



Security Council

Seventy-second year

8099th meeting

Tuesday, 14 November 2017, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Cardi (Italy)

Members:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
France	Mrs. Gueguen
Japan	Mr. Kawamura
Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
Senegal	Mr. Ciss
Sweden	Mr. Skoog
Ukraine	Mr. Kyslytsya
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Rycroft
United States of America	Ms. Sison
Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Letter dated 2 November 2017 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2017/924)

Letter dated 2 November 2017 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2017/925)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

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The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Osman Saleh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Eritrea.

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

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/945, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members document S/2017/924, which contains a letter dated 2 November 2017 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, and to document S/2017/925, which contains a letter dated 2 November 2017 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council.

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

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Russian Federation

The President: There were 11 votes in favour, none against and 4 abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2385 (2017).

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

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption today of resolution 2385 (2017), which renews the Eritrea and Somalia sanctions regimes for a further 12 months. This is a vital regime for the region — one that keeps guns and funds out of the hands of Al-Shabaab and helps to promote peace and stability across the Horn of Africa.

We also recognize, however, that the Eritrea regime commands differing views among Council members, so as penholder we have worked hard to balance these views. The resolution adopted today is a measured text that acknowledges and attempts to bridge those differences. We are disappointed that some Council members could not support the resolution today, but I do thank all Council members for their cooperation and engagement in its drafting.

In spite of those differences, the sanctions regime will continue its important work. In Somalia, it will continue to prevent the flow of illicit arms and funding to terrorist groups; it will help to preserve Somalia's resources for Somalia's economic development; and it will help to strengthen the Somali National Security Forces by giving them access to the necessary equipment and support to build a stronger weapons and ammunition management system. Through the resolution, we have also agreed additional steps to support Somalia. The text requests that the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea recommend further action that we can take against those who continue to put money into the hands of Al-Shabaab by violating the

charcoal ban, as well as on additional steps to prevent chemical precursors from reaching Al-Shabaab.

Through these new and existing measures, the regime will continue to support the significant progress that Somalia has made this year, including at the London Conference in May, and we look forward to the December meetings in Mogadishu that will provide further important milestones towards achieving Somalia's stability and prosperity. These are efforts that we should all back. We will not allow terrorist groups like Al-Shabaab to undermine this progress through their indiscriminate attacks on civilians.

Turning to Eritrea, the resolution recognizes the positive developments that have occurred this year. There have been no provocative actions on the Djibouti border following the withdrawal of Qatari forces, and we welcome the fact that the Monitoring Group has once again found no conclusive evidence of Eritrean support for Al-Shabaab. We also welcome Qatar's efforts in the mediation process so far. As a Council, I am sure that we all stand ready to engage with Eritrea constructively, but this effort must be reciprocated. With that in mind, we have made clear in the resolution the route that Eritrea needs to take to fully abide by the arms embargo and to engage fully with the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, as well as the Monitoring Group, so that we can be satisfied of that.

As penholder, we stand ready to support Kazakhstan as Chair of the sanctions committee to kick-start this engagement, and I hope that all Council members will join me in strongly encouraging Eritrea to come in from the cold.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): We welcome the adoption of resolution 2385 (2017), renewing the mandate of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea for another year. The United Kingdom should be commended for all these efforts in facilitating the resolution and in trying to accommodate as much as possible the comments and inputs of members of the Council.

This sanctions regime has critical importance to regional peace and stability, and much significance should be attached to its full and effective implementation. In that regard, the Monitoring Group has certainly provided extensive information and analysis in its latest annual reports on Somalia and Eritrea (S/2017/924 and S/2017/925, respectively), and the Security Council should take this opportunity to

express its appreciation to the group for its dedicated efforts in monitoring the implementation of the sanctions regime.

We believe that it is fitting to thank those that voted for resolution 2385 (2017), because we understand their gesture as an expression of commitment to peace and security for the Horn of Africa — a region that is desperately in need of even a temporary respite from the overwhelming number of conflicts affecting it. We are therefore extremely appreciative, not because we are fond of sanctions, but because for now there is no other alternative for halting acts leading to destabilization, which is impossible to ignore in the reports of the Monitoring Group.

As far as the situation in Somalia is concerned, the growing influence of Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh) is a cause for serious concern that should give us more reason to continue intensifying our efforts in combating terrorism and violent extremism. That cannot be done however without providing the necessary support for the Somalia National Security Forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia. We cannot afford to take for granted the security gains made in recent years, which, as we have seen recently, can easily be reversed in the absence of sustained international support and engagement.

With regard to Eritrea, despite the increased tempo of lobbying in the run-up to the renewal of mandates, we have seen no change of behaviour whatsoever in the country's destabilizing activities in the region. It continues to violate the arms embargo and supports armed opposition groups operating in the region. Based on corroborating evidence, the Monitoring Group has documented very well the extent to which Eritrea continues to violate the sanctions regime in complete disregard of the relevant Security Council resolutions. That cannot and should not be taken lightly.

With regard to providing conclusive evidence of Eritrea's support for Al-Shabaab, we understand that that continues to be a work-in-progress, as the Monitoring Group has not been able to make a clear determination with regard to the investigative work that it is carrying out. But it has not ruled out Eritrea's support for Al-Shabaab. It should be understood that, according to the Monitoring Group's report on Eritrea, it was unable to find conclusive evidence. The lack of conclusive evidence does not denote the absence of evidence, in the least, especially in circumstances in

which the Monitoring Group has not been allowed to visit Eritrea. We should therefore allow the Monitoring Group to finalize its investigation.

Eritrea has continued to obstruct the implementation of resolution 1862 (2009). It should be called upon to clarify the situation concerning the remaining Djiboutian prisoners of war. Eritrea has not even acknowledged the existence of those prisoners of war, but at one point stated that they had died. We note what was stated in the mid-term update in the final report indicating that those prisoners might still be alive, which contradicts Eritrea's statements. Therefore it is incumbent upon Eritrea to clarify the situation concerning the remaining prisoners of war in line with its treaty obligations and pursuant to resolution 2385 (2017), which we adopted today.

Eritrea has also not given a constructive response to both the Monitoring Group's request to visit the disputed area between Djibouti and Eritrea and the African Union fact-finding mission following the withdrawal of Qatari forces. The visit to Djibouti has already been conducted, while a positive response regarding the Eritrean portion remains forthcoming. That is a clear indication that Eritrea does not have any desire to fulfil its obligations. Although other countries under sanctions regimes try to cooperate as much as possible, Eritrea has not shown thus far any willingness or readiness to extend the necessary level of cooperation to the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, and the Monitoring Group. We have to wonder why Eritrea continues to refuse to allow the sanctions committee and the Monitoring Group to visit Asmara. That really does not make any sense unless it has something to hide. A country that desperately wants sanctions lifted would logically have to demonstrate the maximum level of cooperation, but that does not seem to be the case. Some might be inclined to give short shrift to that, while ignoring how critical it is for regional peace and security.

Once again, the Council has urged Eritrea to facilitate the visit by the Chair of the sanctions committee and the Monitoring Group. We are hopeful that that will happen, and even more hopeful that Eritrea will choose to live in peace with Djibouti and Ethiopia, which we know would not make some people happy, but would be in the best interest of the peoples of the three countries in the region, in general. That is something we look forward to with great hope.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to explain the reasons for which my delegation abstained in the voting on resolution 2385 (2017), on the renewal of sanctions against Somalia and Eritrea and the extension of the mandate of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea.

We would have preferred greater balance in the drafting of the resolution and that it take into account some of the points made in the report of the Monitoring Group on Eritrea (S/2017/925), particularly those pertaining to the absolute lack of proof of Eritrea's support for Al-Shabaab. This is the fourth consecutive year that the Monitoring Group has made the point that there is no conclusive evidence. That was the primary and original reason for imposing sanctions against Eritrea in 2009, which is that it was supporting Al-Shabaab. Presently, we have no evidence to support that claim.

There is also the issue of supporting regional armed opposition groups, which must be addressed without bias or partisanship if it is a concern. Addressing such a concern means confronting the root and real causes so as to stamp out the phenomenon of regional non-State armed groups and its ensuing instability for the broader region. We would have liked to have seen the resolution serve as an opportunity to review sanctions against Eritrea and conduct such a review based on clear criteria that would have allowed Eritrea to continue to cooperate with the Security Council in such a way so as to strengthen peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and properly consider the concerns of all parties in the region, particularly as they pertain to humanitarian issues. To cite an example, I would point out the need to solve the issue of the disappeared soldiers from Djibouti. There is also a need to step up efforts to resolve peacefully the border dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti.

I would also like to affirm that Egypt's abstention in the voting is in line with our clear position on the issue of sanctions, which is that they are not an end in themselves. They are temporary measures to be resorted to only in exceptional circumstances in order to achieve a political result. Sanctions should not last indefinitely, with no stated limits. They should also be flexible enough to enable them to be revised based on changing circumstances on the ground. Despite the efforts that have been made and our willingness to be flexible in order to enable us to reach a consensus, the draft submitted failed to take into account various

members' proposals, including Egypt's, whose thoughts on the subject are based on what I have just outlined. That is why we were unable to vote in favour of resolution 2385 (2017).

With regard to Somalia, we reaffirm the importance of maintaining the sanctions regime as outlined in the resolution in order to prevent arms reaching terrorists and to cut off their financial and material support, with the goal of eliminating terrorism and strengthen peace and stability in Somalia.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Like other members of the Council, we are eager to see sustainable peace and stability achieved as soon as possible in Somalia and Eritrea, and in the Horn of Africa as a whole, but we were obliged to abstain in the voting on resolution 2385 (2017) for the following reasons.

The main criteria for instituting restrictive measures against Asmara in 2009 were based on Eritrea's support to the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea, the support Asmara was lending to armed groups operating against Djibouti and Ethiopia and Eritrea's lack of cooperation with the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea.

In the intervening eight years, the situation on the ground has changed significantly. For the fourth year in a row, the reports of the Monitoring Group conclude that there is no convincing evidence of Eritrea's support for Al-Shabaab. As for its claims that the Eritreans allegedly support regional armed groups, the same report from the experts says that this kind of assistance is forthcoming not just from Asmara, but from almost every State in the region. In other words, the problem is clearly a regional one, and it would be unfair to blame Eritrea alone for the destabilization of the entire region. We would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that some of the armed groups mentioned by the Monitoring Group have headquarters in the capitals of countries whose delegations are sitting around this table. We can therefore see that some of the reasons that gave rise to the need to impose sanctions on Eritrea no longer exist, while the sanctions regime itself continues unchanged.

We are concerned about the fact that the Monitoring Group was unable to visit Eritrea this year, and we supported the draft text's provisions related to that. However, in our view, compared with last year's version, this year's resolution has only worsened.

Despite our repeated requests, it makes no reference to a road map that could serve as a kind of guide for Eritrea's actions in the future. In addition, the authors deleted the reference in the preamble to the fact that the Monitoring Group once again failed to find conclusive evidence of Eritrean support to Al-Shabaab, on the pretext that the passage also appears in the operative part of the resolution and according to them was therefore superfluous.

At the same time, however, in both the preamble and the operative part of the resolution there are paragraphs critical of Eritrea that correspond to the penholders' interests, and we cannot support this kind of selective approach. In that regard, we once again reiterate the importance of formulating some sort of road map for gradually lifting the sanctions on Asmara, as we and a number of delegations suggested during the work on the draft resolution as long ago as last year, as well as during 2017.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): Sweden welcomes the Council's adoption this morning of resolution 2385 (2017), although we regret that we were unable to reach consensus on it. We supported it because we believe that it is important to continue backing the wider effort to bring peace, stability and prosperity to the Horn of Africa, as well as to address challenges and disputes in the region.

With regard to Somalia, the sanctions regime continues to play a critical role in supporting the international effort to defeat Al-Shabaab by blocking flows of illicit arms and preventing it from raising funds. Our continued strong support to the Somali peace- and State-building process is crucial if we are not to imperil the political and security gains already made. There is still a long road ahead for Somalia, with many important tasks remaining. The international community and the Somali people must stay the course in maintaining their momentum and building on what has been achieved.

With regard to Eritrea, it is the Council's job to continually assess whether its measures are achieving its objectives. Sanctions are not an end in themselves, but a means to an end. We welcome the fact that in the resolution, the Council clearly states its readiness to regularly review the measures on Eritrea, as that country takes steps to deepen its cooperation with the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, and with the

international community as a whole. We take due note of the fact that the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, in consecutive reports, has found no evidence of Eritrean support for Al-Shabaab. It is essential to ensure that Eritrea cooperates with the Committee and the Monitoring Group so that this encouraging assessment can be verified once and for all. Based on that, the Council can initiate a review of the sanctions regime.

The current situation concerning several border issues continues to jeopardize regional stability and obstruct regional cooperation and development. As the resolution makes clear, all Member States in the region have a responsibility to refrain from destabilizing acts and to work towards peace and prosperity in the Horn of Africa.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): The United States strongly supports the Council's adoption today of resolution 2385 (2017), an important resolution that renews the mandate of the Somalia and Eritrea sanctions regimes. The renewal reflects the Security Council's understanding that those regimes are a significant part of the international community's comprehensive response to the situation in the Horn of Africa. By renewing the mandate of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, we signal our commitment to greater security and peace for the region.

We would like to acknowledge the recent engagement between the Government of Eritrea and the United States and the international community generally. We encourage Eritrea to continue to work to address the Security Council's concerns. While we appreciate our dialogue with Eritrea, we must note our disappointment that the Monitoring Group and the Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea continue to be prevented from visiting the country. That lack of cooperation hinders the Monitoring Group's ability to fulfil its mandate to fully assess Eritrea's compliance. It will be essential to confirm that compliance in order to ease the sanctions regime. Allowing the Monitoring Group to visit and fulfil its mandate is a necessary initial step.

We remain deeply concerned about the Monitoring Group's reports of possible sanctions violations, including the interdiction of military encrypted radios being shipped from North Korea to Eritrea, as well as Eritrean support to regional armed groups. We

also expect Eritrea to share any additional available information in order to resolve any lingering questions regarding any Djiboutian prisoners in its custody.

Turning to Somalia, we acknowledge the ongoing efforts made by the Federal Government of Somalia aimed at security sector reform and at complying with its reporting requirements under the sanctions regime. More broadly, it is clear that Somalia has an important opportunity to solidify its political and security gains. Now that the Federal Government of Somalia has a president, prime minister and cabinet in place, the Federal Government and Somalia's federal member States must focus on providing effective governance to the people of Somalia.

The continuing threat posed by the Al-Shabaab cannot be overlooked. We note with grave concern the Monitoring Group's reports regarding the group's enhanced revenue from Somalia's natural resources, and the United States strongly reaffirms the ban on the import and export of Somali charcoal. We expect all Member States to fulfil their obligations to ensure full implementation of this ban and look forward to additional detailed reporting from the Monitoring Group on the sources of Al-Shabaab's funding.

Similarly, the presence of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Somalia is a serious warning against complacency. Somali authorities must continue to work with the international community to neutralize this threat. Resolution 2385 (2017) highlights the importance of good governance, the gains already made in the country and the prospects for future progress.

We support Somalia in its efforts to lay the foundation for a more stable, representative and inclusive Government. The United States stands by Somalia, and the international community and the Security Council must remain engaged to ensure the region realizes a more peaceful future. By supporting the full implementation of the measures reflected in today's resolution, Member States will help promote the long-term peace and stability of the Horn of Africa and the wider region. We join Council members in sending that strong message today.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Recently, the overall situation in the Horn of Africa has remained stable. Meanwhile, Al-Shabaab and other terrorist organizations are still rampant, bringing challenges to peace and development in the region.

China has been closely following the situation in the Horn of Africa. We appreciate the contributions by the African Union and the countries in the region in combating Al-Shabaab. We call upon the international community to continue to assist Somalia in its nation-building efforts and support the African Union Mission in Somalia and the Somali National Security Forces in their efforts so as to achieve peace and stability in the Horn of Africa as early as possible.

The countries of the Horn of Africa live in close proximity to each other and form a community with a shared future, interconnected interests and a common destiny. Therefore, maintaining regional peace and stability is in the fundamental interest of all the countries of the region. China sincerely hopes that the countries of the region will move forward towards the overall peace and stability in Horn of Africa in the fundamental interests of the peoples in the region, reinforce good-neighbourly relationships, strengthen solidarity and cooperation, and settle their differences through dialogue and consultation, all of which is in the fundamental interest of the countries in the region.

It has been the consistent view of China that sanctions are a means rather than an end in and of themselves. Sanctions should be conducive to cooperation among the countries in settling their differences and should be adjusted in the light of the situation on the ground. Council members have differing views on resolution 2385 (2017), which we just adopted, and the text still has room for further improvement. In view of the foregoing, and on the basis of China's consistent position on sanctions, China abstained in the voting.

China hopes that the countries concerned will continue to follow the principles of being friendly to their neighbours, paying attention to the legitimate concerns of neighbouring countries, and taking effective measures to improve their relationships with neighbouring countries so as to achieve common security, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, China will continue to play a constructive role in achieving regional peace, stability and development in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay believes that the sanctions regime continues to play a vital role in the promotion of peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.

In Somalia, the regime is curbing the illicit arms flow and cutting the financing of Al-Shabaab. Uruguay has followed the situation in the Horn of Africa closely and welcomes the progress made by the Federal Government of Somalia. We congratulate the African Union and the countries of the region for their contribution in the fight against the Al-Shabaab terrorist group, and we appeal to the international community to continue to help Somalia in its efforts.

As for Eritrea, the Government of Eritrea must still allow the Monitoring Group to visit the country. Although in its report (S/2017/925) the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea highlights the fact that for the fourth consecutive year no conclusive evidence of Eritrean support for Al-Shabaab in Somalia has been found, Uruguay believes that if Eritrea were to allow the Monitoring Group to visit the country, verify the lack of support for armed groups and ascertain the fate of prisoners of war, the Council would be in a position to reconsider delisting Eritrea from the sanctions list.

Nevertheless, it is important for the Security Council to begin to consider and develop other working methods that will allow us to unblock the situation and move forward towards the resolution of conflicts in the Horn of Africa, keeping in mind that sanctions are a means and not an end in and of themselves. As such, the resolution addresses the sanctions regime imposed on Somalia and does not dissociate the two regimes. Voting against it would have called into question the sanctions regime currently in force for Somalia. For that reason Uruguay voted in favour of the proposal.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): Achieving sustainable global peace is impossible without peace and security in Africa and the Horn of Africa in particular. Even though we see success in the building of political institutions by the Federal Government of Somalia, terrorist organizations continue to perpetrate their destructive activities. It is clear that efforts made at peacebuilding and nation-building should be redoubled in a coherent, coordinated and supportive manner in order to fight these terrorist groups.

We support resolution 2385 (2017) adopted today and believe that Somalia needs all the support of the Sanctions Committee in order to overcome its upcoming challenges. We welcome the progress made by the Federal Government of Somalia in promoting the political process and call on the international

community to continue to help Somalia in its State-building efforts.

We should reinforce the efforts being made by the United Nations, the international community and the Federal Government of Somalia to avert famine and must take all measures to condemn and halt increased attacks against humanitarian actors and the obstruction of delivery of humanitarian aid. We need to facilitate full, safe and unhindered access to the timely delivery of assistance to those in need across Somalia in order not to repeat the 2011 famine. Kazakhstan provides assistance to the rural areas of the country.

With regard to Eritrea, we take note that the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea has found no conclusive evidence of Eritrea's support for Al-Shabaab. We welcome the willingness of the Government of Eritrea to facilitate a visit by the Chair and hope that a mutually convenient date will be agreed soon. It is obvious that great understanding of the situation on the ground could help the Security Council be better informed and thereby facilitate a review of measures on Eritrea.

On the issue of prisoners of war, we welcome the release of four prisoners of war by Eritrea in March 2016 and call on both sides to continue to engage in resolving the issues of combatants.

With regard to the Djibouti-Eritrea border issue, my delegation urges the two parties to maintain an atmosphere of calm and restraint and resolve their border dispute peacefully in the manner consistent with international law.

Finally, Kazakhstan considers sanctions to be a last resort and remains ready to continue to play a constructive role in achieving peace, stability and development in the Horn of Africa. As Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, I am committed to working in an open, transparent and objective manner with all members of the Council towards national reconciliation and the restoration of peace in this critical subregion. I also call on the support of all Member States in the implementation of the suggested measures and to help bring security and stability, which can then reinforce investments in development and progress, with gains for the entire region.

Mr. Llorenty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Bolivia has followed closely the

developments of the recent events in the Horn of Africa. First and foremost, we would like to underscore the fact that Bolivia supports the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea and hails its efforts to work with the parties and thereby contribute to improving the security situation in the region. Nonetheless, our abstention in the voting on resolution 2385 (2017) is explained as follows.

First, with regards to the sanctions, we reiterate once again that sanctions should not be an end in and of themselves. They should be a tool of last resort in the face of non-compliance with the provisional measures established in the Charter of the United Nations. Sanctions must be subjected to constant reviews as the circumstances and situation on the ground evolves.

Secondly, with regard to Eritrea, we underscore that the point that maintaining confidence-building measures among States must be applied to the actions of all States Members of the Organization. In that connection, we have taken note of the most recent report of the Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) and of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (S/2017/925), which finds no conclusive evidence of Eritrean support for the terrorist group, Al-Shabaab.

Thirdly, with regard to transparency and upholding the decisions of the Security Council, we believe that a visit to Eritrea by the sanctions committee and the Monitoring Group must also be carried out as quickly as possible.

Finally, we call on Eritrea to work towards the stability of the region and to set aside interests of any kind that might undermine that overarching goal.

As far as Somalia is concerned, we reiterate our concern about the ongoing depredations of Al-Shabaab in Somalia and across the subregion. Its use of sophisticated and asymmetric attacks reflects a testament to that, and the multiple attacks and hundreds of lives lost as a result of the attacks in Mogadishu last month are but one example thereof.

Bolivia calls on the international community as a whole to continue to support the efforts and initiatives of the African Union and the countries of the subregion to bring peace and stability to Somalia and to counter and defeat the terrorist threat. We would also like to underscore the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia aimed at developing and strengthening the

appropriate political process of peace and reconciliation for the country, taking into account its sovereignty and territorial.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the adoption of resolution 2385 (2017), which renews the sanctions regime for Somalia and Eritrea, as well as the mandate of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea associated with it.

With respect to Somalia, sanctions, specifically the arms embargo, remain an important and constructive tool in the face of the continued threat of Al-Shabaab to the country and the ongoing presence of Da'esh. In this regard, I would like once again to extend France's condolences to the people and the Government of Somalia for the horrific attack on 14 October in Mogadishu. Furthermore, with respect to the arms embargo, France underscores the fact that the stipulated exemptions help to safeguard the Somali authorities' capacity to access the equipment they need to defend themselves against terrorist groups.

With respect to Eritrea, France is of the view that the Security Council should adopt a balanced position and especially a realistic position. For the fourth consecutive year, the Monitoring Group has found no conclusive evidence of Eritrean support for Al-Shabaab in Somalia. This is a positive point. However, France is of the view that it remains necessary for Eritrea to cooperate with both the sanctions committee and the Monitoring Group and, more broadly, with other United Nations mechanisms prior to initiatives being undertaken by the Security Council.

The Council demonstrated a degree of openness last year with the adoption of resolution 2317 (2016) and with the consultations held this spring. However, the cancelling of the visit to Asmara by the Chair of the sanctions committee in this context was disappointing. Furthermore, Eritrea should commit to addressing the issue of Djiboutian war prisoners once and for all and to supporting active mediation with a view to a resumption of dialogue with Djibouti and in general there should be a cessation of any support for armed groups in the region. The door remains open, but we await tangible gestures of cooperation.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal welcomes the adoption of resolution 2385 (2017), renewing the sanctions regime for Somalia and Eritrea, which is an indication of our collective willingness to

continue to closely monitor the political and security situations in the two countries.

The ongoing concerns that are reflected in the text also constitute, in our view, a demonstration of the common acknowledgement of the challenges faced in Somalia and Eritrea. Indeed, in Somalia the presence and nefarious actions of Al-Shabaab, which continues to occupy parts of the territory and perpetrate attacks, including recently, makes the security situation in the country more difficult at a time when Somali leaders are attempting to restore and strengthen the rule of law.

In this context, my delegation extends its support for the political agreement of 16 April between the Federal Somali Government and the federal states on a national security mechanism aimed at integrating the regional and federal forces, as well as the Security Pact adopted at the London Conference.

We also stress the importance afforded by this resolution for a comprehensive approach that takes into account the importance of stepping up efforts to eliminate the sources of financing for Al-Shabaab. We support the provisions in the resolution to prevent illegal exploitation of natural resources in Somalia. Senegal hopes that the implementation of this resolution will help to promote to peaceful reconstruction of Somalia.

With regard to Eritrea, the resolution rightly acknowledges the recent efforts of the Government to rebuild the links with the international community. This cooperation is of critical importance and in the future could enable the Council to better assess the measures to be implemented by that country. I would like to recall that the Monitoring Group has not found evidence of Eritrean support for Al-Shabaab.

With respect to the border dispute with Djibouti, we welcome the calm and restraint of both parties and we request that they look into any possible way to arrive at a peaceful solution.

We are confident about the effectiveness of regional processes. We are convinced that only full cooperation of States in the region within the framework of regional mechanisms established for that purpose can ensure a coordinated and, therefore, sustainable response to the problems regarding Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups plaguing the region.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Italy.

Italy shares deep historical, cultural, economic, historical and strategic ties with the whole Horn of Africa and is deeply committed to the full restoration of peace and stability in the region. Therefore, we welcome the adoption of resolution 2385 (2017) and we thank the penholder, the United Kingdom, for its excellent work. We spared no efforts in negotiating the text adopted today in order to introduce some provisions that could reflect the evolution of the situation and open the way for reviews of the sanctions regime in the near future, allowing us to fully support this text.

Regarding Somalia, the resolution condemns the violations of the arms embargo, which undermine Somali sovereignty and territorial integrity. Moreover, for the first time, the Security Council has recognized Somalia's progress in arms control and has committed to revising the embargo once Mogadishu has met all the conditions.

Turning to Eritrea, in the operative part of the resolution the Security Council recognizes for the first time that there is no conclusive evidence of the alleged support of Eritrea to Al-Shabaab, as the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea has been stating for four years. Furthermore, the Security Council is committed to reviewing the sanctions on Eritrea again, starting in the next semester. To this end, Eritrea should enhance its cooperation with the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea and the Monitoring Group, in particular by facilitating a visit of the Chair of committee. Cooperation with both the sanctions committee and the Monitoring Group is not an option; it is mandatory requirement in order to open more doors in the coming months.

Sanctions are an instrument, not an end. Like every instrument, they must be revised when new circumstances require it. Somalia and Eritrea should seize the opportunities offered by the resolution adopted today.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): I am pleased to be addressing members of the Security Council today at this meeting on Somalia's behalf. At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Umarov for his efforts, as Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, to advance

its work since he took office. We broadly support resolution 2385 (2017), on Somalia, and commend the British Government, as penholder of the resolution, for its engagement, as well as all members of the sanctions committee for their work.

We welcome the steps taken to strengthen and fully implement the ban on the charcoal trade, which provides significant funding for the terrorist organization Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab remains the most pressing threat in Somalia and causes serious security problems in the country and indeed in the region. In this regard, I would like to remind the Council that, shortly after his inauguration, His Excellency President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo offered grace and amnesty to the members of these terrorist organizations. However, his offer was declined by those terrorists.

As a result, the strengthening of our security capabilities and architecture through the reform of the security sector and a robust disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme continue to be the main priority for the Somali Government. We firmly believe that this reform will be achieved only through the increased coordinated assistance of the international community to the Somali security sector, strengthening the Somali national army, and a more robust African Union Mission in Somalia force, while enforcing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia. I should like to emphasize the following three points.

First, while the resolution underscores the importance of working to prevent the destabilizing effects of the regional crisis from spilling over into Somalia, it does not specifically identify the impact of the Gulf crisis on Somalia, be it from a political disintegration perspective or otherwise. It was our hope that the resolution would be more explicit about the need for respect for the political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and, above all, unity of Somalia.

Secondly, while the resolution calls on the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea to further investigate the use of chemicals in the manufacture of improvised explosive devices, our Government would like to see recommendations adopted by the Security Council to curb such fatal tactics, especially given the fact that six of the last seven Al-Shabaab bombs contained chemicals, and in view of the scale of the

14 October bombing, in which over 350 innocent lives were lost.

Thirdly, the arms embargo has been in effect in Somalia for over 20 years, with multiple modifications, including that of a partial lift. Although the resolution calls for the implementation of a national security architecture for Somalia that would integrate regional and federal forces, the existing arms embargo framework on Somalia supports a dis-integrated supply of weapons and ammunition to multiple different security sector entities and may contribute to fragmenting our country in the worst possible way. There may be a rationale for limited specific exemptions, but the arms embargo framework must be closely aligned with the architecture of Somalia's national security sector. The Monitoring Group, in its Implementation Assistance Notice No. 2 of 2016, recognizes these concerns and provides recommendations to the Security Council that have, to date, been ignored.

I accept that my Government needs to do more to fully comply with the partial-lift requirements, including the improvements we must make to our weapons management and command-and-control systems. I confirm that my Government will work on enhancing compliance over the next year. In this regard, we ask the Council to consider developing clearly defined benchmarks for the full lifting of the arms embargo, as well as updating the arms embargo framework on Somalia to reflect our national security architecture.

Finally, we express our great concern regarding the fact that the Eritrean Government has not accounted for the 13 remaining Djiboutian prisoners of war who are detained incommunicado in Eritrean prisons. We urge Eritrea to release them immediately, to comply with Security Council resolutions and to negotiate in good faith the settlement of the border dispute with Djibouti, which the Federal Government believe to be detrimental to the stability of the security situation in the Horn of Africa.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Eritrea.

Mr. Saleh (Eritrea): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, and Italy on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of November. I have the honour to address this meeting of the Security Council on behalf of the people of Eritrea who have, for

over half a century, been at the forefront of the struggle for peace and human dignity in the Horn of Africa.

Today once again, the Security Council has missed another opportunity to rectify its transgression against the people of Eritrea and to positively contribute to security in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, which have long suffered the debilitating effects of the scourge of conflict, poverty and terrorism. For five years — including this — the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea has asserted that there is no evidence of Eritrean support to Al-Shabaab in Somalia, which is the principal justification invoked for imposing sanctions. This should never have come as a surprise, as Eritrea's role in combating terrorism in the region is a matter of historical record.

With regard to Djibouti, it is unprecedented for the Council to sanction one party without any symmetry, especially when the dispute is under a mutually agreed mediation. The skewed manner in which the Security Council has been handling the dispute continues to breed a sense of non-obligation for the Government of Djibouti, which pursues a policy of provocation aimed at stirring up tensions when, in fact, the border between the two countries remains calm. Moreover, Eritrea finds it ironic that the Council has chosen to remain silent on Ethiopia's illegal occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories for 15 years while it harasses Eritrea on account of a putative border dispute with Djibouti.

The message to the people of Eritrea from those that supported resolution 2385 (2017) is loud and clear. Eritrea has done no wrong, nor has it violated Security Council resolutions, yet the sanctions will be maintained for the sole purpose of targeting Eritrea. The message to the citizens of the region is equally clear — there is no willingness on the part of the Council to address the core issues undermining peace and security in the region.

The emphasis placed by some Council members on alleged support to armed groups is inappropriate, unacceptable and based on a double standard. It will reward aggravation, occupation, the policies of destabilization and regime change, and provocation. It will encourage the perpetuation of zero-sum games, which is unfortunate, but more importantly, it will be viewed as a discredit to this organ, which is mandated with the critical task of maintaining international peace and security.

The Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region remain volatile and fragile. Eritrea is making its modest but significant contribution to stabilizing the region; however it is critical to examine whether the sanctions that have been in place against Eritrea for the past eight years are abating conflicts or fuelling them. Evidently, the sanctions have worsened the situation by rewarding an aggressor and giving Ethiopia a sense of impunity. They have entailed the perpetuation of the conflict, resulting in a heavy price paid by the peoples of Ethiopia and Eritrea, as well as complicating the regional security situation. Eritrea once again calls on the Council to redress that wrong, in the interests not only of Eritrea, but also of Ethiopia, the subregion and the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region.

Regional peace and security in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region are first and foremost the responsibility of the countries of the region. Eritrea will continue its constructive engagement and contribution to ensuring peace, amity and progress in our region. Eritrea's conviction arises from its belief that a conducive environment is essential to its all-inclusive and people-centred development.

I wish to conclude by thanking those delegations that did not support this politically motivated and counterproductive resolution adopted by the Council.

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

Mr. Doualeh (Djibouti): At the outset, Djibouti wishes to express its profound gratitude to the members of the Security Council for this opportunity to offer Djibouti's perspective on the unresolved border dispute with Eritrea and the heightened tension and insecurity following the withdrawal of Qatari forces on 13 June. It further wishes to thank Mr. Kairat Umarov, Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, and to commend the United Kingdom for its efforts leading to the adoption today of resolution 2385 (2017).

On Somalia, I would like to underline Djibouti's strong concern that Al-Shabaab continues to pose a serious threat to the peace and stability of the region. We have in particular witnessed a worrying trend of incredibly vicious multiple attacks this year. According to some reports, Al-Shabaab has been involved in more than half of all the violent events attributed to militant Islamist groups in Africa in the first three quarters of 2017.

We applaud the political agreement reached on 16 April for a national security architecture to integrate regional and federal forces, as well as the Security Pact agreed at the London Conference, and we look forward to the security conference to be held in Mogadishu in December. We firmly believe that it is only through viable political settlement that we can help chart an agreed pathway towards creating professional national security forces.

To realize our common goal of defeating and degrading Al-Shabaab, it is important to underscore that continued and enhanced support will be required for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces. International partners must enhance their support for AMISOM by providing the Mission with vital capabilities — in particular, force multipliers and enablers — to help face the challenges to achieving its mandated tasks. Finally, Djibouti reiterates its enduring commitment to peace in Somalia and its readiness to contribute in any way possible.

On Eritrea, Djibouti expresses serious concern that for the fifth consecutive mandate, the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea was not permitted to visit Eritrea. Similarly, the mission proposed by the Chair of the Monitoring Group could not take place due to conflicting schedules — an excuse that is frequently cited by Eritrea for not cooperating with monitoring missions.

We continue to believe that Eritrea has never ceased arming and providing support to Al-Shabaab, and we have shared evidence of that with the Monitoring Group, as contained in its report to the Council (S/2017/945). As the monitoring missions were prevented from carrying out their mandates in Eritrea, they were obviously unable to draw any conclusions on Eritrea's behaviour. Eritrea should commit to full cooperation with the Monitoring Group, including by allowing full access to all information and records that the mission deems necessary to review and all personnel it deems necessary to interview.

The resolution just adopted by the members of the Council underscores the importance of cooperation with the Monitoring Group. There must be a change in the behaviour of the State of Eritrea, and we hope that it will not again — in defiance of the Council — publicly vow to obstruct the work of the Monitoring Group, as it unequivocally did in this Chamber in April, when its representative said: "Eritrea does not see any added

value in a visit by the Monitoring Group to the country” (S/PV.7925, p. 17).

It has been almost 10 years since Eritrea breached international law by illegally moving into our territory and occupying Ras Doumeira and Doumeira Island. It has also been 10 years since Eritrea took Djiboutian prisoners of war and refused to provide a list of names and identification numbers for those prisoners and other missing persons in its custody, or to otherwise account for the Djiboutians in its custody, held incommunicado and in the most inhumane and degrading conditions. It has been 10 years since Eritrea started recruiting, equipping and arming groups to destabilize the region and incite violence and civil strife in Djibouti.

The report of the Monitoring Group offers compelling evidence of Eritrea’s ongoing attempts to exacerbate the conflict by fomenting armed rebellion against the Government of Djibouti. We have consistently demonstrated a persistent and keen interest in the peaceful resolution of this crisis. We have left no stone unturned in our quest for the resolution of the crisis. Following the end of Qatar’s mediation efforts and the departure of Qatar’s personnel from the international border, Eritrea moved its military personnel to Ras Doumeira and Doumeira Island, thereby contributing to heightened tensions and insecurity, and threatening a new outbreak of violence.

Alarmed at the possibility of the resumption of hostilities, the African Union decided to deploy a fact-finding mission to both Djibouti and Eritrea. Djibouti has cooperated with and facilitated the work of the African Union mission in its endeavour to accomplish its mandate. Characteristically, Eritrea is yet to cooperate with the African Union’s fact-finding mission. As called for in the resolution just adopted by the Council, Djibouti fully commits to continuing to cooperate with the Chair of the African Union.

Four months have elapsed since the withdrawal of Qatari observers, and Eritrea continues to illegally occupy Djibouti’s sovereign territory. Now that the unresolved border dispute is no longer subject to third-party mediation, Djibouti is of the view that the Security Council must urge Eritrea and Djibouti to accept — as a matter of urgency and in order to avoid the further escalation of violence — the peaceful settlement of the border dispute in conformity with Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.

We thank the members of the Security Council for their assessment of the situation, and in particular we note paragraph 40, which urges the two parties “to seek all available solutions to settle their border dispute peacefully in a manner consistent with international law”. To fulfil the Security Council’s resolution, Djibouti would agree to submit the dispute for final and binding determination by the International Court of Justice or an international arbitrary tribunal established in conformity with the applicable rules of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Even though the Qatar-led mediation broke down as soon as it began because Eritrea refused to appoint its member to the mediating body, Djibouti has invested in peace from a very early stage. It has submitted a legal memorandum and a comprehensive statement of pertinent facts and legal principles applicable to that matter and other matters that form part of the dispute. We have cooperated and devoted time, resources and energy to achieving a peaceful settlement. In return, we have encountered only obfuscations in bad faith from Eritrea.

Thirteen remaining prisoners of war are unaccounted for and remain in Eritrea’s custody. Our prisoners of war are human beings, not numbers. The release of our remaining prisoners of war from the cruelties of captivity has been uppermost in our thoughts. We will work tirelessly to ensure their repatriation. Eritrea’s self-serving claims that it released all the Djibouti prisoners of war in its custody have no credibility whatsoever. Even after two Djiboutian prisoners of war escaped in 2011, Eritrea refused to acknowledge that it had ever held them. Indeed, for eight years, Eritrea denied the existence of the four prisoners of war that it did release.

The African Union, in its statement issued in March 2016, was compelled to say the following:

“While acknowledging the March 2016 release of Djibouti prisoners of war, nonetheless we call on Eritrea to clarify the fate of any remaining prisoners and to release them”.

In contrast, the Government of Djibouti has authorized the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to review all the individual histories of Eritrean prisoners of war held in Djibouti since the clashes of 2008, and to make recommendations with respect to their status and need for protection.

Djibouti's overtures were rebuffed and its offer of dialogue was refused. Instead of looking for peace, Eritrea preferred to make war. Instead of cooperating with the African Union's fact-finding mission, Eritrea is yet to provide a date. By renewing the sanctions, the Security Council has sent a clear political signal that Eritrea has only itself to blame. Indeed, any objective and impartial analysis would reach the conclusion that the responsible party is Eritrea itself.

At the same time, today's resolution offers Eritrea a reasonable pathway. Eritrea is legally obligated to

comply with the resolutions of the Security Council because, as the United Nations fact-finding mission noted in its report of 12 September 2008 in regard to Eritrea's defiance of the Security Council,

“no country should be allowed to disregard the decisions of the Security Council with impunity, as this would not augur well for peace and security in the region and globally” (*S/2008/602, para. 56*).

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.