



Security Council

Distr.: General
27 May 2020

Original: English

Letter dated 27 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia; and Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, South Africa (on behalf of the three African countries that are members of the Security Council — the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia — as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam, in connection with the video-teleconference on the situation in Somalia convened on Thursday, 21 May 2020. A statement was also delivered by the representative of Somalia.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter by the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of Security Council members dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefing and statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Sven Jürgenson**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, James Swan**

I wish everyone a good evening from Mogadishu and Ramadan Mubarak to our Somali brothers and sisters as we approach Eid al-Fitr.

Somalia, like the rest of the world, is focused on confronting the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Somalia has more than 1,500 recorded cases, although the actual figures are almost certainly much higher.

The consequences for Somalia are acute. Even before COVID-19, more than 5 million Somalis required humanitarian assistance. The 2.6 million internally displaced persons are particularly at risk. Compounding the crisis, nearly 1 million Somalis are now affected by flooding, and the country also faces its worst desert-locust infestation in some 25 years.

In addition to the medical and humanitarian effects, COVID-19 is also having a severely negative economic impact on Somalia. The Federal Government projects an 11 per cent decline in nominal gross domestic product for 2020. Revenue generation has suffered from the closure of ports and airports. Vital remittances from the diaspora have dwindled by 40 per cent.

The Federal Government and federal member states have responded quickly to the crisis within their means. A national COVID-19 task force was established in early March, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Hassan Khayre. Federal member states have created similar structures and also participate in the national-level coordination. Public-health messages are being disseminated, funds mobilized and medical and protective equipment procured.

The United Nations family is working to reinforce the Government's response. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have reoriented their activities to give priority to COVID-19. I will list just a few examples: the World Health Organization has expanded Somali hospital capacity, established isolation centres and supported testing laboratories. The United Nations Development Programme has provided generators. The United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) and the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service have provided vital air transport and other logistical support. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is leading on coordination within the United Nations family and with partners. And much more is being done across all agencies, funds and programmes.

Somalia's ability to respond to COVID-19 is greatly aided by its having achieved the decision point under the World Bank and International Monetary Fund Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative on 25 March. That historic milestone recognized Somalia's improved public financial management and has now enabled Somalia to become eligible for the additional grant financing urgently needed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The World Bank and other partners have mobilized funding for immediate preparedness needs and budget support. The World Bank and United Nations agencies such as the World Food Programme are also fast-tracking economic recovery and cash transfer investments to help shore up livelihoods and resilience.

In addition to its direct response, the United Nations family has supported the Government by engaging with and coordinating help from the broader donor community. On 23 April, the United Nations in Somalia issued the country preparedness and response plan for COVID-19, which consolidated United Nations system requests in support of the Government.

Prior to the global pandemic, Somalia had set ambitious national priorities for 2020. These include the holding of the first direct, one-person-one-vote elections in Somalia since 1969. As the Council noted in November (see S/PV.8671), the holding

of peaceful, inclusive, credible and transparent one-person-one-vote elections would be a historic step in rebuilding Somalia and would assist with the country's continued democratic development.

The coming weeks will be decisive in determining how Somalia will proceed to these elections. The parliamentary joint ad hoc committee is expected to present its recommendations for resolving the issues omitted in the electoral law passed in February. These include designating constituencies, allocating Upper House seats and guaranteeing 30 per cent of the parliamentary seats for women. Parliament must also adopt amendments to the political parties law to conform to the electoral code.

The Chairperson of the National Independent Electoral Commission will also report to a joint session of the Houses of the Parliament on plans for conducting elections within the constitutional time frame: November 2020 for the Parliament and February 2021 for the presidential elections.

These Somali institutions will determine the pathway to elections. Somalia's partners must then be ready to mobilize the technical support and financial resources needed for implementation. The work of the national electoral security task force must also accelerate to ensure the necessary security arrangements for voting to take place. Equally important, there will be a need for consensus-building among political leaders and across Somali society to ensure that the elections enjoy broad support and acceptance.

In addition to the focus on elections, we also note the importance of Somalia making progress on other critical State-building priorities. These include the formation of the Constitutional Court, the Judicial Service Commission and an independent Human Rights Commission, as well as completing the review of the Federal Constitution.

Effective democratic competition also requires an enabling environment that protects freedom of speech, assembly and organization. I call on the Federal Government and federal member states to ensure these are fully respected, especially during this critical election year.

Turning to the security situation, let me first pay tribute to Somali security forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for their continued sacrifice in the pursuit of peace. AMISOM completed the reduction of its troop ceiling by 1,000 troops on 5 March, as decided by the Council. UNSOS is currently providing logistics support to 19,626 AMISOM uniformed personnel as well as to 10,900 Somali security forces, supported by donor contributions to the Somali security forces trust fund.

Since my most recent briefing (*ibid.*), Somalia has made progress in recovering areas occupied by Al-Shabaab. On 16 March, the Somali National Army and AMISOM liberated the strategic town of Janaale, in Lower Shabelle. Somali-led forces have held the town since then, and efforts by the federal and South-West state authorities to return governance, justice, the rule of law and stability to the town are ongoing, supported by UNSOS, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and other partners.

Meanwhile, institutional reforms have continued in the security forces, including improvements to management and personnel systems.

As set out in the threat assessment undertaken jointly in January by the United Nations, the African Union and the Federal Government of Somalia, the threat of Al-Shabaab has continued to evolve. The group continues its intimidation and violence through improvised explosive devices (IEDs), mortar attacks, assassinations and other means. Within communities under its control, Al-Shabaab employs extortion and conducts illegal commercial and criminal activities. We regret that it has not

embraced the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire and that its terrorist operations continue unabated.

With regard to the specific threat of IEDs, Somali security forces would benefit from additional support to counter that deadly menace. In that connection, I look forward to the briefing by the Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service later in this meeting.

I welcome the Federal Government's commitment to revise the Somali transition plan by updating the timelines and identifying key tasks and gaps in response to the evolved threat from Al-Shabaab. The Federal Government has acknowledged the need for greater coordination, both internally and with international partners, as well as the need for additional non-military responses to the diffuse Al-Shabaab threat, such as addressing terrorist financing. The Government has signalled its commitment to promote a comprehensive approach to security, and we welcome that.

Regrettably, COVID-19 has slowed the international partner training needed to generate forces for the fight against Al-Shabaab. That may impact operations, underscoring the need for an updated transition plan that reflects all changes to the force generation timeline.

We welcome the recent inclusive conversations held among Somali security leaders and key international partners to discuss requirements and configurations for international support for Somalia's security sector in the coming years. We look forward to continuing those discussions with a view to strengthening our collective efforts.

Turning to developments with regard to the federal member states, we are encouraged by recent progress on dialogue and reconciliation in several of them. Those include Galmudug, where a broadly representative new cabinet has been appointed, South-West state, where elders have selected a new Parliament, and Jubaland, where former political rivals have agreed to work together and to pursue further reconciliation. In those and other federal member states, we urge continued efforts to promote dialogue and outreach in all communities for the sake of inclusive governance in the interest of the people.

With regard to Somalia-Somaliland relations, we welcome the ongoing dialogue at senior levels and are encouraged that both sides have indicated a willingness to maintain open channels of communication and pursue further discussions.

We urgently call for commitment to dialogue and improved cooperation to extend to relations between the Federal Government and all of the federal member states. While relations between the central Government and some federal member states remain cooperative, we regret that it has been more than a year since the President and all federal member state leaders met. They must all work together with urgency if they are to address important national priorities in the interest of the Somali people.

As directed by the Council in resolution 2461 (2019), UNSOM has supported efforts to accelerate regular high-level dialogue between the Federal Government and federal member states. The United Nations stands ready to support Somali initiatives on reconciliation and collaboration through inclusive dialogue.

In conclusion, I wish to reassure the Council that United Nations forces in Somalia remain present, active and committed to delivering our mandate — despite the limitations and additional challenges resulting from the global pandemic and the ongoing security threats to our Mission. We have temporarily reduced the staff working in Mogadishu and our field offices, but our colleagues are still working remotely from all over the world, remain engaged and continue to demonstrate their determination to support the people of Somalia.

Annex II

Statement by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, Francisco Madeira

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has not spared Somalia. COVID-19 is undercutting our collective efforts in the country and undermining the progress that the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member states have made. We have set up an COVID-19 response task force within the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which is working closely with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the central Government and the Governments of the federal member states in all AMISOM sectors.

It is with admiration that we witness the effort Somalia is making to contain terrorism, build peace through dialogue and reconciliation and develop the country through State-building, reconstruction and recovery — despite the disruption of COVID-19 in Somalia and its potential to derail the implementation of the country's outstanding priority tasks. In that context, I would like to highlight developments in three key areas: Somalia's economic recovery, inclusive politics and security.

In October 2019, at the Somalia Partnership Forum, the Federal Government committed to continuing its stringent economic reforms as part of its debt relief efforts. The country needs to overcome important economic hurdles, however, if it is to fully cancel its debt.

To achieve its next milestone, the Federal Government must now embark on new short-term targets, which include providing food assistance to about 5.2 million people, addressing the needs of those in internally displaced persons camps, educating people who are not in school and creating around 400,000 jobs each year. That is a daunting task if we take into account the adverse conditions brought about by the combination of terrorism, recurrent natural disasters and the impact of COVID-19 on Somalia's economy. Already there are indications that remittances are declining, trade is dropping and household incomes are facing a downward trend. If the trend of decreasing revenues continues, due to COVID-19, a potentially more worrisome concern is the risk that the Federal Government will struggle to meet some of its obligations. As partners of Somalia in our common endeavour to help the country remain on its feet and progress, we need to envisage ways to help Somalia overcome those trends and meet the conditions to be eligible for full debt cancellation.

While the Federal Government does not yet fully enjoy cooperative relations with all of its federal member states, in recent months we have witnessed a degree of readiness to move forward on key national issues. I take note, with satisfaction, of the Federal Government's role in strengthening its technical cooperation with the federal member states' line ministries to ensure that important must-not-fail priorities are achieved.

In February, after hosting a consultative conference, the Puntland President announced his intention to pursue dialogue with Mogadishu. In conjunction with other initiatives under way, we hope that this will lead the Federal Government and federal member states to begin articulating a common vision for Somalia.

In addition to the encouraging signs of a much-needed national dialogue in the near future, we have also seen progress in reconciliation and dialogue efforts at both the State and local levels.

In Galmudug, the deployment of AMISOM troops in Dhuusamarreeb has contributed to the creation of a conducive environment for the holding of a successful

all-clan reconciliation conference and to substantial progress in state formation. The process saw elections take place in February and, more recently, we witnessed the formation of an all-inclusive Galmudug cabinet and a peaceful transfer of power from former President Haaf to the new incumbent, President Qoor Qoor. We welcome these significant developments, and we are optimistic about the future of Galmudug and the ability to build on those important steps.

In Jubaland, we take note of the recent developments that saw the Jubaland leader and Ogadeni opposition figures reach a settlement that led to mutual recognition and cohabitation. Nevertheless, we insist on the need to go further to ensure that all clans come together in an all-Jubaland stakeholder congregation to find a lasting solution to the political, social and economic problems that continue to besiege that federal member state.

At the local level, similar reconciliation efforts were also promoted in April as part of a push to end violent clan conflicts. In Lower Shabelle, the swift intervention by the South-West President saw put an end to conflict between the Gaaljeecel and Shanta Caleemood clans. And in Galmudug, a similar approach by the new Administration resulted in a cessation of hostilities between the Wagarda'a and Habar Gidir clans.

Work to prepare for elections continues. In that context, I would like to applaud the commitment of the joint parliamentary ad hoc committee on elections and the tireless efforts of the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC). Despite the COVID-19 disruptions, both the Committee and NIEC have opted to continue most of their work through technological platforms. Pursuing that option enabled the critical drafting of recommendations to complement the national electoral bill passed in February.

In addition, I commend the vital work of the National Electoral Security Task Force. In adverse conditions, the Task Force increased its activity, which recently led to an agreement on its terms of reference and the adoption of the concept of security for voter registration.

We also see additional progress as the Task Force held a two-day workshop in March to conduct assessments on the ability to create secure areas across Somalia and to make plans for starting to map potential voter registration centres.

It is abundantly clear that holding national elections is a top priority for Somalia. From my engagement with key election stakeholders, I am also convinced that they too view this as a matter of necessity and urgency. The recent return to Mogadishu of the two Speakers of the Federal Parliament is an encouraging sign, and it will enable the report of the NIEC's Chair to be delivered on 27 May.

I am concerned, however, that despite genuine efforts to prepare for elections, there are outstanding and potentially contentious issues that must be immediately and effectively addressed. Those include making the electoral law implementable and ensuring a 30 per cent quota for women representatives and the adoption in Parliament of the amendments to the political parties law.

But above all, Somalia's election will require the political support and involvement of all federal member states. This is urgent as time is running out. I therefore call on all stakeholders at the Federal and regional levels to overcome their challenges and to allow the presence and effective action of the National Independent Electoral Commission in all federal member states so that credible, free and fair elections can take place.

During the reporting period, there were tangible security gains in degrading and disrupting Al-Shabaab's operational capabilities across Somalia. On 16 March,

through Operation Badbaado, Al-Shabaab was dislodged from the bridge town of Janaale in Lower Shabelle. The recovery of Janaale represents a serious blow to Al-Shabaab, as the town was a strategic stronghold for the group's operations in Lower Shabelle and Mogadishu. Janaale was also a hub for manufacturing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and vehicle-borne IEDs. Beyond Janaale, targeted operations by AMISOM and Somali security forces in Bula Xaaji on 20 March destroyed enemy positions and considerably reduced the group's capabilities.

In line with resolution 2472 (2019), AMISOM completed its mandated drawdown of 1,000 troops by 28 February without handing over or collapsing any of its forward operating bases. In doing so, they have consolidated the gains made over the years and have protected the population from Al-Shabaab. As agreed at the Kampala operational coordination committee meeting, each troop-contributing country assumed all expenses related to maintaining its forces in the forward operating bases that were to be collapsed.

The implementation of phase one and two of the transition plan has seen AMISOM and the Somali security forces conduct several joint operations as part of efforts to disrupt and degrade Al-Shabaab. Nevertheless, much work remains if we are to fully implement the tasks in both phases of the transition plan by December. However, the current pace of generating well-trained, well-equipped and regularly paid Somali security forces may not be enough to reach the goal of producing a critical mass of Somali forces capable of taking over from AMISOM by the end of 2021, or to preserve the gains made over the years with so much sacrifice. That fact alone calls for the urgent reconsideration and readjustment of the way and pace in which all stakeholders involved in supporting peacebuilding and State-building efforts in Somalia — together and individually — implement the tasks outlined in the Somali transition plan.

AMISOM's effectiveness in the theatre of operations should be seen in the broader context of several actors, each with a specific role in responding to Somalia's fundamental problems of terrorism, political disagreements, lack of reconciliation and economic underdevelopment. In that connection, the comprehensive approach to security, which underpins the implementation of the transition plan and outlines the division of labour into five strands, remains the most viable vehicle to ensuring that all fundamental aspects of the Somali crisis are taken into account and effectively tackled. The comprehensive approach to security may be reviewed if necessary so as to ensure maximum effectiveness. In that regard, such a framework would ensure that all actors have shared responsibility and help overcome the challenges related to poor coordination and coherence, erratic information sharing and lack of trust and mutual accountability, which are all serious obstacles to our joint endeavour in Somalia.

The current rate of force generation is too slow and, if left unchanged, will take several years to reach the threshold for an effective transition. The recent successes in Lower Shabelle under sector 1 were possible only because of the generation of national forces that relieved AMISOM forces and created mobile units.

In the coming days, the Council will consider AMISOM's mandate renewal. On 7 May, the African Union Peace and Security Council, in its communiqué, renewed AMISOM's mandate for 12 months. But, as the Council deliberates on AMISOM's mandate renewal tasks, a key focus will be the future engagement of Somalia's key security investors, particularly the need to base that future engagement on a comprehensive independent assessment.

As members of the Council are aware, the African Union Commission is currently undertaking its own comprehensive assessment of what future support the

African Union will provide to Somalia through AMISOM beyond 2021. In addition, we are exploring options that will allow other key international partners, including the United Nations, to better realign their support to Somalia. To achieve this, and as agreed at the recent high-level virtual meeting on Somalia, there must be consensus on formulating a comprehensive approach to Somalia's stability and security, and, as noted earlier, a commitment by all of Somalia's security investors not only to revising and updating the transition plan but also to taking into account its implementation modalities for all stakeholders.

Annex III

Briefing by the Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service, Agnès Marcaillou

I am honoured to address the Security Council on the threat posed by Al-Shabaab's use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Somalia and their impact on the civilian population, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops and the Somali security forces. I am also honoured to present the activities carried out by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to mitigate the threat posed by explosive ordnance in Somalia.

With respect to the IED threat, the number of IED-related incidents has risen from 402 and 492 in 2017 and 2018, respectively, to 529 in 2019, with 161 such incidents recorded through April 2020. Between 1 January 2017 and 30 April 2020, 153 AMISOM troops and 489 Somali security force personnel were killed in targeted IED incidents. Without counting the close to 600 people killed in the horrific 14 October 2017 IED attack that occurred in Mogadishu, a reported 787 civilians have been killed and 1,779 injured.

We have noted the drop in civilian casualties in Mogadishu in 2020, which we attribute to the positive impact of the current Mogadishu security plan and Operation Badbaado in Lower Shabelle, which have limited the infiltration of explosive devices into Mogadishu. The decrease has been from 1.17 vehicle-borne IED incidents per month in 2019 to only one such incident to date for the whole of 2020.

Meanwhile, as Somali security forces have led military operations in Lower Shabelle since the second quarter of 2019, there has been a concomitant increase in Al-Shabaab's IED attacks targeting the Somali National Army (SNA), causing an alarming increase in SNA casualties, which, in the first quarter of 2020, and for the first time, have exceeded civilian casualties. In recent years, Al-Shabaab's manufacture of IEDs has shifted from using military-grade explosives to more readily available compounds and components, hence demonstrating both its ability to adapt and its determination to continue to use this method of warfare.

With regard to UNMAS in Somalia, the Mine Action Service is an integral component of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM) and of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). UNMAS provides the Federal Government of Somalia with expert advice on the development of legislation, plans and policies to mitigate the threat of explosive ordnance. It also produces regular Somalia-specific IED threat analyses, which inform preventive and responsive actions by the SNA, AMISOM and other partners. UNMAS also assists UNSAM and carries out clearance activities following indirect-fire attacks against the United Nations compound in Mogadishu and the airport area.

With the support of UNSOS, UNMAS maintains a physical presence in all AMISOM sectors and provides advice, analysis, training and mentoring to AMISOM uniformed personnel to find and destroy IEDs and to safely operate in this high-threat environment. Since 2017, UNMAS has trained over 50,000 AMISOM troops on subjects ranging from IED-threat awareness to search and detect techniques as well as to deploy techniques for defeating IEDs. UNMAS uses and promotes a number of standardized training materials that it has drafted to support the consistent growth of IED-disposal operators across troop-contributing countries.

UNMAS training and mentoring of AMISOM mission enabling units has increased troop confidence in the utilization of main supply routes and led to vastly increased consignment movements on these routes from Mogadishu to the sectors. UNMAS provides AMISOM with an explosive-ordnance clearance

capacity of 21 teams, working with 42 explosive-detection dogs, to protect such key infrastructure as airports, airstrips and AMISOM bases. The Service's survey, detection and clearance capacity also facilitates the construction of AMISOM forward-operating bases.

UNMAS support has contributed to a strengthened AMISOM capacity to respond and adapt to the evolving IED threat. While the number of IED incidents reported as targeting AMISOM has remained high, the AMISOM casualty rate per incident has decreased from 2017 to the present. Moreover, while there has been a gradual increase in IED incidents, no impact on AMISOM has been observed. As I speak, despite coronavirus-disease pandemic restrictions, all UNMAS activities in support of AMISOM are ongoing, except for predeployment and in-person training.

In the past few years, UNMAS has responded to requests from the Somali Government to build the threat-mitigation capacity of the Somali police. To date, UNMAS has trained and equipped the existing 14 Somali police explosive-ordnance disposal teams. I want to thank those Member States that have provided UNMAS with the voluntary financial contributions necessary to support these activities.

In conclusion, UNMAS action has proved, and continues to prove, that it enhances AMISOM's force protection, mobility and operational effectiveness and has contributed to reducing casualties and fatalities among the AMISOM ranks. According to our analysis, Al-Shabaab is likely to continue its IED attacks against SNA personnel, using available precursors and ever-evolving and complex designs. To be better equipped to operate safely and effectively in this IED-threat environment, SNA troops need appropriate training, mentoring and equipping consistent with standards that match those guiding UNMAS support to AMISOM. Effective, sustainable and accountable IED-threat mitigation capabilities for Somali security forces would support the transition of security responsibilities from AMISOM.

As an integrated component of UNSOM and UNSOS, UNMAS stands ready to extend its support to the SNA. It is our hope that the Security Council will consider expanding the categories of the United Nations non-lethal support package provided to the SNA through the United Nations Trust Fund for the Somali security institutions to include IED-threat mitigation support, namely, the training, mentoring and equipping I just mentioned. Accordingly, I would call upon Member States and other partners to channel funding towards the strengthening of the SNA's IED-threat mitigation capabilities through the United Nations Trust Fund mechanism.

Annex IV**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve**

I thank the briefers. While some of the news we have received is encouraging, other news is less so.

With regard to the political situation and the preparation for elections in Somalia, the country has shown the capacity to make progress on its priorities. The signing of the electoral law is an important step, yet more efforts are needed to work out its implementation. Among other things, the participation of women must be ensured. Work has also started on other pieces of legislation, such as the political parties law, and will have to resume. Technical preparations, including on electoral security, should stay on track. Elections can still happen in accordance with the planned timetable.

We also ask the Federal Government to re-establish the dialogue with the federal member states. Somalia needs this dialogue to overcome challenges not only to the elections but also to the transition plan and to those presented by the current humanitarian crises. This lack of dialogue has gone on long enough.

Unfortunately, Somalia has not been spared by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, or by seasonal floods or locust infestations. Belgium stands with the people of Somalia and is contributing to the humanitarian response. We also think it is important for the international community and the Somali authorities not to lose sight of the country's development and political objectives while responding to these crises.

As the Security Council is about to discuss the renewal of the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), we note that Al-Shabaab remains a very significant threat. There have been successes with joint Somali National Army/AMISOM operations, but they have not been sufficient to lead us to expect the successful conclusion of the transition plan in the planned time frame.

The Federal Government and the federal member states must come together to forge a shared vision for national security. We welcome the Government's willingness to revise the transition plan. The international community, including the European Union as an important financial donor, will work with Somalia to implement this plan. Coordination should also be ensured among the security partners, under the leadership of the Federal Government.

Finally, in the immediate future, looking towards the elections, we believe that AMISOM should continue to perform its mandate in its current form and, before considering plans for 2021, will seek to renew its mandate with no significant changes, but for a slightly shorter time period. Let me also thank the troop-contributing countries for their commitment.

Annex V**Statement by the Acting Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Yao Shaojun**

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General James Swan, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Francisco Caetano José Madeira, and Director Agnès Marcaillou for their briefings.

China pays close attention to the situation in Somalia. China commends efforts made by the country in the past three months in preparing for elections, implementing the transition plan, improving the relationship between the Federal Government and federal member states and promoting economic and social development. We have good reason to believe that the people and the Government of Somalia will continue to make new progress in the national governance and peace processes.

Somalia is entering a critical stage, with the elections at the top of its priorities. President Farmajo signed the electoral bill into law and the National Electoral Security Task Force adopted its terms of reference and reviewed the draft concept of security for voter registration. The progress in these areas fully demonstrates Somalia's strong willingness to promote peaceful elections. China supports all parties in Somalia that proceed from the fundamental interests of the country as a whole, enhance cooperation and dialogue and jointly advance the electoral and political processes. In providing constructive assistance, the international community should adhere to the principle of a Somali-led and Somali-owned process.

China consistently advocates the idea that African countries should address African issues in African ways. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has been playing a significant role in maintaining peace and stability in the country. China supports AMISOM in continuing to perform its duty in accordance with its mandate and helping the Somalia national security forces to strengthen their capacities and gradually assume security responsibility. The African Union Peace and Security Council has made requests and suggestions in terms of Somalia-related issues. We hope that the United Nations Security Council will give sufficient attention and positive response to the African Union's voice.

China strongly condemns all forms of terrorism. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and AMISOM have made notable contributions to Somali efforts aimed at combating terrorist activities. Terrorism attacks targeting the United Nations and AMISOM facilities are a matter of grave concern. We call on all relevant parties to take pragmatic measures that would effectively guarantee the safety and security of United Nations and African Union facilities and staff in Somalia.

The coronavirus disease pandemic, combined with locust infestation and floods, has worsened the humanitarian situation in the country. China appreciates measures already taken by the Somali Government to prevent and control the pandemic. Limited by its economic and social development conditions, Somalia is more vulnerable than ever and less capable of responding to disasters.

The international community should continue to provide constructive assistance in order to help Somalia overcome difficulties and achieve sustainable and independent development at an early date. In the face of the pandemic, we are truly a community with a shared future. The Chinese Government and enterprises have donated multiple batches of medical supplies to Somalia and shared our experience and best practices with Somali medical personnel through video-teleconferences. China will continue to make its own unilateral contributions.

Annex VI

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations

We would like to start by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan for his briefing and Ms. Agnès Marcaillou for her focus on the work being carried out by the United Nations Mine Action Service on the continued threat of the use of improvised explosive devices in Somalia.

We remain concerned about the continued political stagnation between the Federal Government and some federated member states. Overcoming the current stalemate is key to resolving the challenges that prevail in Somalia. We urge the leaders to put aside their differences and join forces to forge strategic agreements that would allow the priority concerns of the country to be addressed. We express our solidarity with the people of Somalia in their fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, whose effects represent a real challenge and whose consequences will affect all aspects of the daily life of Somalians throughout the country.

Even in these very challenging times, preparations for timely, credible and transparent one-person-one-vote elections are vitally important, as is the continuation of the work for the adoption of the amendments to the political parties law. In this regard, we continue to advocate 30 per cent participation by women, whose participation in the electoral process — as well as that of minorities — is paramount. It is also essential to continue the constitutional review process, and we urge the parties to make full use of the tools put at their disposal by the United Nations and its partners.

The Dominican Republic welcomes the measures taken by the Somali Government to mitigate the spread of the virus among the population and to facilitate continued access to emergency supplies. The fragile humanitarian situation paired with the increased number of recorded cases and a weak health-care system makes Somalia one of the most vulnerable countries facing this pandemic.

It is equally worrisome that the seasonal rains that have prompted farmers to begin cultivation have also caused flash floods, increasing the possibility of water-borne diseases and creating the conditions for locust breeding, a plague already causing serious damage across the region. We encourage the international community to contribute to the Somalia Humanitarian Fund, which would save lives, alleviate the needs of the most vulnerable and help to scale up responses to the pandemic.

We would like to pay tribute to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali security forces for their sacrifices in the search for peace and stability in the country. The volatile security situation in Somalia is cause for concern. We condemn all attacks carried out by Al-Shabaab, especially the mortar attacks on the Aden Adde International Airport in Mogadishu, where the United Nations compound is located, as well as the attacks targeting AMISOM.

We condemned the ongoing grave violations committed against children and encourage the Government to adopt and implement the national strategy to prevent child recruitment, facilitate the release and reintegration of child combatants and further strengthen the legal framework for child protection. Equally worrisome is the rise in female genital mutilation in the country during the pandemic, which is why the issue should be included in any COVID-19 response.

We commend the work being carried out by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) on the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda. Young Somalis make up a vast proportion of the population; therefore, an

enabling environment is needed to allow them to further engage meaningfully in peacebuilding and governance activities.

To conclude, Somalia needs the support of the international community, neighbouring countries and partners more than ever. We recognize the continued efforts and role that the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, AMISOM and UNSOM have been playing in difficult conditions to achieve lasting peace and stability in the country.

Annex VII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson

I would like to join others in thanking the briefers for their insightful overviews.

Estonia is concerned about the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) to Somalia, and we welcome measures taken to combat the disease. Even in the face of the obstacles created by the COVID-19 pandemic, we believe that Somalia, together with the international community, should not lose sight of the long-term goals of State-building. In that connection, we would like to highlight the following points.

On the political front, holding peaceful, transparent and one-person-one-vote elections, within the agreed time frame, must remain a priority. In that regard, it is crucial that the Federal Government of Somalia and all federal member states urgently resume their dialogue. It is also important that the remaining issues regarding the electoral law be addressed. We warmly welcome any progress made and strongly encourage further efforts to those ends.

On the security front, we welcome the commitment of the Somali authorities to update the transition plan. Clear timelines, clear tasks and a clear vision are crucial in order to achieve the end goal of Somalia taking full responsibility for its security. We will achieve the best results on how to get there if all stakeholders work closely together. Therefore, we encourage the Somali authorities and all key partners to engage in inclusive discussions about international support for the post-2021 arrangements. We also welcome the joint operations against Al-Shabaab in Lower Shabelle. However, we underline the need for the military operations against Al-Shabaab to be conducted in compliance with human rights law and international humanitarian law.

We are very concerned about the threat of the increased use of improvised explosive devices in Somalia. To address that trend, we should support Somalia in the development of a national regulatory framework that would help to effectively combat the threat. In addition, on the operational level, it is important to support the capacity-building of security institutions and the Somali National Army through the provision of training and equipment.

Finally, Estonia is deeply concerned about the current humanitarian situation, which is exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, a locust infestation as well as floods. We are concerned that the humanitarian response plan for 2020 remains only 17 per cent funded and call for the international community to address that.

I would like to conclude by expressing Estonia's thanks and support to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the African Union Mission in Somalia and Somali security forces for their efforts, commitment and sacrifices to make long-term peace and stability in Somalia a reality.

Annex VIII

Statement by the Political Coordinator of France to the United Nations, Antoine Michon

I would like to thank our briefers for their useful presentations and highlight three points regarding the situation in Somalia.

First of all, France is concerned by the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Somalia and across the region. We welcome the measures taken by the Somali authorities to combat the spread of COVID-19 with the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and other partners. France is mobilized, in coordination with the European Union (EU) and the African Union, to support our African partners in their response to the pandemic. The EU has dedicated around €27 million to Somalia and is also implementing a humanitarian air bridge to Africa, which France fully supports. Moreover, France has strongly advocated for a collective effort to consider a moratorium on the debt servicing payments of African countries. France has also mobilized €1.2 billion to support our African partners in four priority areas: health, economic recovery, humanitarian assistance and scientific research.

Secondly, France considers that Somalia is now at a critical juncture regarding both its political situation and the process of preparing its security architecture post-2021. On the political front, all Somali actors must continue to work for the preparation of peaceful, inclusive, transparent and one-person-one-vote presidential and legislative elections in late 2020 or early 2021. That requires broad consensus on the electoral framework; therefore, we encourage the Somali authorities to address remaining issues relating to the electoral law with the assistance of UNSOM.

In that context, France also calls on the Federal Government of Somalia and all federal member states to urgently resume their dialogue. Such dialogue will be key not only for the holding of the upcoming elections but also for other critical reforms, especially in the security sector. In that connection, we strongly condemn the clashes in the Gedo region, which are guided by political interests at the expense of the security transition.

Somalia is also at a critical juncture on the security front, as Somali institutions are set to take over the responsibility for security by 2021. In that context, we welcome the resumption of joint operations led by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali National Army against Al-Shabaab in Lower Shabelle. We call on the Somali authorities to extend those operations to other areas, to update the transition plan and to accelerate the establishment of a plan for the generation of new Somali forces and the integration of regional forces into the National Army. The latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/398) shows that more progress is urgently needed on that front.

Lastly, France believes that the Somali authorities and their key partners, including the European Union, the African Union and AMISOM troop-contributing countries, must now seriously engage in discussions on international support to the security sector in Somalia after 2021. The European Union has shown its readiness to actively participate in such discussions and is in favour of a more transactional approach. In that context, we think that the current model of international security support to Somalia should not be taken for granted and that all options must be put on the table, including alternative options to AMISOM. In particular, we want to make clear that the European Union's current financing model for AMISOM is not sustainable. If the European Union is to continue to support the security sector in Somalia, that support will be dependent on the establishment of accountability

mechanisms, the participation of the European Union in strategic decisions and the financial contribution of other partners. More generally, the European Union has also initiated a brainstorming process on its broader cooperation with Somalia, including through the strategic reviews of its three missions — Atalanta, the European Union Training Mission for Somalia and the European Union Capacity-Building Mission in Somalia.

Annex IX**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Juergen Schulz**

Let me start by talking about the political cooperation between the Federal Government and all federal member states. We have talked about this many times, but I think it cannot be stressed enough. It should be a key element of all efforts if we want to see Somalia move forward in the right direction. It is the basis for reaching sustainable progress. For example, coordination meetings should be resumed swiftly and should take place regularly in order to resolve outstanding issues, such as constitutional reform, or open questions on the electoral process.

We take note of the progress made in the preparation for the elections but are concerned that the electoral code does not include a 30 per cent quota for women. Let me also underscore that credible, free and fair one-person-one-vote elections in late 2020 or early 2021 are key to democratic State-building in Somalia and will be the yardstick by which the current Somali Administration will be measured. We acknowledge the challenges posed by coronavirus disease (COVID-19) to the continued preparations for the elections, but want to make clear that this should not hamper the Federal Government's ability to answer unresolved questions on the basis of a broad political consensus and in full cooperation with the federal member states. A return to the 2016 clan-based model must be avoided. We need to see concrete progress towards implementing the principle of one-person-one-vote wherever possible.

We welcome the progress made in the security sector; however, the security situation remains a great challenge. We are concerned about the high frequency of attacks by Al-Shabaab. In order to update and implement the security transition plan, a comprehensive approach to security is essential. The plan needs Somali ownership and buy-in from all stakeholders and partners, as well as a focus on capacity-building for the Somali security forces in order to enable them to fully take over responsibility for security in the country. Against that backdrop, we must pursue a constructive discussion on international support to the Somali security sector over the next months, also with an eye on the upcoming independent assessment.

The African Union Mission (AMISOM) has been of key importance to the security situation in Somalia since its inception. The European Union (EU) has contributed very significantly to supporting AMISOM, with a total of almost \$2 billion since 2007. Germany is convinced that AMISOM will continue to be one of the cornerstones of international support to the Somali security sector for the time being.

Turning to the humanitarian situation and COVID-related repercussions, we remain extremely concerned about the current humanitarian situation. The present flooding and the increased spread of desert locusts clearly show the aggravating consequences of climate change for Somalia's humanitarian situation and fragile statehood. COVID-19 poses additional challenges. We welcome the measures taken by the Somali authorities to combat the spread and call upon all international partners to support Somalia in that regard.

It is essential that, under these circumstances, humanitarian access be maintained and humanitarian principles be fully respected. We will continue our humanitarian engagement in Somalia. The EU is very heavily and seriously engaged in humanitarian support for Somalia. Germany is doing the same bilaterally and nationally. Germany has already provided over €55 million for humanitarian assistance. In the light of the worsening humanitarian situation, further commitments are being considered.

Annex X**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani**

Let me begin by thanking Mr. Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, and Ms. Marcaillou, Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), for their comprehensive briefings.

I welcome Ambassador Abukar, Permanent Representative of Somalia, and wish our brothers and sisters in Somalia a blessed Ramadan.

This meeting is taking place amid a very challenging situation for Somalia. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has impacted its economy and development and will potentially exacerbate the humanitarian situation. However, I believe that this common challenge could also serve as an impetus for all parties to resolve their differences and refocus their efforts towards work together constructively. In that regard, I would like to highlight three points.

First, we cannot overemphasize the need to ease tension between the Federal Government and some of the federal member states. As highlighted by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2020/398), the pandemic has highlighted the need for Somalia's federal and state leaders to come together in a spirit of unity and compromise. We welcome the efforts to facilitate the resumption of political dialogue between the Federal Government and the federal member states. With regard to the election, we welcome the enactment of the electoral law and the efforts to address key issues in the law. We also welcome more women holding parliamentary seats. The holding of a one-person-one-vote election as planned should remain a priority. It is necessary to mitigate the potential impacts of COVID-19 so that the elections can continue as planned. It is also important to make progress on critical State-building priorities, such as the Constitutional Court and the judicial service. An enabling environment is important for democracy to prevail.

Secondly, we remain concerned by the security situation. We once again condemn all recent attacks by Al-Shabaab, which mainly targeted the African Union Mission and the Somali National Army, and would like to express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims. We heard the briefing by the Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service, which showed that the threat of Al-Shabaab has not lessened. I thank UNMAS for the information.

We would like to reiterate that any attack on United Nations personnel is unacceptable and that perpetrators must be brought to justice. Al-Shabaab remains capable to conduct larger, more complex and high-profile attacks, including with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and vehicle-borne IEDs. We regret that Al-Shabaab has not embraced the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire.

Therefore, it is important to provide the Somali National Army (SNA) with the necessary training in countering IEDs and with capacity-building. We commend the SNA and AMISOM on their continued operations and stabilization activities undertaken in areas previously controlled by Al-Shabaab and welcome the contribution of UNMAS. Furthermore, we pay tribute to the efforts of Blue Helmets and the African Union Mission in Somalia in the pursuit of peace. We also welcome the commitment by the Government to update the transition plan to ensure a comprehensive collective security plan for Somalia.

Thirdly, the COVID-19 pandemic is happening amid an already dire humanitarian situation in Somalia coupled with severely negative economic impacts,

as stated by Special Representative Swan. With at least 2.6 million people displaced, high levels of food insecurity, recent flooding and a locust outbreak, scaled up efforts are needed to alleviate the plight of the Somali people. We are glad that a United Nations country preparedness and response plan for COVID-19 is in place. We call on all international partners to provide the much-needed funding for the humanitarian response plan in order to ensure the long-term recovery and resilience of the people of Somalia. It is also crucial to facilitate and maintain unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance and relief, including in hard-to-reach areas.

Lastly, it is our hope that, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, all actors in Somalia will remain committed to its peace and development efforts. Dialogue and reconciliation among all parties are crucial to ensuring a prosperous and peaceful Somalia.

I reaffirm Indonesia's respect for Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and convey our utmost tribute to UNSOM, UNSOS, AMISOM, and all actors working to ensure lasting peace and stability in Somalia.

As we approach the end of Ramadan, we wish all our brothers and sisters in Somalia a blessed Eid al-Fitr. Indonesia continues to support a prosperous and peaceful Somalia.

Annex XI**Statement by the First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Dmitry Polyanskiy**

We thank Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, and Mr. Francisco Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), for their detailed briefings on the situation in Somalia. We also thank Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), for her useful update on our delegation's request regarding the situation with the improvised explosive device (IED) threat.

We have carefully studied the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2020/398) and share its conclusion that the country's security situation remains turbulent. The Federal Government faces numerous challenges, including the need to restore State institutions and establish dialogue between the centre and the regions and among the regions. Lack of progress in preparing for the general elections and on constitutional review is really worrisome. We deplore the continuing tensions in Jubaland and Galmudug. All those issues are now further exacerbated by the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Particularly worrisome is the ceaseless terrorist activity of Al-Shabaab and its fighters' growing reliance on the use of IEDs, mortar attacks and political assassinations. Importantly, the Somalis themselves recognize that IEDs have already caused more fatalities to the Somali National Army (SNA) and the population than bullets. We fully appreciate the picture that Ms. Marcaillou has presented to the Council and hope that it will contribute to better identifying the appropriate response for the international community to the IED threat.

We also note some positive developments in Mogadishu. The Federal Parliament had a productive winter session. We commend the establishment of an ad hoc parliamentary committee to address key issues concerning the electoral law and the continued work of the National Electoral Security Task Force. We welcome the communication between President Farmajo and President Bihi of Somaliland, as well as the positive political changes in South-West state and Hirshabelle. We urge Special Representative Swan to continue his efforts to foster dialogue between and within federal member states with a view to holding an all-Somalia summit.

In view of the upcoming AMISOM mandate renewal, we believe that the Mission continues to be critical to the country's stabilization. Considering the upcoming general elections and the COVID-19 pandemic, a reduction in the number of peacekeepers is unacceptable. Both AMISOM and the SNA should build on the progress demonstrated in the transition operations in the town of Janaale. Regarding the AMISOM resolution itself, we see it as a concise document that sends a clear message to the Somali people — that they will have the full backing of the international community both prior to and during the upcoming general elections, which are an important milestone in the country's modern history.

In general, we are convinced that effective collaborative work in building a unified national security architecture is necessary if we are to address the persistent security challenges in Somalia. The international community should continue to take measures to increase the operational readiness of the African peacekeeping units and the SNA. Progress in that arena will be decisive in ensuring the effective transition of security responsibilities to the Somalis.

In conclusion, let me reiterate my country's firm commitment to continue to work efficiently in the Security Council to solve the crisis in Somalia, while respecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

I also have a couple of questions for Ms. Marcaillou. We know that UNMAS is conducting very useful awareness-raising work on the IED threat worldwide, particularly in Geneva through the annual conference on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. How does Ms. Marcaillou think the mechanisms under this Convention could be used to assist Somalia to address the issue of IEDs?

In her view, what else can be done to deny Al-Shabaab access to explosives and ammunition abandoned on battlefields and to mitigate the explosive ordnance threat? Does she think that AMISOM and the SNA are doing enough in that regard? Finally, what can the States Members of the United Nations do to assist Somalis to be better prepared and trained to overcome these challenges?

Annex XII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Jerry Matjila

I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for convening this important and timely meeting on Somalia. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Council — the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia — and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

At the outset, we would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2020/398) on the situation in Somalia. We would also like to thank Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Mr. Francisco Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), for their briefings.

The three African members of the Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines wish to address the situation in Somalia, the role of the United Nations through UNSOM and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), as well as the role of AMISOM.

On the political front, we agree with the Secretary-General's observation that this year marks a critical period for the advancement of national priorities in Somalia. A number of targets and benchmarks in various policy documents, such as the Mutual Accountability Framework and the Somali transition plan, were set to be achieved this year. The concerted efforts of all Somalis is needed in order to realize those national priorities. However, that requires constructive dialogue between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states if they are to resolve their differences — starting with tackling the challenge posed by the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in an already fragile situation.

The three African members of the Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines echo the sentiments of the Secretary-General that political differences must not be addressed through violence. We are therefore concerned about the unfortunate armed clashes that erupted in the Gedo region of Jubaland and in Galmudug during the period under review. We urge the Somali parties to use dialogue as a peaceful means to settle disputes and as a tool for cooperation, which is critical to achieving national priorities, including the holding of general elections in 2020-2021.

In that regard, we welcome the positive development of the meeting between President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo and Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi. We also welcome the announcement by President Said Abdullahi Mohamed Deni of Puntland of his intention to travel to Mogadishu and to other federal member states to advance dialogue. We view those overtures as positive steps towards addressing the lingering tensions between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states, and an indication of the will of Somali parties to address their differences.

One of Somalia's critical priorities is the preparation and holding of one-person-one-vote elections. The three African members of the Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines underline that dialogue, inclusive political participation and the resolution of political differences between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states is critical to the success of those elections and to national cohesion.

Furthermore, we commend the enactment of the electoral law and encourage the expeditious formulation of regulations necessary to ensure its implementation

and the broad support of all federal member states. It is also important to ensure the participation and representation of women, youth and all members of the Somali population, and to prepare and secure the electoral process. We encourage the international community to continue to mobilize resources to help the Federal Government of Somalia finance the elections.

We remain deeply concerned about the volatile security situation due to the persistent terrorist threat posed by Al-Shabaab and the elements of the pro-Islamic State in Iraq and the Shams in Somalia, who continue to carry out targeted terrorist attacks against the Somali National Army (SNA), AMISOM, local security forces, civilians and the United Nations.

Despite the commendable progress and success of joint operations conducted by the SNA and AMISOM to recapture towns from Al-Shabaab in south Somalia, the terrorist group continues to launch attacks and carry out assassinations using mortars and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). More has to be done to improve security in Somalia in general, and to mitigate mortar and IED attacks in particular.

We agree with calls to strengthen the IED threat-mitigation capabilities of the Somali security forces with a view to better protecting themselves from the increased deployment of IED attacks and preventing harm to civilians and critical infrastructure. We highly appreciate the close cooperation and support among the SNA, AMISOM and the United Nations — particularly UNSOM, UNSOS and UNMAS — as well as the support of international partners for the national security architecture and national transitional plan.

Since its deployment in 2007, AMISOM has been playing an important role in supporting the SNA's efforts to restore security and stability in Somalia. The recent success of joint AMISOM and SNA operations in Lower Shabelle in recovering territory attests to the valuable role of AMISOM. There is, however, a need for continued efforts to stabilize the recovered territories and to generate troops and capacities within the SNA and the police in order to secure recovered areas, facilitate stabilization activities, consolidate gains and avoid setbacks.

We urge the Federal Government of Somalia — with the support of the United Nations, AMISOM and international partners — to continue the generation, training and resourcing of capable and effective Somali national security forces that will ultimately take over the security responsibilities, in line with the transitional plan and the national security architecture. To that end, we reiterate our previous calls for the international community and international partners to mobilize the necessary resources, including the replenishment of the Trust Fund for AMISOM, in order to support the Somali security forces as they continue to make commendable progress in weakening Al-Shabaab and securing and stabilizing liberated areas.

On the humanitarian front, Somalia continues to be mired in a grave humanitarian crisis. Somalia is facing a triple shock — floods, desert locust infestation and the COVID-19 pandemic. The threat to food insecurity remains high, despite the favourable seasonal rains. In some parts, unpredictable rainfall due to climate change has resulted in flash flooding, which not only impacts food security but also leads to death, displacement and the risk of water-borne diseases. The rains have further exacerbated conditions and accelerated the locust infestation that has affected the entire Horn of Africa.

We are concerned that the security situation continues to impede humanitarian operations and thwart assistance to people in need in Somalia. We call upon the international community and humanitarian organizations to continue supporting the Federal Government of Somalia and the Somali people in their quest for a peaceful and stable Somalia, including through the provision of prompt and adequate funding, as well as through contributions to the 2020 Somalia humanitarian response plan.

The year 2020 will be remembered in history as the greatest challenge of our generation — the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Like all of us around the globe, Somalia has not been spared from the pandemic. As of mid-May, it has recorded over 1,400 cases of COVID-19. Given the country's numerous challenges and vulnerabilities, this pandemic presents specific risks. Measures must be taken to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 for the sake of the continuity of peacebuilding and State-building activities in Somalia. We commend the efforts of the Somali Government, United Nations agencies and partners in launching the Somalia COVID-19 country preparedness and response plan. We note that the coronavirus may exacerbate the already dire humanitarian situation, as well as the socioeconomic, development coordination and security challenges facing Somalia. In addition, it is important to safeguard the well-being of those under the employ of AMISOM, the SNA and other partners as they continue to provide security, including by facilitating the provision of the humanitarian assistance so critically needed by vulnerable Somalis.

With respect to economic developments, we note that Somalia has made significant strides in the past few years in improving its economic prospects. All interventions undertaken by the Federal Government of Somalia have yielded positive results. We therefore commend the Federal Government for reaching the decision point under the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. That has facilitated the clearing of Somalia's arrears. It is also a matter of great satisfaction that the World Bank and the IMF have issued a joint staff advisory note on the ninth national development plan, for the period 2020 to 2024, noting that the plan exceeded the standards of a typical interim poverty reduction strategy. That is a positive and welcome development given the humanitarian, socioeconomic, resource-related and other challenges that Somalia faces in the period ahead.

It is critical now, more than ever, that the international community join hands in support of Somalia, including through cooperation, coordination and resource mobilization, so as to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that Somalia continues on its positive trajectory of State-building and peacebuilding.

We wish to underline the importance of fostering strong and effective regional cooperation in the Horn of Africa, particularly between Somalia and its neighbours. That is necessary if we are to bring peace, stability and development to Somalia and across the region. In that regard, we call on the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union, the United Nations and the international community to continue to support efforts to foster strong and effective regional cooperation in the Horn of Africa.

Finally, we commend the constant efforts and commitment of the United Nations, AMISOM, the Federal Government of Somalia and international partners to promote stabilization, federalism and State-building in Somalia.

In view of the approaching end of AMISOM's mandate on 31 May, the three African members of the Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines would like to reaffirm their support of maintaining an AMISOM presence in Somalia as a stabilizing force for the SNA. We look forward to constructive engagement on a new resolution that will reaffirm the Council's commitment to support the activities of AMISOM by maintaining the Mission's current capabilities and authorizing its deployment for another 12 months. It is our view that the 12-month extension will provide the necessary space for Somalia, AMISOM, the United Nations and other partners to assess and deal with the impact of COVID-19, the security situation on the ground, the upcoming elections, the comprehensive review of the Somali transition plan, effective force generation and the need to preserve the gains made thus far.

Annex XIII**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, Jonathan Allen**

Let me, if I might, thank our briefers and commend Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan for his relentless professionalism and commitment in difficult circumstances. I also want to thank Ambassador Madeira and Director Marcaillou.

In the light of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), let me start by expressing our solidarity with Somalia in facing this global pandemic and by commending Somalia for the measures they have taken to contain the spread of the virus. I also want to welcome the work of the United Nations in coordinating a coherent response among international organizations, including the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, UNICEF and non-governmental organization partners.

We want to urge all partners to respond to Somalia's COVID-19 response plan, which calls for additional, aligned and coordinated funding. The United Kingdom gave \$420 million in the last financial year to Somalia and, in the light of the response plan, we are now considering what more we can do. And I would also just like to mention that today the United Kingdom has announced a \$25 million contribution to the African Union fund set up last month by President Ramaphosa to tackle COVID-19.

Despite the pandemic and the Secretary-General's calls for a ceasefire, Al-Shabaab continues to launch attacks. We strongly condemn the recent attacks in Mogadishu, including against the United Nations, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the international community. And I want to pay tribute to the ongoing commitment and sacrifices of AMISOM troop-contributing countries and the efforts of the Somali security forces. I want to echo the concerns of the United Nations Mine Action Service regarding the use of improvised explosive devices in Somalia. Such use is why the Security Council imposed a ban on components of such devices, and why we have recommended strengthening support on tackling IEDs in the AMISOM text.

It is clear that COVID-19 poses significant challenges to Somalia. We need to recognize as much and that it should not distract us from supporting Somalia in safeguarding the gains made and making further progress on security, greater political engagement and elections.

On security reform, there has been important progress over the last year. Somalia has recovered additional territory from Al-Shabaab, trained Somali security forces, developed a threat assessment and become a member of INTERPOL. There is now greater international engagement on the question of what security support in Somalia will look like after 2021. In March, the United Kingdom supported a Wilton Park-convened conference in Ethiopia. In April, the African Union and Somalia chaired a ministerial conference. We should build on that momentum.

Somalia has also started the process of updating the Somali transition plan. Rapid progress in updating and, above all, implementing the transition plan is vital if Somalia is to meet its own December 2021 deadline to take over lead responsibility for national security. The independent assessment requested by the Security Council will help us decide how best to support Somalia's post-2021 vision. Both the revised security strategy and the independent review should guide our decision-making in a timely fashion.

The long-term goals of a Somali political settlement, including one-person-one-vote elections and progress on the constitutional review, remain unchanged. We are seeing progress on technical preparations for elections, and we welcome the United Nations efforts to enable Parliament to reconvene virtually, and AMISOM's support on security. It is vital that the Government, Parliament, the electoral committee, the joint parliamentary committee and the federal member states work together and take urgent and inclusive steps to help facilitate timely, constitutional and inclusive one-person-one-vote elections.

There is no reason that COVID-19 should prevent the key preparatory work from taking place. This is the time for Government and opposition to put aside differences and find compromise. Decisions on the electoral code, seat allocation, the definition of constituencies and women's quota and provisions for Somaliland and Benadir are needed urgently, and it is good to hear that we should see progress on these issues in the next few weeks.

I want to express deep concern about recent actions taken to repress the media, with the arrest of journalists in Somalia. We welcome the recent positive steps to facilitate accurate reporting on COVID-19 by the Office of the Prime Minister. The media has a vital role to play in Somalia. We call for Somali journalists to be able to perform their work, and we call also on Somali leaders to ensure the political space is kept open.

Reconciliation is central to Somalia's State-building efforts. There has been some progress in Jubaland, South West state and Galmudug, but critical issues remain. We look to the Federal Government to drive forward reconciliation efforts, and we need to see high-level political dialogue with the federal member states. Such dialogue was already urgent, and it is even more urgent in the light of COVID-19. There is no room for division in the face of a common enemy.

In conclusion, let me emphasize three points.

First is the importance of an enhanced and coordinated response to supporting Somalia in its fight against COVID-19. We should all do what we can.

Second is the importance of the Security Council, the United Nations, the region, the African Union and the wider international community continuing to support Somalia to achieve progress on holding timely one-person-one-vote elections and moving ahead on security reform. Somalia's future security and development depend on continued progress.

And, finally, I reiterate our call — a call that the Council has made many times — for the Federal Government and the federal member states to work together to build a stronger and more peaceful Somalia.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Acting Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Cherith Norman Chalet**

I thank Special Representative Swan for joining us today and for his leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia.

The United States welcomes the positive developments Somalia has made so far this year. Debt relief has opened new access to international grants to support economic growth, development and reform. The Somali National Army and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have continued to gain ground south of Mogadishu against Al-Shabaab. And the meeting between President Farmajo and Somaliland President Bihi on the margins of the African Union Summit in February holds promise for reconciliation between Somalia and Somaliland. It also gives hope for ongoing reconciliation efforts in Jubaland and Galmudug.

However, there are also challenges and obstacles that require further attention, as many of the other Council members have highlighted today.

The United States condemns the ongoing campaigns of violence and terror by Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Somalia. We express our deepest condolences to victims and their families, and remain committed to working with Somalia and our international partners to counter their threat. We acknowledge the tremendous sacrifices that AMISOM troop-contributing countries have made in this important fight.

While the progress made by the Somali National Army and AMISOM to clear and hold territory in the Lower Shabelle is historic, much work remains to be done, including the expansion of their control of other areas. We call on the Federal Government of Somalia to equip and deploy a police presence to liberated towns in order to maintain security and re-establish Government services in Lower Shabelle and beyond.

We welcome Somalia's continued commitment to holding elections on schedule beginning later this year, but we are concerned that planning and implementation is falling far behind schedule. We call on the Parliament to pass outstanding electoral legislation, and on Mogadishu to bring together federal member states, civil society and other relevant stakeholders to reach consensus on the electoral process. We encourage each of these parties to work together and to agree on a practical model for peaceful, timely, inclusive and credible elections.

We regret that the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member state leaders still have not met at the leadership level to discuss national priorities and reforms, despite repeated calls from the Security Council. We urge President Farmajo to call a meeting of the National Security Council, as required by the Constitution, as soon as possible to discuss election planning, security cooperation and other urgent national priorities. We also remain concerned that security resources needed to fight Al-Shabaab are being misused for political rivalries in certain regions.

Federal cooperation is all the more critical given the multitude of humanitarian crises facing Somalia as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), flooding and locusts. COVID-19 appears to be spreading rapidly in Somalia, which lacks the resources and health infrastructure to respond effectively. We underscore the need for timely, reliable and more equitable humanitarian assistance, and we encourage other Governments to join us as we pledge our ongoing support to assist with humanitarian aid and to help mitigate the crop damage and food insecurity the swarms and flooding are causing.

Considering these many challenges, looking to the AMISOM mandate renewal this month, we must consider how AMISOM can more effectively respond to the persistent threat of Al-Shabaab. Elements include strengthening its command-and-control structure, prioritizing more mobile combat operations and increasing its focus on mentoring and advising Somali National Army forces in the field.

The AMISOM mandate renewal is also an opportunity for the Security Council to send a strong message to all stakeholders in the region that transitioning security responsibilities to the Somalis remains a priority. We are still very concerned that the Somali transition plan remains off track. Implementation of the transition plan must accelerate this year to prepare for the transition of security responsibilities from AMISOM to Somali forces in 2021. We welcome efforts to update the plan, but meeting the existing benchmarks remains the primary challenge. We urge that the plan assess impediments to progress and lay out steps to meet benchmarks for force generation, security-sector reform and civilian security.

The United States remains a steadfast partner in its commitment to promoting peace and stability in Somalia, and to working with our international partners in assisting the country reach its goals for a peaceful and prosperous future. And we also welcome the presence with us today of the Permanent Representative of Somalia and the other briefers.

Annex XV**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy**

At the outset, I would like to thank the briefers for their informative briefings and to highly commend their work on the ground. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Somalia to our meeting today.

We are encouraged by some positive developments in Somalia vis-à-vis the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the maintenance of security, economic recovery and preparations for the forthcoming elections. On the overall situation in Somalia and the way forward, I would like to share the following points.

First, we are concerned by the recent serious developments in the relations between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states, especially the armed clashes between the federal and state forces in Jubbaland. We support the efforts of the Government and political leaders of Somalia to maintain a stable environment for national unity and reconciliation. We call on all parties concerned to make further efforts to strengthen relations between the Government and the federal member states and to engage in constructive dialogue, for the sake of security, sustained stability and the development of Somalia, and to refrain from any act that may escalate tensions or see them spill over into a regional conflict.

Secondly, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have adverse impacts, delaying the resumption of Parliament and preparations for national elections in 2020. We emphasize the need for the National Independent Electoral Commission to adopt the draft amendments to the political parties law and to step up protection measures needed for civilians in the electoral process. We call on the Government of Somalia and other stakeholders to fully comply with the electoral law to ensure the preparations and the participation in one-person-one-vote elections for all people and political parties. We are of the view that the political representation of women and minorities must be strengthened, including in all decision-making processes.

Thirdly, the COVID-19 pandemic also has caused severe consequences for the livelihoods of the people of Somalia, aggravating food insecurity and humanitarian difficulties in areas affected by flooding and the desert locust outbreak. It has also compounded the magnitude of the dire humanitarian issues, as 30 per cent of the population is in need of assistance.

We commend the Government's swift measures to fight COVID-19, but we would like to emphasize that the risk of exponential increase in infections is high across countries. It is therefore necessary to maintain the precautionary and preventive steps, as well as to address economic and social consequences.

In this regard, we welcome the statement by the Secretary-General reiterating the commitment of the United Nations to working closely with Somalia, and calling on international partners to unite in the fight of the COVID19 pandemic and support the Federal Government of Somalia in mitigating current and future risks and alleviating the suffering of the people of Somalia caused by COVID-19 pandemic and weather-related crises.

Fourthly, we condemn the terrorist attacks by Al-Shabaab against the United Nations and personnel and facilities of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as well as local security forces in Mogadishu and other regions. In this connection, we urge the Government of Somalia continue to work closely with AMISOM to take all necessary security measures. It is also incumbent on international partners and relevant parties to uphold their responsibilities to

strengthen cooperation measures against Al-Shabaab to protect civilians, especially women and children.

Fifthly, in March 2020, AMISOM completed the reduction in its troop ceiling as provided for in resolution 2472 (2019). But many more efforts are needed for AMISOM to assist the Somali security forces in providing security for the political process at all levels and relevant support to the Somali police and authorities to create a secure environment in the run-up to the election. We look forward to the handover of security responsibility to Somali security forces, in line with the transition plan, by 2021, and call on international partners, the Federal Government of Somalia and Member States to assist AMISOM in fulfilling its mandate to support Somalia and its people.

In conclusion, we reiterate the importance of the assistance of, and coordination with, regional and international partners in these important undertakings by the Somali Government. We commend the tireless work and efforts of AMISOM, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations country team and the Special Representative, and reiterate our support for their continued assistance to Somalia in maintaining peace and stability and pursuing development.

Annex XVI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Somalia to the United Nations, Abukar Dahir Osman**

Allow me to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Estonia, Mr. Sven Jürgenson, on his leadership as President of the Council for this month of May 2020.

The Federal Republic of Somalia reiterates its unwavering commitment to continuing to work closely with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, alongside the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), to help it accomplish its mandate. I therefore extend gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing and the increased understanding and closer cooperation between my Government and the Mission. On the same note, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for his briefing.

Our security sector reform is in earnest progress. We have virtually completed the verification exercise. We have managed to increase the salaries of the Somali national armed forces by 70 per cent and also ensured timely, accurate and inter-bank payments that are easily verifiable. Our comprehensive security sector reform continues to gain momentum. Having streamlined and standardized the Somali national armed forces, the Government continues to generate and integrate forces, enabling us to continue degrading the terrorist groups and liberate more areas.

Through a Somali-led operation, we managed to liberate Janaale, a strategic town that was providing a safe hideout from which Al-Shabaab launched attacks against other parts of the country, including the capital city, Mogadishu. This follows the liberation of a series of other towns and settlements from which Al-Shabaab used to carry out wanton attacks against the Government and international partners. Indeed, it is as a result of these liberations that the Government was able to prevent major terror attacks in the city during the reporting period.

The latest operations are in line with the longer-term Somali transition plan, which is meant to hand over the responsibility to protect Somali citizens to the Somali national armed forces as AMISOM peacekeeping troops continue to transit out of the country. The national armed forces are effectively holding areas previously liberated within the same region.

Al-Shabaab has resorted to using sleeper cells on a hit-and-run basis, such as the despicable attacks against El-Adde and the United Nations compound. Such heinous acts underpin the significant need to redouble the efforts of the Somali Government and international partners to build on the current progress.

In order for the national armed forces to be able to be fully prepared to take over from AMISOM, there is a need to empower and invest more in the advancement, training, mobility and equipment of the Somali National Army (SNA). The arms embargo is greatly hindering the capabilities of the SNA to be able to effectively eradicate terrorist groups from our country.

Somalia's economic and financial sector reform initiative has been a priority project whose realization is prerequisite to the success of our other national reforms. The Finance Minister's fiscal forum, which has been chaired by Minister Beileh, has been held four times in different locations since September 2019, including Kismayo, Jubbaland.

The forum has been a very successful platform for advancing financial reforms, fiscal federalism and resource-sharing. Formulas for budget support and other resource-sharing have been agreed. The forum also recognizes that a political

settlement and increased security in the country rest with reaching agreement on the federal model, particularly fiscal federalism, in the new constitution.

We have now fully formalized our engagement with international financial institutions, having also reconstructed and validated our external debts. The recently adopted ninth national development plan provides for an interim poverty reduction strategy that seeks to present sustainable measures to mitigate countrywide poverty challenges.

On 26 February, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced that it had secured sufficient pledges, to the tune of £334 million in financing from over 100 countries, enabling the Fund to provide comprehensive debt relief to Somalia. This was followed by the World Bank Group's announcement on 27 February that it would re-establish financial relations with Somalia, paving the way for the full resumption of operations via the Bank's International Development Association. Similar re-engagement was announced by the African Development Bank.

Our stringent economic and financial sector reforms paid dividends on 25 March, when Somalia attained the debt-relief decision point under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, thereby effectively re-establishing relations with the IMF and the World Bank. On 5 March, Somalia's arrears with the World Bank and the African Development Bank were cleared through bridge loans that we secured from development partners Norway, the United Kingdom and the European Union (EU).

With the reform fatigue associated with implementing IMF and EU benchmarks, such as fiscal discipline and the civil service recruitment cap, additional resources also provide opportunities for Somali citizens to reap the development dividend from the implemented reforms and align it with incentives for further reforms. Enhancing the provision of social services, protecting human rights, guaranteeing the freedom of expression and ensuring political inclusion will all be premised on the aforesaid national reforms.

Economic reforms under the IMF debt relief process is not over yet. The IMF staff-monitored programme has been replaced by the Extended Credit Facility (ECF), plus additional completion point triggers. Under ECF and the completion point triggers, we are committing to additional reforms in fiscal federalism, domestic revenue mobilization, financial sector development, private sector development in energy, socioeconomic investment in social protection, fiscal foundations for the extractive industry and the strengthening of anti-corruption measures.

Somalia has been grappling with cyclic climate emergencies as the country oscillates between floods and droughts virtually every season. We are now faced with the worst medical crisis in a century. Somalia's weak health infrastructure and limited resources have curtailed our efforts to contain the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The pandemic is threatening to derail our reform efforts. COVID-19 poses a serious security challenge to a context that is already marked by fragility. In Somalia, training by partners has been suspended to stall the spread of the disease. There is a high risk that security personnel screening road-users may catch the disease. Protective gear is in short supply. The Government is distributing masks among front-line officers, but this is far from sufficient. The Somali national armed forces are also involved in public-awareness campaigns against the disease. The global shutdown has seen a ban on international and local flights, the imposition of a partial curfew and the waiving of taxes on essential food and non-food items, among

other measures. While food prices have skyrocketed, remittances have significantly decreased and trading activities have declined considerably. All these factors have caused a reduction of domestic revenue.

Families will need to be supported and small and medium-sized business enterprises cushioned against the negative impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.
