



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 10

### Technical assistance and capacity-building

## Written statement\* submitted by Elizka Relief Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 August 2023]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **The Situation of Human Rights in Somalia**

### **Background:**

Somalia, like other African and non-developing countries, witness a deep gap between the huge opportunities, resources and efforts, and the state of violence, conflict, poverty, fragility, and diminishing technical capabilities. In this context, Elizka Relief Foundation submits its written contribution to the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia under item 10; as it reviews the facts of the Somali technical capabilities and their impact on human rights by focusing on the right to food, education, health, life, an appropriate environment and standard of living, and then presents a set of recommendations to enhance capabilities and technical assistance.

### **First: Facts about Somali Technical Capabilities and their Relationship to Human Rights:**

Somali record the extent to which they need technical capabilities as a cornerstone for facing security, economic, political and climatic consequences and challenges in Somalia and mitigating their impact on human rights. Somali realities suffer from the increasing humanitarian needs of about 5.2, 9.5, 7.7, and 8.25 million people in 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 respectively, as well as from its estimated response costs of \$2.6 billion, which would only assist 2.7 million vulnerable people.(1) Hence, the human rights facts of Somalia in light of the existing Somali technical capabilities can be reviewed as follows:

#### **A- Right to Food:**

Somali contexts require more capacity-building programs and technical assistance to overcome food insecurity. Food security decline in Somalia, with 1 out of every 2 Somalis facing food insecurity, statistics are monitored about the suffering of more than 8.3 million Somalis, equivalent to 49% of Somalis, from acute food insecurity between April and June 2023, and the suffering of 1.8 million children under the age of five from malnutrition, including 477,700 expected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition between January and December 2023 and cumulative levels of resulting deaths estimated at 260,000 children continue to increase since 2011.(2)

#### **B- Right to Health:**

Somali need more technical assistance and capacity building on the right to health, as health technical capacity in Somalia is dwarfed by the low levels of operational capacity of health facilities, vaccination, and water and sanitation coverage; As the facts of Somalia witness only 19% of the health facilities work at full capacity, and about 8 million people lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities. As a result, Somalia has become a suitable scene for the spread of epidemics and diseases, especially cholera and measles, whose cases were estimated at 9,768 and 3,006, respectively, during the period from January to June 2023.(3)

### **C- Right to Appropriate Environment:**

Somali government's policies and technical capabilities are dwarfed by raging climate change. Where the Somali population continues to suffer from climatic shocks, riverine floods and severe droughts; Severe droughts, following the failure of five rainy seasons, caused the number of those affected by severe drought to rise from 7.8 to 8.3 million, and 1.3 million displaced from their homes in search of water and food during the period from January to March 2023, and the devastating monsoon floods between April and June 2023 have overshadowed 468,000 people to cause the displacement of at least 247,000 people from their homes and the isolation of 30 in eastern Johar and can only be reached by boat, and the threat of harming 1.2 million people and 1.5 million hectares by October 2023(4), despite the fact that the Somali government was able to return 90% of the affected communities to their homes after the flood receded.(5)

### **D- Right to Education:**

The procedural and technical capabilities and efforts in education allow only 33% of children to go to school without ending the estimated 4.8 million out-of-school children's drop-out rates or putting in place proactive measures to protect 900.00 children at risk of dropping out or meeting the needs and services of 3.8 million children of education in emergencies.(6)

### **E- Right to Life:**

Security complexities still overshadow Somalia and its development ambitions since 1981. Where Somalia witnessed a state of violence, instability, fighting, forced recruitment, kidnapping, and the destruction of civilian infrastructure to the extent that it drained 45% of Somalia's income, in addition to the destruction and sabotage of infrastructure and the displacement of civilians.

In 2022, more than 600,000 people will be internally displaced due to conflict and insecurity, and more than 450,000 additional civilians are expected to be displaced in 2023.(7) In November 2022, Somalia recorded at least 613 civilian deaths and 948 injuries during targeted and indiscriminate attacks by Al-Shabaab using improvised explosive devices, suicide explosions and bombings as well as targeted killings; Thus, recording the highest number of civilian deaths since 2017 and an increase in the number of deaths by 30% over its estimates for 2021.(8)

### **F- Woman Rights:**

The Somali contexts witness the fragility of its institutions and the diminishing of its technical capabilities in terms of repercussions and human rights violations against Somali women. The fragility of the laws and the absence of a law that gives them the right to participate and represent 30% of the seats in the House of Representatives, as well as the dependence on the clan electoral system and its formula 4.5, deprive Somali women from full public participation, as they represent only 20% of the seats in the House of Representatives according to May 2022 elections, not to mention the fragility of health structures, in which Somalia records the highest rates of maternal and child mortality among the highest in the world, and the submission of at least 98% of Somali girls between the ages of 9 and 15 years who were subjected to circumcision and mutilation of female genital organs.(9)

## **Second: Recommendations:**

Elizka Relief Foundation monitors the extent to which Somali national technical capabilities are diminishing and makes recommendations to the Independent Expert on Human Rights in Somalia and the Somali government as follows:

A- Elizka Relief Foundation recommends the independent expert to encourage the national government to re-modernize, revise and reform its legal and legislative system by adopting draft laws on children's rights and accelerating the adoption of the sexual offenses bill and the draft law of criminalizing genital mutilation.

B- Elizka Relief Foundation appeals to the independent expert to encourage the Somali government to intensify its efforts to expand the scope of public participation of Somali women and marginalized groups through reforming the electoral system and the clan mechanism 4.5 and adopting a draft law that gives women their right to 30% of parliamentary representation, as well as their representation in the administrative structure.

C- Elizka Relief Foundation calls upon the independent expert to urge the Somali government to launch training and awareness programs and to build the capacity of its judicial and security agencies regarding the activation of human rights in a manner that guarantees commitment to fulfillment, respect and protection.

D- Elizka Relief Foundation notes and draws the national attention to the diminishing national capabilities concerned with addressing climate change and its shocks such as droughts and floods, and recommends the establishment of monitoring and early warning systems for climatic disasters, and the development of advance plans to contain their repercussions on human rights in Somalia, especially housing and education.

E- Elizka Relief Foundation appeals to the Somali government to intensify its national efforts, which would strengthen the Somali institutional structures, including human rights issues, through the establishment of a national human rights committee and the signing and ratification of international and regional agreements.

F- Elizka Relief Foundation recommends the expert to cooperate with the Somali government to ensure the acceleration and intensification of efforts aimed at establishing stability, peace and national reconciliation, besides traditional justice systems based on clan elders in local communities to curb impunity and provide means of remedies, compensation and reparations.

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1- RW, Somalia: Operation Overview, July 2023, August 15, 2023, <http://rb.gy/7c4pw>

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3-UNHR, Somalia: \$2.6 billion appeal to support millions amid historic drought and famine fears, 8 February 2023, <http://rb.gy/yw7ti>

4-Relief Web, Somalia: 2023 Flash and Riverine Floods Situation Report No. 3 (as of 13 July 2023), 17 July 2023, <http://rb.gy/ry03m>

5-WHO, EPI: epidemiological Bulletin in Somalia, 9 July 2023, <http://rb.gy/o42di>

6-UNHCR, Over 1 million people internally displaced in Somalia in record time, 24 May 2023, <http://rb.gy/83ts6>

7-OCHA, Somalia Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023 (February 2023), <http://rb.gy/s4e0g>

8-UNHR, Somalia: Türk decries steep rise in civilian casualties amid surge in Al-Shabaab attacks, 14 November 2022, <http://rb.gy/qtx3s>

9-UNFPA, Somalia: Funding for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian programming, 20 June 2020, <http://rb.gy/10yfl>