



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

## 8907<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 17 November 2021, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

---

*President:* Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez/Mr. Gómez Robledo Verduzco (Mexico)

*Members:*

China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
Estonia . . . . .	Mr. Jürgenson
France . . . . .	Mr. Benaabou
India . . . . .	Mr. Raguttahalli
Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
Niger . . . . .	Mr. Abarry
Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
Russian Federation . . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. DeShong
Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Ladeb
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Hunter
Viet Nam . . . . .	Mrs. Tra Phuong Nguyen

## Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2021/944)

---

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation in Somalia**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2021/944)**

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; Mr. Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia; and Ms. Asha Siyad, Executive Director, Somali Women's Leadership Initiative.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2021/944, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia.

I now give the floor to Mr. Swan.

**Mr. Swan:** I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to brief the Council on the situation in Somalia. I am pleased to do so again together with the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira. I am also grateful to brief the Council alongside Ms. Asha Siyad, co-founder of the Somali Women's Leadership Initiative and a member of the Goodwill Ambassadors, who have tirelessly advocated in support of the 30 per cent representation of women in the elections.

Progress, albeit slow and uneven progress, has been made in the electoral process. I welcome the recent completion of the elections for all the 54 seats in the Upper House of the Federal Parliament. It is encouraging that 14 women will soon take office as Senators, representing 26 per cent of the Upper House. This is an increase from the previous elections in 2016, though still short of the 30-per cent target. It is also

encouraging that elections for the House of the People have commenced, with 2 of the 275 seats having been completed and elections for an additional eleven seats announced to begin this week.

In addition to the electoral preparations at the national level, the holding of peaceful, direct local elections in three districts in Puntland in October demonstrated the feasibility of holding one-person-one-vote elections and underscored the desire among Somali people for political participation on the basis of universal suffrage.

While I acknowledge this progress, it has now been more than one year since Somalia's political leaders signed the 17 September electoral agreement and nearly six months since the commitments were reaffirmed through the 27 May agreement.

The elections for the vast majority of seats in the Federal Parliament are still to commence, electoral security preparations need to be accelerated and a list published of the 30 per cent of House of People seats that will be reserved for women. We continue to stress that women's full inclusion and representation in political life, and indeed in all sectors of life, is key for Somalia's sustainable peace and development. This message was underscored by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa on their recent visits to Somalia.

The United Nations continues to engage with and support key stakeholders to advance the election process. This includes diplomatic engagement, including joint visits with partners to the federal member state capitals and polling sites and joint partner statements, as well as technical support to the Federal Electoral Implementation Team, State Electoral Implementation Teams and the Office of the Prime Minister, and coordination and channelling of donor contributions for the elections.

I urge all stakeholders to move swiftly to conclude the House of the People elections in the federal member states to ensure the full Parliament is elected before the end of this year. I also call for the full respect of fundamental rights during the campaign and electoral periods, including peaceful assembly, and the freedom of movement, association and expression.

With regard to political developments in Somalia, I am also pleased to note that tensions between the President and the Prime Minister that emerged in August and September over two issues, namely,

the appointment of senior security officials and the handling of an investigation into the disappearance of an agent of the National Intelligence and Security Agency, have now eased. Following mediation efforts by several senior Somali officials, a broadly welcomed compromise solution was announced at the end of October.

The security situation in Somalia unfortunately continues to be volatile. I pay tribute to the commitment and sacrifice of the Somali security forces and those of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which continue to face Al-Shabaab on a daily basis. Al-Shabaab remains a serious threat to Somalia's security, able to maintain a high level of activities, including through the continued use of improvised explosive devices and an increase in the use of suicide bombers. In Mogadishu, the latest vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack occurred on 25 September, targeting a checkpoint at Villa Somalia, resulting in several fatalities, including of a senior Government adviser. I condemn in the strongest terms Al-Shabaab's attacks and express deep condolences to its victims. To date in 2021, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia has documented 964 civilians killed or injured as a result of armed conflict. Al-Shabaab remains the largest perpetrator, responsible for almost two thirds of civilian casualties.

Regrettably, political tensions also continue to drive conflict in Somalia. The period from 23 to 26 October saw intense fighting in the town of Guriel between Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a and the Galmudug security forces, supported by the federal armed forces. That armed confrontation resulted in significant casualties, mass displacement of the civilian population and severe damage to public facilities and private homes. Along with partners, the United Nations engaged all parties on those issues, with strong calls for a cessation of hostilities and pursuit of dialogue to address political differences.

The implementation of the Somali transition plan for the progressive transfer of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces is advancing but remains behind schedule. Regarding the implementation of resolution 2568 (2021) with respect to post-2021 security arrangements, the Secretary-General will keep the Council informed of developments. I will therefore not go into details on that matter. Suffice to say, further discussions will be required among key security stakeholders

to reach agreement on the strategic objectives, size and composition of a future African Union mission designed to support the security transition in Somalia in the most effective way. In that regard, I welcome the recent African Union Peace and Security Council visit to Somalia, which provided an important opportunity for discussions among many stakeholders.

The ongoing delays in the electoral process continue to stall progress in other critical areas and hamper the achievement of national priorities beyond the elections, including reforming the Constitution and the justice sector and advancing the development agenda and financial reforms, such as achieving the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative completion point in 2022.

The humanitarian situation in Somalia remains dire, compounded by conflict, displacement and disease outbreaks. Somalia is also on the front line of recurrent climatic shocks, exacerbating the humanitarian emergency. Humanitarian partners estimate that 7.7 million Somalis will require humanitarian assistance in 2022. Without immediate treatment, some 1.2 million children under the age of five are likely to be acutely malnourished in 2022.

Some 2.9 million people are estimated to be internally displaced throughout the country, which is one of the highest numbers of internally displaced persons in the world. In that context, I am gravely concerned that the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan is currently only 51 per cent funded. I thank donors for their generous contributions to date, but a critical scale-up in humanitarian action is urgently required.

Let me conclude by stressing that, although progress is being made, the efforts of Somalia's political leaders will need to be redoubled in the coming weeks to bring the elections for the Federal Parliament to a successful conclusion so that the presidential elections can be held as soon as possible. The completion of those elections is now more important than ever so that all efforts can return to the key governance, security and development priorities in Somalia.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Swan for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

**Mr. Madeira**: I thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to address the Security Council on the situation in Somalia. Let me start by congratulating you

and your country, Mexico, on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of November.

Since my previous briefing to the Security Council (see S/PV.8833) and despite the deeply concerning slow pace of the process, Somalia has moved away from the pre-27 May electoral impasse and has recently completed its Upper House elections — not a minor feat that we have all welcomed. The country is now in the early stages of its lower house electoral marathon. It is our ardent hope and desire that this process will be accomplished and completed before the end of the year, in line with the commitment made by the country's political leadership at its most recent National Consultative Council meeting. It was with satisfaction that, after months of protracted dispute over the composition and leadership of the "Somaliland" electoral management body, we witnessed and took note of the start of the lower house election in the Somaliland constituency in Mogadishu, the first of its kind in this electoral season.

It is worth noting that, despite persistent differences, the country's political stakeholders have kept their doors open to each other. That is allowing for sustained interaction and dialogue to continue among them in spite of the odds, ensuring a platform where differences can be narrowed and the possibility for consensus around issues of common concern can be enhanced. That is a very positive development, which we should continue to encourage and harness to ensure the swift, peaceful and credible completion of the remaining stages of the electoral process, which are pivotal to returning the country to peace, stability and prosperity.

The 30 per cent quota for women remains a challenge. While the African Union welcomes the completion of the Upper House elections, we note with concern that the results have fallen short of the minimum 30 per cent quota for women, totalling only 26 per cent. To strengthen the voice of women in the quest to have their rights and level of political representation recognized and upheld, AMISOM has been working closely with the women goodwill ambassadors and other female activists. Their focus now is the upcoming House of the People elections and how to prevail over the elders and other political leaders to ensure that they live up to the commitments undertaken and voluntarily enshrined in the 17 September 2021 and 27 May agreements. Those commitments include improving the electoral mechanisms to ensure that the very important 30 per cent minimum quota for women's representation is achieved.

While attention has rightly been focused on the completion of national elections, I am encouraged by the peaceful completion of the first direct one-person one-vote local council elections that took place in three districts of Puntland in October. The elections were free, transparent and peaceful. Voter enthusiasm was immense, and the turnout was high. It was a unique experience in many ways, which I am sure will be emulated.

Recognizing the importance of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) extending its support beyond election security, the African Union Peace and Security Council, through its communiqué 994, mandated AMISOM to provide technical assistance to other areas of Somalia's electoral process.

In that context, I am pleased to report that Somalia is now the first African Union member State to receive multipronged intervention support through an African Union peace support operation. That support now includes African Union technical experts embedded in the Federal Electoral Implementation Team, providing important advisory support on logistics, legal issues and election security, financial support to the Federal Electoral Implementation Team to assist in fulfilling its electoral obligations, conducting capacity-building workshops on key election themes, including building support for the enhanced participation of women in the electoral process and the provision of information technology equipment for the Federal Electoral Implementation Team, under the Federal Minister for Women and Human Rights Development, as part of operational support to those institutions.

Since my most recent briefing (S/PV.8833), AMISOM police, together with their Somali counterparts, have continued to enhance their efforts to secure the ongoing elections. That has led to AMISOM police units being deployed beyond their traditional areas of activity across the federal member states, particularly Garbaharey, in Jubaland; Jowhar, in Hirshabelle; and Barawe, in South-West state.

In anticipation of the operationalization of the joint operation centres across Somalia, AMISOM police have also focused on election-related training. In that regard, AMISOM's election security cell has recently trained 245 security officials, mostly from the National Intelligence and Security Agency and the Somali National Army. The trainings were aimed at providing Somali security officials with the requisite knowledge

and skills to plan, monitor and coordinate the activities of the joint operation cells before, during and after the elections.

Insecurity across Somalia remains a source of grave concern. Apart from continuing to infiltrate its Amniyat operatives into major cities and towns, extortion and ground surveillance, Al-Shabaab has increased its improvised explosive devices attacks, complex attacks, probing attacks, grenade and mortar attacks, ambushes, suicide bombings and targeted assassinations of senior Government officials.

In addition, and of late, Al-Shabaab's efforts have been increasingly and deliberately directed at disrupting the electoral process with attacks on some election centres, indirect fire attacks against AMISOM fortified bases and increased public execution of individuals working with the Somali security forces and AMISOM personnel.

While Al-Shabaab remains the principal threat to peace and security, I am concerned by recent incidents of resorting to armed confrontation in the standoff between Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a and Government authorities. Separately and in conjunction with the other international partners, we have appealed to the parties to cease fighting and seek to address their differences through negotiated mechanisms. Armed clashes have died down. Guriel town and the village of Bohol are now quiet, but our efforts in the direction of the peaceful resolution of the standoff must continue.

In the period under review, we have conducted joint operations with the Somali National Army, disrupting Al-Shabaab in Lower Shabelle, notably in Basra in October and in Gambole in September, and frustrating, through robust air power, the attempt by Al-Shabaab to reclaim some bridge towns.

With regard to joint planning and coordination, AMISOM force headquarters and Somali National Army representatives held a series of meetings to implement the harmonized AMISOM reconfiguration plan. In order to facilitate joint planning and the coordination of operations, joint operations coordination cells have been opened in all AMISOM sectors. Somali National Army staff officers have been nominated to lead those cells.

The African Union cooperation priorities and objectives at this stage of its history are not only the preservation and consolidation of its member States'

hard-won political independence and sovereignty, including that of Somalia, but also the enhancement of that independence and sovereignty with the empowerment of every people and State through economic and social development and prosperity. Those continental strategic objectives, which are enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union and are part and parcel of the African Union's Agenda 2063, cannot be achieved in isolation or without peace.

The security threat confronting Somalia today is a threat not only to the Somali people; it is a regional threat, a continental and worldwide threat. It slows down and undermines the development of Somalia and its neighbours. It will continue to jeopardize and compromise the attainment of our continental objectives if it is not contained and removed. For the sake of the people of Somalia and for our own sake, as a continent and as a region, we need peace and stability in Somalia, but that cannot come unless we continue to work together, and complementarily.

The AMISOM mandate comes to an end on 31 December. There is an absolute need for a new mission that would take over from AMISOM. To achieve that, and in full respect of Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, we need, as a matter of urgency, to continue and conclude, in a detailed and exhaustive manner, the discussions that we have already started on the issues that will shape the future mission and are relevant to its effectiveness and success, markers such as those related to the enhancement of our coordination and cooperation, coherence and complementarity in our approaches, mutual trust and accountability, sustained information-sharing and funding, inter alia.

Our work in that regard has, to a large extent, already been facilitated by resolution 2568 (2021), which called for proposals on the strategic objectives, size and composition of the new mission. There is also a request for updating the concept of operations, which should clearly spell out the end-state, nature, mandate, tasks, posture, structure, duration, and command and control of the mission. It is in that context that the AU Peace and Security Council requested that the AU Commission immediately resume consultations with the Federal Government of Somalia and relevant international partners with a view to reaching a common approach on the aforementioned issues. The African Union Commission has already indicated its readiness to engage in that regard.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Madeira for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Siyad.

**Ms. Siyad:** I thank you, Mr. President, for your invitation to provide an update on women's political participation, electoral development in Somalia and what is needed, from a civil society perspective, after the 2021 election.

My name is Asha Abdulle Siyad, I am an advocate for women's rights and empowerment, peace and political participation. Today I speak in my capacity as the Executive Director of the Somali Women's Leadership Initiative as well as a member of the Goodwill Ambassadors, the advocacy committee promoting the 30 per cent quota, appointed by the Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Somalia. Allow me to convey to the Security Council the warmest greetings of Somali women peace and political activists as well as the entire team of the Goodwill Ambassadors. I am deeply honoured and privileged to be speaking on behalf of Somali women at this august body.

Women in Somalia have been an integral part of Somalia's recovery and stability efforts, playing an important role to keep the family united and, in effect, the country together. However, Somalia's political history continues to be exclusionary, keeping women out of leadership and decision-making roles. The clan-based political system relegates the role and participation of women in politics and in public spheres to a limited and insignificant level.

The 2016 federal election resulted in 24 per cent of women being elected to the tenth parliament. The experience of the 2016 election taught us that achieving a minimum of 30 per cent representation of women through the electoral process and its outcome in the context of a clan-based 4.5-formula elections model is not only challenging but it is also detrimental to women's struggle for equality and justice.

In the absence of a concrete mechanism to implement the 30 per cent quota, in the ongoing indirect elections in 2021, we are witnessing a repeat of the 2016 process. The outcome of the Upper House elections, which delivered only 26 per cent representation of women, confirms our fear and doubts about the potential of indirect elections to support a 30 per cent quota for women.

Since the announcement of the appointment of the Goodwill Ambassadors in July this year, we have been advocating concrete measures to deliver the 30 per cent quota. We have also offered suggestions as to what the National Consultative Council (NCC) could consider to be minimum measures to secure the 30 per cent quota. However, there has been no decision by the NCC, and the consequences of that were visible in the outcome of the Upper House elections.

We are now headed for the Somali House of the People elections. We, as women leaders and Goodwill Ambassadors, have been asking ourselves what we could have done differently or that we did not try to do during the Upper House elections that could help to achieve the 30 per cent quota in this election. The unfortunate truth is that within the present indirect electoral model, the views and voices of the masses, including women, do not matter in electing our representatives. According to the 22 August 2021 NCC communiqué, the Presidents of the federal member states and the state elections implementation teams are primarily responsible for identifying seats for women. We demand that they fulfil their responsibility and commitment to the nation and particularly to women.

We are deeply concerned at the delays and the lack of concrete measures and schedules for the completion of the House of the People elections. Further delay in the elections is likely to negatively affect women's quota, as the attention of all concerned, including the international community, will be focused on the urgent completion of the elections, regardless of its outcome.

Beyond the political agreements, it has become abundantly clear in our engagement with women leaders and advocates and other stakeholders, including political leaders, clan elders in the federal members states, and in Mogadishu, that the achievement of the 30 per cent quota is in the hands of the National Consultative Council and the federal and state elections implementation committees. That is particularly so since the release of the 22 August 2021 communiqué. The NCC and the federal and state elections implementation committees must identify and reserve 30 per cent of seats in the House of the People for women and ensure that only women are candidates for the reserved seats. We have done the clan mapping, which makes the identification of seats for women much easier, and we are on standby to provide any amount of support to the NCC and the elections committees in their efforts to deliver on the 30 per cent quota requirement.

As we all have started contemplating a post-2021-elections Somalia, we all must be resolute in rescuing the country from this trap of indirect elections. If we truly believe in inclusive politics and a Somali federation with people at its centre, then we must work towards implementing one-person, one-vote elections in 2025-2026. Not only do indirect elections disenfranchise most of the entire adult population of Somalia — be they women, men, youth, minorities or people with disabilities — but they also disempower an entire nation, embolden political elites and help perpetuate exclusionary political practices.

An inclusive Somali governance must reflect the diversity of Somalia, and women must have a say in setting national priorities and in determining public policies and public expenditures. The current political structure and electoral process do not allow that to occur, and that must change. The new Government and the new Parliament must take that into account as they set their priorities. In particular, they must focus on several tasks.

First, the constitutional review must be completed. The Federal Constitution must guarantee a minimum of 30 per cent representation of women in the Federal Parliament, the Cabinet and civil service. The political participation of women and many others, including youth and marginalized communities, must not be dependent on the will of a certain privileged group or clan elders. Participation is our right and it must be safeguarded in the Constitution. Constitutional review is the only way to safeguard women's rights to equal participation in, and contribution to, the country's peace, politics and governance.

Secondly, the new Government must prioritize the one-person-one-vote principle in 2025, and all necessary measures must be put in place from the outset in order to guarantee that no political crisis can overturn that principle in 2025. Only in that way can we put an end to women's misery and struggle to participate in elections.

Thirdly, the protection and the political participation of women are interlinked. The new Government must prioritize the protection of women in order to promote their participation in politics and public life. The endorsement and implementation of the sexual offences bill must therefore be completed as a matter of priority.

Finally, the new Government and the new Parliament must work hand in hand to amend Federal

electoral law and laws concerning political parties and must enact clear and explicit provisions in order to ensure that women can participate fully. In addition, constitutional review must provide clear provisions on women's participation in politics and public office. Resources must be provided to enhance the protection of women and promote their leadership role, and newly elected women Members of Parliament and Senators must be supported so that they can be effective in their legislative role.

The international community, including the United Nations and particularly the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, must extend its full support and cooperation to the new Government in its efforts to implement this long-overdue agenda of national interests. The international community must ensure that its support is dependent on the Government adopting a gender-inclusive approach, with women at the centre.

In conclusion, in post-2021 elections Somalia, we demand concrete measures and full accountability for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. On behalf my fellow Somali women and on my own behalf, I would like to extend to the Security Council, the representative of the Federal Government of Somalia, Special Representative of the Secretary-General James Swan and Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia Francisco Madeira our sincere thanks and appreciation for this opportunity and for their continued support to Somalia and Somali women.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Siyad for her invaluable briefing.

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

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): May I start by thanking the briefers — Special Representative Swan, Special Representative Madeira and Executive Director Siyad — for their briefings.

I will focus my remarks today on two issues: elections and the future of international security support to Somalia.

The Security Council has closely followed the electoral process in Somalia, and the United Kingdom welcomes the completion of the Upper House process, which represents an important milestone, as does the election of women to constitute 26 per cent of the Upper House. However, that achievement was eloquently

qualified by Executive Director Siyad's challenge to meet the 30 per cent quota in the lower house elections and to see the full inclusion of women in the political, social and economic decision-making in Somalia.

Turning back to elections, we remain deeply concerned by the very slow electoral progress overall. Somalia has committed to starting the lower house elections immediately and to conclude them by 24 December. It is vital that the elections are not delayed beyond that date, as that would only continue to undermine progress on Somalia's national priorities, increase political uncertainty, provide Al-Shabaab with the opportunity to regain ground and boost its political influence and, as Ms. Siyad said, disadvantage women.

We have a collective interest in protecting against any deterioration of security in Somalia. That leads me to my second point — international support. With the expiry of the current African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) mandate fast approaching, we need to make urgent progress on the security transition in order to ensure continuity of international security support to Somalia in a manner that reflects the evolving situation on the ground.

It is clear that there is a broad range of views about what such support should look like. In our view, that support must be both realistic and affordable and should support the progressive transition to Somali-led security, as set out in the Somali transition plan. Our view is that the African Union (AU)-United Nations multidimensional stabilization mission model endorsed by the African Union Peace and Security Council will not achieve that. In our view, it would run counter to the idea of progressive transition to full Somali security responsibility.

Reaching agreement on a joint United Nations-AU proposal, in consultation with the Federal Government of Somalia and donors, as requested by the Council, will mean moving past the current impasse and finding consensus on the way forward. Such a joint proposal should reflect our common objectives of preserving AMISOM's hard-won achievements but beginning the transition away from external support to full Somali responsibility for security, as the Council set out unanimously in resolution 2568 (2021). The United Kingdom will continue engaging with all stakeholders, including the Federal Government of Somalia, the United Nations, African Union, troop-contributing

countries and donors in order to identify areas of common ground and help stakeholders reach consensus.

Somalia faces important electoral and security transitions in the months ahead. Successful completion of those processes will form a crucial part of enabling Somalia's security and prosperity for the long term. We hope that Somalia's leaders, the United Nations, the AU and donors will come together and collaborate to achieve lasting peace and security in Somalia, and we encourage them to do so.

**Mr. Ragutthalli** (India): Let me begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. James Swan, for updating us on the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2021/944) and the implementation of the mandates of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). I also thank the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Madeira, for his briefing. I thank Ms. Asha Siyad, Executive Director of the Somali Women's Leadership Initiative, for sharing her insights with us. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Somalia at today's meeting.

The recent progress related to elections has been reassuring. After months of delay and political brinkmanship, the electoral cycle has moved forward. Elections to the Upper House were successfully concluded last weekend. That is an encouraging development, particularly the fact that 13 out of 54 senators are women. The next step is elections to the lower house, for which the process has commenced. We hope that the Somali leadership and institutions will continue to move forward with the same level of commitment and complete the electoral process within the agreed timelines. The peaceful conduct of elections, in accordance with the agreements, is important for the democratic future of Somalia.

A successful security transition towards stability in Somalia cannot be envisaged without the ownership of its representative democracy. As we draw closer to the deadline for finalizing discussions on the security transition in Somalia, we underscore the importance of the completion of the elections and the peaceful transition of power. To that end, we encourage UNSOM to continue to work closely with the Federal Government

of Somalia and the federal member states in providing the requisite electoral support.

The security situation in Somalia continues to remain critical. The Secretary-General's report indicates a monthly average of 273 incidents, most of them perpetrated by Al-Shabaab. The persistent improvised explosive device attacks and suicide bombings documented during the reporting period are a cause for concern. Those acts of terrorism by Al-Shabaab must be condemned in the strongest terms. Al-Shabaab remains largely responsible for numerous civilian casualties and human rights violations, including against women and children. We express our full support for the operations conducted by the Somali security forces and AMISOM against Al-Shabaab.

As we discuss the important security transition, the Somali people will need the international community's support and attention in dealing with a terrorist group such as Al-Shabaab. We therefore welcome the recently adopted Somalia sanctions resolution 2607 (2021), with a greater focus on sanctions against Al-Shabaab. It is important that we all summon our collective political will in dealing with terrorism in the Horn of Africa. Preventing Al-Shabaab from accessing financial resources is crucial to countering the threat of terrorism, while linkages between terrorism and transnational organized crime must be recognized and addressed.

We welcome the recent meeting held in Mogadishu between Somalia and the African Union Peace and Security Council on the future of AMISOM. We are hopeful that there will be a positive outcome and a consensus on the way forward. A stable security transition in Somalia demands the strong leadership and collaboration of the Somali Government and the African Union. We support a phased handover of security responsibilities to the Somali security forces, with a view to transferring full responsibility by 2023.

Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation remains dire. Somalia continues to suffer the effects of multiple factors, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and desert locusts. The international community must do more to bridge the funding gap and meet the humanitarian needs.

India and Somalia share two millenniums of civilizational exchanges across the seas. India continues to support Somalia through development assistance and capacity-building programmes. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, India continued its assistance to Somalia

through capacity-building on a virtual platform, which has seen the participation of 34 Somali candidates up to now. Seventeen Somali students have been offered scholarships through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations for the 2021-2022 period. The Government of India also gifted 27 minibuses to Somalia early this year.

Somalia is at an important juncture on its development path, and the next few months will be critical to the democratic future of Somalia. We believe that the people of Somalia and its leadership will continue to show determination and resolve by making the right choices. India will continue to support Somalia and its people as they strive for a stable, secure and peaceful future.

**Mr. Ladeb (Tunisia):** I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council — Kenya, the Niger and Tunisia — as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

We thank Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, Mr. Francisco Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, and Ms. Asha Siyad, Executive Director of the Somali Women's Leadership Initiative, for their briefings. We would also like to recognize and welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Somalia at this meeting.

The A3+1 welcomes the completion last Saturday of the Upper House elections, with all 54 seats selected, as well as the start of the House of the People elections. We again underline the importance of completing the electoral process, including the election of the President of Somalia, in a timely manner to realize the legitimate aspirations of the people of Somalia for security, stability, democracy, good governance and development. We once more reiterate that a prolonged delay in completing the electoral process could divert resources and attention away from critical national priorities.

While we regret the missed target of 30 per cent women elected to the Upper House, we note that 26 per cent of persons elected in that phase were indeed women. We hope that the upcoming elections for the House of the People will bridge the existing gap. We also reiterate our support for one person/one vote

elections and encourage the continuation of efforts to achieve that objective during the next election cycle.

The A3+1 remains concerned by the major threat to peace, security and stability in Somalia posed by the Al-Shabaab terrorist group, which is responsible for the majority of attacks in the country and whose terrorist and other activities have a destabilizing impact on State-building in Somalia. In particular, we strongly condemn the numerous suicide attacks that they perpetrated in Mogadishu in the past three months, and we express our sincere condolences to the families of the victims and the Government and the people of Somalia.

We reiterate our call for continued international support for the Government of Somalia in its fight against Al-Shabaab and other groups active in the country, as well as to enable it to take full security responsibility, in line with the Somali transition plan.

We pay tribute to the role played in that regard by AMISOM during the past years. We also take note of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council communiqué adopted on 7 October, circulated in the Security Council as document S/2021/922. The communiqué endorsed the report of the AU-led independent assessment on the African Union's engagement in and with Somalia post-2021 and its option 1, namely, to establish an AU-United Nations multidimensional stabilization mission in Somalia, deployed under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which would ensure predictable and sustainable multi-year financing for the future mission through United Nations assessed contributions.

The A3+1 underlines the importance of taking due consideration of the needs, priorities and views of the host country in defining the nature and objective of any future mission in Somalia and encourages all the relevant parties to further engage constructively in order to reach a mutually acceptable agreement.

The A3+1 also shares the view that there is a need to thoroughly address the financing challenges of any African Union engagement in Somalia post-2021 through the provision of adequate, sustainable and predictable financing, including access to United Nations assessed contributions.

The A3+1 reiterates its deep concern over the humanitarian situation in Somalia, with an estimated 7 million people at crisis-level food insecurity due

to the combined effect of conflict, environmental crises, including droughts, floods and locusts, and the coronavirus disease pandemic. We call for unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need. We also reiterate our call on all international partners to scale up funding for humanitarian response plans for Somalia.

To conclude, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, unity, political independence and territorial integrity of Somalia, as well as our support for all efforts to secure its peace, political stability and socioeconomic progress.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): I thank Special Representatives Swan and Madeira for their briefings. I also welcome my colleague, the Permanent Representative of Somalia. I wish to thank Ms. Siyad in particular for her powerful and very frank remarks to us this morning.

The finalization of elections to the Upper House of Parliament in Somalia is welcome and gives momentum for the next and, admittedly, more complex phase of elections for the lower house. The quicker that process is completed, the sooner Somalia's leaders will be able to refocus on the expectations of their own people for a peaceful, prosperous and stable Somalia. The collaboration we have recently seen between the President and Prime Minister is encouraging and we call for that to continue.

There is an opportunity now to aim for the completion of all elections, including the Presidential elections, by the end of January. It is clear that technically and financially and from a security perspective, Somalia's leaders can achieve that. Any further delays risk cost over-runs, interference from Al-Shabaab and upsetting the delicate political balance that now exists. Those are risks we do not need to face. We urge the Federal Government and member states' leaders to reconcile their differences and give renewed impetus to the crucial State-building work that will ensure a brighter future for Somalia.

As Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohamed said during her visit to Somalia and again to the Council (see S/PV.8867), women's participation in political, social and economic life is a game changer. Their participation and representation are preconditions for lasting peace. While recognizing efforts made thus far, Ireland still regrets that Somalia missed the 30 per cent target for the Upper House elections. However, as we know, there is now an opportunity, with the elections to

the House of the People, where the overall target could be met. We join the call for Somalia's leaders to now identify which 85 seats will be reserved exclusively for women candidates.

Ms. Siyad's remarks this morning underlined the critical nature of acting urgently on that issue. Her own reference to "limited and insignificant" progress is really concerning. I think we have to do better and end what she described as women's misery and struggle in trying to ensure political participation.

The threat of terrorism, armed conflict and violence continues to loom over the Somali people, as well as over the country's institutions. I deeply regret that the most vulnerable are suffering the most, as incidents of conflict-related sexual violence and grave violations against the most vulnerable — children — are on the rise. I echo the Secretary-General's call for accountability for those violations, whoever carries them out. Somalia's leaders at the local and national levels must do all they can to end that unacceptable scourge. It is their duty.

As elections and the struggle for power continue, it is vital that the Government prevent killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, as well as other actions to repress freedom of expression and political participation. The Government should also ensure that those who commit violations are held to account. We look forward, in that regard, to the outcome of the impartial investigations into the killing of Ms. Ikran Tahlil.

Ireland reiterates its condemnation of Al-Shabaab's heinous attacks, which are exerting a considerable human toll. Their threat extends beyond Somalia's borders and throughout the region and is only heightened by recent instability. It makes it all the more urgent that the Government of Somalia, the African Union and the United Nations find a path forward together on the future configuration of the African Union Mission to Somalia and the eventual handover to Somali security forces.

The European Union stands ready to assist. It has long been a strong and committed partner of Somalia. But there must be agreement reached on the way forward.

It is clear that the already dire humanitarian situation is being exacerbated by climate change. In that context, the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia on climate and security is more important than

ever. We look forward to further tangible outcomes of that work, which we are following with interest and expectation. Meanwhile, as we have heard in others' remarks this morning, extended drought conditions are causing displacement and raising the spectre of worsening food insecurity. The fact that 7.7 million people are expected to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022 is simply shocking, yet it is the grave reality we face today.

It is therefore vital, in that context, that Somalia's leaders keep the interests of the Somali people at the fore now, moving as rapidly as possible to end this period of political uncertainty and create the space to fully focus on tackling the fundamental issues facing the Somali people.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, Mr. James Swan, as well as the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), Mr. Francisco Madeira, for their traditionally informative briefings. We also listened to the briefing by the representative of Somali civil society and Executive Director of the Somali Women's Leadership Initiative, Ms. Asha Siyad. We welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Permanent Representative of Somalia to the United Nations, Mr. Abukar Dahir Osman.

We have carefully studied the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/944). We note that, since the previous quarterly Council briefing (see S/PV.8833), the Federal Government of Somalia has been able to demonstrate new successes in shaping a sustainable model of federalism in the country. The conclusion of the Upper House elections was an important milestone in that process. We welcome the Somali people's achievement of a 26 per cent quota of women in the Upper House. We also note the start of voting in the lower chamber of the Somali Parliament.

We are grateful to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and to Mr. Swan personally for his contribution to resolving differences within the Federal Government. We hope that, in the time remaining the country will be able to complete its electoral process, in accordance with its updated election timetable and

the Somali agreements of 17 September 2020 and 27 May 2021.

The security situation in Somalia remains tense. We call on the Somali Government and African peacekeepers to remain steadfast in the fight against Al-Shabaab and to continue to pay special attention to the security of the electoral process. The situations in Jubaland, Galmudug and Hirshabelle require particular focus, given that other extremist groups in addition to Al-Shabaab are becoming increasingly active and intercommunal confrontation is growing.

Against that backdrop, we commend the work of the African peacekeeping mission in the country, which remains a key element of security in Somalia. We welcome the ongoing Mogadishu talks with all key international actors on the configuration of the future mission and the parameters for the transfer of responsibility for security in the country from AMISOM to the Somali National Army.

We have taken due note of the reformatted version of the Mission approved last month by the African Union, transforming it into a hybrid United Nations-African Union operation. We expect that all participants in these discussions will manage to reach mutually acceptable decisions. In any case, we are convinced that any decisions on African Union peacekeeping missions must be taken with due account of the view of Mogadishu and with the objectives of making progress in training the Somali National Army and in building a single national security architecture. It is also important to avoid a security vacuum.

Taking into account the complex humanitarian situation in Somalia, Russia will continue to provide assistance to the country and to Somali refugees in neighbouring countries through targeted contributions to earmarked funds of the United Nations World Food Programme. We also intend to continue to train Somali civilian professionals in this area.

In conclusion, allow me to assure Council members of the readiness of our delegation to continue to focus on the topic of Somalia on the Security Council agenda while strictly respecting its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence.

**Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia):** I join others in thanking the briefers for their insightful briefings. I would also like to welcome the Permanent Representative of Somalia to today's discussion.

As this is the Security Council's last quarterly meeting on Somalia in which Estonia will participate as a member of the Council, I would like to share the following messages that will not only reflect the last quarter, but also entail observations we have made during the last almost two years of our membership in the Council.

First, in order to achieve political stability and progress in State-building goals, there is no substitute for holding timely, inclusive and credible elections. That is why it is regrettable that there have been significant delays to Somalia's election timelines. Nevertheless, Estonia welcomes the recent conclusion of the Upper House elections and hopes that the elections of the lower house will conclude by the end of the year. We also urge the Somali leaders to ensure the minimum of a 30 per cent representation quota for women members of Parliament through a clear mechanism. Since elections lay the foundation for the next chapter for the country, the importance of women's participation in this next chapter cannot be overemphasized.

Secondly, throughout Estonia's membership in the Council, Al-Shabaab's ability to conduct attacks across Somalia has unfortunately remained unchanged. We condemn the attacks by Al-Shabaab in the strongest terms and express our condolences to the victims and their families.

Estonia has repeatedly emphasized that the security situation can improve only if all stakeholders work closely together towards this important goal. Therefore, in the planning for the post-2021 mission, we call on all key players to work together for a common vision. Additionally, we call on the Federal Government of Somalia to redouble its efforts for the timely implementation of the transition plan. As a member of the European Union (EU), Estonia would like to reiterate that the EU remains ready to assist Somalia in the next chapter. However, the EU hopes that its concerns will also be taken into account.

Thirdly, we saw the dire humanitarian situation unfortunately deteriorate during our membership in the Council. That is also due to Somalia's severe vulnerability to climate change. The Security Council must stand firmly behind helping Somalia address the climate threat, including through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). Estonia encourages strategic and comprehensive efforts that will proactively address the humanitarian challenges.

Somalia has come a great distance. However, there is still a long way to go until Somalis can live as a peaceful, stable and prosperous society. The foundations for that will be laid, inter alia, through rule of law, democratization, respect for human rights and effective accountability mechanisms for anyone violating such rights. Estonia hopes to have contributed to these foundations by upholding the aforementioned elements throughout our Council membership.

Finally, I would like to thank the personnel of UNSOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia for their commitment and sacrifice.

To conclude, allow me to reiterate Estonia's full support for Somalia and its people with a view to making a better future for the country a reality.

**Mr. Hunter** (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan and Special Representative Madeira for their briefings today. The United States also thanks the civilian and uniformed personnel of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as they implement the Security Council's important mandates in an extremely dangerous and challenging environment. I also wish to thank Executive Director Siyad for her message to the Council today and for the brave and the vital work that she and her colleagues do every day.

The United States is deeply concerned about the slow pace of progress towards completion of Somalia's national elections. Next month will mark one year since the mandate of the Federal Parliament expired, and more than five months have passed since Somalia's national and federal member state leaders agreed on a process for completing the elections. While we welcome the completion over the weekend of the selection process for the Upper House, only two of the 275 members have been chosen for the lower house.

We welcome Prime Minister Roble's call for completion of the lower house elections by the end of the year, and it is vital that Somalia's leadership and political aspirants follow through with their repeated commitments to inclusive, transparent and timely elections. That includes ensuring voting can take place in a safe and secure environment and finalizing arrangements for meeting the agreed 30 per cent

female representation quota in Parliament that has been mentioned so many times today.

We are also concerned about the conflict in Galmudug between the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a militia and Federal Government forces. The violence has resulted in numerous casualties, displaced thousands of innocent civilians and needlessly distracted the Government from the fight against Al-Shabaab terrorists. We urge both sides to refrain from further violence and engage in negotiations to peacefully resolve the issues at the root of the conflict.

Finally, as was highlighted by Special Representative Madeira earlier, we note that AMISOM's mandate expires at the end of this year, but there remains no agreement among the African Union (AU), Somalia and international stakeholders on a post-2021 international stabilization mission. The United States believes that a restructured AU-led mission focused on increasing pressure on Al-Shabaab and gradually transferring security responsibility to Somali security forces is the best way forward. We urge renewed discussions among all stakeholders to reach an agreement and effectively advance peace and stability in Somalia.

We again commend the work of Special Representative Swan and his team, and the United States also urges the Somali Government and stakeholders to conclude the national elections as soon as possible. This will enable renewed focus on the work that needs to be done to make a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Somalia a reality.

**Mrs. Tra Phuong Nguyen** (Viet Nam): I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan, Ambassador Madeira and Ms. Siyad for their very insightful briefings. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Osman to our meeting today.

With regard to the political process, we note with concern the various reports that the implementation of the Somalia transition plan, including the conduct of important elections, remains behind schedule. However, we also heard from our briefer about recent positive developments in Somalia, particularly elections for the 54 seats of the Upper House. In addition, several local elections have eased tensions between the President and the Prime Minister of Somalia.

Given that late 2021 and early 2022 will be decisive for Somalia, especially in terms of parliamentary and presidential elections, political consensus among the

relevant parties is crucial and urgently needed for the elections to be implemented in a secure and peaceful manner, based on the agreed timetable.

Furthermore, the implementation of a Somali-owned and -led political process should take into account the legitimate aspirations and concerns of all Somali stakeholders and other related parties. An adequate representation of women, minorities and young people should also be ensured.

In that process, we call on the United Nations and the international community to urgently prioritize resources for supporting the holding of those elections in a peaceful environment. Long-term peace and prosperity in Somalia depend on the success of those elections.

Turning to the security situation, a number of long-standing threats and violence remain. Terrorist groups, including Al-Shabaab, continue to demonstrate their capability to conduct attacks, including those using improvised explosive devices and suicide bombings. We strongly condemn the violence and terrorist attacks, especially those against civilians, Government officials, Somali security forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We reiterate that such violence is unacceptable, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

We support the operations carried out by the Somali security forces, AMISOM and international partners against Al-Shabaab. Measures should also be taken to stop violence and to better protect vulnerable groups, particularly women and children. While commending their ongoing efforts to address criminality, we urge the Somali Government, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and AMISOM to strengthen law enforcement and uphold their responsibilities in dismantling terrorist groups. We call upon international and regional partners to maintain their support for Somali security forces through training, the provision of equipment, capacity-building and operations against Al-Shabaab.

The Secretary-General warns that our resources are at historically low levels, while humanitarian needs in Somalia are growing rapidly. Furthermore, the coronavirus disease pandemic, extreme flooding and locust infestation are long-standing challenges that exacerbate the situation.

In that connection, we call on international partners to assist the Federal Government of Somalia in alleviating the socioeconomic impacts of those threats. We also support predictable and comprehensive funding for the future security of Somalia. Only through a comprehensive approach can the Government and the people of Somalia overcome long-term challenges and achieve sustained stability and development.

Before I conclude, I would like to commend the unceasing work and tireless efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, AMISOM and the United Nations country team. In that regard, we would like to reiterate the importance of upholding the principles of the political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Somalia.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Madeira and Ms. Asha Siyad for their insightful briefings.

Somalia is still at a political impasse — one that has absorbed too much energy for too long. There is a high risk of power and governance vacuums in several areas, which could be filled by Al-Shabaab and severely set back the peace and State-building processes. While we recognize some progress, there is an urgent need to finalize the electoral process and to address fundamental security and development challenges in Somalia.

Recurrent humanitarian crises, which are compounded by the effects of climate change and insufficient economic growth, continue to affect the lives of vulnerable Somalis. A life-saving humanitarian response is critical, but long-term solutions can only be found through economic development, reforms, stabilization and reconciliation. At all levels, the Government needs to strengthen service delivery, implement sustainable mitigation strategies and focus on implementing the national stabilization strategy.

I again thank Ms. Siyad for her account of the remaining challenges that must be overcome to achieve the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all parts of Somali society. Although there has been some progress, as compared to 2016, it is disappointing, as so many others have expressed, that the 30 per cent quota was not met in the Upper House elections. We strongly urge those responsible — at all levels — to redouble their efforts and ensure a clear mechanism for implementing the 30 per cent quota in the lower house

of Parliament. Somalia's ambition should be to move well beyond what was already achieved almost five years ago.

The call for the inclusion of women in political processes is not one imposed from the outside. As we heard again today, Somali women are expressing themselves loudly and clearly, including through the Somali Women's Charter. We appreciate that the renewed mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is strengthened on the issue of women and peace and security and look forward to its implementation and reflection in future reports.

Norway remains deeply concerned about the high levels of grave violations against children in Somalia. While Al-Shabaab remains the main perpetrator, we are particularly concerned about the recent return of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a to Galmudug state, due to the group's documented recruitment and use of children. We urge all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian and international human rights law. In that regard, we call on the Federal Government of Somalia to engage with the United Nations to strengthen its commitment to ending and preventing rape and other forms of sexual violence, including against children.

Finally, we are concerned about the lack of progress in the talks between the African Union and the Federal Government of Somalia on the nature of the new African Union Mission in Somalia for the transition, as well as the concept of operations. The timelines in resolution 2568 (2021) are clear. We urgently need to see progress in developing the joint proposal on the strategic objectives, size and composition of a reconfigured African Union Mission. A new or reconfigured AMISOM should contribute to ensuring that obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law are upheld and should ensure the accountability of AMISOM itself.

Our common goal is for Somalia to be responsible for its own security. To that end, we need a Mission that more effectively builds the capacity of Somali security forces, in line with the Somali transition plan.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Representatives Swan and Madeira for their briefings and listened carefully to Ms. Siyad. I welcome Ambassador Osman, Permanent Representative of Somalia, to today's meeting.

At present, the reconstruction of Somalia is at a critical juncture. The country has many pending tasks with regard to elections, counter-terrorism and the security transition, even as it faces pressure related to the pandemic, the humanitarian situation and development challenges.

In connection with the Secretary-General's report (S/2021/944) and the briefings today, I would like to emphasize the following points.

First, it is essential to focus on advancing the elections. The successful holding of elections will help to maintain political stability in Somalia and lay the political foundation for the people of Somalia to continue to promote national reconstruction. China welcomes the efforts of the leaders of Somalia to focus on national interests, reach reconciliation through dialogue and consultation and actively commit to accelerating the electoral process. All parties in Somalia have overcome numerous difficulties to hold the elections. Currently, the elections for the Upper House of the Somali Parliament have just been completed and the elections for the lower house have begun. We hope that all parties will continue the positive momentum, earnestly implement the 17 September 2000 and 27 May election agreements and work together for continuous progress in the electoral process. China appreciates the technical, logistical and security assistance provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and calls on the international community to continue to provide the necessary political and financial support for the elections in Somalia.

Secondly, we must jointly maintain security and stability in the country. China strongly condemns the recent bomb attacks in Mogadishu and expresses its condolences to the victims. Helping Somalia to combat terrorism is the common goal of the international community. AMISOM has made tremendous efforts and sacrifices to that end. China pays tribute to AMISOM peacekeepers. At present, Somalia, the African Union, the United Nations and other major parties are negotiating on the post-2021 AMISOM configuration. We hope that all parties can reach a solution acceptable to all based on fully respecting the views of the host country. Before the Security Council takes a decision on this issue, the funds needed for AMISOM's operations must be guaranteed to avoid a security vacuum due to funding gaps. China has been doing all it can to support

AMISOM, and we have decided to provide annual cash assistance to AMISOM.

The security and stability of the country are ultimately the responsibility of Somalia itself. In that regard, no external help can replace Somalia's own efforts. China calls on the international community to heed the voice of the Somali Government, help Somalia to strengthen its security capabilities and take positive actions with regard to lifting the Security Council's arms embargo on Somalia. China expects the Secretary-General to conduct a technical assessment of the management of arms and ammunition, in accordance with the Security Council resolution, and set clear, realistic and measurable assessment criteria for lifting the embargo on arms and ammunition.

Thirdly, we must increase humanitarian and development assistance. Affected by the coronavirus disease pandemic, violent conflict and extreme weather, nearly half of Somalia's population is in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. At the same time, the Somali Government faces huge financial pressures and a severe lack of humanitarian assistance and vaccines, forcing it to slow down its national development plan. The international community should attach great importance to that issue and take positive actions to support Somalia in meeting its humanitarian and development needs. Suspending aid to Somalia for political reasons is not a constructive approach, and it is the Somali people who will ultimately suffer. China sympathizes with Somalia's current difficulties, and we delivered aid worth \$4 million to Somalia last month. We will provide Somalia with another 500,000 doses of vaccine to fully support Somalia's pandemic response. China will continue to work with the international community to provide practical assistance for peace and reconstruction in Somalia.

**Mr. Benaabou** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Ms. Asha Siyad for their briefings.

I will focus on two points: the elections and the security transition.

France welcomes the completion of the elections for the Upper House, which is the result of several months of dialogue and cooperation between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states. France calls for those efforts to continue so that the

lower house and presidential elections can take place as soon as possible and in compliance with the 30 per cent quota for women provided for by the Somali legislation.

Somalis need a fully legitimate Government that can meet the challenges that the country is facing.

The first of those challenges is security. The Secretary-General's report (S/2021/944) highlights the human tragedy resulting from Al-Shabaab's attacks both on civilians, particularly women, children and humanitarian and medical personnel, and on Somali and AMISOM forces. Deadly attacks, targeted killings, abductions and forced displacements are unacceptable. The perpetrators of those terrorist acts must be relentlessly confronted and prosecuted for the crimes committed.

We must pursue our efforts to combat the Al-Shabaab group, which controls areas in central and southern Somalia and brings the terrorist threat to the heart of the capital. The renewal of the sanctions regime is an important step that allows us to further stem the flow of arms and financing to the group, which poses a threat to the region.

At the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that Somalia must be able to ensure its own security. That requires the full implementation of the Somali transition plan, with the support of all regional and international partners and, in particular, a reconfigured African Union mission, which is to take over from AMISOM as of 2022. France regrets that the joint report on the future of AMISOM could not be submitted within the time frame prescribed by resolution 2568 (2021).

France reiterates its willingness to participate in talks with the Somalis, the members of the Council and all other stakeholders. It is our responsibility to take a decision as soon as possible to ensure that the international community's efforts to fight against Al-Shabaab have not been in vain. At the same time, we must draw lessons from the current model and its shortcomings in terms of strategic direction and effectiveness. It is becoming urgent to find an effective, collective and sustainable solution in terms of funding, to which the European Union is currently contributing a particularly large share compared to the contributions of Somalia's other partners.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Mexico.

I thank Special Representatives Swan and Madeira for their briefings, and I welcome to the Council Ms. Asha Siyad, who is doing important work to make the inclusion of women in positions of responsibility a reality in Somalia. I also welcome the representative of Somalia.

Mexico recognizes that, despite the many delays and difficulties that the process faced, Somali political actors achieved the necessary agreements to complete the Upper House elections and progress towards the formation of the House of the People. In that regard, we welcome the agreement reached between President Farmajo and Prime Minister Roble at the end of October. We also welcome the fact that the first direct vote elections were held in three districts of Puntland, showing that it is possible to move towards universal suffrage when the political will prevails.

As Ms. Siyad rightly pointed out, at this electoral juncture, concrete steps must be taken to ensure that women can participate safely as candidates and voters in the elections. We regret that the 30 per cent quota for women was not reached in the Upper House. We call for the mobilization of all available means to ensure that the women who have been elected can exercise their mandate effectively and on an equal footing with their male counterparts.

It is crucial to conclude the elections so that the authorities can focus on pending reforms. The timely implementation of the transition plan, including security sector reform, the integration of regional forces and force generation, is essential for the transfer of security responsibilities to the Somalis themselves. In that connection, we also call on the Somali authorities, the African Union and other actors involved in the functioning of the African Union Mission to Somalia to engage in a dialogue on the appropriate reconfiguration for the Mission. We are aware that it will not be an easy conversation, but it is necessary to take into account the different points of view when making decisions that will allow Somalia to achieve peace and stability.

Mexico also hopes that the strategic review of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia provided for in resolution 2592 (2021) will contribute to establishing clear goals to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities to the national Government.

We strongly condemn the increase in conflict-related sexual violence and grave violations against children. We therefore call on the Federal Government

of Somalia to work on a new national action plan on preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict, in line with the 2013 joint communiqué on the prevention of sexual violence. We also call on all parties to end the recruitment and use of children in the conflict.

I conclude by reiterating that, for my country, it is simply unacceptable that only 2 per cent of the Somali population has so far received a dose of the coronavirus disease vaccine. Those who still maintain that the pandemic has nothing to do with international peace and security can hardly comprehend how serious and complex the reality in Somalia is.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

**Mr. Osman (Somalia):** At the outset, I would like to acknowledge the presence of Ms. Asha Siyad of the Somali Women's Leadership Initiative; Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; and Mr. Francisco Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and thank them for their detailed briefings.

With regard to political developments, I am happy to state that the Upper House elections have been completed successfully, with 26 per cent of seats allocated to our capable women. As planned, the lower house elections have already begun, with two members of Parliament from the Somaliland constituency elected and additional nine members of Parliament to be elected by 22 November.

The Federal Electoral Implementation Team, as well as the State Electoral Implementation Team, will ensure the 30 per cent quota is observed in accordance with the 17 September agreement, where at least 82 of the 275 lower house seats will be reserved for women. That successful start will undoubtedly encourage the rest of the federal member states to begin elections for the lower house as soon as possible in order to ensure that the elections are completed before the end of the year.

Holding free and credible parliamentary and presidential elections has always been the stated policy of the Federal Government of Somalia and, in many respects, the delay in the elections has been a result of the need to ensure that all stakeholders are not only

informed of the process but also accept it in order to ensure the legitimacy of the Administration post-election.

On the security arrangements for Somalia post-2021, the Somali transition plan remains the Federal Government of Somalia's only foundation and strategic vision for a phased, multi-year, conditions-based configuration of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and for a sustainable approach to countering Al-Shabaab while building the core security functions of Somalia and sustainably recovering strategic locations. In that regard, the Federal Government of Somalia made it very clear in many instances that it will not accept any African Union (AU)-United Nations hybrid multidimensional mission in Somalia.

The Federal Government of Somalia continues to engage with the AU Commission and AMISOM in order to finalize the concept operations, as required by the Security Council mandate. Regrettably, despite some progress, that process has been stalled, but it will hopefully resume before the end of the year to enable the Federal Government of Somalia and the African Union to make significant progress and to report back to the Council before the end of AMISOM's mandate on 31 December.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.*