



Security Council

Seventy-fifth year

8775th meeting

Thursday, 12 November 2020, 10.10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

Members:

Belgium	Mr. Kridelka
China	Mr. Dai Bing
Dominican Republic	Mrs. Cedano
Estonia	Mr. Auväärt
France	Mr. De Rivière
Germany	Mr. Heusgen
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Niger	Mr. Aougi
Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
South Africa	Mr. Matjila
Tunisia	Mr. Ben Lagha
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Farrey
United States of America	Mr. Hunter
Viet Nam	Mr. Dang

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Letter dated 28 September 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2020/949)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Letter dated 28 September 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2020/949)

The President: 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.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2020/1100, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2020/949, which contains a letter dated 28 September 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

Against:

None

Abstaining:

China, Russian Federation

The President: The draft resolution received 13 votes in favour, none against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2551 (2020).

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

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Somalia is currently at a critical stage in its national reconstruction. Preparations for the general elections are proceeding steadily and the progress observed in the implementation of its transition plan continues. On the other hand, the country's security situation remains challenging. The mandate renewal provides an opportunity that, in China's view, should be used to update the relevant sanctions measures in the light of the developments on the ground to help Somalia build greater security capacity in the service of the reconstruction process

That position of ours guided our active engagement in the consultations on resolution 2551 (2020), during which we proposed many constructive amendments. Regrettably, however, our proposal that the Council explore the benchmarks for assessing the appropriateness of lifting the arms embargo were not taken on board in the resolution. The current embargo has been a serious impediment to the enhanced security capacity of the Somali Government. The text fails to duly respond to the strong desire of the Somali Government to have the arms embargo lifted.

On another note, the current text fails to effectively address the concerns of Djibouti and Eritrea. Both Djibouti and Eritrea are good friends of China, and China encourages them to improve their ties through bilateral consultations. Given the foregoing, and in view of the fact that the resolution failed to duly address China's concerns, it had no choice, but to abstain in the voting.

Mr. Hunter (United States of America): The United States welcomes the renewal of resolution 2498 (2019) under the United Nations sanctions regime for Somalia, as well as its extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Somalia and the provisions of the arms embargo for a further 12 months.

The authorities in this resolution are an important part of the United Nations arms embargo, which every Council member has committed to upholding in the interest of securing peace and stability both in Somalia and in the broader region. To that end, we also support the increased focus on thwarting Al-Shabaab's exploitation of the financial system, and the addition of humanitarian language in the resolution. These elements draw attention to necessary reporting and urge

the Somali authorities to address sexual and gender-based violence in Somalia with renewed strength.

The United States remains committed to promoting the security and prosperity of the people of Somalia.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation abstained in the voting on resolution 2551 (2020), prepared by the United Kingdom, on the sanctions on Somalia. We note the amendments, included at the request of Mogadishu, aimed at streamlining the arms embargo. We hope that they will contribute to normalizing the situation and to reducing the terrorist threat coming, first and foremost, from Al-Shabaab.

However, our principled and duly justified observations were not taken on board in the resolution. We deem inappropriate the inclusion of paragraphs on Djibouti and Eritrea in a document focusing on Somalia. Sanctions on Eritrea were lifted in 2018. The situation in the relations between Djibouti and Eritrea poses no threat to international peace and security. The remaining disputes between those countries should be resolved through bilateral diplomacy. The report of the Secretary-General circulated this summer confirmed these assessments.

We also regret the continued practice of using Security Council resolutions to promote human rights-related aspects of the Somalia dossier. Let me stress once again that there is a separate body — the Human Rights Council — that exists to address those issues. We call for respect for the traditional division of labour.

We also cannot accept the singling out in the text of certain partners for providing assistance to Somalia in the fight against organized crime and illegal trafficking in coastal waters at the expense of other stakeholders in the region. Such a selective approach does not seem constructive.

In conclusion, I would like to express regret that once again this year the Council was not able to reach a consensus on the adoption of this resolution, which is so important for our Somali colleagues. It is unfortunate that, rather than trying to find trade-offs and compromise solutions for the text, our British colleagues preferred to ignore the comments made by our delegation at the last stage and to force a vote. We hope that appropriate conclusions will be drawn from this situation.

Ms. Farrey (United Kingdom): I would like to make a few short remarks in response to the explanation of vote by the representative of the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation expressed concerns about references to the relationship between Eritrea and Djibouti. This is a direct bilateral dispute, but one that the Council has continued to follow with close attention since United Nations sanctions on Eritrea were lifted in 2018. When the Secretary-General wrote to update the Council on this issue in July, he was clear that there had been no negative developments in the relationship between Eritrea and Djibouti, and the two countries have continued to act responsibly. But he was also clear that there had been no progress towards resolving their outstanding disagreements and that one of the parties continued to view this as a threat to peace and security. Given the divergent views between the parties and among Council members, this text is the fairest outcome and the best way to ensure that the Council can support further progress towards resolving these outstanding issues.

Finally, I would like to thank Council members again for their support for the text, although it is regrettable that consensus could not be achieved. I especially welcome the Federal Government of Somalia's engagement in this process and thank them for their constructive approach.

This sanctions regime is a central part of international efforts to help Somalia build its long-term security and stability and address the threat posed by terrorist organizations, such as Al-Shabaab. We strongly support the inclusion of new measures targeting Al-Shabaab finances and are committed to supporting the Federal Government of Somalia to identify, address and mitigate money-laundering and terrorist-financing risks.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): At the outset, allow me to warmly congratulate you, Madam President, on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. We wish you every success in fulfilling your mandate.

I would also like to commend your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for his able leadership in guiding the work of the Council for the month of October.

We take note of resolution 2551 (2020), just adopted, renewing the sanctions regime on Somalia. We regret that again, for the second year in a row, important inputs have not been considered in order to reach consensus. The Federal Government of Somalia goes on record again in seeking the full lifting of the sanctions imposed on Somalia since 1992. In that regard, I would like to raise the following issues.

First, the sanctions on Somalia are the longest United Nations sanctions regime, with the widest mandate. We reiterate that sanctions are a tool and a means, and not an end in themselves. Therefore, we stress the importance of identifying clearly defined benchmarks for the full lifting of the sanctions on Somalia. We welcome the new addition in the fourth preambular paragraph, in which the Council plan is to keep sanctions under constant review in order to assess their appropriateness, including modifications, identification of possible benchmarks, suspension or lifting measures. We equally welcome paragraph 35, calling on the Secretary-General to conduct a technical assessment on Somalia's weapons and ammunition management programme in 2021 with a view to identifying benchmarks for the full lifting of the arms embargo.

Secondly, the terrorist group Al-Shabaab remains a serious threat to Somalia's peace and stability. The United Nations has generously spent millions of dollars on monitoring teams and panels of experts for more than a decade. It remains crucial for the international community to increasingly support the Federal Government of Somalia's policies and strategies to

properly address the root causes of insecurity in Somalia. Therefore, we request that our partners invest in improving our capacity in air surveillance, border control and law enforcement. It is also a main responsibility to investigate crimes and safeguard our land and our people.

Thirdly, subject-matter expertise and evidence-based reporting are the two most important and best practices used in monitoring United Nations arms embargoes. However, there seems to be a little consideration given to such practices, since the quality of the reports remains mixed due to questionable levels of expertise. Therefore, we recommend the following: first, choosing from a pool of candidates with a high level of technical professionalism, integrity and regional expertise to undertake future investigations in Somalia; and, secondly, establishing a reliable mechanism to address misconduct and redress cases where allegations are wrongly made. We welcome recent steps taken by the Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia to address our concerns and look forward to more institutionalized and transparency-driven process and procedure in that regard.

In conclusion, we thank the Security Council for its continued support to Somalia's unity and progress. We encourage our partners to invest in sustainable solutions for building our institutions, as well as to support us in our regional efforts to curb the threats we face. This is the only way that will enable us to build lasting peace in Somalia as well as our region.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.