

**Mine Action Review comments on South Sudan's Article 5 Extension Request
(delivered by NPA on behalf of Mine Action Review)**

**Agenda Item 4: Matters related to the mandate of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation
APMBC Intersessional Meetings, 17–20 June 2025**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

In the interests of time we will deliver a few short observations and will submit full comments in writing.

We thank South Sudan for submitting and presenting its four-year extension request.

Mine Action Review has the following three comments:

- Firstly, we would welcome clarification from South Sudan on the extent to which technical survey (TS) is incorporated into its land release methodology, in line with best international practice. This is particularly important given that South Sudan has not reported any reduction of anti-personnel (AP) mined areas through TS during the period 2011–2024. Additionally, the extension request provides only limited detail on its land release methodology and makes no specific reference to the planned use of TS—either to confirm contamination in areas to be re-surveyed or to reduce areas found not to be contaminated in minefields slated for clearance.
- Secondly, how much international funding has already been secured to support the proposed extension period, and which donors have made commitments? Has UNMAS's budget for 2025/26 been approved yet?
- Lastly, the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of UNMISS-funded mine action teams—which currently accounts for approximately 75% of South Sudan's clearance capacity—poses a significant risk to the country's ability to meet its Article 5 obligations. This makes resource mobilization efforts all the more critical to diversify funding sources. We welcome South Sudan's initiative to hold an individualised approach meeting this week. We encourage South Sudan to convene at least one mine action donor coordination meeting annually, as outlined in its National Mine Action Strategy 2024–2028, and to work towards establishing a national mine action platform in line with Action #42 of the Siem Reap–Angkor Action Plan.

Additional points, provided in the written submission of the statement:

- For the sake of clarity and accuracy, the extension request period should be consistently stated throughout the request as 9 July 2026 to 8 July 2030, rather than 9 July 2026 to 9 July 2030.
- It would be helpful if South Sudan could number the tables in its extension request to facilitate easier reference and review.
- As South Sudan aims to address all types of explosive ordnance (EO) contamination during the requested extension period, its progress in meeting Article 5 obligations concerning AP mined areas is therefore closely linked to progress in the survey and clearance of other forms of contamination.

- We note that, with the exception of pages 8, 33, and 36, all other tables in South Sudan's extension request—including those in the work plan—refer to 'minefields' in a way that encompasses both AP and anti-tank (AT) minefields.
- South Sudan is encouraged to clarify or correct what appears to be an error in the table on page 33, which lists the extent of AP minefield CHA as 2,508,444m². This figure appears inconsistent with the 4,335,896m² reported in the table on page 36. Without this correction, the totals in the table on page 33 cannot be reconciled with the data presented on pages 8, 13, 34, and 36.
- South Sudan's extension request projections are based on, and highly dependent upon, the reconfiguration of fifteen lane-clearing demining teams by clearance operators. It would be helpful for South Sudan to clarify whether operators which are bilaterally funded, are in a position to carry out this reconfiguration.
- South Sudan's extension request places significant reliance on the use of demining machines. Has the work plan accounted for the logistical challenges and time required to transport these machines between regions and operational sites?
- Although South Sudan anticipates it will be able to cancel a significant portion of some of the largest AP minefields in the Greater Upper Nile region—as well as other minefields in the Greater Equatoria region—the resources and timelines in its Work Plan appear to be based on the assumption that re-surveyed areas will require full clearance. If substantial areas are ultimately cancelled rather than cleared, this could free up clearance capacity for use elsewhere. It would be helpful for South Sudan to clarify, in approximate terms, how much of the remaining AP mined area it expects to cancel through non-technical survey, reduce through technical survey, and release through clearance.
- Effective capacity development of the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) is critical for the successful implementation of Article 5 and for building a sustainable national capacity to address residual contamination, including in the area of information management. We therefore encourage South Sudan to include a dedicated budget for NMAA capacity development in the main body of its extension request.
- The concept note, included as an annex to the extension request, references South Sudan's recently adopted Mine Action Gender Equality and Diversity Policy (2025). However, the main body of the Article 5 extension request does not mention this policy. We encourage South Sudan to incorporate a reference to the new policy and outline its implementation plans in the main body of the request.
- South Sudan's extension request makes several references to effects of climate change and on extreme weather events, most notably flooding. However, we encourage South Sudan to also include reference to broader environmental considerations and efforts to mitigate negative impacts of Article 5 implementation, such as through guidance in its NTSGs.
- It is important that South Sudan continues to monitor known or suspected anti-personnel mined areas that are currently inaccessible due to flooding. These areas remain part of South Sudan's Article 5 obligations and must be fully addressed before completion can be declared.

=== ===