have seen the allegations contained in the report of the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mission of March 2014. The allegation was the deployment of AP mines by the forces of the Government of South Sudan around Nasir in the northern state of Upper Nile. We take these reports with deep concern. However, given the challenge of accessibility posed by the recent armed conflict, it has been unfeasible to carry out a verification mission.

My government has resolved to establish a committee to go and investigate this allegation when such mission becomes feasible. We welcome colleagues in UNMAS and civil society to form a joint verification mission with us to establish the facts regarding the allegations. It is our hope that security will improve soon and pave the way for such an investigation, which results we shall also share.

**Mr. President**, allow me to conclude by underscoring that South Sudan does not stockpile any landmines. All mines that we have discovered in our territory have been destroyed. We welcome other states and NGOs to join hands with us within the framework established by Article 6 of the convention - International cooperation and assistance – in our efforts to fully implement the Ottawa Convention.

Thank you for your attention.

**END**

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