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Seventy-fifth year

8735th meeting

Thursday, 27 February 2020, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium)

Members:

China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
Dominican Republic	Ms. Morrison González
Estonia	Mr. Auväärt
France	Mr. Michon
Germany	Mr. Licharz
Indonesia	Mr. Soemirat
Niger	Mr. A Barry
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ms. Prince
South Africa	Mr. Mpanyane
Tunisia	Mr. Ben Lagha
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
United States of America	Mr. Hunter
Viet Nam	Mr. Pham

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Somalia to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I will now brief the Security Council in my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia.

In accordance with paragraph 11 (g) of resolution 1844 (2008), I have the honour to brief the Council in my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia, covering the period from 26 October 2019 to 27 February 2020.

This is my first briefing since the adoption, on 15 November 2019, of resolution 2498 (2019), in which the Council consolidated and streamlined the provisions related to the arms embargo, imposed a ban on the components of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Somalia until 15 December 2020. Following the adoption of the resolution, the Secretary-General appointed five members of the Panel of Experts on 16 December 2019, and a sixth expert was appointed on 13 January 2020.

At its first consultations this year, on 17 January, the Committee met with the members of the Panel of Experts on Somalia to discuss their priorities for 2020. In that connection, the new Coordinator of the Panel of Experts highlighted the increased focus on the revenue sources of Al-Shabaab, in line with the provisions of paragraph 1 of resolution 2498 (2019). She also mentioned the ban on IED components, the charcoal embargo and the management of weapons and ammunition as other priority areas for the Panel of Experts. The Coordinator pointed out that the recent attacks in Mogadishu and a series of incidents in Kenya had highlighted the constant threat posed by Al-Shabaab in Somalia and the region.

The Coordinator stressed the importance of re-establishing a constructive working relationship with the Federal Government of Somalia, including by allowing all members of the Panel of Experts to visit Somalia. In that regard, she viewed her visit to Mogadishu in early January, at the invitation of the National Security Adviser to the President of Somalia, as a promising step forward. The members of the Committee were encouraged by those initial exchanges. They agreed with the Coordinator that the priorities of the Federal Government of Somalia were well aligned with those set out in the mandate of the Panel of Experts.

From 21 to 23 January, I travelled to Mogadishu in my capacity as Chair of the Committee, along with Committee members who joined me from New York or through their local and regional diplomatic representatives. The report on my visit, which contains details of my meetings with the President and Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Somalia and other interlocutors, was shared with the members of the Committee. I would like to briefly summarize my observations.

The visit was an important opportunity to help raise awareness of the purpose and scope of the sanctions measures, which are aimed primarily at Al-Shabaab and other armed groups, and to gather first-hand information on their implementation. I hope that it will also contribute significantly to the re-establishment of relations between the Federal Government of Somalia and the Panel of Experts. The Coordinator of the Panel has already visited Mogadishu three times, which is an encouraging start, and I hope that other members of the Panel will soon be able to visit Somalia as well. I believe that the visit was also useful in helping the members of the Committee familiarize themselves with the political, security and humanitarian developments on the ground.

I note that the Committee plays an ongoing role in raising awareness of the sanctions regime, correcting the misperception that the sanctions regime is targeting the Federal Government of Somalia and promoting a better understanding of the scope of the measures, particularly the new ban on IED components. We must also continue to stress that the sanctions regime is not static. It is regularly reviewed, has evolved over the years to reflect changing circumstances and will continue to evolve. The Committee and its Panel of Experts are partners of the Federal Government of Somalia, with the mutual aim of countering the threat

of terrorism and tackling the flow of illegal arms to non-State armed groups in Somalia.

During the reporting period, the Committee received three monthly updates from the Panel of Experts, one of which was submitted pursuant to resolution 2441 (2018) and the other two pursuant to resolution 2498 (2019). The Committee also received correspondence from two Member States. One letter raised concerns regarding the findings of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, the predecessor of the Panel of Experts, and two others raised confidentiality issues. To date, the Committee has responded to two of the three letters.

I will conclude by summarizing statistics with regard to the arms embargo. Prior to the adoption of resolution 2498 (2019), the Committee approved an exemption request submitted by the Federal Government of Somalia pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 2111 (2013). The Committee also received a pre-delivery notification from a Member State, pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2142 (2014) and paragraph 14 of resolution 2444 (2018). Following the adoption of resolution 2498 (2019), the Committee received four pre-delivery notifications from the Federal Government of Somalia, pursuant to paragraphs 11 and 13 of resolution 2498 (2019), for one of which it also received a pre-delivery notification from the supplier Member State, pursuant to paragraph 14 of the same resolution. In addition, the Committee received three pre-delivery notifications from a supplier Member State and an international organization, pursuant to paragraph 17 of resolution 2498 (2019). Lastly, the Committee received a copy of the Federal Government of Somalia's biannual report to the Security Council, pursuant to paragraph 35 of resolution 2498 (2019), on the structure, composition, strength and deployment of its security forces and the status of regional and militia forces.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for your briefing this afternoon.

The Somalia sanctions regime represents a shared effort by Somalia and its international partners to tackle the greatest threats to Somalia's peace and security and to support long-term security sector reform. Its nature as a partial embargo means that the Federal Government

of Somalia is able to access the equipment and training needed to tackle the scourge of Al-Shabaab. We greatly welcome the support provided by Council members in that regard. We strongly condemn the continued attacks by Al-Shabaab, which take lives in Somalia and beyond. At this point, I wish to pay tribute to the brave men and women of the Somali armed forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia.

We welcome the Federal Government of Somalia's recent engagement with the Panel of Experts and the Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, including constructive meetings with the new Coordinator of the Panel and a visit by the Committee in January 2020, on which we have just been briefed. We hope that that engagement can continue with the support of the international community to enable continued progress in building long-term stability and security in Somalia and we look forward to a visit to Somalia by the other members of the Panel in the near future.

We are currently at a critical juncture in the long-term future of Somalia's security. Together, we can work to stop the flow of arms, improvised explosive device components and illicit finance to Al-Shabaab and other armed groups that threaten Somalia's stability. We also call for progress in agreeing individual designations under the Somalia sanctions regime, in particular those proposed in October 2019. Those listings represent an important element in ensuring that the sanctions regime has an impact.

Somalia and its international supporters face a huge task in the coming years in delivering the full transition to Somali-led security. The United Kingdom will continue to stand firmly alongside Somalia, the United Nations and regional partners in those efforts.

Mr. Licharz (Germany): I thank you, Mr. President, for your briefing. At the outset, I would like to commend you for the visit that you conducted to Somalia in January. I would also like to thank the Somali representative for the support in coordinating and facilitating the visit.

Germany reiterates that sanctions are an indispensable instrument, contributing to stabilization and State- and peacebuilding in Somalia, thereby also to enhancing regional stability. In that regard, the visit on which we were just briefed was very important, including with regard to an understanding by all sides of the sanctions regime in place.

To make one point very clear, the purpose of the arms embargo is to support the Government and to strengthen its ability to provide security. The focus of the sanctions is on the fight against Al-Shabaab. The newly imposed ban on improvised explosive device components in particular will degrade Al-Shabaab's ability to manufacture home-made explosives. It is now of paramount importance that that provision be effectively implemented, particularly by neighbouring States.

We often hear it said that sanctions are not an end in themselves. At the same time, it remains true that sanctions have been adopted for a particular purpose. As long as that purpose has not been fulfilled, the sanctions must be maintained.

At the same time, Germany remains ready to support the Somali Government in capacity-building, for example, to better register and monitor the use of small arms and light weapons. We are also ready to continue to support security sector reform. In that regard, I believe that much progress has been achieved. An example is the biometric registration of almost all members of the security forces, which is an ongoing process. Such developments can help towards later considering lifting some of the sanctions in that respect.

We continue to fully support the work of the Panel of Experts. The first meetings between the new Coordinator and the Somali authorities are encouraging but cooperation must now be fully re-established. All the experts need access in order to accomplish their mandate. The cooperation of the Somali authorities without preconditions is crucial to the effectiveness of the sanctions instrument, which contributes to the stability of Somalia and beyond. As the Council, we must stand up for the Panel to ensure that it can do its mandated work.

We are concerned about attacks against civilians and the persistent sexual and gender-based violence in Somalia. We therefore again call on all forces in Somalia to strictly adhere to international humanitarian law.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your informative briefing on the work of the Committee over the past four months.

The Russian Federation fully supports Mogadishu's efforts to achieve domestic political and socioeconomic stability and to counter the main security threat in Somalia, namely, the terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

We note that the arms and charcoal embargoes against Somalia continue to work. Those bans have proved to be a fairly effective tool for cutting off the channels that supply the extremist and terrorist forces. At the same time, the partial lifting of the arms embargo on the supply of weapons to the Somali security forces has had a positive impact. We support further multifaceted assistance to Mogadishu to improve the operational readiness of the Somali army and the African Union Mission in Somalia, which bear the main burden in combating terrorists.

Last year, the Council imposed additional restrictions on the supply of improvised explosive device components to the country. We trust that such measures will work smoothly. However, we would like to underscore that we do not see sanctions as an end in and of themselves — only as a way of assisting Somalia's authorities to achieve peace and stability in their country.

With regard to relationships between the Committee and its Panel of Experts and the Federal Government of Somalia, we would very much like such contacts once again to take on a normal tone. For this to happen, there is a need to clearly understand that all the concerns of Somalia's sovereign authorities must be given full consideration. The reality on the ground is such that, if we do not do so, Somali stakeholders and external forces are unlikely to deem it necessary to defer to the authority of the central authorities. In that case, all our efforts to provide political, economic and humanitarian assistance will be in vain. The Federal Government in Somalia must not have the impression that the Security Council is biased in its work. In that regard, we welcome your January visit to Somalia, Mr. President, as well as the initial contacts with the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts in Mogadishu. We trust that, with the assistance of the renewed composition of the Panel of Experts, we will be able together to turn the page and to build constructive relationships with our Somali partners.

Mr. Ben Lagha (Tunisia): I deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council — the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia — as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

At the outset, we would like to express our thanks to the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia, for his briefing on the work of the Sanctions Committee and on

the recent field visit he undertook to Somalia in January. That visit clearly demonstrates the determination of the international community and the United Nations to continue to support Somalia to achieve stability and development and engage in the reconstruction phase.

Our delegations believe that sanctions are not an end in themselves and that they should constitute a tool to assist and support the Somalia Government in its stabilization efforts. We would like to take this opportunity to commend the Somali Federal Government for its determination to hold elections within the established timeline. We would therefore like to appeal to all Somali parties to put the national interests above any other considerations and to fully engage in a constructive dialogue to promote genuine consensus on building an inclusive Somali State.

We call on the international community to continue to provide all support to the Federal Government of Somalia with a view to enabling it to hold the elections within its set timeline, which would open up new prospects for the Somali people to lay the foundation for stability and reconstruction.

Mr. Soemirat (Indonesia): Let begin by thanking you, Sir, in your capacity as the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia, for your important briefing. I would like to reaffirm our support for your leadership and work as Chair. I would like to share several points in that regard.

First, we commend your efforts as Chair to contribute towards the resetting of relations between the Federal Government of Somalia and the Panel of Experts. As we said on previous occasions, dialogue and cooperation between Somalia and the Panel, based on mutual respect, are key for the Panel's success in discharging its mandate. We encourage continued confidence-building exercises between the Government of Somalia and the Panel and are heartened by the recent engagement and visit to Mogadishu by the Coordinator of the Panel.

Secondly, Indonesia continues to support the Panel's work priorities for 2020. As we stated during the briefing on Somalia earlier this week (see S/PV.8731), we are concerned by the ongoing threat of Al-Shabaab. We welcome in particular the expanded focus on Al-Shabaab's revenue sources. We look forward to seeing concrete recommendations to effectively

cut Al-Shabaab off from its sources of weapons and financing.

Thirdly, we feel the need to continue raising awareness of the purpose of the sanctions regime. We concur with the statement of the Chair that the sanctions regime is not static; it must be used only as a means to support a wider political strategy and peace process. It must therefore have a clear, transparent and measurable timetable. We would like to reiterate that its ultimate objective is to support, ensure and maintain security and stability in Somalia.

I wish to reaffirm Indonesia's solidarity with Somalia in achieving long-term peace and stability, as well as our respect for Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr. Yao Shaojun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, for your briefing on your recent work in your capacity as the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia. I also welcome your recent visit to Somalia.

Over the past few months, the Federal Government of Somalia has improved relations and enhanced communications with the Sanctions Committee and its Panel of Experts. The positive progress achieved is encouraging. Maintaining the mutual trust and cooperation between the Sanctions Committee and the Panel and the Federal Government of Somalia is very important as it bears upon the effectiveness of relevant measures of the Security Council. China encourages the Panel to continue to utilize its comparative advantages, seek greater input from Somalia and countries and organizations in the region, provide constructive assistance based on needs and respond in a timely manner on matters of interest to Somalia.

The Sanctions Committee is an important tool of the Security Council to maintain regional peace and stability. It should improve the focus of its work and pay more attention to critical issues affecting regional security, help Somalia effectively combat terrorist forces, such as Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, and help the Somali Government to enhance its governance and security capabilities.

Finally, China would like to reiterate that sanctions are not the end but the means, and should contribute to the political settlement of relevant issues. Sanctions

should be adjusted in the light of developments in a timely fashion and eventually lifted.

Mr. Pham (Viet Nam): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, in your capacity as a Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia, for your briefing. We commend the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia and its recent constructive cooperation with the Panel of Experts and look forward to their continued collaborative efforts.

We support the important role the Somalia Sanctions Committee and of the Panel to implement their functions and mandates under the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, especially their central role in overseeing the implementation of the sanctions regime with regard to Somalia. We would like to emphasize that the Committee should discuss specific recommendations thoroughly, with the assistance of the Panel, to ensure the full implementation of the sanctions measures put forth by the Council.

As noted by the Chair, the Committee should also pay attention to the practicalities of the situation in Somalia, including the legitimate concerns and requests of the Federal Government of Somalia. In that connection, it should make sure that sanctions measures are targeted correctly and do not affect capacity-building and other national development plans. We find it necessary to take into account the need to alleviate any misperceptions about sanctions measures. At the same time, the Committee and the Panel should continuously pay close attention to the situation on the ground and make the necessary adjustments to the sanctions regime as appropriate.

Mr. Auväärt (Estonia): I would like to thank you, Sir, for your briefing as well as your leadership in leading the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia, including for having organized a visit to Mogadishu last month. Estonia participated in that visit and found it very useful. We would like to add our voice to your statement: we, too, hope that, as a result of the visit, the Federal Government of Somalia and the Panel of Experts will be able to reset their relations.

Given their mutual aim of countering the threat of terrorism, we believe that the Panel of Experts is a natural partner for the Somali authorities. Estonia fully supports the priorities of the Panel of Experts for 2020, especially the expanded focus on Al-Shabaab's

revenue sources, the ban on components for improvised explosive devices, the charcoal ban and weapons and ammunition management. The Panel's priorities are closely aligned with the priorities of the Somali authorities, as both aim to build a peaceful and stable Somalia.

It is important to recall that the sanctions regime is in place with the sole purpose of supporting the Somali authorities in achieving the stabilization of Somalia. It is, *inter alia*, preventing illegal arms trafficking and Al-Shabaab from getting weapons. It cuts revenue sources for Al-Shabaab. It helps the Somali authorities to enhance security-sector reform and weapons and ammunition management capacities. It is also important to note that the sanctions regime entails notification and exemption procedures, which ensure that the Somali authorities can get the necessary equipment for their defence and security forces.

A lot has been achieved since the last briefing by the Chair, including the adoption of resolution 2498 (2019), which consolidated and streamlined the provisions of the arms embargo and imposed an improvised-explosive-device components ban. This goes to show that the sanctions regime is customized in a way aimed at best helping the Somali authorities in continuously changing circumstances. The sanctions regime is a tool to help to transform Somalia.

Estonia would like to commend the Federal Government of Somalia on the progress achieved, including in the area of security-sector reform. We also welcome the fact that the coordinator of the Panel has visited Somalia three times already, and we encourage the Somali authorities to grant access to all members of the Panel, as only then will the Panel be able to begin its important work.

Estonia hopes that in 2020 the Council, the 751 Committee, the Panel of Experts and the Federal Government of Somalia can all work together in good faith with strong unity of purpose to make long-term peace and stability in Somalia a reality.

Mr. Michon (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for your statement and your visit to Mogadishu and to reiterate to you France's full support in your work.

I should like to touch on to three points.

The first relates to the arms embargo, which remains an essential tool for moving towards sustainable peace

in Somalia. The embargo limits the trafficking of arms and ammunition to Somalia and prevents terrorist groups from obtaining them. The embargo also makes it possible to support the federal Somali authorities in their efforts to reform the security sector and improve their capacity to manage arms and munitions. In addition, notification and exemption procedures enable them to obtain the equipment that they require for their defence and security forces.

My second point concerns the fight against the funding of Al-Shabaab. For our part, we hope that the Panel of Experts will begin to work together with the Federal Government of Somalia and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in analysing Al-Shabaab's revenue sources and on mapping that terrorist group's illegal taxation system, as requested by the Council in resolution 2498 (2019), of 15 November 2019. This is a complex but important task that will contribute to strengthening our collective action against Al-Shabaab's funding. We therefore call on all Member States to cooperate fully with the Panel of Experts on this issue.

My third and last point involves the cooperation of the Somali authorities with the Panel of Experts, which has been a difficult subject over the past couple of months. We welcome the progress that has been made since the beginning of 2020, with the three visits by the new coordinator of the Panel of Experts to Mogadishu and the discussions that were begun with regard to priority cooperation between the Federal Government of Somalia and the Panel of Experts. We believe that these efforts are headed in the right direction and respond in part to the expectations of the Council. It is now vital that all Panel experts be able to carry out their work in a free and independent manner through regular visits to Somalia, on the basis of the mandate that was given to them by the Council.

Mr. Hunter (United States of America): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for your briefing and for your contributions as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia.

The United States is encouraged by the coordinator of the Panel of Experts' recent travel to Somalia and meeting with the national security adviser to the President. We hope that the visit will serve as a building block to re-establish important information-sharing

and constructive working relations between the 751 Committee and the Federal Government of Somalia.

This positive step comes at a critical time, as Somalia continues to suffer from a lack of overall security and faces significant humanitarian challenges. Al-Shabaab, the Islamic State in Somalia and other actors continue to threaten the peace and stability of Somalia and the surrounding region. Disrupting and ultimately eliminating sources of financing for these groups is crucial in this fight. Addressing the issue of financing and other ongoing threats will require close cooperation between the Federal Government of Somalia, international partners and members of the Panel of Experts.

The United States is committed to working with our partners and Member States to utilize the 751 Somalia sanctions regime to its full extent and reduce Al-Shabaab's ability to conduct attacks. This includes providing technical assistance to counter the financing of terrorism, support in tackling the threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and capacity-building to help the Somali security forces secure and properly manage their conventional-weapons stockpiles.

The United States continues to support the arms embargo so as to prevent Al-Shabaab and other actors from accessing weapons and related materials. We emphasize that the arms embargo does not prevent the Federal Government of Somalia from obtaining the military equipment that it needs; the embargo requires only that arms shipments follow the required notification process for transparency and tracking purposes.

Effective enforcement of the 751 sanctions regime requires the Committee to act expeditiously on the nomination of individuals. When Member States identify and nominate individuals engaged in the arms-trafficking and illicit charcoal trade, the Committee should act quickly on such nominations. We urge the Member States that have placed holds to lift them immediately so that those individuals may be properly sanctioned.

Finally, we urge Member States to support ongoing Committee measures and sanctions designations and to implement fully resolution 2498 (2019), which outlines the arms embargo provisions and, importantly, places a ban on IED components. We must continue to work together and employ all available tools to ensure peace and stability in Somalia and in the region to achieve a better future for all Somalis.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): I am honoured once again to address the members of the Security Council today and would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, for your visit to Mogadishu last month, during which you witnessed first-hand the progress on the ground. I wish also to thank you for your briefing.

My purpose today is threefold: first, to present my Government's considerations on the threats to peace, security and stability in my country; secondly, to provide an update on the important work that my Government is undertaking to address those threats; and, thirdly, to update the Council on our engagement with the Panel of Experts on Somalia.

In terms of existing and emerging threats to Somalia, Al-Shabaab continues to pose the biggest threat to Somalia and to the region. It retains the capacity and the network to sneak suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices into the capital, as seen in the recent security incidents there, including the 28 December 2019 attack in the vicinity of the ex-control Afgooye junction, and the vehicle-borne improvised explosive device at a checkpoint on Makka Al-Mukarama road in Mogadishu on 8 January. At the same time, the terrorist group continues to influence some parts of Somalia through its extensive extortion and intimidation techniques as well as propaganda.

The Federal Government of Somalia remains strongly committed to the implementation of the transition plan, underpinned by the notion of a comprehensive approach to security. The Government recognizes that mutually reinforcing efforts on the reform front in the security sector, coupled with effective military operations and the delivery of stabilization initiatives, are prerequisites for consolidating successes in the transition plan.

Operation Badbaado, in Lower Shabelle, has been the central focus of the Government after successful military operations in which joint military operations resulted in several strategic areas recovered by the Somali National Army and the African Union Mission in Somalia. Since February 2019, a total of 9,704 Somali National Army forces have been generated, of which 1,023, under the October 14 brigade, were directly

involved in the recovered areas in Lower Shabelle, namely Sabiid, Anole, Awdheegle and Bariire. Thus far, 2,000 militias have been integrated into the Galmudug forces and 374 into the Hirshabelle forces, based on the politically negotiated Hirshabelle and Galmudug frameworks. In addition, such efforts by the Federal Government of Somalia has resulted in the reintegration of the first battalion of 550 soldiers from existing Somali National Army units. The sustained offensive against Al-Shabaab terrorists illustrates the increasing capabilities of the Somali security forces, and, given the right conditions, the latter are capable of effectively implementing the transition plan and delivering security and justice.

The Federal Government of Somalia has made substantial progress in building the institutional capacity of the Somali National Security Forces so as to promote the rule of law and access to justice as well as to improve the quality and delivery of governance. In 2019, key benchmarks met by the Somali National Army and overseen by the Minister of Defence included completing the biometric registration of its forces, the development of financial management and procurement guidelines for the Somali national armed forces, the creation of an efficient and effective system in managing rations as well as reviewing such key areas as personnel, logistics and finance. Logistical support to the Somali national forces by the United Nations Support Office in Somalia was also streamlined. The Somali Police Force has also illustrated its potential by supporting military operations and consolidating gains made in recovered areas.

The first 100 Darawiish officers have been deployed in Lower Shabelle to support holding the liberated areas and assisting with humanitarian deliveries, allowing the Somali national forces to move further afield with their operations. The Federal Government of Somalia intends to accelerate force-generation efforts for holding recovered areas with a view to creating an environment conducive to stabilization activities and the implementation of the rule of law.

On 30 December 2019, 385 new police recruits from South-West State graduated and are to be deployed to Lower Shabelle, following the new police model agreed by the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member states in 2016. On 13 February 2020, a further 300 Darawiish cadets at General Kahiye Police Academy graduated and are now ready for deployment. The Federal Government of Somalia's

objective is to generate 1,750 Darawiish police officers for deployment in 2020. In 2019 alone, the Somali Police Force generated a total of 3,212 new police officers.

In addition to the ongoing operational and institutional capacity-building activities, the Federal Government of Somalia has continued with efforts designed to create the conditions needed to strengthen local governance, reconciliation and rule of law, among other stabilization efforts. To support the coordination of stabilization activities in the newly liberated areas as part of the Lower Shabelle military operations, an interministerial task force, consisting of the Ministers of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, Defence, Justice and Judiciary Affairs, Internal Security, Health, Information and Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, was formed and has focused on the need to ensure coherent and conditions-based approaches to stabilization activities.

While implementation of the transition plan is under way, the existence of armed elements that are not yet part of the Federal or state forces presents a risk to stability. Integration efforts are under way to incorporate militia groups into the forces, as set out in the transition plan. However, integrated militia forces require vast financial resources, equipment, training and such other efforts as the demobilization of non-active persons and civilian reintegration. The Federal Government of Somalia continues to strengthen weapons and ammunition management for the Somali security forces. It has improved storage capacities and undertaken consistent implementation of the marking and registration of weapons as well as efforts aimed at capturing data on weapons distributed.

With regard to the Panel of Experts on Somalia, our aim is to begin and maintain a constructive working relationship with the Panel and to cooperate on determining how to address the security threats in terms of terrorism financing, illegal weapons flow and the illicit charcoal trade in Somalia, while helping to reach a deeper understanding of Al-Shabaab's use of improvised explosive devices. The Federal Government of Somalia has had a number of meetings with the Panel's Coordinator in the last few months, with a view to improving relationships. However, we have not agreed on the way forward, as our priorities remain unaligned and our concerns continue to be unexamined.

As Council members are aware, the Panel or the Monitoring Group during the previous mandate

made unsubstantiated allegations against certain individuals within and outside the Government. Such allegations have damaged relations and caused significant reputational damage. We are aware that the best practice in monitoring the United Nations arms embargo is to use evidence-based reporting with a reasonable standard of proof, but that approach has not been followed for recent incidents. We therefore request once again that a reliable mechanism be established to redress cases where allegations are wrongly made. The Council must also ensure that all efforts are made in a timely manner to ensure full investigations in cases of misconduct by Panel of Experts, in line with the rules and the regulations of the United Nations.

The Federal Government of Somalia is confident that all efforts will be undertaken to strengthen and improve accountability and responsibility in conduct-related matters, including through the application of policy and practice guidance and enhancement of investigation capacities. We trust that these efforts will continue to improve awareness and that violations are promptly investigated and addressed so that accountability is ensured in cases of sustained misconduct, thereby guaranteeing that full cooperation between the host country and the Panel of Experts is achieved.

In conclusion, Somalia continues to face multidimensional challenges with competing priorities. The Federal Government of Somalia is concurrently engaged in countering an insurgency and building strong and stable institutions in line with the national security architecture and the Somali transition plan. Resource gaps and logistical flexibility remain key challenges in adapting to changing operational strategies by the insurgents. Strengthening intelligence-sharing mechanisms and joint planning is a priority for the Federal Government of Somalia and pivotal in joint operations to further recover the remaining areas under Al-Shabaab control.

In this regard, the Federal Government of Somalia requests the continued support of the international community in the aforementioned areas to counter the threats of Al-Shabaab effectively and bring lasting peace and stability to Somalia and the region. However, the sanctions continue to be imposed on Somalia without proper assessment of its effectiveness. We therefore once again wish to go on record that we are seeking the full lifting of the arms embargo on

Somalia, which has no time limit or clearly defined or verifiable benchmarks.

Lastly, my Government remains seized of the important issues being discussed today, and I ask for the Council to support our continued constructive working relationship moving forward.

Upon instructions from my Government, I would like to bring to the Council's attention an urgent matter that poses a serious threat to our peace and security. The Federal Government of Somalia has exhausted all diplomatic means in seeking the Government of Kenya to refrain from actions that threaten the historical relations between our two nations and the long-lasting economic, security and political cooperation between our two Governments and our citizens.

Somalia believes that our region can best succeed with more cooperation and less interference. However, Kenya continues to be a consistent destabilizing force in Somalia, off-setting and negating its engagement in the African Union Mission in Somalia.

Kenya's brash interference in Somalia's domestic affairs is a blatant breach of Somalia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity. Furthermore, Kenya's continuous encroachment in the Somali border areas clearly undermines our stability and sovereignty. Our hard-earned progress, with the

help of the international community, is today being jeopardized by the negative anti-peace actions carried out by the Kenyan Government. These destabilizing actions not only negatively impact Somalia, but are also antithetical to the objective of regional and global peace and in clear violation of paragraph 4 of Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, which states:

“All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”

The Federal Government of Somalia strongly condemns those blatant violations and reaffirms that it will take all necessary measures proceeding from its responsibility to defend the inviolability, sovereignty and unity of Somalia, in accordance with our Constitution, as well as international law and covenants.

The Kenyan Government continues its destabilizing actions against our nation, despite our multiple protests. If the aforementioned actions do not immediately cease, we will invoke Article 35 of the United Nations Charter and bring our case against Kenya's breach of Somalia's sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity to the Security Council.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.