



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8601st meeting

Wednesday, 21 August 2019, 9.30 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Ms. Wronecka (Poland)

Members:

Belgium	Mr. Cooreman
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
France	Mrs. Gueguen
Germany	Mr. Schulz
Indonesia	Mr. Syihab
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Ugarelli
Russian Federation	Mr. Repkin
South Africa	Mr. Matjila
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2019/661)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2019/661)

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in the meeting: 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; Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; and Ms. Amina Arale, Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Centre.

Mr. Madeira and Ms. Arale are joining this meeting via video-teleconference from Mogadishu.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/661, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia.

I now give the floor to Mr. Swan.

Mr. Swan: I am pleased to address the Security Council for the first time since assuming my duties in June. I want to begin by affirming to the members my full commitment to implementing the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), approved by the Council in resolution 2461 (2019), and other relevant Council resolutions. I also want to stress at the outset the central importance of key cross-cutting priorities in all that we do, including human rights, the women and peace and security agenda, youth engagement and the inclusion of civil society, among other issues.

Since my arrival in Somalia, I have been grateful for the warm welcome by the Federal Government,

federal member states and all of the Somalis I have had the pleasure of meeting. I also appreciate the collaboration to date of the international partners in Somalia and look forward to reinforcing that collaboration. I am particularly grateful for the counsel and close cooperation of Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, and I pay tribute to the continued heroic sacrifice of forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for the cause of peace in Somalia.

Since my return to a country I have followed closely for many years, I have been impressed by many visible signs of progress. I have visited each of the federal member states and Somaliland, where I had an opportunity to hear the perspectives of their leaders and people. In my travels around the country, I have observed many examples of recovery, development, improving security and functional State institutions. I have been deeply impressed, even moved, by the resilience, commitment and courage of Somalis I have encountered. This progress is a testimony to the ambitious but achievable peacebuilding and State-building agenda, to which Somalia's leaders are committed.

Somalia and its international partners are eager to see this progress advance between now and the end of 2020 through constitutional reform, advances in security operations and security sector reforms, the achievement of debt relief leading to predictable financing for development, and delivery on the anticipated national elections. We must acknowledge the gains made to date towards achieving these priorities. Yet the window to achieve further necessary progress on these issues is narrowing. Key benchmarks risk falling behind agreed timelines. Further progress may be delayed without renewed dialogue and cooperation among all stakeholders.

Setting the stage to achieve these goals between now and 2020 will require accelerated efforts in the next several months. It will also require political consensus and compromise among Somali leaders at the national level — in both the executive and legislative branches of Government — and particularly between the central Government and the federal member states, on how best to advance. We look forward to the next meeting of the Somalia Partnership Forum in October, which will provide an opportunity for Somalia and its international partners to agree on the priority areas for action and to

catalyse progress on Somalia's State-building priorities between now and the end of 2020.

The national electoral cycle in 2020 and 2021 offers an opportunity to decisively advance the process of democratization. Technical preparations continue to make progress, a draft electoral law is under review by the Federal Parliament and the National Independent Electoral Commission is preparing for voter registration.

I encourage Parliament's House of the People to expedite its review and adoption of the electoral bill, including further consultations to achieve broad political support. To that end, I welcome the resumption of cooperation between the two Houses of Parliament. I also encourage the Federal Government to establish an electoral security coordination task force to develop the arrangements by which the election will be secured. We also urge that the empowerment of women in the political processes be enhanced.

Even as we look ahead to national elections in 2020 and 2021, we must be attentive to electoral processes in the federal member states. We are closely following developments in Galmudug, where, with the support of the Federal Government of Somalia, a reconciliation forum is being put in place. We encourage this effort aimed at achieving a broad-based consensus on Galmudug's electoral process.

In Jubaland, we continue to urge a single, agreed, consensual electoral process, without which there is an increased risk of instability if there is a contested outcome. The United Nations and other international partners have pressed all sides to seek compromise on an agreed path forward, but time is now, regrettably, very short. Disorder in Jubaland would put in jeopardy not only gains made in that federal member state, but also many critical national priorities, including preparations for the elections in 2020 and 2021, the fight against Al-Shabaab and the development agenda. Whatever the outcome in Jubaland tomorrow, I implore all stakeholders to show restraint, refrain from violence and resolve grievances through dialogue.

As noted at the beginning of my briefing, I visited Somaliland on 27 and 28 July and had informative consultations with its leaders. We continue to encourage dialogue between authorities in Hargeisa and Mogadishu, and others, building on past efforts.

The Federal Constitution, once adopted, will provide a common vision for all Somalis, while clearly

defining the respective roles of the organs of the federal State and relations with and between federal member states. Progress has been made in the technical review process, but Somalis now need to pursue an inclusive dialogue to reach agreement on outstanding critical issues, including the allocation of powers, intergovernmental relations, the system of governance, resource sharing and the status of Mogadishu.

The security situation in Somalia remains a serious concern. The brutal Al-Shabaab attack on the offices of the Benadir regional administration on 24 July served as a painful reminder of the threat that terrorism poses to progress. I pay tribute to the victims of this and other attacks. Yet there are encouraging security developments. Somali security forces, working with AMISOM, the United Nations and international partners, are making progress in recovering and stabilizing areas of Lower Shabelle, on the periphery of Mogadishu, that had been held by Al-Shabaab. Those operations have shown the effectiveness of this collaboration and reinforced the commitment of key security actors to the comprehensive approach to security. The operations are simultaneously supporting the implementation of the transition plan and the national security architecture by advancing institutional reforms designed to generate, professionalize and sustain Somali military and police forces, as well as rule-of-law and justice institutions.

Somalia is making steady progress toward economic recovery. Efforts are ongoing to improve the country's economic resilience as well as the inclusiveness of that growth. Government authorities have made important strides towards improving fiscal performance and strengthening governance. The decision point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative is within sight. The Federal Government of Somalia now needs to ensure that it achieves the remaining preconditions for reaching the decision point in early 2020, which will require close collaboration with Parliament to pass necessary legislation, and with federal member states on the fiscal federal framework.

Meanwhile, the humanitarian crisis in Somalia remains among the most protracted in the world. Currently, 2.2 million Somalis are facing acute food insecurity, and 2.6 million are internally displaced, fleeing conflict and drought. The United Nations and the Somali Government together issued a drought impact response plan requesting \$686 million, of which approximately \$350 million has been secured. I call on Member States to urgently resource the plan.

At the same time, we must focus on legitimate Somali priorities for longer-term development, as reflected in the recovery and resilience framework and preparations for the new national development programme.

Almost eight months have passed since 1 January, when the United Nations family was shaken by a mortar attack on our Mogadishu compound. Since that day, we have made substantial progress to enhance the safety and security of United Nations personnel. Staff security and welfare will remain a priority for me throughout my tenure.

Allow me to express my appreciation to my Deputy, Mr. Raisedon Zenenga, for his leadership in the challenging months before my arrival. I also thank the United Nations Support Office in Somalia for its steadfast assistance to AMISOM, the Somali National Army and the United Nations family in Somalia.

Building sustainable peace and stability in a country that has suffered the trauma and shocks that Somalia has experienced over many decades will take perseverance and patience. With the continued support of the Security Council, and the wider international community, UNSOM remains committed to assisting Somalis on their journey towards a peaceful and prosperous future.

The President: I thank Mr. Swan for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

Mr. Madeira: I thank you, Madam President, for inviting me to address the Security Council on the situation in Somalia. At the outset, let me join Mr. Swan in congratulating you, Madam President, upon your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council.

Since my previous briefing of the Council (see S/PV.8533), Somalia's political and security landscape has remained encouraging, despite recurrent instances of commotion and political uncertainty. In the past three months, the country has witnessed political, security and economic developments that, if sustainably harnessed, will have a healthy impact on our concerted effort to help end the war in Somalia, bring about a return to peace in the country and build a better future for all its people.

During the period under review, we witnessed efforts by the Federal Government of Somalia to seek to comply with its commitments and milestones on peace, stability, development and inclusive politics,

in particular in relation to the preparations for the state-level elections in Galmudug and Jubaland. In Galmudug state, remarkable progress towards reconciliation was recorded, including inter- and intra-clan reconciliation, as the basis for a long-term approach to stability. Prime Minister Hassan Khayre's stay in Galmudug, which lasted more than a month, led to the triggering of a process whereby Ahl Al-Sunna Wal-Jama'a and Habar clan forces are being integrated into the Somali national security forces. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the European Union, the United Nations and bilateral partners were invited to witness the unveiling of the Prime Minister's initiatives on force integration and on preparations for the Galmudug reconciliation conference in Dhusamareb and the preparation of the ground for Galmudug state elections later in the year.

The delegation met with some of the integrated Ahl-Sunna recruits and was afforded an opportunity to meet and discuss with the reconciliation committee their composition and mission, the communities they represent and their level of representativeness. The Prime Minister's efforts need to be supported in all aspects, as they provide a unique opportunity to deliver on the establishment of a united Government and functioning institutions in Galmudug, lasting reconciliation among the 11 clans that make up the population of that state and the much-needed peace and stability that is essential for any meaningful development there.

With regard to Jubaland, in the course of preparations for upcoming elections, AMISOM held several separate meetings with the Federal Government of Somalia, Jubaland state leaders, presidential candidates from the opposition, traditional elders and representatives of the international community to review the deteriorating political situation in Jubaland state, with a view to mitigating the far-reaching ramifications and potential escalation of tensions among the stakeholders. The key outcome of those engagements was the stakeholders' agreement on AMISOM's role as elaborated in resolution 2472 (2019) to help create a secure environment in the run-up to elections, including beefing up the security of Kismaayo and its environs. An elaborate plan for the envisaged free, fair and inclusive elections was agreed, and an intelligence committee was put in place.

Together with AMISOM and IGAD, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), under the leadership of my colleague, Mr. James

Swan, went into Kismaayo and, on behalf of the international community, made efforts to reach out to the stakeholders, the Jubaland Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission and the administration in Kismaayo to address key concerns raised by the parties. These efforts are ongoing, and, despite the late hour, it is our hope that the parties will come to an understanding that will produce inclusive, credible and peaceful elections that strengthen the unity of the people of Jubaland.

On the 2020 and 2021 elections, the key highlights during the period under review were the further development of the electoral rolls whereby political decisions on the electoral system were considered, with a review of the political party law, voter registration, public outreach and election security. The National Independent Electoral Commission has yet to finalize the pre-voter-registration preparations, including the identification of voter-registration locations that can be secured with the support of AMISOM.

In line with the decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council and resolution 2472 (2019), the African Union Commission and AMISOM sponsored and organized a multi-stakeholder workshop in Kampala on electoral security and an electoral dispute-resolution mechanism directed to the 2020 and 2021 general elections in Somalia. A draft election plan on electoral-security planning was developed during the workshop, which envisages, among other key interventions, the establishment by the Federal Government of Somalia of an electoral-security task force that will develop the electoral-security concept for the 2020 and 2021 elections. Meanwhile, AMISOM has proactively put together internal election-security cells throughout the regions comprising its own police, military and civilian components.

On the Constitution review process, mandated bodies held discussions with President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo on the progress realized so far. Public consultations and civic engagement within the states have been planned and agreed, and work towards their implementation is in progress. AMISOM is ready to contribute to these efforts by supporting the Somali security forces, which have been given the task of providing security to the different teams that will be implementing this programme in the regions.

The Somali economy continues to recover, and this year's growth is estimated to strengthen to 3 per cent

from 2.8 per cent last year. Inflation declined from 3.2 per cent to 3 per cent, according to information obtained from the Governmental authorities. The Government is implementing the fourth and last staff-monitored International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme designed to attract soft loans from the IMF and the World Bank and strengthen opportunities for debt relief. We believe that effort needs to be recognized and supported.

Al-Shabaab remains a serious threat to security and stability across Somalia. To face this challenge, AMISOM maintains a presence in the sectors as set out in its 2018 to 2021 concept of operations, and, in collaboration with the Somali security forces, we continue to protect population centres, secure the main supply routes and provide convoy escorts to ensure the safe movement of peoples and goods, the distribution of humanitarian assistance and the exercise by the Government and federal member states of their governance functions. We undertake combat patrols and conduct targeted operations against the enemy.

To sustain and enhance current operational coordination among AMISOM, the Federal Government of Somalia and their partners, AMISOM convened several operational coordination meetings at its headquarters, and significant progress has been recorded in the areas of consultation, joint planning and joint operations. In that regard, in support of efforts by the Somali security forces aimed at implementing the Somali transition plan, AMISOM conducted targeted offensive operations in Coscore and Dar es Salaam in Sector 2 with a view to disrupting and degrading Al-Shabaab. In this context, significant progress was made in the implementation of first phase activities of the Somali transition plan, including combat readiness, mentoring and assisting the 53rd, 143rd, Eagle, 27th and reconnaissance battalions of the Somali National Army. AMISOM and the Somali National Army conducted joint operations that, apart from Sabiid, Janaale and Bariira, calmed areas that were liberated in April and May. These joint operations also led to the capture from Al-Shabaab of the towns of Ceel Sallini, Ceel Gelow, Awdhagle in the Lower Shabelle region between June and August 2019.

Our interaction and collaboration with the United Nations Mine Action Service is vital and indispensable. It is getting tighter and stronger as we progress deep into enemy territory. Thanks to the work of this important United Nations agency, many lives of our soldiers are

saved and their physical wholeness safeguarded. This is also important in mitigating the threat posed by the improvised explosive devices.

I also want to highlight the important collaboration, cooperation and support that AMISOM is getting from the United Nations Support Office in Somalia. This support is what makes us move and achieve what we are achieving. I wish to express my recognition and thanks to Ms. Filipetto for her proactive, receptive and amicable handling of business with AMISOM.

In terms of reconfiguration, AMISOM has been reconfigured in space and forces. In this regard, due to operational tempo, AMISOM has established new forward operating bases in Ceel Sallini, Ceel Gelow and Awdhagle. On the other hand, AMISOM Sectors 1, 2 and 3 have already established mobile forces that have proved to be very effective in keeping the enemy on its toes and far away from the main population centres. Relatedly, AMISOM police has mentored 3,251 Somali police personnel deployed in 31 operational police stations in Somalia on various policing themes and provided operational support to enhance the delivery of professional, responsive and robust policing services across the country.

Similarly, in line with the Somali transition plan, AMISOM provided capacity-building support to the Somali Police Force through the conduct of refresher and specialized training, including courses on community policing and human rights, community policing and de-radicalization, and the training of trainers to enhance policing skills as part of efforts to facilitate the gradual transfer of security responsibilities to the Somali security forces.

In a bid to support the protection of the rights of vulnerable persons, AMISOM police officers co-located with the Somali police gender focal point officers for mentoring and sensitization. A total of 970 Somali Police Force and federal member states police force officers were mentored and sensitized on numerous themes related to sexual and gender-based violence. AMISOM maintains civilian-sector teams in Kismaayo, Jawhar, Beledweyne and Baidoa, carrying out the Mission implementation plan for 2019 and engaging with the leaders of federal member states, civil society organizations and key partners, including United Nations agencies, in support of the military and police in stabilization efforts aligned with

Somalia's transition plan and in the implementation of stabilization programmes.

As we do those things, we strive to ensure that our operations are conducted in strict compliance with applicable international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the United Nations human rights due-diligence policy. To that end, during the period under review, AMISOM conducted a series of predeployment and in-mission trainings for all uniformed personnel on international humanitarian law, international human rights law, child protection, the protection of women, tracking civilian casualties, analysis and response cells, sexual exploitation and abuse, conduct and discipline, and conflict-related sexual violence. In the period under review, professional development trainings were conducted for AMISOM troop-contributing countries — Uganda, Burundi, Kenya and Sierra Leone — while various in-mission induction trainings were carried out in Mission areas.

The Council may recall that, after the capture of the city of Mogadishu, AMISOM forces embarked on the liberation of regional capitals and main population centres in the rest of central and southern Somalia. To preserve those gains and ensure that life evolves normally in the liberated areas, AMISOM has had to establish a continued presence in those towns and population centres to hold and secure them and foil all attempts by Al-Shabaab to take them back. As the number of towns captured from Al-Shabaab increased, so too did the number of forces required to hold them. The number of troops approved for AMISOM was put under pressure in the presence of the growing population demand for AMISOM protection and security.

To solve that problem and to continue to take towns from Al-Shabaab while holding on to the already captured towns, AMISOM created dedicated mobile forces, but that approach came with another challenge — who would hold the newly liberated towns and preserve the accumulated gains? That question did not have a satisfactory answer, as our Somali brothers were not yet in a position to generate a sizeable, properly trained, integrated and equipped force with adequate and dependable logistical support. That inability of the Somali forces to hold and build on the newly liberated population centres posed a much more delicate question — what is the use of AMISOM continuing to liberate more cities and towns, at immense cost in lives and equipment, just to see those same towns and

cities being retaken by Al-Shabaab because of the lack of forces to hold them?

That aspect of the challenge faced by AMISOM in the theatre of operations was never properly understood by the wider international community, which preferred to cling to its assumed position — that AMISOM was not carrying out offensive operations as it once did. The recent developments in Sabid, Bariire, Ceel Sallini, Ceel Gelow and Awdheegle have provided the right answer to that question, which has eluded us for many years. The Somalis are now producing properly trained and integrated battalions capable of taking on Al-Shabaab, liberating towns and holding them, and allowing the Government to come in, attend to the population and provide services.

That is one of the most salient achievements during the period under consideration. To sustain that and allow for the consolidation of the accumulated gains and the transition of the security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somalis, we must continue supporting the generation of troops in Somalia, training and equipping those armed forces and protecting and enabling them to take and continue to hold cities and towns.

The President: I thank Mr. Madeira for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Patten.

Ms. Patten: I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on my recent visit to Somalia, which took place from 14 to 18 July, at the invitation of the Federal Government.

While it was my first visit, Somalia has been a priority country for my mandate over the past decade. Following the signing of a joint communiqué on the prevention of sexual violence in May 2013, my Office, through the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, has been actively working through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and other United Nations entities to support the Government in strengthening its formal justice system.

The purpose of my visit was to engage with the Federal Government and the federal member states, to take stock of ongoing efforts, to understand the challenges and to determine the nature of support to be extended to the Government in its efforts to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence. During my mission, I visited Mogadishu and Baidoa. In both locations, I met with senior Government

officials, parliamentarians, United Nations and African Union officials, front-line service providers and civil society representatives.

I could not meet with survivors due to security constraints, but I am satisfied with the level of information I obtained from the United Nations system and implementing partners who stressed how sexual violence in Somalia remains a matter of grave concern. The number of cases documented is just the tip of a deeply structural problem, with countless women and girls subjected to, or living in fear of, sexual violence. I emphasize the word “countless”, as victims are often invisible and inaccessible, with nowhere to report these crimes and nowhere to turn.

It is an environment in which women and girls are particularly vulnerable to conflict-related sexual violence owing to deeply entrenched gender inequality and discrimination, continuing insecurity, weak rule of law, large-scale displacement, limited reach of State institutions, lack of access to areas controlled by Al-Shabaab and the recurrent humanitarian crises.

In Baidoa, the President of South-West state and other members of his cabinet, the Ministers of Justice and Gender Equality, informed me of persistent insecurity, particularly in internally displaced persons camps, with displaced women and girls from marginalized minority groups facing the highest risk of sexual violence owing to a lack of, or limited access to, protection mechanisms.

I met with more than 35 civil society organizations and front-line service providers in Mogadishu, who depicted a situation in which sexual predators are emboldened by a weak legal system and the stigma attached to reporting, leading to justice being elusive for most victims. They highlighted how the conflict has eroded the strength of all key institutions, especially the criminal justice system, thereby severely limiting human rights protection for survivors and their ability seek justice in a secure and dignified manner.

They raised the serious challenges that they face in reaching vulnerable women and girls, especially those with disabilities, due to insecurity, restrictions imposed by parties to the conflict and targeted attacks on aid workers. The majority of survivors do not have access to comprehensive health services, including sexual and reproductive health services. Al-Shabaab has banned most non-governmental organizations and all United Nations agencies from areas under its control.

Concerns were also raised about the common practice of abduction by Al-Shabaab and forcing families to endorse forced marriages. In that regard, I was encouraged by an innovative pilot project in Baidoa, supported by International Organization for Migration, which provides rehabilitation and reintegration assistance to women and girls formerly associated with Al-Shabaab. Social workers shared information about several cases, including that of a 17-year-old girl who was abducted and forcibly married to a member of Al-Shabaab, but escaped with her two children born from rape, and that of another young victim who paid So.Sh50 million, the equivalent of \$2,500, in order to escape Al-Shabaab. In recognition of the potential of that project and the urgent need to reach more victims of violent extremism and terrorism, the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, the inter-agency network that I chair, is already working to replicate and scale up that initiative.

Impunity for the perpetrators of crimes of sexual violence was also raised as a major concern, with victims' fears of stigmatization and reprisals, the weakness and complexity of the legal system, the lack of an adequate legislative framework and functional judicial system and the use of traditional justice systems resulting in chronic underreporting.

Despite ongoing efforts by the Government to strengthen the formal justice system, many survivors of sexual violence depend on traditional mechanisms for justice — including customary law, *xeer* and *Sharia* — through which they are forced to marry their rapist to avoid bringing shame and stigma upon the family. Local culture, with its custom of compelling victims to marry their assailants or accept livestock as compensation for their assault, constitutes a major obstacle to justice. Concerns were expressed about the safety of a 9-year-old girl who was raped by a 27-year-old brigadier soldier in Adale a few days before my visit and about the likelihood of the case being settled through traditional justice system.

Despite that extremely challenging situation, I am pleased to inform the Council that my dialogue with the national authorities was frank and constructive. There was no attempt to deny or downplay the extent and gravity of these crimes. In fact, there was a clear acknowledgement that sexual violence has been, and is being, perpetrated by all parties to the conflict, as well as an expression of political will to address that scourge.

Despite some commendable efforts by the Government, such as the constitutional review, the sexual offences bill approved by the Federal Cabinet since May 2018, efforts led by the Attorney General's Office and training of the Somali police, Somali armed forces and national intelligence security agency throughout 2018, progress is slow, with terrorism remaining a major threat to peace and stability in the country.

As a direct outcome of my visit, the Government committed to working with the United Nations system to develop a new implementation plan for the joint communiqué, in the form of an action plan on ending sexual violence in conflict, which will focus on key elements of resolution 2331 (2016), which outlines the nexus between terrorism and conflict-related sexual violence, and resolution 2467 (2019), which calls for a holistic, survivor-centred response to conflict-related sexual violence.

The Government also expressed the commitment to work towards the delisting of its forces from the annex to the annual report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence and has sought the technical support of my Office to establish a road map in that regard. In the latest report of the Secretary-General's (S/2019/280), the Somali National Army, the Somali Police Force and allied militia, as well as the Puntland forces, are listed as parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence. In my engagement with the Deputy Prime Minister and other Government officials, I made it clear that the full implementation of the joint communiqué will be key on the road towards delisting.

Other key messages that I imparted to the Government included the importance of tackling conflict-related sexual violence primarily as a matter of peace and security, by engaging the Ministries of Defence, Internal Security and Justice, alongside the Ministry of Women, Human Rights and Development. The importance of addressing the root causes along with a recognition that ending sexual violence necessitates ending the gender inequality and discrimination that underpins both the abuse and accompanying social stigma, starting with the ratification of relevant international and regional women's rights instruments.

There must be a prompt enactment of the sexual offences bill, which is still before the Parliament, which

notes that the Somali penal code classifies sexual violence as merely an offence against modesty and sexual honour. There is a need to strengthen the participation of the federal member states in all the initiatives of the Federal Government, and most especially in the development and implementation of the new action plan. Last but not least, I stressed how critical it is to engage a broad range of stakeholders, including the Government, civil society, traditional and religious leaders and the donor and diplomatic community.

I agreed with the Federal Government of Somalia to deploy technical expertise from my Office at the earliest convenience to support the elaboration of a new action plan to address and respond to conflict-related sexual violence. My Office will be working closely with the United Nations system as a whole in supporting the Government of Somalia.

Although peace remains elusive and violence and insecurity have become normalized through decades of conflict, survivors and front-line service providers remain resilient. What they want, above all, is a response from their Government and the international community that shows that they are not forgotten.

The President: I thank Ms. Patten for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Arale.

Ms. Arale: I thank you, Madam President, for the invitation to provide an update on the situation of women and girls. My name is Amina Arale. I am a young human rights defender and peace advocate. I was born and raised in Somalia, and I have witnessed human right violations in my country for 30 years. I join my voice with those of my fellow human rights defenders who have tirelessly fought for peace and justice in my country and who have lost their lives or loved ones in the process.

Today I speak in my capacity as the Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Centre. My organization strives to combat gender-based violence against women and girls by enhancing their participation in all spheres of public life. The Somali Women Development Center established the first free hotlines for victims of sexual and gender-based violence and provides medical, psychosocial, material and legal support, in addition to safe spaces for survivors through one-stop centres. My organization is also one of the largest providers of legal aid and access to justice programmes in many parts of Somalia. We support

thousands of survivors of gender-based violence every year.

My statement today will address four key points: the impact of the conflict on women and girls in Somalia, the challenges related to access to justice, women's participation in the peace and security sector and women's meaningful participation in economic and political life.

The culture of violence bred by 30 years of war and political instability has devastated Somali society, from State institutions to ordinary households. Somalia is today deeply unequal, and gender discrimination affects the majority of women across social and economic status. Somalia ranks at 0.77 on the Gender Inequality Index, according to which 1 represents complete inequality. Sexual and gender-based violence is persistent and shrouded in silence. Minority groups, for example, remain quiet on how it affects their communities, in order to avoid stigmatization and social exclusion.

We welcome some of the concrete steps taken by the Government to address sexual and gender-based violence, including the drafting of the sexual offences bill and efforts to hold perpetrators to account. The consultative process surrounding the drafting of the bill, which included input from civil society, was a positive example of inclusive policymaking that is responsive to the needs of survivors of, and organizations working on, sexual and gender-based violence.

However, much remains that must be urgently done, including the implementation of the sexual offences bill. To date, Somalia has not signed, adopted or implemented the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Somali Government committed to developing a national action plan in line with resolution 1325 (2000) but has yet to do so. The Security Council must urge the Federal Government of Somalia to ratify and implement all regional and international legislation to protect the rights of women and girls and ensure that all national legislation, including the sexual offences bill and the female genital mutilation bill, meet international standards and are rigorously enacted and implemented. The Somali Government must also accelerate the establishment of the national human rights commission and ensure respect for international human rights laws.

The Federal Government of Somalia and the regional authorities must also ensure that impunity will

not be tolerated and that all reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence, including those against security personnel, are swiftly investigated, as well as respect the rights, safety, and privacy of survivors in any process. The Government should support the creation of specialized courts for addressing cases of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls and juvenile courts for children.

It is critical that the Government undertake efforts to sensitize various stakeholders, including religious and traditional leaders, local authorities, law enforcement and the judiciary, to sexual and gender-based violence. Talking about sexual and gender-based violence is the first step towards eliminating it.

In the fragile context of Somalia, women's access to justice is especially challenging owing to discriminatory laws and the lack of gender-responsive programmes. Women are therefore left with rights in name, but without any actual remedies, while men remain the providers of justice.

The participation of women in the judiciary and the legal profession has also met with resistance in Somalia. Despite many years of advocacy, there are few female prosecutors and no female judges in the country. For 19 years, my organization has been working on increasing women's participation in the justice sector. We have found that women's inclusion in that sector not only improves justice for women, but for society as a whole.

The inclusion of women as judges, prosecutors, lawyers and court officials ensures that the judiciary is more representative of Somali society and that it is better able to respond to the needs of diverse groups, including women. Access to justice must be about more than prosecuting crimes; it must also empower women and transform underlying gender inequalities that render women vulnerable to violence.

Women have actively contributed to peace and ending the civil war in Somalia. However, 14 of the peace agreements that have been reached over the past three decades have failed owing to the exclusion of women. The most recent peace agreement, in 2000, was signed after women were included. Yet their role as key contributors to peace remains largely unrecognized. The Somali Government has to date also failed to implement the gender provisions in peace, security and State-building agreements.

The Government must ensure that women's rights are central to peace and security decisions at all levels. In order to achieve that goal, we need to address all barriers and protection risks that limit women's full participation in building peace in Somalia. Women make up 11 per cent of the police force, making Somalia the country with the third-highest number of female officers in Africa. However, only one female brigadier general is in a top decision-making role in the police force. Therefore, the Government must do more to ensure that women are not only reflected in the ranks, but also in senior roles.

Somali women have been excluded from the negotiating table, decision-making and leadership roles, and in the economy and politics, despite the fact that women are the main breadwinners in about 80 per cent of Somali households today. Politically active women also face retaliation to discourage them from engaging in future activities. The Security Council should urge the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to work with the Government to develop a mechanism to protect aspiring women and provide updates on progress made in engaging with women's civil society in all activities.

The Council must also explicitly call on the Government of Somalia to protect the rights of women and all human rights defenders. It was the result of the advocacy of local and international women's groups that a 30 per cent quota for women was included in the Garowe Principles, although it was not mentioned in the peace road maps or bylaws of the country. The Security Council must now call on the Somali Government and State authorities to ensure that a quota of a minimum of 30 per cent for women is enshrined in the Federal Constitution and in the electoral laws, which are currently under review.

A 30 per cent quota for women must be secured in the upcoming 2020 elections, which will offer a historic opportunity for women to participate in the first universal suffrage elections that the country has held in 50 years. Somali women and girls deserve the same rights, opportunities and protection in all spheres of life as Somali men and boys.

The President: I thank Ms. Arale for her briefing.

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

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking our four briefers, who have genuinely enriched our discussions here today, as well as by extending the United Kingdom's deepest sympathies to the families of the victims targeted in attacks by Al-Shabaab. We condemn those attacks in the strongest possible terms and we pay tribute to the role of the Somali National Army, the Somali Police Force and the troops from the African Union Mission in Somalia in their efforts to promote peace, security and stability in Somalia.

I want to give a particularly warm welcome to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan and pay tribute to him and his team for the work that they have been doing over the past few months. The United Nations has played, and will play, a vital role in enabling the achievement of lasting peace and security for Somalia, and we encourage full engagement and cooperation with the United Nations. The sanctions regime is of course a key part of security sector reform. We encourage Somalia to engage in dialogue with the Panel of Experts, who have been mandated by the Security Council.

I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Pramila Patten for her very important briefing today and for the excellent work that she has been doing with the Somali Government to address conflict-related sexual violence.

The Government's commitment to developing a new national action plan to end sexual violence in conflict demonstrates willingness to tackle that pervasive issue. However, we share concerns about the lack of progress, in particular in passing the sexual offences bill, which Special Representative Patten mentioned. I hope that she will be able to come back to the Council in due course to update us on progress on the many issues that she flagged this morning.

I would also like to thank Ms. Arale for her extremely brave and very powerful briefing today about the work she is doing on the ground and the work that her organization and other human rights defenders do to strengthen human rights in Somalia. We all heard loud and clear her message about the need for the Security Council to integrate the issues of human rights and tackling sexual violence into our work on Somalia. I thank her for being so clear. Her presence at our meeting today is a further reminder to the Council of the importance of women playing a central role in

conflict prevention, mediation and State-building. I thank her very much.

As we heard from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the next 18 months will be crucial for Somalia. I would like to briefly touch on three issues. First, with regard to the elections in Jubaland, we, together with other partners around the table, have been encouraging all stakeholders to reach an agreement on a single electoral process that is credible, inclusive, fair and peaceful. We are very concerned about the fact that an agreement on such a process has not been achieved and that the existing approaches are reaching a point beyond which the likelihood of instability and division within Jubaland has been significantly increased.

We therefore call on all actors in Jubaland to refrain from violence. We encourage a reinvigoration of dialogue among States of the region, aimed at maintaining stability in Jubaland, Somalia and the wider region and call on all stakeholders to pursue any possible changes that would result in a process that enjoys wider support in Jubaland. The United Kingdom stands ready to provide its full support to such discussions through the efforts of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and in partnership with the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

The second area I would like to touch on is the national elections in 2020 or 2021. The swift passage of an electoral law that ensures a fair process and allows the representation of all Somalis is vital. If it is not passed by November this year, it could seriously impact the delivery of elections on time. As it stands, the United Kingdom is particularly concerned about the insufficient provisions on the rapid representation of minority groups and women. It is an issue that Ms. Arale also touched on in her briefing just now. We stand ready, as the United Kingdom, to provide support for the elections and urge others to do the same.

The third area of focus is security. It is vital that the Federal Government of Somalia and the member states work together to implement the national security architecture agreed at the 2017 London Somalia Conference and deliver the transition plan towards Somali-led security, as the Council called for in resolution 2472 (2019). We agree with the Special Representative and Ambassador Madeira that force generation of able, accountable, acceptable and

affordable Somali security forces is absolutely vital to that end. I would also agree with the message from Special Representative Patten that we also need to ensure that the Somali security forces are able to tackle the issue of sexual violence against women and girls, which is so prevalent in Somalia, as we heard today.

On that note, we welcome the ongoing Somali-led joint security operations in the Lower Shabelle region as an example of good coordination between Somali and international forces, but much more remains to be done to stabilize and hold the territory in the long term and carry out similar work elsewhere in Somalia.

In conclusion, we agree with Special Representative Swan that engagement between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states is at the heart of all our efforts in Somalia. We therefore urge both the Federal Government and the member states to come together to settle the remaining questions about federal power and resource-sharing through a process of constitutional review to enable the continued trajectory of Somalia to inclusive and peaceful one-person one-vote elections in 2020 or 2021. It is important that the Somalia Partnership Forum in October demonstrates that the Federal Government's relationship with the federal member states is a genuine partnership and that it delivers an agreed set of shared priorities to the end of 2020. External pressures continue to pose risks to political stability. The international community, States of the region and the Council must use their influence constructively, invest in the federal system and institutions and increase our coordination to support Somalia in its efforts.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): I would like to thank all our briefers today and congratulate Special Representative Swan on his new role. His deep experience will be of great help to the international community in supporting Somalia in the challenging period ahead, through its political and security reforms, and we stand ready to support him.

Somalia continues to face significant challenges on its path towards building a safe, stable and prosperous State, underscored by Al-Shabaab's recent attacks in Mogadishu and Kismaayo that killed the mayor and more than two dozen people, including two United States citizens. Despite those attacks, the reform efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia, with support from the United Nations, the African Union and international partners, offer hope that progress is under

way. We encourage both the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali Government to continue to work towards a conditions-based transfer of security responsibilities and international partners to closely coordinate in that effort. Similarly, the Somali police need ongoing capacity-building support to help stabilize areas reclaimed from Al-Shabaab.

As our colleague of the United Kingdom noted, Somali officials must also cooperate and engage with the sanctions committee Panel of Experts to address shortcomings highlighted by that Panel that impede Somalia's progress.

On the political front, the Federal Government's political and governance reform, including the draft electoral law and constitutional reform, offers the best hope for sustainable stability and economic growth. The United States regrets that those important reforms have not yet been finalized or implemented. We urge all Somali stakeholders to earnestly commit to advancing those reforms.

We applaud Prime Minister Khayre's reconciliation efforts among competing clans and the Federal Government and his support for the integration of local militias into Somalia's national security architecture. Somalia's success depends on continued productive collaboration between Mogadishu and the member states. The upcoming Jubaland presidential election provides an opportunity to reaffirm mutual respect between the central and state governments. We call on all parties to support a peaceful election and to avoid any interference in the electoral process. As the country continues to work towards a one-person one-vote democratic system in preparation for the presidential election in 2020 or 2021, we underscore the need for close coordination between the Federal Government's electoral security task force, AMISOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to provide voter security during each stage of electoral planning and implementation.

We must also not lose sight of Somalia's ongoing humanitarian crisis. Poor rainy seasons have caused widespread crop failures, deteriorating livestock conditions and a heightened risk of drought-related diseases. An estimated 2.2 million people in Somalia face life-threatening food insecurity, and at least 5.4 million people require urgent humanitarian assistance. Since 2018, the United States has been

helping by providing more than \$670 million in funding for food, water, health, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene. We call on the international community to also help fund the humanitarian response.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to welcome Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia. We wish him success in his new role and thank him for today's important briefing. We also thank Mr. Francisco Madeira, Ms. Pramila Patten and the Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Center for their briefings.

Today I will focus on three key issues. The first pertains to political developments. We welcome the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia and federal states to achieve reconciliation in spite of the challenges facing them. We call on all parties to overcome the obstacles that are impeding political, economic and security integration in Somalia and to put the interests of the State first, especially as the upcoming phase will be decisive for the future of Somalia, as we are closing in on the general elections, to be held in 2020-2021.

The achievement of reconciliation will undoubtedly have a positive impact. It will enable Somali leaders to build on previous important achievements, including continuing the implementation of the technical aspect of the comprehensive approach to security; enabling the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission to complete its first review of the Provisional Federal Constitution; the adoption of the draft electoral bill; the completion of the identification of voter registration centres; and the adoption of many important laws.

We look forward to the efforts of the Federal Government to implement the transition plan and its comprehensive political reform agenda. We trust that it will implement economic and development goals as well as increase its financial capacity and revenues.

With regard to the security situation, unfortunately the latest incidents in Somalia continue to remind us of the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed groups. We reject and condemn in the strongest terms their targeting of United Nations and humanitarian personnel in Somalia. The Security Council must address that issue with the utmost seriousness and wisdom to ensure that such acts do not reoccur. We are concerned about the growing ability of those groups

to manufacture improvised explosive devices, hence the importance of implementing the comprehensive approach to security in order to enable the national security forces to protect the State against the threat of terrorism and violent extremism, in line with the transition plan and the national security structure.

Concerning the humanitarian situation, the ongoing food insecurity and the growing number of internally displaced persons — which is reaching dangerous proportions at 2.6 million people — are a source of grave concern. Unfortunately, weather forecasts are not encouraging, as they are predicting a new dry season owing to the low level of precipitation. We fear that this could impede Somalia's harvests this year.

Despite all this, we are still optimistic regarding the developmental steps taken by the Somali Federal Government, which led the International Monetary Fund to confirm that Somalia has thereby met the conditionality standard for a credit tranche arrangement. That is an important step in terms of debt relief for the State, in line with the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative.

In conclusion, we reiterate our call for the need to respect the sovereignty, political independence and unity of Somalia. We call on the international community to continue to provide political and financial support to the Somali Federal Government in order to enable it to rebuild the State and establish stability.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): South Africa wishes to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Mr. James Swan; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Pramila Patten; the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira; and our sister, the Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Centre, Ms. Amina Arale, for their briefings.

My delegation commends the role that UNSOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), AMISOM, the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, as well as international partners, have been playing in facilitating State-building and peacebuilding processes in Somalia. We pay tribute to the sacrifices that are being made by AMISOM and the Somali security

forces to ensure that the vision of a peaceful and stable Somalia is realized.

My delegation would like to address the following three issues: first, the political process and the imperative of national dialogue and reconciliation; secondly, the necessity of addressing security and humanitarian issues; and, thirdly, the importance of creating suitable conditions for the 2020-2021 national elections.

First, South Africa wishes to underline the critical importance of ensuring that the political process in Somalia is sustained. In that regard, my delegation reiterates that the gains achieved in Somalia can be strengthened and sustained only when all leaders of the Federal Government and the federal member States resume their efforts to engage in a genuine national dialogue. That is the only way to address the outstanding political issues and challenges that they are currently encountering. That will require compromise, cooperation and consensus on key issues on the part of all stakeholders.

We also urge support and encouragement for stakeholders to undertake dialogue and broad-based and inclusive reconciliation at the regional level, with the support and participation of the Federal Government and the administrations of federal member states. That will ensure that any differences or disagreements over regional electoral processes are attended to as soon as possible and resolved in a peaceful manner.

South Africa therefore welcomes the progress made in the legislative process, especially the resumption of cooperation between the two Houses of Parliament; the submission of key legislation in Parliament; the completion of the preliminary technical review of the last five chapters of the Provisional Federal Constitution; and the draft electoral bill. Equally significant are efforts that include the reiteration of commitments to dialogue between Somalia and "Somaliland"; the roll-out of the National Reconciliation Framework to the federal member states by the Federal Government; and efforts towards regional and local-level reconciliation meetings.

With regard to the prevailing security situation, we note with serious concern that Al-Shabaab has increased its acts of terror in Somalia, including in Mogadishu. Of concern is its increased capability to use improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices in attacks conducted by the group. Al-Shabaab continues to undertake

attacks on Government personnel and facilities, which include the killing of civilians, United Nations staff and humanitarian workers, AMISOM forces, the Somali security forces and international partners. These continued atrocities on the part of Al-Shabaab must be condemned and cannot go unpunished. We also believe in the importance of increasing efforts to address inter-clan and communal clashes, which have, regrettably, resulted in the loss of lives.

However, we commend the ongoing success of the Somali National Army (SNA) on its offensive operations and stabilization activities, with the support of AMISOM and international partners, in Lower Shabelle as a clear demonstration of its efforts to counter and degrade Al-Shabaab. This further underscores not only the significant role that AMISOM continues to play in support of the SNA-led operations, but also its critical importance, together with the United Nations and international partners, in terms of addressing the security challenges facing Somalia.

Furthermore, we reiterate that for Somalia to be able to take ownership of addressing its own security challenges, the area of capacity-building requires sustained and coordinated international support. In this regard, South Africa calls for the continuation of the implementation of the comprehensive approach to security, encompassing international support, coordination and joint planning by AMISOM, the Federal Government, the federal member states, UNSOM, UNSOS and regional partners, among others. This includes a focus on preventing and countering violent extremism at the lower levels, thus ensuring that efforts to address Al-Shabaab are not only military but comprehensive and include the effective rehabilitation and reintegration of defectors.

Thirdly, the current insecurity in Somalia is further exacerbated by the continued humanitarian situation. The ongoing climatic effects of decreased seasonal rains, drought and flooding have had a negative impact on food production, which, in turn, has increased food insecurity and adversely affected the most vulnerable communities, including children, especially among internally displaced persons. In addition, many people are also being internally displaced due to evictions, food insecurity and other factors. All together, these various developments have further increased the duration of the humanitarian situation in Somalia.

For those reasons, we support the appeal by the Secretary-General for an increase in efforts aimed at supporting the delivery of life-saving assistance and protection. Continued support in addressing the humanitarian situation in Somalia remains of paramount importance. We therefore urge the international community to support the funding of the 2019 humanitarian response plan for Somalia in order for the humanitarian community to deliver necessary services to civilians in need. We also echo the Secretary-General in commending the Somali authorities for demonstrating leadership by prioritizing the scaling up of its drought response and its collaboration with aid agencies.

Lastly, South Africa wishes to underline the imperative of creating suitable conditions for the 2020 and 2021 national elections in Somalia. In that respect, we agree with the Secretary-General about the need for Somali stakeholders to reach consensus on key electoral issues, including the adoption of the draft electoral law and the need to mobilize financial support for conducting such electoral activities as voter registration. Above all, it is of critical importance that the electoral security coordination mechanisms be established to ensure proper planning and operations.

The need for assistance and support from the United Nations through UNSOM, but also in coordination with the Somali National Army and AMISOM, as well as all other international partners, is paramount for delivering secure and successful elections in 2020 and 2021 in Somalia. Creating the suitable conditions for, and ultimately holding, successful national elections will be a key milestone towards State-building and peacebuilding for Somalia, which includes resolving the reported targeted assassinations of participants in electoral processes.

In conclusion, it is pleasing to note that UNSOM has worked diligently to include the participation of women and youth in the political processes in Somalia through the holding of various events aimed at building capacity and awareness, particularly on constitutional review and election-related matters. We equally commend the Federal Government of Somalia for ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These developments constitute positive steps towards an inclusive State-building and peacebuilding process in Somalia. It is therefore the responsibility of the international community to continue supporting the

cause of the Somali people towards sustainable peace and stability. We in South Africa will play our part.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes this briefing on the review of the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Somalia (S/2019/661), as well as the implementation of the mandates of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). We congratulate Mr. James Swan on his recent appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSOM and on his excellent briefing. My delegation also commends 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 (AMISOM), Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and Ms. Amina Arale, Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Centre, for their enlightening briefings.

The presentation of the Secretary-General's report on Somalia calls for comments from my delegation in the political, security, economic and humanitarian fields, as well as on the question of human rights.

With regard to the political situation, Côte d'Ivoire notes with concern the persistence of tensions between the Federal Government and the federal member states fuelled by differences over electoral processes in the federal member states and the draft electoral law. In our view, this institutional crisis is likely to undermine initiatives to revive the political process and reconciliation between the Somali Federal Government and the member states of the federation, slow down the pace of the Government's reform efforts and prevent the swift implementation of the country's stabilization plans.

My delegation therefore urges both sides to make every effort to overcome their differences in order to create conditions conducive to the holding of fair and credible regional elections, the conclusion of agreements on power- and resource-sharing, constitutional review and the establishment of Somalia's federal model. We also welcome the resumption of collaboration between the two Chambers of the Somali Federal Parliament, which should lead to legislative progress. From this point of view, the adoption of the law on the establishment of an anti-corruption commission to

strengthen the framework for managing public finances is to be welcomed.

On the security front, Côte d'Ivoire notes the persistence of targeted attacks by the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, which continue to create a climate of insecurity and instability in the country. The situation is all the more worrisome given the surprising resilience and adaptability of this terrorist group, despite, in particular, the joint air raids by AMISOM and the Somali security forces. It is therefore imperative that the joint actions of AMISOM and Somali forces be supported by building the capacity of security institutions to enable them to retain control over areas they have recovered. This capacity-building should also increase their strike force in the necessary campaign to stabilize the situation as well as to fight violent extremism.

In the economic field, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the International Monetary Fund's approval, on 1 August, of the staff-monitored programme for Somalia, which is an important step towards debt relief for the country, as part of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. My country therefore encourages the Somali Government to continue its efforts to meet the remaining conditions for reaching the decision point set forth in the Initiative.

Human rights violations, in particular targeted killings and abductions, sexual violence against women and children, as well as the use of child soldiers, as Ms. Patten has just noted, remain a matter of concern to the international community. Convinced that the promotion and protection of human rights is part of the process of strengthening security and peacebuilding, my country calls on the Somali Government to continue its relentless efforts to combat impunity. In that regard, Somalia's ratification, on 31 July, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the measures taken to strengthen the legal framework for protecting human rights are encouraging signs.

The deteriorating humanitarian situation, marked by increasing food insecurity, increased internal population displacement and expanding needs for assistance and protection, remains another cause for concern. While it needs to be further strengthened, we nevertheless prefer to commend the Somali Government for its outstanding actions achieved through its intensification of the drought response and its full collaboration with aid agencies. My delegation would therefore like to urge international partners to

further support the 2019 humanitarian response plan and provide food assistance and increased protection to populations in distress. We also call on the Somali parties to ensure the safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to the affected areas.

Finally, Côte d'Ivoire would like to reiterate its support for UNSOM, AMISOM and UNSOS for their indispensable role in Somalia. We call on them to strengthen their cooperation with other international partners on the ground, with a view to supporting the Government's efforts to restore peace and stability in Somalia.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to thank Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and Ms. Amina Arale, Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Centre, not only for their briefings but also for their commitment, work and energy for the well-being of Somalia and in favour of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the Somali Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Abukar Dahir Osman.

After two years of peaceful transition of power, Somalia is in the process of rebuilding a State and is making significant progress in the political, economic and security spheres thanks to the Government's development programme under President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed. The support of its people, the countries of the region, the United Nations, the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and other international players has been key in speeding up this important and delicate process.

Equatorial Guinea welcomes the efforts of the international community to achieve peace and stability in Somalia and to counter and overcome policies that promote stagnation and the ongoing terrorist threats that seek to reverse this process.

Good relations between the federal member states and the Federal Government of Somalia are important for addressing the country's continuing challenges and are necessary for the implementation of the joint development projects. Since the end of last year, the

Secretary-General's reports have reflected a climate of estrangement between those two levels of Government, a situation that continues to this day and jeopardizes some of the gains made on issues such as federal elections, enhanced security and debt relief. In that regard, we urge the parties concerned to engage in a spirit of consensus and cooperation, and to do all they can to accelerate political discussions on key issues as an immediate priority.

We welcome the announcement of the Speakers of the House of the People and the Upper House of the resumption of cooperation between the two houses of the Federal Parliament, after seven months of rupture. That enabled more positive developments to take place in the overall political process in Somalia.

On this year's pending electoral processes of the federal member states, we urge all parties concerned to ensure transparency and to refrain from violence. Similarly, we encourage the relevant authorities to ensure the broad participation of women in those elections. We ask the same of the 2020 and 2021 general elections, as women's participation in all decision-making bodies in Somalia will help to consolidate the process of the State recovery process.

Before concluding, I would like to express our concern about the series of attacks perpetrated in Mogadishu and other parts of the country by Al-Shabaab and factions of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. We strongly condemn those heinous attacks and firmly maintain our support for and solidarity with the Government and the people of Somalia in combating the threat of terrorism in their country.

Finally, the delegation of Equatorial Guinea would like to express its confidence in the work of the United Nations in Somalia. We are convinced that the collective response to terrorist threats and political instability in Somalia must be strong and consistent. The international community must continue to strengthen cooperation to ensure the full implementation of the national security architecture throughout Somali territory so that, in the very near future, Somali security forces can assume full responsibility for maintaining the security of their country and its people.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China wishes to thank Mr. Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General; Mr. Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia; Ms. Patten, Special Representative of the

Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; and Ms. Arale, Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Centre, for their briefings.

Located in the Horn of Africa, Somalia represents an important strategic location. The maintenance of peace and stability in the country is important to peace and development in Africa as a whole. According to the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2019/661), in the past three months the Federal Government of Somalia has actively engaged in national reconstruction, making progress in the political, economic and security spheres. It is currently actively preparing for the 2020 general elections.

Nevertheless, the overall situation in Somalia remains relatively complex, and peace and stability are still facing challenges. The international community should continue to play close attention to the situation in Somalia and actively provide help.

I would like to make the following observations. First, we should continue to help Somalia to strengthen its governance capacity. On the basis of respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Somalia, the international community should help improve the federal mechanism, strengthen the relationship between the Federal Government and the federal member states, and properly review the Constitution. In the spirit of cooperation, all federal member states of Somalia should fully respect and safeguard the authority of the Federal Government and jointly work towards national peace, stability and development.

Secondly, we should continue to help Somalia to build its security capacities. All international partners should strengthen coordination and create synergies to help the Somali Government steadily implement the Somali transition plan so as to eventually transfer the security tasks of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to the Somali security forces. The United Nations and the international community should provide stable, predictable and sustainable financial support to AMISOM in order to help the troop-contributing countries build their capacities to more effectively combat terrorism.

Thirdly, we should continue to increase support for humanitarian aid and economic and social development in Somalia. This year, owing to the effects of climate change, wars and conflicts, the humanitarian situation in the country has deteriorated, and international

humanitarian assistance has major shortfalls. China calls on the international community to further increase humanitarian assistance and help Somalia achieve internal social and economic development, thus addressing the root causes of the conflict and ensuring the long-term stability of Somalia.

Since its deployment, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) has played a key role in maintaining peace and stability in Somalia. China appreciates its efforts and will continue to support the Special Representative and UNSOM in the discharge of their duties.

China has always supported Somalia's efforts to achieve peace and development. It has actively participated in the peace process in Somalia and has played a positive role in promoting a political settlement of the Somali issue. In June, in order to help the Somali Government with the food crisis, China sent a shipment of food aid to Somalia. China will continue to support the Somalia's national reconstruction process and play a constructive role in the achievement of peace, stability and development in Somalia and the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank all the speakers for their briefings today.

We commend the efforts of President Farmajo and the leaders of the federal member states to resume dialogue. However, we note with concern the persistence of tensions and the political stalemate between the parties. We understand that overcoming that impasse must be the main objective in support of the national reconciliation process taking place in Somali society.

We are also deeply concerned by the security vulnerability in Somalia. We condemn the attacks perpetrated by the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, carried out through the use of improvised explosive devices placed in vehicles.

We welcome the progress made in the constitutional review process. We urge the stakeholders to continue to make the necessary efforts to ensure that the review is inclusive and transparent and guarantees the participation of women in political processes throughout Somalia.

We appreciate the briefing delivered by Ms. Arale, who spoke on the role of Somali women in the settlement of conflicts. We are convinced that investing in girls and women in Somalia would create a domino

effect leading to numerous benefits, not only for them but also for their families and communities. Greater participation by women is needed in the various areas of public and political life. The introduction of the quota system in the draft electoral law of at least 30 per cent of seats for women on the list of political parties in Somalia is a breakthrough that we hope to see come to fruition in the near future when that law is enacted. The representation of women in the political system is key to promoting socioeconomic development.

We welcome the strides made in technical preparations for the elections and underscore the need to continue making progress on the legal framework for the 2020 and 2021 elections. We call on the Federal Government and the federal member states to spare no effort in reaching an agreement on a political framework for the fundamental electoral issues. With regard to the elections in Jubaland, we urge all actors to reach an agreement on a single electoral process that is credible, inclusive, fair and peaceful.

The effects of climate change continue to be a challenge for Somalia. Added to existing vulnerabilities and the absence of resilience in communities, lower than normal seasonal rains have resulted in a troubling intensification of humanitarian needs in the country, whereby humanitarian assistance is necessary for survival. Food insecurity, largely caused by adverse climatic conditions, increased by almost 30 per cent over projections made in February. The lack of access to potable water and the increase in the number of displaced persons have led to a deterioration in the humanitarian situation, which comes at a time when humanitarian aid agencies have had to curtail their activities due to a lack of resources. We urge the international community to redouble its cooperation efforts and suggest that those who are able contribute to the humanitarian response plan for Somalia so as to alleviate the country's present humanitarian needs.

To conclude, I would like to highlight and acknowledge the role of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, the African Union Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, as well as all the stakeholders who support Somalia in achieving peace, lasting stability and sustainable development in the country.

Mr. Syihab (Indonesia): Allow me first to join others in expressing our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. James

Swan, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Pramila Patten, and Ms. Amina Arale for their very comprehensive and insightful briefings. My statement will focus on three issues, namely, the political, security and humanitarian situations.

First, I wish to commend the Somali Government for its determination in executing its comprehensive reform agenda. We welcome progress in preparing for the inclusive 2020 or 2021 elections, promoting internal reconciliation and putting Somalia on a clear path to debt relief. In that regard, we concur with Special Representative Swan that the next meeting of the Somalia Partnership Forum, to be held in October, will provide an opportunity for Somalia and international partners to agree on priority areas for action on Somalia's State-building priorities between now and 2020. Encouraging development is also evident in the Federal Parliament, as both houses announced the resumption of their cooperation.

However, Somalia continues to face persistent challenges on multiple fronts, many of which require the continued engagement of the international community. In the meantime, we must not allow the political impasse between the Federal Government and the federal member states to jeopardize the many hard-won gains. The two must engage in a sustained and constructive dialogue to resolve their outstanding differences and accelerate progress in key political processes. Any dispute, including on the regional electoral process, must be resolved in a peaceful manner.

My delegation reaffirms its support for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) in promoting a Somali Government-led inclusive political settlement and providing advice for peacebuilding and State-building efforts. We are pleased to see a collaborative relationship between the Somali Government and UNSOM, in line with their mutual commitment to strengthen cooperation.

Secondly, the ongoing threat from Al-Shabaab, including its enhanced use of improvised explosive devices and other asymmetrical attacks, remains the most serious security challenge for Somalia. My delegation condemns the recent attacks by Al-Shabaab. We are very concerned that Al-Shabaab continues to maintain its capacity to recruit, train and deploy

fighters, while raising considerable financing. The continued presence of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the need for predictable and sustainable financing cannot be overstated.

We recognize the gains made from the joint operations by the Somali National Army and AMISOM in Lower Shabelle, including the capture and establishment of forward operating bases and the delivery of stabilization efforts in recovered areas. Accelerated and coordinated international assistance is essential to support force generation and build a well-trained and well-equipped Somali security force that will eventually be able to take over security responsibilities. We look forward to the joint threat assessment by the African Union and the United Nations, in line with resolution 2472 (2019), to inform AMISOM's reconfiguration plan.

Thirdly, efforts to promote peace and stability in Somalia are taking place against the backdrop of a troubling humanitarian situation and resource constraint. Around one third of the population requires humanitarian assistance. There are 2.2 million people who are facing acute food insecurity. With 2.6 million internally displaced persons, Somalia has one of the world's largest displaced populations. Humanitarian assistance is a daunting but essential task. Yet only 40 per cent of the 2019 Somalia humanitarian response plan is funded. We call on the international community to contribute more. The operating environment for humanitarian actors in Somalia continues to be challenging and dangerous. All sides must respect international humanitarian law, protect civilians and provide access for humanitarian assistance.

Let me also emphasize that our collective efforts should always be aimed at saving human lives. In that regard, we commend the efforts of Special Representative Patten in engaging with national authorities and other stakeholders with a view to assisting the Government of Somalia in developing a national action plan to end sexual violence in conflict.

I should like to conclude by reaffirming Indonesia's solidarity with our Somali brothers and sisters in their quest for peace and stability, as well as our respect for Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We pay the utmost tribute to UNSOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, AMISOM and all actors working to bring about peace and stability in Somalia.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank our briefers for their very informative presentations. In particular, I congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Swan, on beginning his functions in Somalia and reaffirm France's full support. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Patten, for her visit to Somalia and for her efforts, together with all parties, to combat such violence. Inviting Special Representatives who are responsible for thematic issues to briefings on specific conflict situations is a good practice that we must continue.

At the outset, I underscore that we welcome the cooperative attitude adopted by the Somali federal authorities with the new Special Representative. We hope that those good relations will be pursued and make addressing all subjects possible, particularly those related to respect for human rights and the rule of law. We also hope that those good relations will be extended to all United Nations entities, especially the sanctions committee Panel of Experts. I will make three points.

First of all, with regard to the political situation in Somalia, France remains concerned about the deadlock in relations between the Somali Federal Government and the federal member states, which poses a major obstacle to carrying out the tasks crucial to achieving lasting peace in Somalia. In particular, I would note, first, the organization and holding of the 2020 or 2021 elections; secondly the constitutional review process and the needed agreement on power-sharing and the allocation of revenues emanating from natural resources; thirdly, the implementation of the security transition plan; and, fourthly, the implementation of the national security architecture and the integration of regional forces into the Somali National Army. It is therefore urgent that dialogue on those matters be resumed.

Furthermore, France is concerned about tensions relating to the electoral process scheduled to begin tomorrow in Jubaland, despite mediation attempts by the Special Representative, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. In that regard, we call on all parties to show a spirit of compromise to reach an agreement on a single, transparent and universally accepted electoral process. We also call on all parties to refrain from violence and rely on dialogue to resolve their differences.

Secondly, concerning the security situation, France remains concerned about the frequency of attacks by

Al-Shabaab, particularly in Mogadishu. In that context, we welcome the operations carried out by the Somali National Army with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in Lower Shabelle, which have enabled taking back key cities from Al-Shabaab. We also encourage the Somali federal authorities to intensify their force generation efforts so that they can pursue those operations, as well as accelerate the implementation of the security transition plan to transfer security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces.

With regard to AMISOM, France remains committed to meeting the deadlines set out in resolution 2472 (2019), adopted in May, including with regard to the reduction of the troop ceiling by 1,000 military personnel by 28 February 2020. While we believe that the reconfiguration of AMISOM must take place gradually in the most stable areas of the country, we deem it imperative that the decisions of the Security Council be respected. That desire has also been expressed by the Somalis. The transition plan they have developed will allow them eventually to master their own destiny.

Moreover, the European Union intends to continue its support for AMISOM, given its important role in ensuring the security of Somalia, through significant financial support in the amount of €400 million for the period from 2019 to 2020, as well as €20 million destined for the Somali security forces. Nevertheless, we continue to believe that that support must be part of the frameworks involving the transition and mutual commitments that each party must respect. All things considered, the European Union cannot continue to finance the bonuses of AMISOM soldiers alone. The Security Council must therefore send a clear message to Somalia's other partners on the need to contribute to funding AMISOM.

Thirdly, and lastly, concerning the humanitarian situation, respect for human rights and the fight against sexual violence continue to be areas of concern. We are concerned about the humanitarian situation in Somalia, which has worsened owing to the drought facing the country. That situation attests once again to the importance that we must continue to attach to the impact of climate change in Somalia and the Horn of Africa.

We are also deeply concerned about the persistence of numerous human rights violations and acts sexual

violence committed in Somalia. In that regard, we stress the importance of cooperation among the various Somali ministries to ensure that justice is done, that it is accessible to all and that victims are provided with assistance. We also call on all local and religious leaders to commit themselves to ensuring that the sexual offences bill is adopted and effectively implemented throughout the country.

In conclusion, I reiterate that stabilization and the return of lasting peace in Somalia for the benefit of all Somalis remain a priority for France.

Mr. Ugarelli (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the holding of this meeting and the important presentations by the briefers. We also welcome and wish Mr. James Swan every success in his endeavours, whose work we hope will mark the beginning of a new phase of cooperation between the Federal Government of Somalia and the United Nations.

At the outset, we reaffirm our conviction that it is only through close cooperation and coordination among the Federal Government of Somalia, the federal member states, the African Union, the United Nations and other international partners that we will be able to achieve the priority objectives laid out for Somalia. We therefore call on the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states to resolve outstanding issues through dialogue. The country cannot waste valuable time and requires the consensus and cooperation of both levels of Government to move forward on the key issues necessary for consolidating the Federal State, such as federal elections, security and debt relief.

We recognize the efforts of the Federal Parliament to move forward the legislative agenda and welcome the resumption of cooperation between the Upper and Lower Houses of that body. We ask the Somalis to accelerate their efforts to advance the federal election process with the same momentum. We stress that, to a large extent, the success of the elections will depend on the consensus reached by the Federal Government and the federal member states on the political framework and key issues for the upcoming national and regional elections.

In that regard, we encourage the state and federal authorities of Jubaland to reach a consensus on the upcoming elections for the state Assembly and state President so that they are held in a transparent and peaceful manner, while avoiding parallel and unrecognized electoral processes. We also underscore

the importance of promoting the active participation of women in the political life of the country. We hope that reforms by the Government will include gender-sensitive provisions and that the means for achieving a 30 per cent quota of women in the Federal Parliament in 2020 and 2021 will be provided.

Peru regrets, however, that, despite the increase in security measures by the Government of Somalia, Al-Shabaab continues to show resilience and carry out abhorrent terrorist attacks with improvised explosive devices, which can be countered only through adequate cooperation between the Federal Government and the federal member states.

With regard to that last point, we would like to highlight the progress made in the coordination efforts of the Federal Government and the authorities of South-West State. They are an encouraging collaboration model, which, if replicated in the other states, would make it possible for Somali forces to regain control of security in 2021. We also welcome the fact that the Somali Government's efficient financial management has enabled it to qualify for debt relief from the International Monetary Fund. We expect that the national development plan 2020-2024 will enable Somalia to overcome poverty and food insecurity, which are seriously affecting 2.2 million people.

Peru notes with concern the precarious humanitarian situation faced by internally displaced persons and marginalized communities in Somalia, which is exacerbated by adverse climatic conditions and requires urgent and increased financial contributions from the international community.

We commend Ms. Pramila Patten on her trip to Somalia in July to work with the Government of Somalia on the issue of eliminating conflict-related sexual violence. We trust in the Government's strong commitment to developing the national action plan to end that scourge.

I would like to conclude by underscoring the work of the African Union Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, in support of the efforts of the Somali authorities and people to build lasting peace, in spite of the remaining difficulties and challenges. We also commend the efforts of the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the United Nations to provide

the necessary conditions for the construction of a Somali State.

Mr. Cooreman (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the briefers for their insightful briefings on the situation in Somalia.

Today I will focus on the political situation, security issues and, lastly, the humanitarian situation.

Elections will be held in Jubaland tomorrow. Presidential elections at the level of a federal member state provide an opportunity for the Somali political class to demonstrate its willingness to participate fully in the exercise of democracy. We hope to see a calm and transparent process and a peaceful and non-violent transition of power, regardless of the outcome of the election. The future president of Jubaland must contribute to rebuilding relations between the Somali Federal Government and its federal member states.

Federalism can work, but only if there is readiness to engage in dialogue along with a spirit of cooperation, as well as an ongoing quest by the Federal Government and member states to reach compromise. That also means being ready to cede some power and share rights and responsibilities. It is also time to make progress in preparing for the general elections to be held in 2020-2021. We call on the federal authorities to redouble their efforts to adhere to the electoral timetable by reaching an agreement with the federal member states on key electoral issues and by rapidly adopting the electoral law with the necessary amendments.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2019/661) once again confirms that Al-Shabaab is the primary threat to the country's security and stability. Terrorist attacks have continued to plunge Somalia into mourning. Government ownership of security — that is, by the Somali armed forces — is a priority. The continued use by Al-Shabaab of improvised explosive devices makes clear the need to maintain and implement the arms embargo in a prudent and thoughtful manner.

We would like to see a greater number of initiatives aimed at creating the conditions necessary for a gradual withdrawal of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In that regard, we thank Ambassador Madeira for the importance he attaches to monitoring the transition, as set out in his briefing to the Council.

We pay tribute to the men and women who are risking their lives for Somalia as part of AMISOM and mourn the victims of the recent attacks. Weapons alone

are not enough to protect people from security threats; well-trained, well-prepared and well-supported armed forces and police, with a well-thought-out strategy and a clear code of conduct, are needed. I would add that successful security-sector reform requires coordination among all relevant actors, including international actors.

The plight of the people of Somalia remains at the heart of our concerns, as 5.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, including more than 2.6 million internally displaced persons, of whom 220,000 were newly internally displaced in the first half of the year. Somalia is also particularly vulnerable to climate shocks. Droughts are increasingly frequent and undermine the resilience of the population.

The issue of sexual violence in conflict and the plight of the tens of thousands of women and girls who are victims of that barbaric practice remain one of Belgium's major concerns. We advocate a victim-centred approach and the need to make further progress in ensuring that the perpetrators of sexual violence are held accountable, as underscored by resolution 2467 (2019). Justice must be served for those crimes. We advocate the specific inclusion of sexual violence as a designation criterion for sanctions. It is encouraging that the Federal Government of Somalia has committed to working on a new national action plan and to encouraging the involvement of the federal member states.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate Special Representative Swan on the dynamic manner in which he has begun the first few weeks of his mandate. The upcoming months look to be complex, and Somalia has everything to gain from full and sincere cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We have every confidence in him.

Mr. Repkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, for his comprehensive briefing on developments in the country. We also thank Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; 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. Amina Arale for their briefings.

We agree that the political situation in Somalia remains fragile. There are complexities in relations between Mogadishu and the federal member states. The situation is also complicated by the conflict among various clans in some states and by the start of the electoral cycle. The general elections planned for 2020-2021 also pose a serious challenge for the country. We are particularly concerned about the activities of the terrorist group Al-Shabaab. It continues to control broad swathes of the country and is also a threat to the region. In Kenya, terrorists have virtually been able to establish a full-fledged independent cell. We are also extremely concerned about Al-Shabaab's incursions and use of improvised explosive devices. Our delegation specifically asked for a separate briefing at today's meeting by the Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service on the threat from such devices in Somalia. We regret that the Director was unable to meet our request.

We welcome the successes that have been achieved in the joint military operations between the Somali armed forces and AMISOM against Al-Shabaab in South Shabelle. Those activities should be continued. We believe that in order to cut off the terrorist threat, there is a need for effective joint work to establish a unified national security architecture. The main goal is to ensure the gradual transfer of responsibility for the country's security to the Somalis themselves. We trust that this process will be carried out in line with existing plans and take into account specific developments on the ground.

AMISOM continues to play a key role in addressing security challenges in Somalia. Its reconfiguration should go hand in hand with the establishment of Somali military and law-enforcement structures. Cuts in the number of African peacekeepers in current conditions are not only counterproductive but also dangerous.

We also must address the humanitarian situation in the country. We note with concern that the lack of rainfall and the forced displacement of the population have caused the situation in the area to deteriorate further in recent months. Despite all the difficulties, we also note the encouraging trends in Somali State-building. We commend Mogadishu's efforts to build bridges with the federal member states.

Strides have been made in constitutional reform. Progress has also been made in the reconciliation process in Galmudug and South-West State. There has

also been renewed cooperation between the two houses of the Parliament. Moreover, a positive trend is being maintained in establishing the legal framework for the upcoming electoral cycle. The financial and economic sector is being effectively restructured as well.

In conclusion, we would like to note that an effective fight against the challenges that I have listed is possible only through strict respect for Somali sovereignty and the non-interference of external players in the internal affairs of the country. We hope that those are the principles that will guide the work of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia. In that regard, we welcome the determination of the country's authorities to continue fruitful cooperation with the United Nations presence.

Mr. Schulz (Germany): Let me begin by thanking our two Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Mr. James Swan and Ms. Pramila Patten, for their comprehensive briefings. I would also like to extend a particularly warm welcome to Mr. Swan, who is joining us in the Council for the first time. I further thank Ambassador Madeira and Ms. Amina Arale for their very insightful briefings.

The situation in Somalia continues to be volatile and fragile, and, for that reason, I will make a few remarks from our point of view on three aspects.

First, I will address the political, security and humanitarian aspects. We would like to start by expressing our appreciation for the work of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, James Swan, and his team. We fully support the efforts of the United Nations and joint international efforts to help stabilize Somalia. The upcoming Somalia Partnership Forum will be a good opportunity to take stock of mutually agreed commitments and to set priorities for the coming months.

With regard to the coming months, we agree with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan's assessment that we need accelerated efforts in the next month to reach the ambitious goals for the 2020-2021 general elections. For that to succeed, we need constructive cooperation between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states on accomplishing the constitutional review, adopting the electoral law and delivering on the security reform agenda. We believe that coordination meetings should be resumed and take place regularly in order to resolve

the remaining differences. In view of the 2020 elections, political processes must noticeably catch up.

We see federalism as key to achieving sustainable peace. A strong Federal Government and strong federal member states do not exclude but support one another. As many other speakers before me have said, we are also deeply concerned about the electoral process in the federal member states, especially in Jubaland tomorrow. There is high potential for escalation, which could potentially destabilize the region. Right now, we still have two separate processes, but we need a single agreed electoral process, and that requires some compromise. Although we are in the very last hours before those elections take place, we still hope that such a compromise can still be reached.

With regard to security, for the effective and timely implementation of the security transition plan, a comprehensive approach involving joint and coordinated planning and operation is essential. In particular — as noted by many, especially by the African Union Mission in Somalia itself — force generation and integration, as well as the training of new police officers, are key. That requires Somali ownership and buy-in from all stakeholders and partners. The progress made in the preparations for the building up of five forward operating bases for the Somali police is yet another milestone in strengthening the role of the Somali police and the security architecture.

Lastly, on the humanitarian situation, given what we have heard today, we continue to be deeply concerned about the very difficult humanitarian situation. More than 2 million people are severely food-insecure, and that has worsened due to insufficient rainfalls and ongoing conflicts. In 2017, the Federal Government, the federal member states, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, together with donors, were able to avert an even worse humanitarian catastrophe. It continues to be urgent to continue those efforts.

Secondly and briefly, on Special Representative of the Secretary-General Patten's briefing, we very much welcome her visit to Somalia. As documented in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/661), cases of conflict-related violence are still often underreported throughout Somalia, especially due to cultural and social factors and the limited availability of police and justice services. Access to justice and the enhancement of respective capabilities within Somali institutions are therefore essential to enforce accountability. In line

with resolution 2467 (2019), survivors must be at the centre of all efforts, and medical and psychological care and opportunities for economic participation and legal protection are some of the key aspects. In order to actively prevent and address sexual violence, it remains essential to recognize and tackle gender inequality as the root cause and driver of sexual violence. We call upon the Somali Government to advance gender equality and ensure women's full and effective participation in the implementation of the transition plan as well as in current electoral processes.

On a more positive note before I conclude, we very much welcome the commitment of the Somali Government to work with the United Nations and the Office of the Special Representative to develop a new national action plan to end sexual violence in conflict.

Thirdly and lastly, I would also like to add my words to those who strongly encourage the Somali authorities to cooperate with the United Nations Panel of Experts to address the shortcomings in implementing the sanctions regime.

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

Allow me to begin by thanking all our briefers today for their very comprehensive presentations. As this is the first time that the Security Council has received a briefing from Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan, I wish to welcome him in his new assignment and wish him every success.

Poland welcomes the resumption of cooperation between the two houses of the Federal Parliament of Somalia and looks forward to the advancement of crucial legislation, including the electoral bill. However, we remain concerned about the protracted political impasse between the Federal Government and the federal member states. It is our belief that the upcoming political processes — if conducted in a transparent and consensual manner — can contribute to the re-establishment of constructive dialogue between the Government and the regional authorities, for the benefit of the Somali population. We continue to stress the need for consensus and cooperation in order to keep to the timelines of crucial reforms.

In that context, I would like to once again underline the critical importance of political inclusiveness and of ensuring the genuine involvement of women and young people in political processes in Somalia. Poland

condemns in the strongest terms acts of sexual and gender-based violence. We welcome the constructive approach of the Somali Government in addressing conflict-related sexual violence and its willingness to work with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Patten to develop a new national plan to end sexual violence in conflict.

We are deeply worried about the increasing number of attacks by Al-Shabaab in Somalia and by the increased use of improvised explosive devices. We see a need to address the threats posed by explosive devices in a comprehensive manner and to reflect on the critical nexus linking mine-action activities and peace and security. We believe that the international community should step up its efforts against the trafficking and illicit diversion of precursor chemicals by Al-Shabaab.

Poland remains deeply concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in Somalia and the fact that today more than 5 million people are affected by drought and conflict, and in urgent need of humanitarian assistance within Somalia. Children are bearing the brunt of the drought, with increasing malnutrition, disease and displacement, which we find particularly worrisome.

Let me conclude by expressing Poland's continued appreciation for United Nations actors and those of the African Union Mission in Somalia for their everyday efforts and sacrifices.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): As I am taking the floor for the first time during your presidency, Madam, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to sincerely congratulate you on your stewardship of the Security Council's work for the month of August. I also wish to congratulate your predecessor, the representative of Peru, on his efforts in presiding over the work of the Council for the month of July. I extend the thanks of the Federal Government of Somalia to the briefers, in particular the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador James Swan, in his first briefing to the Security Council.

At the outset, I would like to reiterate the commitment of Somalia to cooperate with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia so that it can fulfil its mandate, as well as our gratitude for the service of the personnel of the African Union

Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We also want to thank Ambassador Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, for his briefing today.

It is with great pleasure that the Federal Government of Somalia welcomes Mr. Swan back to Somalia. In particular, Mr. Swan's long association with my country gives him an important perspective that situates current events and developments in Somalia within the arc of progress. It is inevitable that we all focus on the most immediate challenges and tasks in front of us, but, as we discuss the issues of immediate importance today, I encourage the Council to see them in the context of Somalia's continued upward trajectory and steady path towards rebuilding our State.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Pramila Patten, for her briefing and her visit to Somalia. Let me also express our gratitude for the briefing by Ms. Amina Arale.

A State can only be as strong as the people within it. During the reporting period, Somalia has demonstrated the resilience and determination necessary to reconcile differences. Galmudug state — one of the federal member states — was until recently divided between two administrations in two cities seeking to lead a divided population, with independent armed groups providing security. As a result of the Federal Government's sustained and inclusive engagement, the state is now an example of what we hope to achieve throughout all of Somalia.

Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khayre, many Cabinet members and his security force chiefs and officials spent nearly six weeks in Galmudug. During the visit, they spoke to local communities, including elders, members of the business community, young people and women. They brought groups together and discussed a vision of a united Somalia that will benefit all of its people.

As a result of that engagement, there is now agreement to hold a state-wide reconciliation conference that will begin in a few days, bringing together Galmudug's 11 clans, geared towards the holding of elections following a period of reconciliation. The armed group Ahl Al-Sunna Wal-Jama'a has also entered into an agreement with the Federal Government of Somalia, and their forces are now being integrated into the Somali security forces. Like all other army

personnel, those integrated are being biometrically registered, trained and paid directly via their personal bank accounts.

It is said that Galmudug is the heart of Somalia and that, if there is stability, unity and prosperity in Galmudug, the same will be true in the whole country. Not only are those State-building, security and reconciliation efforts vital for the people of Galmudug, but they also lay the foundations for similar unity and reconciliation across Somalia.

We do not pretend that this is easy. In that regard, it is necessary to remember the wider context and the painstaking path towards stability that Somalia is on. Tomorrow, there will be so-called elections in Jubaland, which have been marred by threats, intimidation, violence and outside interference.

As the Federal Government of Somalia, the international community and its partners have made clear throughout the process, the election has not been credible, inclusive or legal. The Federal Government and its international partners have consistently pointed out its flaws and the risks that that corrupted process poses to Somalia's democratic development. From the outset it has been our fear that the methods and approach taken by the incumbent state President will result in a deeply divided state, with whole communities excluded from the process, and will create a dangerous precedent for future elections in Somalia, including the federal elections to be held in 2020 and 2021. The worst-case scenario — God forbid — could involve violence and the loss of lives.

We are making good progress towards the holding of federal elections in 2020 and 2021. Voter registration work is on track, and we are committed to ensuring that a historic number of Somalis will have the opportunity to elect their leaders.

Somalia has much to do in the coming months, with key milestones ahead on our State-building journey. That includes building on the significant progress that we have made under the fourth staff-monitored programme, working towards a decision point on debt relief, preparations for elections in 2020, the continuation of decisive operations against Al-Shabaab and the conclusion of our constitutional review process. Re-engaging with international financial institutions, which will pave the way for arrears clearance and debt relief, will not only contribute to economic growth and

security in the country but will also promote peace, unity and cohesion.

The Federal Government is focused on those objectives and determined to ensure that Somalia continues its steady progress in achieving them. To that end, we look to the federal member states to play their role in Somalia's future and work towards deepening federalism and fostering collaborative engagement with the Federal Government. As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/661) highlights, at the technical level that is well under way with good cooperation. It is now up to the leaders to put aside political differences and work to deliver on the critical milestones that will lay the economic, social, security and political foundations for Somalia's future.

Somalia's resilience has been tested once again by the deadly attack on the Asasey Hotel in Kismaayo, which killed one of our prominent Somali journalists, Ms. Hodan Nalayeh, and the attack on the Benadir Regional Administration in which Somalia lost a great citizen and leader, Mr. Abdirahman Omar Osman, Mayor of Mogadishu and Governor of Benadir. His legacy will endure with many of the initiatives that he put in place to create opportunities for Mogadishu's young people, businesses and communities.

The security of Mogadishu is one of the objectives of the ongoing operations conducted by the Somali National Army on the outskirts of Mogadishu in Lower Shabelle. With the strong support of AMISOM and international partners, the Somali National Army has demonstrated its ability not only to retake and liberate the strategic towns of Sabiid, Bariira and, more recently, the town of Awdheegle, which were in the grip of Al-Shabaab, but, critically, to hold those locations to enable stabilization and local governance to be reinstated.

In addition to those critical tactical gains, operations provide a vehicle for the implementation of the institutional capacity-building elements of the transition plan and national security architecture. In addition to engaging in comprehensive planning, which has included military, police and stabilization planners drawn from across the Federal Government, regional administration and international partners, we are strengthening the institutions that will sustain our security forces and early recovery initiatives. Operations have provided a pilot for force generation, with one mixed integrated battalion drawn from across Somalia

generated, trained and deployed and a second being generated. We remain grateful for the commitment and bravery of AMISOM, which is deployed side by side with the Somali security forces and fighting a vicious enemy. My Government would again like to thank Ambassador Francisco Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, for his unwavering and tireless efforts to help Somalia.

We are currently undertaking significant reforms, including on screening, systematic human rights training, professionalization and, more important, discipline and a code of conduct for our security forces. The Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development has conducted training with ministries, departments, international agencies and human rights civil society organizations and facilitated human rights skills training for public officials, including members of the security forces. Those are vital steps towards addressing many of the issues raised in the Secretary-General's report on sexual violence in conflict as it pertains to the Somali National Army and Somali Police Force.

Security is critical not for its own sake but in order to improve the lives of all Somalis. Alongside our political and security efforts, the Federal Government continues to revive social institutions, such as health, education, sanitation and recreational facilities, among others. The Government has managed to regain possession of a couple of national hospitals and schools. And, for the first time in three decades, Somali students sat for harmonized national examinations. A cadre of students from the Somali National University graduated in June — the first batch of students in 30 years to graduate.

I have set out the evolving nature of Somalia's political, economic and security reform developments. Despite major challenges and continuing security threats, there is a clear trend of improved stability and development in Somalia. However, the gains made remain fragile, serious protection concerns persist and humanitarian needs in Somalia remain high. Therefore, the Federal Government of Somalia asserts that any current or proposed measure that aims to prevent and combat violent extremism in Somalia should advance, rather than hinder, our common and shared objectives of achieving lasting peace, stability and security in the region.

Al-Shabaab has been listed under the sanctions regime of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia, since 12 April 2010. That listing was intended to deny the group financial and material support to carry out terrorist attacks. The measures include an arms embargo, a travel ban and an assets freeze on members of the group, as well as a charcoal ban to prevent that resource from being used to finance terrorist activities. The proposed listing of Al-Shabaab under the sanctions regime of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, comes at a time when a heightened humanitarian response is urgently needed to respond to climate shocks and deteriorating drought-related humanitarian needs.

Under the 751 sanctions regime, there is an exemption clause for humanitarian access. It could not be expected that the same blanket exemption could be made under the 1267 regime. Humanitarian access to some of the most vulnerable parts of the country would be severely impeded and the delivery of assistance to persons in those areas would be hampered. The ability of the Federal Government of Somalia to provide assistance to vulnerable populations, with the support of partners, would be restricted and play into Al-Shabaab's narrative and self-image as a de facto Government in areas where State reach is limited. It would also deter investment and hamper economic growth.

The Federal Government of Somalia takes this opportunity to reiterate its condemnation of any interference in the internal affairs of Somalia and cautions against the repercussions that may arise from such actions, with serious consequences for regional instability.

Somalia calls on all States to abide by General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) on the "Declaration of Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations", which emphasizes that all States enjoy sovereign equality, every State must respect the personality of other States and that no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its own sovereign rights or to secure from it advantages of any kind. Furthermore, the Federal Government of Somalia calls

attention to articles 53 and 54 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Somalia, which grants the Federal Government of Somalia the exclusive authority to enter into international agreements with other States, including international treaties related to international boundaries — either land or sea boundaries — and control over the airspace of Somalia.

The contours of the Somali State are emerging. It is natural that there should be vigorous and divergent views as they evolve. We encourage all Council members to

see it as an essential part of the State-building process. As Somalia's federalism deepens and the contours become more defined, we are grateful for the continued support of our partners and the Council in building a progressively more stable and prosperous Somalia.

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

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.