

**Statement by Hon. Jurkuch Barach Jurkuch
Chairperson, National Mine Action Authority, Republic of South Sudan
Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)
7 - 8 April 2025, Geneva**

Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Republic of South Sudan.

In August 2023, South Sudan acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which entered into force for us in February 2024. Since then, we have made encouraging progress, releasing 47 cluster munition-contaminated areas, amounting to almost 4,000,000 square meters. In parallel, we delivered Explosive Ordnance Risk Education to over 480,000 people, including nearly 35,000 individuals fleeing the conflict in Sudan and now living in vulnerable areas within our borders.

However, the challenge remains significant. As survey and clearance operations progress, new, previously unknown contaminated areas are discovered. In 2024, we initiated a re-estimation of our national contamination figures using data on historical strike footprints. This exercise resulted in the addition of approximately 7 square kilometres of confirmed contamination to our previous estimate. Today, 9.5 square kilometers of known cluster munition contamination remain.

Our work is also hampered by challenging operating conditions: a volatile security landscape, poor infrastructure, and climatic conditions such as seasonal flooding that limit access for months. This already challenging environment was further compounded in 2025 by a sharp and unexpected reduction in international donor funding. The consequences are already felt - delayed operations, idle assets, and reduced field capacity.

At the same time, renewed instability and armed clashes in some parts of the country threaten to reverse our progress. As we have seen before, new conflict not only creates new casualties - it often recontaminates land that has already been cleared.

Still, South Sudan remains fully committed to meeting the February 2034 clearance deadline under the Convention. We believe this is achievable, but only with continued and coordinated international support.

To illustrate what that support enables: today, there are two NMAA owned-Minewolf MW370 machines that are currently not in use because we lack the funds to assess, refurbish, maintain, and operate them. If these machines were operational, they could free up manual capacity that could be utilized to significantly speed up cluster munition clearance.

Therefore, I call on our donor partners to continue supporting South Sudan's mine action efforts and on our government to strengthen its investment in and ownership of this life-saving work.

This is not only about fulfilling treaty obligations. It is about protecting our people, restoring livelihoods, and contributing to peace and development in South Sudan.

We thank all our partners and reaffirm our commitment to the Convention and its humanitarian objectives.

Thank you.