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# The Beacon

A monthly bulletin of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)

## UNISFA-supported common market opens in Amiet

The joint market for the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities which was temporarily suspended due to insecurity formally reopened on 15 August in Amiet, a few kilometers north of Abyei with a few traditional leaders from two communities in attendance. Marked as a crucial joint community-initiated effort, the reopening of the common market in Amiet, as agreed by the two communities at an



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earlier meeting, is seen as an emerging symbol of peaceful coexistence between Misseriya and Ngok Dinka in the Abyei Area.

"I trust that this market will strengthen the relationship between the two communities, and will peacefully reconnect the broken ties of the two tribes," said Deputy Paramount Chief Nyol Paguat Deng during his visit to the market.

The two communities have also agreed to establish a joint traditional court to govern the

market. Over the next days, mechanisms regarding the joint traditional court, including the membership nominations will be discussed further by the traditional chiefs. Once the joint traditional court is worked out, the security committee and security guards from the two communities will be formed to assist the traditional court in ensuring peace and security in the market.

"This market will have a positive impact on the lives of people belonging to Misseriya and Ngok Dinka tribes. It is in a market that

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we meet people, and this is where we build relationships,” said Hamdan Gebril, a sorghum merchant. Hopeful that dynamism shown by traders and buyers on the first day will be sustained, Gebril also expressed optimism that the market will bridge peace between the two communities.

On its reopening, hundreds of people gathered to sell and buy livestock and goods. More than 250 shops have opened, selling sorghum, flour, sugar, oil, among others. Ngok Dinkas were also represented in shops, running cafes, and selling goats and cows. Some of the buyers are

reportedly from Unity and Warrap states.

The two communities have sought logistical assistance from United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei’s (UNISFA) for market improvements such as feeder roads within the market, toilets, and provision of water supply as well as electricity (generator).

“Initially, we need UNISFA’s support to ensure security of traders and buyers,” said Hamad Abubakar, one of the officers of the market committee.

The two communities have requested UNISFA to include the market premises in its regular security patrol activities.



To sustain the activities in Amiet market, commanders from the three battalions in Abyei met with the community and tribal leaders from both Misseriya and Ngok Dinka tribes to discuss the security situation in the market. They further discussed on how to ensure and to maintain peace and order in the newly opened market.



The reopening of the common market in Amiet is seen as an emerging symbol of peaceful coexistence between Misseriya and Ngok Dinka in the Abyei Area.



*With gratitude and respect*

## Honoring a former UNISFA Head of Mission



On 14 August 2016, the staff of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) gathered in the UNISFA compound to honour the late Head of Mission Mr Haile Tilahun Gebremariam who passed away on 12 August 2016. The service was led by the Brigadier General Zewdu Kiros Gebrekidan, Officer-in-Charge Head of Mission and Force Commander, and Mr Elijah Karambizi, Chief of Mission Support. Prayers were offered, and thereafter there was a signing of the condolence book. Tribal leaders from both Ngok Dinka and Misseriya groups came to offer their last respect to the former UNISFA HoM by signing the condolence book for the family and loved ones of the late UNISFA Head of Mission.



# Reaching out to communities through small-scale projects

Forty two kilometers north of Abyei town is the village of Diffra. Affected by many years of insecurity, villagers have sought assistance from the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) through the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for basic infrastructure to support community



livelihood programs.

Since 2014, UNISFA through the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) has supported the needs of the communities living in Diffra to deliver productive assets, such as zinc shops, oil presses, and mill grinding facilities, as well as water pumps.



In support of agricultural livelihoods, farmers in Diffra were also trained on agricultural techniques and plantation of seedlings and seeds. Moreover, a community hall was built to serve as a venue for meetings and discussions.

QIPs are small-scale, low-cost projects that are planned and implemented within a short timeframe. These projects rapidly address key community needs and will hopefully contribute to building confidence in the mission's mandate.



*Photos here show community and tribal leaders in Diffra sharing the impact and challenges of UNISFA-supported small scale projects.*





## Supporting the orphaned students of Abyei

More than 30 orphaned students of the Abyei Secondary School received school supplies from the soldiers of the 13th Motorized Ethiopian Peacekeeping Battalion. The fund-raising initiative, led by Battalion Commander Colonel Nuru Muzeyin, pooled donations from soldiers to purchase basic school supplies.

Col. Muzeyin emphasized the importance of supporting the young generation who, he said, are essentially Abyei's future. He commended the men and women of the battalion who took the initiative to gather resources and support the orphans.

During the distribution of school supplies to students, the Battalion Commander highlighted the peacekeepers' commitment to support efforts to uplift the well-being of the young population. They are looking into other ways to further support the community, particularly the orphaned students.

Provision of materials like school supplies can bring hope school children. Major Mihrete Mola, the Commander of the 1st Motorized Company, stated that during his company's tour of duty in Abyei, the plight of orphaned school children merited most of their attention. Seen as the most vulnerable group in Abyei, the risk of leaving school or dropping out is very high.





## How to protect yourself from malaria?



## Know more about malaria\*

### What are the signs and symptoms of malaria?

Symptoms of malaria include fever and flu-like illness, including shaking chills, headache, muscle aches, and tiredness. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may also occur. Malaria may cause anemia and jaundice (yellow coloring of the skin and eyes) because of the loss of red blood cells. If not promptly treated, the infection can become severe and may cause kidney failure, seizures, mental confusion, coma, and death.

### How soon will a person feel sick after being bitten by an infected mosquito?

For most people, symptoms begin 10 days to 4 weeks after infection, although a person may feel ill as early as 7 days or as late as 1 year later. Two kinds of malaria, *P. vivax* and *P. ovale*, can occur again (relapsing malaria). In *P. vivax* and *P. ovale* infections, some parasites can remain dormant in the liver for several months up to about 4 years after a person is bitten by an infected mosquito.

### How do I know if I have malaria for sure?

Most people, at the beginning of the disease, have fever, sweats, chills, headaches, malaise, muscles aches, nausea, and vomiting. Malaria can very rapidly become a severe and life-threatening disease. The surest way for you and your health-care provider to know whether you have malaria is to have a diagnostic test where a drop of your blood is examined under the microscope for the presence of malaria parasites. If you are sick and there is any suspicion of malaria the test should be performed without delay.

\*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

For more information, visit the following sites:

<https://www.cdc.gov/malaria/about/faqs.html>

[http://www.who.int/neglected\\_diseases/vector\\_ecology/mosquito-borne-diseases/en/](http://www.who.int/neglected_diseases/vector_ecology/mosquito-borne-diseases/en/)

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# Stories to tell, Photos to share

## A walk around the camp

Walking around the camp before sunset, I marveled at the flocks of birds as they sought refuge in bushes and trees.

Mesmerized by the beautiful music the hundreds of birds created, I seized the moment before the familiar sounds of crickets and frogs erased all else from my mind.

In awe at the seemingly painted sky with colors changing by the second, I wondered what lies beneath the magical sky.

