



# The BEACON

United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) Newsletter



## UN awards peacekeepers in Abyei

About 2,008 men and women of Ethiopia's 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Motorized Battalions, Level 2 Hospital Unit, Quick Reaction Force along with Military Staff Officers, and Military Observers of various nationalities serving with United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) received the United Nations Peace Medals in two ceremonies held on 17 and 20 February 2018 at Diffra and Dokura respectively.

The peacekeepers have been carrying out UNISFA's mandate by demilitarizing its area of responsibility, protecting communities, providing escorts for humanitarian agencies and securing UN personnel and facilities. The UN Medals were presented as the UN's gratitude and appreciation for their' commitment, sacrifice and hard work.

During the awarding ceremonies at Diffra and Dokura, Maj General Tesfay Gidey Hailemichael, UNISFA's Force Commander and acting Head of



**67,638 kms** were covered by troops' **day patrols** between Jan & Feb 2018



**31,329 kms** were covered by troops' **night patrols** between Jan & Feb 2018



**550 community interactive patrols** were conducted by UNPOL between Jan & Feb 2018

Mission, emphasized the role of the UN peacekeepers in Abyei. “Practically they have created relatively peaceful and calm security situation in their area of responsibility. The operationally challenging environment, under which they have had to operate day and night, sometimes in very tough conditions, has never deterred them in carrying out their duties. They work closely and hand in hand with communities and their leaders in order to bring peace to Abyei.”



The ceremonies were marked by a dazzling display of military equipment and combat skills of the Ethiopian soldiers coupled with the showcasing of traditional Ethiopian Culture. UNISFA also remembered Peacekeepers who made the supreme sacrifice while serving the mission. Present to grace the occasion were eminent community leaders of the Abyei Area and National Monitors from Sudan and South Sudan.

## MORE WEAPONS AND AMMUNITIONS RECOVERED AND DESTROYED

UNISFA continues to recover weapons and ammunition circulating within the Abyei area, which are handed over to UNMAS for destruction, a step towards fulfilling UNISFA's mandate of ensuring a 'weapons free' Abyei Area.

During the first two months of 2018, 12 Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), eight AK-47s, 11 magazines and 209 rounds of ammunition were destroyed at the Weapon and Ammunition Management facility in Dokura.

Since 2011, UNISFA and UNMAS have destroyed 4,139 ERWs, 162 weapons, as well as 25,022 rounds of ammunition. UNMAS has also reached out to 139,652 individuals for Mine Risk Education.



## UNISFA undertakes preliminary action for police reform and restructuring in Abyei



In accordance with its mandate, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) through its UN Police Component has been engaging the Community Protection Committees (CPCs) and the Joint Peace Committees (JPCs) in the maintenance of law and order in the Abyei Area through the provision of basic law and order training, advising and mentoring them on international policing standards and crime reduction sensitization campaigns.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 2205 (2015) mandates UNISFA, “*within its existing capabilities and resources and in close coordination with the*

*Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, to strengthen the capacities of Community Protection Committees in order to assist with management of law and order processes in Abyei.*”

Due to non-establishment of Formal Joint Institutions including the Abyei Police Service (APS) for management of law and order in the Abyei Area, execution of mandated duties such as to undertake capacity building programs has been a challenge for UNISFA.

To achieve UNISFA’s mandate and as the preparatory planning process for establishment of the Abyei Police Service, UNISFA led by UN Police conducted a field mapping exercise spanning a period of four months from November 2017 to February 2018 to identify suitable areas for the placement of Abyei Police Stations, Training and Prison Service Centers, Abyei Police Service General Hospital, and Vehicle Maintenance Warehouse.

The exercise also involved the assessment of population density, presence of social services such as markets and other vital installations, crime trend, availability of land and other social amenities in the region and also enabled UNISFA to reach-out to the local community to enhance future partnerships.

The exercise will serve as a building block for developing a road map towards the establishment of Abyei Police Service.

## UNISFA launches traffic safety awareness campaign

In response to the increasing road traffic accidents in Abyei area which have resulted to injuries and deaths, a Road Traffic Safety campaign was launched on 18 February 2018 at Amiet common market by the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) through its UN Police (UNPOL) component with support from the Ethiopian troops.

The campaign targeted all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and pushcart drivers. The main objectives of the campaign were to raise awareness on the causes and effects of road accidents and sharing of strategies that can be employed to minimize accidents.



In his address to the people who gathered at the Joint Peace Committee offices at Amiet market, Commander Tesfaye G Ayele who stood in for the Senior Police Advisor, noted that among the causes of accidents were over speeding, reckless driving, not respecting other road users as well as bad road conditions. Drivers were urged to refrain from speeding and reckless driving and respect the sanctity of the life of their passengers and other road users, stressing that safety on the road was a key driver of peace and development. “Without a smooth flow of traffic, it will be difficult for assistance to reach all the corners of Abyei when needed,” he said.

UNISFA UNPOL members together with JPC members talked to drivers in their vehicles and distributed pamphlets that carried the traffic safety messages. Drivers were grateful for the initiative and took heed of the call to play it safe on the roads. They, however, appealed to UNISFA to assist by maintaining the roads throughout the year as they become very difficult to navigate especially during the rainy season.

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