



# Security Council

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## Letter dated 15 October 2022 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator pursuant to paragraph 43 of Security Council resolution 2607 (2021) on the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia and on any impediments to the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia.

I would appreciate it if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Fergal Mythen  
Chair

Security Council Committee pursuant to  
resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia



**Letter dated 26 September 2022 from the  
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and  
Emergency Relief Coordinator addressed to the Chair of the  
Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992)  
concerning Somalia**

In accordance with paragraph 43 of Security Council resolution 2607 (2021), I have the honour to transmit herewith the report on the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia and on any impediments thereto.

The humanitarian community working in Somalia wishes to advise that, as in the previous 16 reports, it maintains the definition of “implementing partner” pursuant to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1916 (2010), which is as follows:

“Implementing partner” – a non-governmental organization (NGO) or community-based organization that has undergone due diligence to establish its bona fides by a United Nations agency or another NGO and that reports when requested to the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia on mitigation measures. Implementing partners have one or both of the following characteristics:

- (a) The organization is part of the Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia (or the Somalia Humanitarian Fund) process;
- (b) The organization is represented in a cluster’s 3W matrix (*Who* does *What* and *Where*).

I remain available should you have any questions on the content of the report or need further clarification on the humanitarian situation in Somalia.

*(Signed)* Martin **Griffiths**  
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and  
Emergency Relief Coordinator

## Report of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

### Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2607 (2021), the resolution succeeding resolutions 1916 (2010), 1972 (2011), 2060 (2012), 2111 (2013), 2182 (2014), 2244 (2015), 2317 (2016), 2385 (2017), 2444 (2018), 2498 (2019) and 2551 (2020), in which the Council established the reporting requirement. It is the seventeenth submission pursuant to the above-mentioned resolutions. The Council, in paragraph 36 of its resolution 2551 (2020), requested the Emergency Relief Coordinator to report to the Council by 15 October 2021 on the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia and on any impediments thereto.

2. The present report covers the period from 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022. It is focused primarily on the delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected people in areas under the control or influence of Al-Shabaab, which was included on the sanctions list pursuant to paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution 1844 (2008), by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, on 12 April 2010. As in the previous 16 reports (S/2010/372, S/2010/580, S/2011/125, S/2011/694, S/2012/546, S/2012/856, S/2013/415, S/2014/177, S/2014/655, S/2015/731, S/2016/827, S/2017/860, S/2018/896, S/2019/799, S/2020/1004 and S/2021/847), in the present report, constraints to humanitarian access and operational implications are outlined. In addition, mitigation measures established to address the risks of the politicization, misuse and misappropriation of humanitarian assistance are summarized. The report is based on information synthesized in consultation with relevant humanitarian organizations active in Somalia and information from the Risk Management Unit in the Integrated Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia.

### Humanitarian situation

3. Somalia is facing a major humanitarian crisis, precipitated by an unprecedented four consecutive failed rainy seasons, with a fifth between October and December and a sixth in early 2023 that are also forecast to fail. The situation is coupled with the impact of protracted conflict, disease outbreaks and an increase in food and commodity prices. Humanitarian needs will continue to rise and remain high until at least the middle of 2023. According to an analysis by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit of the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, approximately 6.7 million people across Somalia are expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity between October and December. Furthermore, famine (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification phase 5) is projected in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and for displaced people in Baidoa town of Bay region in southern Somalia, where malnutrition and mortality levels are already at alarming levels. Bay is one of the regions where famine claimed thousands of lives in 2011, and in the absence of a significant scale-up of multisectoral assistance, there will be a significant risk of death and destitution. According to the Famine Review Committee, projected famine conditions in the Bay region are likely to last until at least March 2023.

4. The Federal Government of Somalia declared a drought emergency in November 2021, following two consecutive failed rainy seasons. The current drought has surpassed the 2016/17 droughts in terms of duration and severity. As of August 2022, an estimated 7.8 million people (almost half the population) had been affected by the drought emergency, with over 1 million displaced from their homes in search

of food, water, pasture and livelihoods. More than 80 per cent of those displaced by the current drought are women and children.

5. As with many countries in the horn of Africa, Somalia is on the front line of climate change, which has induced recurrent droughts and floods and is increasingly a major driver of conflict in the country as the struggle for dwindling resources intensifies clan divisions and inter-clan conflict. Currently, Somalia hosts more than half of the people affected by the drought in the region. Cumulative *gu* rainfall between March to early June 2022 was 40 to 70 per cent below average. The *gu* season accounts for 75 per cent of annual rainfall in Somalia and is critical for crop- and livestock-dependent livelihoods. Although the rains marginally replenished pasture and water resources in some locations, they were insufficient to alleviate the impact of the drought. According to the Somalia Water And Land Information Management programme funded by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), about 80 per cent of the country was facing extreme drought conditions as of April 2022, which hampered irrigated agriculture in the lower reaches of the Shabelle and Juba Rivers. By that time, at least 4.9 million Somalis were affected, with 719,000 displaced and an estimated 3.5 million lacking sufficient access to water and sanitation. As the drought worsened, the number of people in need of water and sanitation rose to approximately 6.4 million by August.

6. The rainy seasons from October to December (*deyr*) in 2021 and April to June (*gu*) in 2022 both failed, leading to widespread crop loss, livestock deaths and drought-induced mass displacement. Widespread crop failure has significantly diminished seasonal agricultural production and employment, the main income source among poor agropastoral and riverine households in south-central Somalia. Overall, the cereal harvest for the 2022 *gu* season will likely be 40 to 60 per cent below average (compared with 20 to 60 per cent in 2021), making it the fifth consecutive below-average harvest on record. More than 3 million heads of livestock – one third of all livestock in the worst-affected areas – are estimated to have died of starvation and disease since mid-2021.

7. The consequences of the drought and other related drivers, such as the ongoing conflict, the impact of the war in Ukraine on food prices, and the global economic downturn, have pushed millions of Somalis to emergency levels of food insecurity. Close to 50 per cent of the population requires humanitarian assistance and protection, a figure that has increased from 5.9 million in 2021 to 7.8 million in 2022. Approximately 1.8 million children under 5 years of age are expected to face acute malnutrition until at least mid-2023, including more than 513,000 who are likely to be severely malnourished.

8. Widespread water shortages and inadequate access to sanitation and hygiene facilities have heightened the risk of outbreaks of diseases including cholera and measles, especially in camps for internally displaced persons. As of August 2022, at least 6.4 million people lacked access to safe water and sanitation. Cholera is endemic in Somalia, spiking during rainy seasons and in locations with a high number of internally displaced persons and limited access to clean water and sanitation. From January to August 2022, nearly 9,300 suspected cholera cases, including 42 associated deaths, were reported, three to four times the number reported in the same geographical areas in the previous two years. The spike in cases of measles is attributed to suboptimal routine immunization services, with most cases reported in children from inaccessible areas who are not vaccinated as required.

9. In many drought-affected areas, global acute malnutrition was already classified as “serious” (10 to 14.9 per cent), rising to “critical” (15 per cent or more) in some locations. In May 2022, global acute malnutrition increased by 7 per cent, largely owing to drought and increased displacement. When compared with the same period

in 2021, the number of children admitted with severe acute malnutrition had increased by 49 per cent as of August 2022. The drivers of acute malnutrition include high morbidity, low immunization and vitamin A supplementation, reduced access to milk and food insecurity. Urgent treatment and nutritional support are required, including for more than 250,000 pregnant and lactating women in need.

10. The drought has forced several schools to close as children were displaced with their families, while for others, their parents are unable to afford basic school costs and food owing to loss of livelihood. As of April 2022, at least 420,000 (45 per cent girls) of 1.4 million children whose education had been disrupted by the drought were at risk of dropping out of school. By August 2022, the number of pupils whose education had been disrupted rose to 2.4 million, with 1.7 million already out of school. A further 720,000 children who were enrolled in the 2021/22 school year are at risk of dropping out permanently. Experience from past droughts indicates that 90 per cent of children who lose access to education never return. In addition, children, in particular boys, who are out of school are at risk of being recruited by armed groups, with reported instances of ongoing recruitment in drought-affected areas.

11. The drought has devastated the livelihoods of the most vulnerable Somalis, whose ability to cope had already been eroded by decades of protracted conflict, climate shocks, locust infestation and disease outbreaks. Persistent insecurity and conflict, in particular in central and southern Somalia, as well as global supply and price shocks and escalating local and imported food prices, including the impact of the Ukraine crisis on production and supply chains and export bans from neighbouring countries, have driven food prices up, threatening the food security of millions across Somalia. In more than half of the markets monitored, prices in July 2022 were abnormally high compared with the five-year average for local cereals (60–234 per cent higher), imported rice (27–85 per cent higher) and diesel (66–130 per cent higher). Prices are expected to remain high until at least the end of 2022.

12. A desert locust infestation that affected Somalia severely from 2019 to 2021 has declined, but there are concerns about a possible resurgence. By September 2021, more than 332,800 hectares of crops had been sprayed using ground and aerial assets in concerted control actions by FAO and the Government, which contributed to the decline in infestation. On 3 November 2021, FAO and Puntland State inaugurated the National Desert Locust Monitoring and Control Centre, based in Qardho, in the Bari region of Puntland State.

13. Conflict and insecurity in parts of the country continue to aggravate vulnerabilities and increase displacement. As of August 2022, Somalia still had the largest number of internally displaced persons, at about 2.9 million. From January to August 2022, an estimated 1.2 million people were displaced across Somalia, according to the Protection and Return Monitoring Network of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), of whom 857,000 were displaced by conflict and insecurity. Between 8 and 15 August, more than 25,200 people (4,200 families) from 14 villages were displaced following armed clashes and political instability in the Maxaas and Matabaan districts, in the Hiraan region. The internally displaced persons face serious protection risks associated with cyclical displacement owing to conflict and natural disasters, coupled with recurring human rights violations, including forceful evictions and the marginalization of some communities.

14. Social support systems are increasingly overstretched in many parts of the country, leading to a surge in displacement from rural areas to already congested internally displaced person settlements and to towns and cities. New internally displaced persons arrive in desperate conditions and often face numerous challenges accessing humanitarian assistance after their arrival. Access to assistance remains limited, with

most internally displaced person settlements classified as being in “emergency” (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification phase 4) until December 2022.

15. Most of the main internally displaced person settlements across Somalia are under private ownership, hence the increased risk of forced evictions. Displaced women, children, persons with disabilities, older persons and persons with minority clan affiliations face the greatest protection challenges and are thus considered the most vulnerable members of society. From January to June 2022, protection cluster partners recorded about 80,000 forced evictions by landowners, of which 84 per cent occurred in the Banaadir region.

16. Resources such as water points and other water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, maternal and children’s health centres and education facilities created through significant investments by humanitarian partners were destroyed during forced evictions in Banaadir and other places. Advocacy by the Somalia protection cluster led to the issuance of eviction moratoriums on 64,000 evictions and to cash payments in order to enable people affected by evictions to resettle. However, while measures to prevent or mitigate the risk of forced evictions have been implemented, they remain significantly insufficient in comparison to the needs.

17. Women and girls face heightened risks because of inequality and social norms that exclude them from opportunities and decision-making platforms. Gender-based violence remains rampant amid forced evictions, multiple displacements and insecurity. Intimate partner violence, rape, revenge killings, and sexual exploitation and abuse are rife owing to poor living conditions and to long distances to water points, farmlands, gender-based violence service sites, health facilities and markets, difficulties that are compounded by overcrowding and lack of privacy. According to the United Nations Population Fund, gender-based violence has spiked.

18. In addition to the humanitarian emergency, Somalia is facing structural development challenges, with 71 per cent of the population living below the poverty line. Communities in rural and hard-to-reach areas lack access to basic health-care and education services. Of the 7.7 million who are projected to need assistance in 2022, about 5.5 million are vulnerable non-displaced people who have had to cope with pre-existing vulnerabilities as well as recurring multiple shocks.

19. Access to health services is limited for many Somalis, with 21 per cent of the population having no access to a nearby functioning health facility. Somalia has some of the highest rates of infant and child mortality as well as maternal mortality in the world, and 79 per cent of all births are delivered at home without skilled assistance. The maternal mortality rate (692 deaths per 100,000 live births) and the fertility rate (an average of 6.9 children per woman) are also among the highest in the world.

20. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) infections have declined but continue to pose a threat in Somalia. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 20 per cent of the population will suffer from direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic. Between 16 March 2020, when the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed, and 20 August 2022, the country recorded 27,162 cases and 1,352 deaths. Somalia has very few testing facilities and, where testing is available, stigma often prevents people from gaining access to it. Moreover, Somalis who lack adequate social protection, in particular internally displaced persons and the urban poor, are more vulnerable to contracting COVID-19 and suffering its most severe consequences.

21. Families and internally displaced persons are the most vulnerable to accidents caused by explosive remnants of war, because they frequently traverse vast tracts of land in search of pastures or while seeking suitable settlements. Over the past 12 months, the Department of Safety and Security has recorded more than 3,000 incidents, including 326 concerning improvised explosive devices, of which 255

involved civilians, including 3 children. With regard to improvised explosive devices, civilians constitute the highest number of casualties, because they are often more vulnerable to the impact of large explosions usually intended to target security forces or installations.

22. In addition to supporting internally displaced persons, humanitarian partners in Somalia provide support to returnees, mainly from Kenya and Yemen. According to UNHCR, an estimated 30,800 refugees and asylum-seekers will arrive in Somalia in 2022, mainly from Yemen, with the majority hosted in Somaliland, followed by Puntland and south and central regions. While conditions are still not conducive to safe and dignified returns to most parts of Somalia, UNHCR anticipates that there will be more than 132,100 refugee returnees in the country in 2022, with approximately 20,000 returning from refugee camps in Kenya and the remainder from Djibouti, Libya, Yemen and other countries.

23. Somalia is among the countries that have recorded the highest number of grave violations against children, including the recruitment and use of children. While many parties to the conflict in Somalia, including the Federal Government and member states, recruit and use children, Al-Shabaab remains the most prolific perpetrator. From October 2021 to March 2022, the country task force on monitoring and reporting verified 1,489 grave violations affecting 1,218 children (911 boys and 307 girls), of which the majority were attributed to Al-Shabaab, followed by the regional forces of the national army and clan militias.

24. The recruitment and use of children are also related to ongoing military offensives and operations in the country. Between October 2021 and March 2022, 510 children, including 42 girls, were reportedly used or recruited by armed groups, according to the country task force on monitoring and reporting mechanism, with Al-Shabaab accounting for 374 (73 per cent) of the cases and clan militias and security forces making up the remainder.

25. Humanitarian partners continue to support children who were subjected to forced recruitment by armed groups. From October 2021 to March 2022, the United Nations Children's Fund and its partners supported 1,591 children (1,355 boys and 236 girls) formerly associated with armed forces and groups, including 977 at-risk children (803 boys, 174 girls).

### **Humanitarian response**

26. On 11 August 2022, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee activated a system-wide scale-up for Somalia, to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation, which has supported the mobilization and deployment of additional capacity and resources, especially at the subnational level. Humanitarian partners have rapidly stepped up response activities in Somalia to mitigate the impacts of severe drought and to help save lives. Partners are prioritizing the most vulnerable people in the areas of highest need, including newly displaced families and members of minority clans who are historically disproportionately affected by the impacts of droughts. The activities are being implemented by 304 humanitarian actors, including 238 national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in all districts.

27. The scale-up is centred around five key pillars under the 2022 drought response and famine prevention plan, namely, prioritization, coordination, integrated response, rapid response and response monitoring. Operational areas have been categorized according to a three-tiered classification based on severity, with an increased focus on priority districts. A rapid response mechanism to provide a multisectoral response for newly displaced people has been launched through a minimum response package project, targeting 100,000 people in Baidoa and Banaadir.

28. As drought worsened from November 2021 and into 2022, delayed and inadequate funding in the first half of 2022 caused major challenges for the response. One of the most valuable lessons learned during the 2016/17 drought response was the difference made by timely funding. As at 31 March 2022, only \$56.1 million had been contributed to the 2022 humanitarian response plan. With the available resources, humanitarian partners, authorities and local communities prioritized responses, reprogrammed activities and scaled up assistance to meet vastly increased needs. In January and February 2022, 186 humanitarian partners reached almost 2 million people with life-saving assistance and protection services.

29. As at 30 August 2022, at least 5.3 million people had received life-saving assistance since January. At least 60 per cent of those assisted were from the top-priority districts, an increase from 52 per cent in May. With donors providing more resources, partners are expanding assistance to reach many more of the 6.4 million people targeted for drought response, including the 1 million who have been displaced from their homes in search of water, food, pasture and livelihoods.

30. Humanitarian partners, through the injection of additional funding, continued to scale up the response, with the number of drought-affected people who have received humanitarian assistance almost quadrupling between January and August 2022. While the Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan was only 18 per cent funded at the beginning of June, more than 4.1 million drought-affected people had received humanitarian assistance by the end of the month, compared with 1.1 million in January. An infusion of funds in the second half of the year (the Plan had been 70 per cent funded by August 2022) was essential to maintain and scale up operations, reaching about 5.3 million people as of August. However, the funding was delayed and disproportionate across clusters, and critical clusters remained underfunded by the end of August 2022, including protection, shelter and non-food relief items, and water, sanitation and hygiene.

31. The Somalia Humanitarian Fund has received \$53 million in deposits and commitments in 2022 alone, amounting to about 5 per cent of the overall funding received against the Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan for 2022, as at 26 September. Together with funds carried over from 2021, this has allowed the Fund to allocate \$54 million to 70 partners for the purpose of implementing 106 life-saving projects across the county. Through these projects – covering issues including responses to severe water shortages, internal displacements, and disease outbreaks – the Fund has ensured flexible and timely funding for delivering essential assistance to 2.2 million people in the locations hardest hit by severe drought and at risk of famine. It continues to maximize efficiency in the delivery of humanitarian assistance by prioritizing direct implementation through non-governmental partners, which received more than 95 per cent of the allocations for 2022. It remains the best vehicle for driving the localization agenda and can facilitate assistance in hard-to-reach areas. About 60 per cent of the funds disbursed so far this year have been allocated to national NGOs. With needs set to escalate in the months ahead, it is critical that more donors put forward additional funding in the coming weeks. One of the most valuable lessons learned during the 2016/17 drought response was the difference that timely funding can make. While there were delays in the receipt of funding in 2022, this can and must be avoided in 2023, when the crisis will be even worse following a projected fifth failed rainy season. As humanitarian workers focus on saving lives and averting famine, there is a critical need to also invest in livelihoods, resilience, infrastructure development, climate adaptation and durable solutions to ensure that those affected can adapt and thrive in the future.

32. As of August 2022, Food Security Cluster partners have assisted at least 4.9 million people of the 5.9 million targeted (82 per cent) in accessible districts, with plans to scale up to 5.5 million by end of September. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Cluster partners have assisted about 1.4 million people of the 3.9 million targeted. Despite the scaling up of sustained humanitarian assistance, the situation remains dire as Somalia reels from a fourth consecutive failed rainy season.

33. As a result of the improved implementation of water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in June and the vaccination of at least 934,500 people in nine high-risk districts, Health Cluster partners have reported a slight decline in new suspected cholera cases in some areas. Partners reported a 42 per cent decline in Jawhar in the first two weeks of June 2022, from 50 to 29 cases, and an 18 per cent decline in cases in Banaadir in July 2022, from 191 to 156 cases. To contain the spread of measles, health partners vaccinated about 21,000 children in the first half of 2022.

34. Despite the provision of \$975 million for the humanitarian response in Somalia, critical programmes remain underfunded, while others are in a race against time to ensure that newly received funds are converted into assistance for affected communities as rapidly as possible. The majority of the projects in the Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan are implemented by national non-governmental organizations, but the organizations rarely receive direct funding.

35. COVID-19 vaccine availability is limited, and vaccine coverage in Somalia was about 1.5 per cent as at 20 August, with nearly 4.5 million doses of vaccine administered and 2.43 million people fully vaccinated. During the reporting period, the demand for COVID-19 vaccination remained low. Health Cluster partners attribute the low uptake of vaccines to several factors, including the lower number of new COVID-19 infections reported, the unpredictability of supplies, the short shelf life of the vaccines, and lack of access to vaccination centres owing to insecurity and geographical distance. In addition, vaccine delivery within the country remains challenging and requires careful planning and complex logistics. High-risk groups, including health workers, the police, teachers, point-of-entry staff and the elderly, continue to be prioritized for vaccination.

### **Humanitarian access constraints and operational implications**

36. Somalia continues to face numerous challenges in delivering humanitarian assistance. Insecurity, bureaucratic and administrative constraints, poor infrastructure and environmental challenges all contribute to movement restrictions, disruption to imports and domestic supply chains, and the lack of basic commodities.

37. Insecurity continues to impede the ability of humanitarian workers to reach people in need and sustain operations critical to the delivery of much-needed humanitarian assistance and protection services, making it difficult for people to access basic services and assistance. Outside of major urban centres, access to some districts, in particular in southern and central regions, remains restricted owing in large part to insecurity along major supply routes. The presence of non-State armed groups across parts of Jubbaland State, South-West State, Hirshabelle, Galmudug and Puntland limits the ability of humanitarian partners to assess needs and deliver assistance in rural areas and restricts the ability of civilians to safely seek assistance.

38. Clan conflict in Galmudug and Hirshabelle persists, hindering humanitarian movement and operations, as do armed clashes between local militias in the disputed areas of Sool and Sanaag. Election-related violence in Puntland, Banaadir and Hirshabelle aimed at disrupting the parliamentary lower house elections resulted in civilian casualties and restrictions on staff movement, impeding humanitarian programmes.

39. A multiplicity of local armed actors with varying command structures and geographical presences, rapidly changing national and regional forces and the presence of various bilateral support missions and African Union Mission in Somalia

(AMISOM) troops, along with regional interventions, result in an operating environment in which territorial control by loosely allied groups shifts regularly and chains of command and control are not always clear. Establishing and maintaining relations with those who have influence over humanitarian access to people in need is both challenging and uncertain. Some 740,000 people are estimated to live within territory controlled by Al-Shabaab, and they remain largely out of reach. The most vulnerable populations are the least likely to reach the relative safety of neighbouring districts or regions where humanitarian actors are responding. Retaliatory violence, reports of harassment and extortion at checkpoints, restrictions on the movement of goods and people, forced taxation and child recruitment underline the severe challenges and difficulties faced by affected people in gaining access to safety and assistance in a safe, timely and unimpeded manner.

40. Access to areas controlled by the Federal Government of Somalia and allied non-State armed groups remains largely possible despite continuing bureaucratic and administrative challenges. Access to areas recovered by the Government and its allies is hampered by ongoing insecurity, including the presence of improvised explosive devices along key supply routes. Extortion and other forms of violations are common occurrences at the numerous illegal checkpoints manned by both State and non-State affiliated armed actors. Security checkpoints, many of which are fee-bearing, hinder safe, timely and unimpeded access. Incidents continue to be reported at the authorized checkpoints along all major access roads in southern and central Somalia, with the Mogadishu-Afgooye-Baidoa, Mogadishu-Balcad-Jawhar and Beledweyne-Gaalkacyo access roads most affected. Operations to remove unauthorized checkpoints along other main access roads continue, but armed actors adjust by creating non-static checkpoints. A lack of State authority beyond major population centres, as well as bureaucratic impediments, including interference by authorities in the selection of beneficiaries and the distribution of assistance, in addition to the temporary suspension of programmes, impede humanitarian activity. Therefore, notwithstanding milestone commitments made by the Federal Government of Somalia and some federal member states and regions, including Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Puntland and South-West State, the general civilian population and humanitarian organizations are still experiencing severe logistical challenges. Aid organizations continue to urge the authorities to build on the milestone commitments and efforts initiated in 2017 to prioritize the securing of the major supply routes.

41. Humanitarian workers operating in those areas face risks associated with unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war. Displaced people returning to areas recaptured from Al-Shabaab face a lack of basic infrastructure and services, resulting in heightened vulnerability. Serious protection concerns remain in many areas, including unexploded ordnance, ongoing and renewed fighting, and retaliatory violence by armed actors, as well as interference with NGOs on the ground and the forced recruitment of adults and children. In some areas, such as Shabelle Dhexe, Galmudug and parts of Kismaayo, assistance, including for marginalized communities, continues to be limited as a result of insecurity, even where access is possible.

42. Access to populations under Al-Shabaab control remains extremely limited, owing to concerns for the safety of humanitarian workers, opposition from other parties to the conflict, and the reported unwillingness of Al-Shabaab to accept principled humanitarian operations in areas under its control. Al-Shabaab imposes heavy restrictions on and engages in retribution against those refusing to comply with illegal taxation requirements, including the forced recruitment of children. Those seeking to leave Al-Shabaab-controlled territories and those who have fled to Government-controlled areas are often subjected to retaliatory attacks. However, increased flexibility by Al-Shabaab in allowing people to leave areas under its control temporarily to seek services has been observed during the reporting period. Information on the

humanitarian situation in those areas, as well as in areas controlled by the Da'esh faction in Somalia, is difficult to verify. Da'esh is present in the mountainous Galgalo areas of Puntland, but its ability to conduct activities has been impeded by Puntland Security Force operations and ongoing rivalry and conflict with Al-Shabaab.

43. Areas controlled by Al-Shabaab include those that are contested and where civilian movement is nearly impossible as a result of regular and active hostilities or military operations. Often, rural and civilian populations remain in these areas despite active hostilities or heightened insecurity, owing to a lack of resources and transportation to flee and a fear of being discriminated against or even prosecuted for clan or other presumed affiliations or for trying to reach safer areas. Subjected to violence and volatile security conditions, these populations are often more vulnerable and in greater need of assistance. However, increased flexibility has been observed in terms of allowing people to seek assistance in areas under government control before returning to the areas under Al-Shabaab control. Equally important, clan competition creates security risks for beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance and has at times led to violence and the suspension of programmes. Moreover, humanitarian access in such areas is hampered by ongoing hostilities, movement and security restrictions, and poor infrastructure. Identifying safe access routes and obtaining assurances to enter remain important measures for mitigating the risk of major hindrances to humanitarian access, such as restriction of movement, denial of access and interference in the delivery of aid. Although local partners have been more successful in securing access in conflict-affected areas on the basis of their lower security profiles, much more needs to be done to ensure the safe, timely, unimpeded and predictable passage of humanitarian assistance, goods and personnel to affected zones.

44. Violence against aid workers, including abduction, arrest, harassment and forcible seizure of assets and restrictions on road movement by parties to conflicts, continues to obstruct the ability of humanitarian workers to reach persons in need. The heavy influence of gatekeepers – informal settlement managers who act as brokers between internally displaced persons, local authorities and humanitarian partners – continues to limit access to services, in particular for marginalized communities, minorities, women and children. Restrictions on the movement of national staff on the basis of their presumed clan or other affiliations and the targeting of particular groups, including through intimidation and harassment, continue to affect the implementation of programmes in conflict-affected areas. Risk transfer to national staff, as well as to national NGOs and civil society, which are most frequently front-line implementers, must also be considered. All stakeholders should renew their attention to the safety and security of national and local actors through tailored risk mitigation measures, coordination and information-sharing with the humanitarian community to enable better situational awareness and common approaches, as well as appropriate training.

45. The safety of humanitarian operations remains a key concern owing to assaults on and against humanitarian workers. Most of the reported security incidents with humanitarian consequences occurred in southern and central Somalia. As a result of the incidents, one humanitarian worker was killed, another was injured, and 13 were detained. The humanitarian community continues to urge all parties to allow and facilitate humanitarian action, including ensuring the security of staff, supplies and facilities. Targeted attacks by Al-Shabaab against humanitarian workers have consistently declined since 2020, partly because of a reduction in movement linked to the pandemic and the remote implementation models adopted by many humanitarian actors.

46. For the first time, no abductions of humanitarian workers were recorded. This may point to a shift in tactics, as kidnappings previously provided a source of revenue when ransoms were paid. However, the threat of kidnapping remains a concern and directly affects the ability of organizations to deliver humanitarian assistance and

protection owing to the resulting scaling down or suspension of operations. Al-Shabaab is currently holding one humanitarian worker, an international staff member abducted in Mogadishu in 2018.

47. Siege-like warfare conducted by Al-Shabaab in some government-held towns in Hirshabelle, South-West State and Jubbaland State continues to hinder the transport of humanitarian and commercial supplies. Humanitarian organizations are limited to the use of air transport to gain access to the towns, which significantly increases the cost of humanitarian activities. Buulobarde, in Hiraan, Hirshabelle State; Diinsoor and Qansaxdheere, in Bay; Waajid and Xuddur, in Bakool, South-West State; and Ceel Waaq and Garbahaarrey, in Gedo, Jubbaland State, are among the districts most affected by the dynamic. Local traders often resort to using donkey carts to smuggle commercial goods into these towns, at great risk to their lives and property. The reliance on and vulnerability of aircraft and aviation routes into these and other towns remains a concern.

48. In Shabelle Dhexe, the abandonment of the ATMIS forward operating base in Ceel Baraf following its takeover and destruction by Al-Shabaab, coupled with the ATMIS handover to and subsequent abandonment of the forward operating base at Gololey by the Somali National Army, led to significant freedom of movement for Al-Shabaab across Shabelle Dhexe, curtailing humanitarian movement along the Balcad-Jawhar-Beledweyne road. In addition, Al-Shabaab continues to sustain pressure on the Mogadishu-Afgooye-Marka access road by staging improvised explosive device attacks and coercing vehicles to pay “taxes”. Trucks using the main supply routes in Hiraan continue to be subjected to Al-Shabaab attacks, a long-standing situation owing to the group’s enforcement of its economic blockade on government-controlled towns. Road access along the Mogadishu-Afgooye-Baidoa route continues to be severely constrained owing to the mounting demands of and extortion by “State-affiliated armed groups” (that is, groups affiliated with the national Government), clan militia, criminal groups and Al-Shabaab. According to local communities, Al-Shabaab has continued to impose fees along some stretches of the Mogadishu-Baidoa and Mogadishu-Jawhar routes. The repeated seizure of Matabaan by Al-Shabaab (four times in 2022), along with continued clan tensions along the Beledweyne-Dhuusamarreeb-Gaalkacyo road, has seen both Al-Shabaab and clan-affiliated militia set up checkpoints to accrue revenue, resulting in clashes and insecurity and hampering all movement along the road.

49. Civilians in southern and central Somalia continue to face rigorous taxation by Al-Shabaab, forcing many into displacement and causing the loss of productive assets, thereby rendering those civilians more vulnerable. In many areas, traders are now forced to pay double taxation, both to Al-Shabaab and to the Government, which renders small businesses non-lucrative and has led to an increase in prices for consumers. Farming communities reportedly continue to be obliged by Al-Shabaab to pay “taxes” to tend to their fields after good rains, with both cash and livestock being provided as zakat or as a “voluntary jihad” contribution.

50. Al-Shabaab remains in a strong financial position and is generating a significant budgetary surplus, some of which is invested in property purchases and businesses in Mogadishu. Its revenue sources are diversified across a “taxation” system that ranges in complexity from basic checkpoint controls to financial assessments of businesses through the group’s access to information sources such as business registrations, property assets and shipping cargo manifests. The movement derives its domestic revenue through checkpoint “taxation” across the country, business extortion, the “taxation” of imports at major seaports and forced zakat collection.

51. Al-Shabaab continues to control key areas and to take control of towns after the withdrawal of the national army, ATMIS and other government-affiliated forces,

resulting in the disruption of humanitarian operations and, in some cases, the complete suspension of programmes. During the reporting period, the seizure of control of towns and villages, at times temporarily, by Al-Shabaab was reported in areas in Galmudug and South-West State. In some areas, Al-Shabaab carries out retaliatory attacks on civilians whom it deems to be government supporters or collaborators, while in others, it talks or preaches to local populations without resorting to violence. Al-Shabaab continues to attack some newly recovered areas in an attempt to regain control. In some cases, civilians have reported abuses and human rights violations by the national armed forces and ATMIS in the areas recovered by the Government following military operations.

52. Conflict between Somaliland and Puntland over control of parts of Sool and Sanaag regions continues, with both sides maintaining troops deployed against the other along the front line. The heightened tensions and the level of preparedness demonstrated by both parties have elevated the risk of a full-fledged escalation of armed hostilities and continue to restrict safe, timely and unimpeded humanitarian access to the area.

53. Clan conflicts remain a major concern, in particular in Hiraan, Galmudug, Shabelle Hoose, Shabelle Dhexe and Sool regions, resulting in lost lives and livelihoods and displacing families. Humanitarian programmes in the affected locations are often suspended until the conflict is resolved. On occasion, local humanitarian staff belonging to warring clans have been victimized or caught up in the conflict. Clan-related conflicts are recorded mainly in areas where pastoralist communities reside, owing to competition for scarce resources such as water and pasture, or in areas where farmers clash with nomads over farmland. Galguduud and Hiraan remain the areas most affected by prolonged clan conflicts, while the Galguduud region is particularly notable for clan skirmishes owing to the harsh environment and competition for resources. While clan elders and the authorities continue to prioritize negotiations to address ongoing conflicts, the payment of blood compensation remains the key determinant of conflict resolution. Even after reconciliation efforts have been successful, conflicts have the potential to reignite quickly over small or perceived provocations. For that reason, humanitarian organizations operating in the areas make every effort to be kept abreast of all incidents that can lead to clan conflicts, including those that may have occurred in past months or years, to avoid falling prey to the revenge cycle.

54. Parties to the conflict have continued to carry out air strikes in some areas in Jubbaland State, Galmudug and Puntland. The targets have mainly been assets and personnel of Al-Shabaab and ISIL located outside residential areas or within isolated areas under their control. Although the air strikes have had no direct impact on humanitarian operations to date, a risk to operations located in the affected regions remains, in particular for vehicles moving supplies and personnel, which might be targeted in error. As a secondary impact, aerial attacks have reportedly made Al-Shabaab more suspicious of humanitarian organizations, on the basis that they could be collecting information to be used for air strikes.

55. Following the directive in September 2018 by the Federal Government of Somalia requiring NGOs operating in Somalia to have a country presence, and the subsequent relocation of many international staff from Kenya to Somalia, international NGOs have continued to reiterate their request to the Government and federal member states to expedite the establishment of a centralized and enabling framework, an initiative that has been under way for the past six years. The NGO Act, which is aimed at regulating the operations, registration and oversight of NGOs through the Registrar General and registrars, remains in draft form. In the absence of a centralized regulatory framework, aid organizations have continued to face demands such as arbitrary or duplicative taxation, the involvement of authorities in contracting

suppliers and service providers, and interference in staff recruitment and taxation on salary payments, including screening, interviewing, selection and vetting. The demands have continued to lead to disruptions, delays, intrusions into humanitarian facilities, arrests and deportation, the detention and expulsion of humanitarian workers, and the occasional temporary suspension of humanitarian programmes.

56. The rise in the number of international NGO staff relocating to Somalia has increased challenges resulting from the lack of explicit laws on registration and income taxation between the national and subnational levels. While a draft law has progressed to the parliamentary level, the international community is concerned that it has reached that stage without adequate consultation with the NGO community, which could undermine its ability to operate when the law is eventually passed.

57. The humanitarian country team has adopted a context- and area-specific approach to expand sustainable and predictable access to life-saving assistance for the most vulnerable people in their areas of origin, in order to prevent non-protection-related displacement and save lives. Almost 3 million people living in hard-to-reach districts under the control of Al-Shabaab and in hard-to-reach areas are without access to predictable and sustained humanitarian assistance. Failure to reach more people in their places of origin with urgent life-saving humanitarian assistance will lead to significant loss of life. Access to people in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab is based on the type of assistance delivered.

58. To overcome access challenges and facilitate engagement directly with partners, authorities and beneficiaries in harder-to-reach destinations, the humanitarian community is utilizing a dedicated Cessna Caravan plane of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, the funding for which was approved by the humanitarian country team. The aircraft has proved to be instrumental in enabling operations. Missions have allowed direct interaction between agencies, international NGOs, beneficiaries and government staff for the first time in months and have allowed international United Nations staff and the staff of international NGOs to gain access to a number of the harder-to-reach destinations for the first time in at least 18 months. The first-hand opportunity to engage with partners, local authorities and beneficiaries and to better understand needs, challenges and opportunities has resulted in issues being identified or resolved and in the reprioritization and delivery of aid, enabling a direct and rapid response. In addition, the inclusion of media has provided advocacy opportunities.

### **Risk mitigation measures**

59. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and their partners faced unprecedented levels of risk associated with a context that remains significantly insecure, is on the front line of climate change and now teeters on the brink of famine. The context poses significant challenges in terms of the ability of the people most in need to gain access to assistance, and it demands vigilance to combat fraud and corruption.

60. The challenges are being met with a similarly unprecedented level of risk management collaboration that is unique to Somalia, from the integration and planning involved in supporting the Federal Government of Somalia through an array of programmes and projects across the country to operational risk management practices that have adapted, have become more agile and are increasingly shared among stakeholders.

61. The increasing and unique level of information-sharing has had a direct impact on the availability, accuracy and timeliness of information that is essential to risk-informed decision-making at all levels. This has been made possible through the operationalization of the collaborative risk management strategy and through continuous and active engagement between the Risk Management Unit, the United

Nations Risk Management, Accountability and Quality Assurance Working Group; and the recently formed NGO Collaborative Risk Management Committee.

62. The Risk Management Unit continues to support and encourage risk mitigation efforts and collaboration between stakeholders. The Contractor Information Management System and the Capacity Injection Reporting Tool play key roles in this regard, along with facilitated and expanded forum discussions among United Nations agencies and partners. The discussions included risk-related information-sharing on capacity-building, implementing partners, risk assessment reports and performance reporting, as well as specific deliberations on areas such as fraud and corruption including audit reports and investigations.

### **Impact of paragraphs 37 and 43 of Security Council resolution 2607 (2021)**

63. In its resolution 2607 (2021) adopted on 15 November 2021, the Security Council reaffirmed that measures imposed by it in paragraph 3 of its resolution 1844 (2008) should not apply to the payment of funds, other financial assets or economic resources necessary to ensure the timely delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance in Somalia, by the United Nations, its specialized agencies or programmes, humanitarian organizations having observer status with the General Assembly that provide humanitarian assistance, and their implementing partners, including bilaterally or multilaterally funded NGOs participating in the Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia. While organizations surveyed for the present report did not explicitly comment on the impact of paragraphs 37 and 43 of resolution 2607 (2021) on their ability to implement programmes, the humanitarian exemption has a significant impact on the ability of partners to deliver life-saving aid and protection.

64. Non-renewal of the humanitarian exemption would make it much more difficult for donors to swiftly and flexibly fund impartial humanitarian operations and for humanitarian organizations to efficiently respond to humanitarian needs, at a time when Somalia is reaching alarming levels of food insecurity. It would result in increased legal, bureaucratic, administrative, contractual and operational constraints for humanitarian partners. Even incremental increases in such challenges would have a significant adverse impact on the ability to deliver assistance. In turn, the inability to deliver aid would deprive civilians of the supplies essential to their survival while compounding the risk of the humanitarian situation deteriorating. The suspension of aid would result in a greater likelihood of additional displacement, including potential refugee flows to neighbouring countries and internal displacement towards urban, government-controlled areas that are already underresourced and have inadequate basic services. Furthermore, if Al-Shabaab were to prevent civilians from leaving areas under its control, their needs would go unmet, and those soliciting aid, such as elders and leaders, might be subjected to human rights abuses or violations of international humanitarian law, such as extrajudicial executions and child recruitment.

65. Importantly, the humanitarian exemption is the basis upon which all stakeholders – humanitarian organizations, donors, contractors, and finance and banking systems – have been relying for the past 12 years to carry out activities necessary for the delivery of needs-based humanitarian assistance in Somalia. The humanitarian exemption and the measures taken for its implementation over those years are essential to humanitarian programmes in Somalia.

### **Conclusions**

66. Somalia is at a crossroads. Humanitarian needs have significantly increased at a time of reduced funding and heightened access challenges. The impacts of climate change, which triggered the prolonged severe drought in 2021 and 2022, as well as protracted conflict and outbreaks of diseases, along with a global economic downturn,

may contribute to an unravelling of hard-won progress achieved in the past decade, at a high human and financial cost. In the Bay region, failure to urgently scale up multisectoral assistance may result, at a minimum, in a rapid acceleration of death and destitution. Even if the technical thresholds for “famine” (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification phase 5) are not reached by December 2022, a large-scale humanitarian response is still critically needed to treat and prevent acute malnutrition among children and limit the hunger-related deaths that occur at the “crisis” (phase 3) and “emergency” (phase 4) levels.

67. Humanitarian organizations in Somalia continue to strike a balance between their security concerns and ensuring the effective and principled delivery of assistance. Humanitarians will continue to work to sustain and expand access to those in greatest need despite security challenges. However, respect for international humanitarian law is paramount, and parties to the conflict must allow and facilitate the access of those who are in need. In addition to requiring greater access to beneficiaries, humanitarian efforts need flexible and timely funding to effectively assist millions of Somalis and to ensure that the security needs of national and local implementing partners are properly factored into proposals and budgets.

68. As at 31 August 2022, a total of 304 humanitarian partners were operating in Somalia, including 238 national NGOs, 47 international NGOs, 7 United Nations partners and 10 governmental partners. Those agencies have scaled up operations to mitigate the severe impact of the drought emergency in order to ensure that response efforts prevent a major humanitarian catastrophe that could jeopardize gains made in recent years. Mechanisms are in place for a rapid scale-up and a sustained response. Partners are prioritizing the most vulnerable people in the areas of highest need, including newly displaced families and members of minority clans who are historically disproportionately affected by the impacts of droughts.

69. Humanitarian assistance will continue to be critical for millions of people in Somalia. While humanitarian assistance has been scaled up, the levels of assistance have not kept pace with the scale and severity of needs amid a two-year drought, protracted conflict and record-high staple food prices. Weather forecasts predict an unprecedented fifth consecutive season of poor rainfall in late 2022 and increased chances of below-average rainfall in early 2023. This is likely to prolong the extreme drought in Somalia and its impacts into 2023.

70. According to the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit and partner field assessments, the sorghum and maize harvest in July 2022 was a near-total failure, amounting to just 13 to 20 per cent of the 1995–2021 average. At the same time, at least 5–10 per cent of the total livestock population in Bay region has died from drought since mid-2021. Crop failure, limited cereal supply from neighbouring countries, and global price shocks stemming from the Russia-Ukraine war have driven up the price of sorghum – the mainstay of the local diet in this area – by more than 200 per cent, exceeding prices observed during the 2011–2012 famine in Somalia.

71. In a context of already high and increasing needs, non-renewal of the humanitarian exemption would result in the disruption, interruption or suspension of life-saving humanitarian services throughout Somalia. In the light of the foregoing, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator invites the Security Council to renew the humanitarian exemption provided for in paragraph 43 of its resolution [2607 \(2021\)](#).