



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8647th meeting

Friday, 25 October 2019, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Matjila	(South Africa)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
	China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Moriko
	Dominican Republic	Ms. Morrison González
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	France	Mr. Michon
	Germany	Mrs. Heusgen
	Indonesia	Mr. Syihab
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Peru	Mr. Duclos
	Poland	Mr. Lewicki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Repkin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Mr. Barkin

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

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

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Ambassador Marc Pecsteen de Buytsverve, Permanent Representative of Belgium, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Pecsteen de Buytsverve.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytsverve (*spoke in French*): In accordance with paragraph 11 (g) of resolution 1844 (2008), I have the honour to brief the Council in my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, covering the period from 27 June to 25 October.

During the reporting period, the Committee convened two consultations. On 3 October, pursuant to paragraph 49 of resolution 2444 (2018), the Committee heard a briefing by the Deputy Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the fourteenth report of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator concerning the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia and any impediments thereto. That report was transmitted to the Security Council on 7 October (see S/2019/799).

In her briefing, the Deputy Director concluded that although Somalia was on the right track — with major achievements on the political, economic, humanitarian and security fronts — the country remained vulnerable to another climate shock or escalation of conflict. Moreover, the delivery of humanitarian assistance continued to be compromised as a result of inconsistent funding. In that context, she emphasized that it was essential that humanitarian assistance be exempted from asset freezing measures, as provided for in paragraph 48 of resolution 2444 (2018). Humanitarian organizations had collectively and individually strengthened their systems to identify and detect the risks of aid diversion, evaluate the capacity of implementation partners and assess relevant programmes through enhanced auditing

and reporting. The Deputy Director also called on the humanitarian sector to supplement the sustained provision of emergency assistance with longer-term solutions.

On 15 October, the Committee heard a briefing by the Panel of Experts on Somalia on its final report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 54 of resolution 2444 (2018). I will not detail the contents of the report here, as it is anticipated that it will be submitted to the Council in the coming days. In his remarks, the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts noted that Al-Shabaab remained a threat to Somalia and the region and that it had been confirmed that Al-Shabaab had been producing home-made explosives and had further expanded its revenue stream by levying a tax on virtually all trade in the south of the country. The group was once again responsible for the highest number of attacks against civilians, in violation of humanitarian law. The Coordinator of the Panel also noted that the current impasse between the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member states had had implications for peace and security in Somalia. Acknowledging the significant progress made by the Federal Government in the area of public finance management, the Coordinator of the Panel nevertheless referred to the work that remained to be done in that area.

With regard to the arms embargo, the Coordinator of the Panel believed that that measure had largely prevented heavier weapons from reaching Somalia and ultimately falling into the hands of Al-Shabaab and other armed actors. In recognizing that the current political and security contexts had changed since the embargo was first imposed in 1992, the Coordinator stated that it was clear to the Panel that the embargo should be streamlined, simplified and updated in order to reflect the current realities of counter-insurgency in Somalia. That included strengthening the monitoring of certain chemical components and precursors, including commercial explosives, which might be used by Al-Shabaab for the construction of improvised explosive devices. With regard to the ban on importing and exporting charcoal, the Coordinator of the Panel stated that it was no longer clear whether Al-Shabaab was deriving significant revenue from that trade and recommended to conduct a review of the ban, taking into account all implications for long-term peace and stability in Somalia, which will be vital to achieving the effective implementation of relevant Council resolutions.

The Coordinator of the Panel concluded his remarks by commenting on the Committee's sanctions list, which has been dormant for several years. He urged Member States to use targeted sanctions to discourage destructive behaviour in Somalia, including that of arms dealers, charcoal traffickers, financiers of terrorism, violators of international humanitarian law and political spoilers.

Committee members had a fruitful exchange of views with the Panel of Experts. They expressed their gratitude and support for the work carried out by the Panel in difficult circumstances and expressed the hope that the Federal Government of Somalia would participate constructively in that work. Of the 15 recommendations contained in the Panel's final report, only one is addressed to the Committee. On Friday 18 October, the Committee unanimously agreed on the action to be undertaken in response to the Panel's recommendation. The Committee is in the process of following up on that decision.

On 15 October, the Committee heard a briefing by the Head of the Global Maritime Crime Programme on the international community's efforts to disrupt the charcoal trade to and from Somalia, and on the complex environment allowing terrorist groups and transnational criminal organizations to exploit porous borders in order to finance their operations. I would like to highlight two important points from that briefing.

First, while the production of wood charcoal is funding Al-Shabaab, it is not a significant source of funding. Secondly, investigations into the charcoal trade reveal close links between Al-Shabaab and transnational organized criminal organizations, whose criminal activities including trafficking of persons, drugs and their chemical precursors, weapons, sugar, tobacco and materials used to make bombs.

I will conclude by summarizing some figures on exceptions to the arms embargo for the current reporting period, as well as other work carried out by the Committee.

The Committee received five pre-delivery notifications, pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2142 (2014) and paragraph 14 of resolution 2444 (2018), submitted by supplier Member States, and one additional notification, pursuant to paragraphs 14 and 22 of resolution 2444 (2018), submitted by the Federal Government of Somalia. The Committee also received two post-delivery confirmations from the Federal

Government of Somalia, pursuant to paragraphs 14 and 22 of resolution 2444 (2018). The Committee further received nine pre-delivery notifications, pursuant to sub-item (g) of paragraph 10 of resolution 2111 (2013). In addition, the Committee received one notification from a supplier State, pursuant to sub-item (a) of paragraph 11 of resolution 2111 (2013) and did not object to it. It is currently considering another such notification. Finally, the Committee also received two requests for clarification, one from a United Nations entity and the other from a Member State, on the scope and implementation of the arms embargo.

The President: I thank Ambassador Pecsteen de Buytswerve for his briefing.

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

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I thank the Ambassador of Belgium for his briefing. Let me take this opportunity today to make three points, first, on the central role the sanctions regime plays in maintaining peace and security in the region; secondly, our expectations of the upcoming mandate renewal; and finally, the importance of the Government of Somalia engaging with the Panel of Experts.

We all have shared interests in working towards the overall goal of transition to Somali-led security. The Council has been unified in its support. The arms embargo, charcoal ban and targeted sanctions were put in place to support Somalia's efforts, not to hinder them. The now partial arms embargo is designed not only to allow partners to support Somalia in its security sector reform, as the United Kingdom is doing, but also to prevent Al-Shabaab and other armed groups from getting hold of those weapons.

The work that the Panel of Experts, the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia and Member States have done to disrupt the charcoal trade — which was undertaken, of course, at Somalia's request — has resulted in a reduction of charcoal exports. The Panel, through its work, has uncovered more evidence and information about Al-Shabaab's use of chemical precursors. Those chemicals can be used to make homemade improvised explosive devices, which have been used to kill innocent people. The sanctions regime is there to enhance Somali security.

Turning to the mandate renewal and the future of the sanctions regime, we believe that our collective aim is to reach a stage where the arms embargo is no longer needed, and the United Kingdom is, at the moment, providing substantial bilateral support to the Somali Government. Our support is focused on building the capacity of Somali security forces, including on weapons management. I know that other partners are doing the same.

However, we still believe, at the moment, that the partial arms embargo is essential to limiting weapons and other materials from falling into the wrong hands. We intend to present a draft resolution that makes the sanctions regime more effective, sets out the key requirements in one place and strengthens measures against Al-Shabaab, which remains a serious concern in Somalia and a growing threat to the region. As always, we are willing and want to work with our Somali partners to chart a path towards progress. Let me thank the Chair for his work over the past year and the Panel of Experts for their vital role in monitoring the regime.

It is unacceptable and regrettable that Somalia has not cooperated fully with the Panel for the majority of its mandate, which, let us remember, was established under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Committee, and its Chair in particular, have continued to engage with Somalia to find a solution. I believe that the Committee and the Council are open to progress and to finding a way forward and through this problem, but in order to do so we need Somalia to engage with us.

Let me conclude by saying again that we depend on the vital work of the Panel of Experts, as we do for many issues before the Council. Its work is to support peace and security in Somalia. Our efforts to support Somali-led security will be effective only if we all work together.

Mrs. Heusgen (Germany): I thank the Belgian Ambassador for his briefing as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia.

I can only echo and underline what the representative of the United Kingdom has just said. Germany continues to fully support the Panel of Experts and its work. We also strongly urge the Government of Somalia to cooperate with the Panel of Experts. The instrument of sanctions against Al-Shabaab is used to support the Somali Government. If such sanctions

are to succeed, the Government's cooperation with the Panel is important and should be in the interest of the Government. Germany welcomes and supports the intention of the Panel of Experts to review the charcoal ban in 2020, as mentioned, but we believe that the environmental impacts of the charcoal trade, notably the effects of deforestation and worsening roads, should be reflected in this review, as they have had a devastating impact on the population and the development of the country.

Mr. Barkin (United States of America): I thank Ambassador Pecsteen de Buytswerve for his briefing today. His work as Chair of the of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia continues to contribute not only to the work of the Council, but also to the international efforts to advance peace and stability within Somalia and in the region.

Despite positive developments, the Federal Government of Somalia continues to face significant challenges on its path towards building a safe, stable and prosperous country. Somalia's ongoing humanitarian crisis remains particularly concerning. An estimated 1.7 million people in Somalia face life-threatening food insecurity, and at least 4.2 million people require urgent humanitarian assistance. The seemingly endless cycle of attacks against civilians, including those cited in the latest report of the Panel of Experts (S/2018/1002) and echoed in numerous prior reports from United Nations experts, must cease in order for Somalia to prosper.

I note that Al-Shabaab was once again responsible for the highest number of attacks against civilians. We are committed to the Somalia sanctions regime, and to using this regime to disrupt Al-Shabaab and its ability to conduct attacks against forces from Somalia, the African Union Military Observer Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the United States. As part of that effort, we look forward to cooperating closely with the Federal Government of Somalia and the international community to disrupt and ultimately eliminate the sources of financing for Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Shams (ISIS) in Somalia. Al-Shabaab continues to expand its revenue base through extensive informal taxation, and ISIS increasingly uses Somalia as the financial conduit to its regional affiliates. We look to partners to strengthen information-sharing on those threats both with the Federal Government of Somalia and multilaterally.

As we work to counter terrorism in Somalia, the United States continues to build the capacity of the security forces of the Federal Government of Somalia to secure and properly manage their conventional-weapon stockpiles to prevent pilferage and unauthorized transfers. International partners can help by coordinating closely on their respective security assistance efforts with the Somali Government. AMISOM and the Somali Government should continue working towards a conditions-based transfer of security responsibilities.

Finally, and in complete agreement with my colleagues from Germany and Great Britain with respect to the Federal Government of Somalia's non-cooperation with the Panel of Experts, we continue to encourage Somali officials to engage with the Panel and work to address the challenges — as highlighted by the Panel — that impede Somalia's progress towards security and stability.

The ongoing refusal of the Federal Government of Somalia to engage with the Panel of Experts and support its work is troubling. The Panel serves as the eyes and ears on the ground in Somalia and the region for the sanctions committee, and ultimately for the Council. We will not ignore or enable the ongoing efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia to stymie the work of the Panel of Experts. We look forward to engaging the Council, the sanctions committee, the Panel of Experts and our Somali partners to further the objectives of peace and stability in Somalia and the region, and ultimately to ensure a better future for all Somalis.

Mr. Michon (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Ambassador of Belgium for his briefing and reiterate France's full support for the realization of his mission.

I will focus on three points.

The first concerns the arms embargo, which, as our United Kingdom colleague mentioned earlier, is vital. It directly impairs the ability of terrorist groups, in particular Al-Shabaab, to acquire weapons and therefore cannot be considered an impediment to combating terrorism. It also plays a useful role in preventing trafficking in arms and ammunition, especially from Yemen. Finally, above all, it provides support for the Somali authorities in reforming the security sector and improving their capacities to manage weapons and ammunition. We have noted progress, but we also see that difficulties persist with regard to documented cases of weapons diverted from the Somali armed

forces to be found in the black market or in the hands of members of Al-Shabaab.

My second point is that we must step up the fight against the financing of Al-Shabaab. In that context, we note that no illegal Somali charcoal exports have been reported since the summer of 2018, which is good news and demonstrates that the work done by the Panel of Experts, together with certain Gulf countries, has been successful. We must, however, remain vigilant to ensure that such traffic does not resume.

We know that Somali charcoal is not Al-Shabaab's only source of funding. The terrorist group also generates very significant amounts of revenue from trafficking in arms, sugar and tobacco and new forms of taxation, including on imports arriving at the port of Mogadishu. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the Somali authorities, with the support of the international community and the Security Council, intensify their vigilance and actions to combat the financing of Al-Shabaab. We also hope that the Panel of Experts, which enjoys particular expertise in this area, will be able to support the efforts of the Somali authorities in combating the financing of Al-Shabaab.

My last point concerns the cooperation of the Somali federal authorities with the Panel of Experts. I will be very clear on this point. For almost 10 months the Security Council has been calling on the Somali authorities to cooperate fully with the Panel, which is mandated by the Council. The chairmanship of the 751 Committee has spared no effort to find a solution. Nevertheless, the Somali authorities have continued to refuse to cooperate with the Panel of Experts, which constitutes a direct challenge to the authority of the Council.

In that regard, we find it unacceptable that the Security Council should receive by letter new injunctions from the Somali Federal authorities, setting new conditions for cooperation with the current and future Panels of Experts. Without a change in attitude on the part of the Somali authorities, we might have to reconsider our position with regard to the considerable support that the international community has been providing for the security of Somalia for years. France therefore unequivocally calls on the Somali authorities to cooperate with the new Panel of Experts as soon as its members are appointed, including by allowing it to visit the country.

Lastly, I recall that we continue to believe that Eritrea must commit to working in good faith with Djibouti to resolve the border dispute between the two countries and the issue of Djibouti prisoners of war. The Council must continue to follow those two unresolved issues, for which concrete and rapid progress would make it possible to strengthen the peace process in the region.

Mr. Almunayekh (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we thank the Permanent representative of Belgium in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Sanctions Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, for his detailed briefing on the Committee's activities and the relevant information on its most salient work covering the period from June to October. We reiterate our support for the efforts made by the Chair of the Committee in effectively discharging his responsibilities. As Chair of the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, we greatly appreciate his commitment to working in an open, transparent and objective manner with all members of the Committee, in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

As we heard from the Permanent Representative of Belgium, the Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) has a critical and vital role to play in establishing security and stability in Somalia, particularly in

the context of implementing the sanctions regime, insofar as this is an effective way to help the Federal Government of Somalia prevent weapons falling into the hands of Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups, as well as to dry up sources of financing to those terrorist groups by imposing the embargo on Somali charcoal.

We commend the progress made by the Federal Government of Somalia in the management of its weapons and ammunition. We also commend the tangible improvement in the notification system following the partial lifting of the arms embargo imposed on Somalia. Furthermore, we welcome the outcome of the second Somalia Partnership Forum, held in Mogadishu earlier this month. The Forum has important positive implications for structuring the budget of the Federal Government and national development plans, as well as for supporting the transition plan for transferring security responsibilities in the country from the forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia to the Somali security forces.

In conclusion, we hope to effectively participate in the negotiations pertaining to the renewal of the Panel of Experts' mandate in November. We hope to realize our shared vision to support the Somali people so that they can build an inclusive Federal State that safeguards human rights and the basic freedoms of all its citizens.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.