

**Check Against Delivery**

**Statement**

**By**

**H.E. Ambassador Aman Hassan**

**Deputy Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic  
of Ethiopia**

**On Agenda Item Agenda Item 147: Budget for the United Nations Interim Security Force  
for Abyie (UNISFA) for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012**

**At the Fifth Committee of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**December 2011**

**New York**

**Mr. Chairman,**

At the outset, let me thank Ms. Maria Eugena Casar, Assistant-Secretary-General, for introducing the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/66/526, regarding the budget for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyie (UNISFA) for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012. Our appreciation also goes to Mr. Alejandro Lepori, Vice-Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing the report of the Advisory Committee as contained in document A/66/576.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Argentina and Cote d'Ivoire on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Africa respectively.

**Mr. Chairman,**

I wish to recall that pursuant to the Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area, signed on 20 June 2011 in Addis Ababa, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1990 on June 27, authorizing the establishment of the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Five months after the establishment of UNISFA, we are pleased to inform the Committee that more than two thirds of the authorized troops are on the ground and the Mission is in a position to perform its mandate. The Government of Ethiopia and the United Nations, with the active support of the two parties, have done everything possible to ensure the timely deployment of the Mission, significantly more quickly than is usually the case. In the same vein, we are also pleased to inform the Committee that

preparations are finalized to deploy the full component of the contingent before the beginning of 2012.

The initial deployment of UNISFA took place despite numerous obstacles, including heavy rains which washed away the land route between Kadugli and Abyei, halting all road movements and severely restricting the induction of UNISFA personnel. Now with the onset of the dry season, road conditions have significantly improved, enhancing UNISFA's visibility and security presence. UNISFA is also conducting regular visits to population centers and liaison with local communities.

It is with greater satisfaction that we would like to inform the Committee that UNISFA's access throughout the area of operations has also been enhanced by the construction, completed on 28 October, of a new Bailey bridge, to replace the Banton bridge destroyed during the conflict of May 2011. The new bridge was financed by the Government of Ethiopia and constructed by Ethiopian engineers. During his visit to the Abyei Area on 31 October, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mr. Hervé Ladsous opened the bridge, an important crossing point between Abyei town and Agok, which will facilitate the return of IDPs, humanitarian access and the operations of UNISFA, as well as commercial transport.

As highlighted in both reports the status-of forces agreement is not yet concluded. Currently, discussions are continuing with both Governments on the draft agreement and it is our hope that they will agree to conclude the agreement shortly. A quadripartite consultative mechanism for UNISFA has been established between the United Nations and the Governments of Ethiopia, the Sudan and South Sudan. The first meeting of the quadripartite consultative mechanism for UNISFA was held on 26 September in New York and its second meeting is expected to

be held tomorrow, 3 December, in Juba. We hope this meeting will resolve a number of outstanding issues.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Currently the annual Misseriya migration southwards through the Abyei area has started and it is vital that this event is handled with care and the necessary preparation. Related to this is the speedy return of the Ngok Dinka displaced population so that they wouldn't miss the planting season. In this regard, the role of UNISFA will be crucial in helping the communities surmount the potential complications and the sensitivities as well as avoid problems such as those that were encountered last May.

Similarly we concur with the concerns expressed by both reports regarding the land mines planted throughout the region. In this regard, we recall the tragedy that caused the lives of members of UNISFA in Mabok, 30 kilometres east of Abyei town on 2 August 2011. That incident has highlighted the increased threat posed by landmines. Their identification and clearance is urgently needed to facilitate the return of IDPs and safety of the upcoming migration period, as well as the operations of the force, which must currently pre-clear all patrol routes of mines.

**Mr. Chairman,**

While UNISFA is trying to implement its mandate in this very complex and demanding context, we are extremely worried about the proposed reduction of the draft budget as recommended by the ACABQ. In this connection, we wish to ask for further clarification from the secretariat regarding the impact of such a reduction, if approved, on the deployment of remaining component of the mission as well as on the implementation of its complex and delicate mandate. It is our strong view

that any decision on the matter should be based on the latest deployment plan and the critical nature of the Mission. It is because of the aforementioned actual situations on the ground that my delegation welcomes and fully supports the amount proposed by the Secretariat.

Finally, we look forward to engage constructively in the informal discussions on this important agenda item.

I thank you!