

South Sudan

Mr. -----President of the 13th meeting of the State parties, Excellencies, ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my pleasure to participate in the Meeting of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. My thanks go to the organizers of this meeting and to all the participants.

Anti Personnel Mine Ban Convention is a landmark step in the history of disarmament" and "an historic victory for the weak and vulnerable of our world". The Republic of South Sudan like any other country around the globe campaigned for the convention, with the aim of putting an end for all time to the deaths and injuries caused by anti-personnel mines. South Sudan is among the many countries where people have suffered terribly from these devastating weapons during its 21 years of conflict.

The presence of landmines and ERW continues to obstruct the delivery of humanitarian aid, threaten food security and agriculture, and hinder reconstruction and development initiatives in South Sudan. The Government of the Republic of South Sudan is committed to the comprehensive eradication of these weapons from its territory.

Overall, the progress over the last decades' of mine action in South Sudan has been impressive.

In 2008, the Republic of South Sudan (by then the GOSS under Sudan) destroyed a huge quantity of Stock piles as an international obligation and continues on destroying any other devices found. This corrects the Statement of Hon Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of South Sudan in the 11th meeting of the State Parties in Cambodia about the un destroyed stock pile. Hon Deputy Minister was meaning the new Mine fields discovered in Greater Upper Nile. Please accept the correction of the statement and we regretted for the error.

As of October 2013, De-mining operators have cleared some 22,842 kilometers of roads for free and secure movement of vehicles, goods and services, over 1Billion square meters of contaminated land have been cleared and released. This has provided hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese with safe land for resettlement, agricultural farms and infrastructure development. Over 2 Million persons have received Mine Risk awareness. Also MRE have been integrated into School curriculum by the Ministry of Education. Victim Injured and killed are over four thousand persons. Cleared/closed hazard is over seven thousand, new hazards identified are over seven hundred and other devices destroyed were 2,387,670.

To broaden the development impact of mine action, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan integrated Mine Action into national development strategies (South Sudan Development Plan) as a cross-cutting issue with impact across development sectors. The challenge is to ensure that all relevant ministries and local authorities take account of mine action issues in the development and implementation of their respective development plans.

South Sudan is committed to meeting its international obligations under Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and other conventions and have succeeded to the APMBT on the 11/11/2011 and this was indeed the very first convention after its independence in 2011.

There have been several unconfirmed and unverified reports by some international organizations that allegedly new anti personnel mines were being laid in Jongole state in South Sudan by members of the SPLA. These reports are not independently verified.

However, a team from the National Mine Action Authority was sent to conduct a fact finding mission in the state and areas that were said to be having new laid mines. After meeting with state authority, SPLA commanders and the civil populations, the team concluded that there was no new evidence of mines laid in Jongole.

Dear Participants, the allegation of laying new APLM is of great concern to this state Parties meeting and I want to assure you that, the government of South Sudan is trying its best in preventing the resurgence of conflict and the use of APLM; and to ensure the citizens of South Sudan can live free from the threats of mines & Explosive Remnants of War with the support of security institutions that are accountable, adequate, affordable, capable and appropriate.

Let me assure you dear participants that it is not possible to get accurate information about new mine in areas such as Pibor in Jongole state due to many reasons such as poor and un accessible roads and in security. However, NMAA in collaboration with UN and NGOs partners will continue to investigate and monitor the incident of new mine laying and if confirm, the government will take appropriate action to ensure the laying of new mine is stopped and those responsible should face justice.

Our shared goal of achieving a mine free world requires continuous commitment and the Government seek support from the international community.

Lastly my sincere thanks and appreciation to our implementing partners (UN agencies, NGOs and Donors) for their support.

I wish all present a successful conference which contributes toward achieving our goals.
Thank you