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Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Syihab	(Indonesia)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Kridelka
	China	Mr. Dai Bing
	Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
	Estonia	Ms. Lõuk
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Germany	Mr. Sautter
	Niger	Mr. Abarry
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ms. DeShong
	South Africa	Mr. Matjila
	Tunisia	Mr. Kabtani
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Roscoe
	United States of America	Ms. Norman-Chalet
	Viet Nam	Mr. Dang

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2020/798)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Expression of welcome to the new Permanent Representative of Belgium

The President: I would like to extend, on behalf of the Council, a warm welcome to the new Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Mr. Philippe Kridelka, on the occasion of his first in-person meeting of the Security Council.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2020/798)

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; and 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.

Mr. Madeira is joining this meeting via video-teleconference from Mogadishu.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2020/798, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia.

I now give the floor to Mr. Swan

Mr. Swan: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Somalia. Members have received a detailed written update in the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/798). So I will focus on just a few key points regarding elections, relations between the Federal Government and federal member states, the security situation and humanitarian developments.

This very week, top Somali leaders convened in Dhuusamarreeb in an effort to reach a compromise on how to proceed with the 2020/2021 elections. We commend the leaders who participated in that meeting, including President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo and the Presidents of the federal member states of Galmudug, Hirshabelle and South-West. Although much more work remains to be done, we are encouraged that their discussions are taking place in a conciliatory spirit and that they are examining a diverse range of electoral options.

We therefore regret the absence of Puntland President Said Deni and Jubaland President Ahmed Islam Madobe from that important meeting. It is disappointing that they declined to participate despite repeated appeals from other Somali political leaders and international partners. We understand that there are strongly held divergent views among the leaders and that political tensions are high in this pre-electoral period. Yet it is precisely during such moments that it is most necessary for the nation's leaders to engage in dialogue and present their best ideas to find solutions in the interest of the Somali people.

On 27 June, the Chairperson of the National Independent Electoral Commission briefed the House of the People that, at this late stage, one-person-one-vote elections could take place no earlier than March 2021, and then only if manual voter registration were used, or in August 2021 if the Commission used biometric registration.

The Chairperson's briefing underscored the dilemma facing Somalia's political leaders. Under the provisional Federal Constitution, Parliament must be elected through universal direct suffrage. But the Constitution also stipulates that parliamentary elections must be held every four years according to a prescribed deadline. That means that parliamentary elections are due by the end of November 2020. It is now clear that it is impossible to satisfy both those constitutional requirements.

As the constitutional court has never been formed, there is no credible judicial body to resolve this constitutional dilemma. A solution therefore requires broad-based political agreement. Unilateral action by any Somali stakeholder is unlikely to garner the support and legitimacy necessary for implementation.

Members of the Council have for more than a year urged dialogue and cooperation between the leaders of

the Federal Government of Somalia and those of the federal member states. I am pleased to report that, since my previous briefing to the Council (see S/2020/436), those leaders met virtually on 22 June, and then in person in Dhuusamarreeb from 18 to 22 July. Those meetings became possible following a conciliatory initiative by President Farmajo to reach out to Jubaland President Ahmed Madobe. I commend both leaders for accepting the dialogue despite their significant remaining political differences.

In Dhuusamarreeb in July, leaders of the Federal Government of Somalia and of the federal member states agreed on the goal of timely and credible elections acceptable to all, and they authorized a technical committee to develop and present detailed options for consideration at their follow-up summit, which started on 15 August. The climate of cooperation in July was regrettably somewhat undermined by subsequent political events, as some federal member states and political parties reacted negatively to the abrupt removal of the Prime Minister from office, among other developments.

President Farmajo and three federal member state leaders returned on schedule to Dhuusamarreeb on 15 August, as agreed, to continue discussions. Again, we regret the absence of the other leaders.

It is of course up to Somali stakeholders to determine the model that will guide the electoral process. Nevertheless, we also urge that such a model be arrived at through inclusive dialogue and compromise. It should also be informed by principles, including that it must preserve the tradition of peaceful rotation in office every four years, be implementable in practice, ensure far broader representation than the 2016 model, be inclusive of women and advance progress towards the goal of one-person-one-vote elections.

Somalis and their international partners are closely watching the discussion currently under way in Dhuusamarreeb. It is incumbent on Somalia's leaders to rise to this moment in history and pursue agreement in the national interest. At the request of many Somali stakeholders, we have contributed ideas and options for a compromise electoral model, and international partners stand ready to offer support if requested by the participants.

Turning to another important dialogue, we welcome the summit of the leaders of Somalia and Somaliland convened by Djibouti President Ismaël Omar Guelleh

on 14 June, with facilitation by the European Union and the United States. We urge that the planned follow-up discussions by the technical committee and subcommittees proceed.

We are now witnessing a worrisome upsurge in attacks by Al-Shabaab, particularly in Mogadishu but also in several regions. The vicious Al-Shabaab attack on innocent civilians at the Elite Hotel on 16 August was one of an increasing number of recent attacks across Somalia and is a tragic reminder of the continued imperative to improve security in Somalia. Long-term security of course includes many aspects, such as improved governance and justice systems and inclusive economic development. Yet unquestionably there also remains a requirement for hard security capabilities and operations to counter Al-Shabaab. In my May briefing to the Council, I commended the Somali National Army and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for their capture of Janaale, Lower Shabelle region, in March. Since then, efforts have focused on stabilizing the recovered areas and consolidating a presence in the area. I again salute the courage and commitment of the Somali and African Union troops.

The year 2021 will see a critical transition, in which Somalia takes the lead on its security matters. Last week, the Federal Government of Somalia completed a concept note for updating the Somalia transition plan, and technical teams comprising Somali security leaders and international partners began work on the update this week. Force generation has faced some setbacks in meeting the projections for 2020 as a consequence of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The comprehensive approach to security continues to operate at the technical level but it would be enhanced by additional strategic-level guidance, as called for by the Council in resolution 2520 (2020).

Throughout this reporting period, despite the impact of COVID-19, the United Nations Support Office for Somalia has continued to contribute reliably to the sustainment and the operations of AMISOM forces and 10,900 Somali National Army troops. In preparation for key security-related decisions to be taken in 2021, we look forward to the independent assessment called for by the Council.

Somalia continues to suffer chronic humanitarian crises, with recurring destructive cycles of floods and drought, compounded this year by desert locusts and COVID-19. More than five million people — one

third of Somalia's population — still require life-saving humanitarian assistance. The 2020 humanitarian appeal, for just over \$1 billion, is currently funded at only slightly more than 50 per cent. We thank international donors and request their continued generosity in support of the Somali people.

COVID-19 has of course undermined health, economic and development gains in Somalia. The achievement in March of the decision point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative was crucial to Somalia's ability to secure funding to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. We hope the new Government and the Prime Minister, once appointed, will continue, and indeed accelerate, Somalia's reform agenda for national development.

While today's briefing has focused on immediate, pressing issues, we remain mindful that progress in Somalia requires a long-term commitment to governance, justice, respect for human rights and the inclusion of women, youth and minorities to build the nation.

With regard to efforts to counter sexual and gender-based violence, I note with concern the recent initiative by some parliamentarians to introduce a new bill entitled "the law on sexual intercourse-related crimes". We have brought our concerns to the attention of the Speaker of the House of the People and, at his request, we have provided him details of many troubling elements in the proposed draft. Among them, the draft bill would violate protections against child marriage and forced marriage, and it is not in conformity with international human rights commitments to which Somalia is a party. We urge that the previous 2018 sexual offences bill be reintroduced for consideration.

Finally, on a positive note, I am pleased to report that the Secretary-General has approved Somalia's request for renewed eligibility for the Peacebuilding Fund. The next period of programming will focus on the important topic of women and peace and security.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

Mr. Madeira: I thank you very much, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on a Somalia. I am particularly pleased to do so again with my colleague Ambassador James Swan. Our partnership is proof of the strong cooperation that exists between the

African Union and the United Nations, which remains vital to our collective support to Somalia.

Let me begin by recognizing that there have been significant developments in Somalia since I last the briefed the Council in May (see S/2020/436). Those developments are, in large part, due to the determination of Somalia's leaders to get together and consult on the bold steps required to strengthen the country's capacity to fight Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, build the State of Somalia and strengthen its institutions and stabilize the country through the provision of essential goods and the services to the people.

The emerging resumption of dialogue and collaboration between the leaders of the Federal Government and those of the federal member states is the most salient political development that happened in the period under consideration. If harnessed and facilitated, this development can unlock the great potential of the Somali people to put in the second plan what divides them and build on the factors that bring them together and strengthen the unity and solidarity of their people.

I commend the personal efforts of President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo and those of the Presidents of the federal member states, who, through emissaries, direct and indirect contacts, consultations, exchanges and mutual reassurances, have laid the groundwork that made those crucial developments a reality: the Dhuusamarreeb process.

In Dhuusamarreeb, we saw President Farmajo meeting bilaterally with President Ahmed Mohamed Islam Madobe of Jubaland and discussing their issues. We witnessed President Farmajo exchanging views one on one with President Said Abdullahi Mohamed Deni of Puntland, with President Mohamed Abdi Ware of Hirshabelle and President Abdiiaziz Hassan Mohamed Laftagareen of South-West State. We saw President Ahmed Abdi Kariye Qoor Qoor preparing the ground and welcoming President Farmajo and all the other Presidents to the big meeting.

Those meetings are important and necessary. They should cease to be historical developments. They must be made to repeat themselves with such frequency that they become normal events — regular encounters of leaders united in a common purpose of making their country a better place for all their people.

We regret that, for the meeting that started on 15 August, two of those leaders have not been there. We the international partners and friends of Somalia have an important role to play to make peace a necessary presence and transformation a necessary reality.

Then Dhuusamarreeb process deserves our unwavering support, as it represents a clear signal of the intent of Somali leaders to work towards a political consensus. This was the missing link, and now it seems to be close. We should not miss this opportunity.

The African Union, through the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), is there in Somalia supporting the Somali security forces in ensuring security for those encounters on the ground. While the parties will require more commitment and trust to assure that the Dhuusamarreeb talks are a success, the African Union will continue not only to secure the process but also to offer its political support, where and when needed.

The African Union welcomes the developing dialogue between President Farmajo and the “Somaliland” leader, Mr. Muse Bihi Abdi. The latest round of talks, held in June, brokered by President Ismaël Omar Guelleh of Djibouti, stands as the second this year. More important, this is evidence of Somalia’s commitment to dialogue as a means of resolving its national differences. We are equally aware that the talks’ joint technical committee is yet to meet again, and we underscore the importance that those talks continue.

The resumption of dialogue between the Federal Government and the federal member states has real potential to act as a catalyst for achieving critical national priorities. I am encouraged so far that the resumption of dialogue has already allowed for Somali stakeholders at all levels to engage in frank and inclusive discussions in search of a consensual approach to the issue of elections and its modalities. We partners of Somalia must strive to ensure that the discussions will remain all-inclusive, because it is that inclusivity that lends legitimacy and will determine the consistence and implementability of the consensus that may be reached in the Dhuusamarreeb process.

Following the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) report to Parliament on 27 June, AMISOM, at the request of the Commission’s Chairperson, has enhanced its discussions on election security, the securing of the new NIEC premises and

the African Union Commission’s technical support to NIEC prior to and during the elections.

I am also pleased to report that AMISOM’s police component, which will play a critical role in election security, is regularly engaging its Somali counterparts on areas of support. In that context, AMISOM police are currently training Somali police on the use of mapping tools for election security threat assessments. Despite that support, it remains essential, as part of election preparation, that the important work of the National Electoral Security Task Force resume as soon as practically possible.

I remain concerned at the threat of Al-Shabaab across Somalia, which is demonstrated by the extremist group’s sustained attacks against Government officials, businesses, civilians, security forces and international personnel. The fight against Al-Shabaab will continue to require concerted efforts. At the centre of peace efforts must be enhanced collaboration, coordination, coherence, improved information-sharing and complementarity between the Federal Government and the federal member states, particularly as Somalia prepares to hold elections.

More must be done to degrade Al-Shabaab’s operational capacities. It is our assessment that as Somalia’s national dialogue continues to edge towards political consensus, Al-Shabaab will seek to derail those efforts. Already Al-Shabaab, in its public statements, has unsuccessfully attempted to undermine the Dhuusamarreeb process and foment national discord.

In line with AMISOM’s tasks, as stipulated in the African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué 923 and Security Council resolution 2520 (2020), I can report that despite the ongoing impact of the coronavirus disease, AMISOM has continued to implement the transition plan. Since May, AMISOM, jointly with our partners in the Somali security forces, has been continuing to conduct several targeted operations to disrupt, degrade and disrupt Al-Shabaab’s freedom of movement and action. In addition to these operations, we have jointly secured and maintained key supply routes.

As part of our transition tasks, we have also mentored various Somali security forces battalions through our ongoing colocation, particularly in Lower Shabelle. In Lower Shabelle, as the Council is aware, recovered areas remain secure thanks to the continued

joint operations and the bravery of our Somali security forces and AMISOM soldiers.

The African Union, through AMISOM, has been the foundation of progress on security in Somalia since 2007, but with this we have thankfully witnessed the capabilities of the Somali security institutions gradually increase. These increases must continue in earnest so that Somalia is eventually able to take the lead on its security responsibilities by 2021. To that effect, it is with satisfaction that we note that the work towards the revision of the transitional plan is ongoing and the Government has set a clear vision of what the revision should entail, the strategic priorities it should pursue, the actions that need to be implemented to make each strategic priority a reality and the specific tasks that need to be fulfilled and by whom.

Clearly, improved and enhanced coordination and coherence, information-sharing and accountability, transparency and complementarity will be necessary for the adopted revised transition plan to be fully implemented in a timely manner. We are happy that this revision is taking place in tandem with efforts to revitalize the comprehensive approach to security mechanisms, which will be more aligned with the revised transition plan activities.

A very positive feature in the current revision is that the elements of all-inclusiveness have been enhanced and the federal member states have been fully included and involved from the outset in the preparation of this new revised transition plan. They are participating directly and actively, and their views are being noted and reflected in the baseline documents that are being produced. Their seats are assured and reserved in the three technical committees tasked with producing the draft revised transition plan. This is of extreme importance, as no realistically sustainable peace operation in Somalia can succeed without the involvement of the regions concerned.

As we begin to review the transition plan, under the leadership of the Federal Government, it remains critical that a reviewed plan must focus on practical elements. These must include consensus on priority locations for transition and agreement on the realignment of tasks, particularly for international partners, as called for in African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué 923. Agreements on those elements will in part inform our collective assessment on what comprehensive support Somalia would require from key international

partners in the lead-up to 2021 and post-2021, as called for in both African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué 923 and Security Council 2520 (2020).

In terms of operations, one of the pressing issues that needs to be tackled head-on and addressed as a matter of urgency is the lack of commensurate Somali security forces to take over and hold areas under AMISOM control and those projected for liberation from Al-Shabaab. This is making it difficult for AMISOM forces in various sectors to reconfigure and create mobile forces for targeted offensive operations against Al-Shabaab, as they are forced by circumstance to keep holding and protecting the populations in the towns and habitational centres they have liberated from Al-Shabaab.

Therefore, realistic and feasible approaches need to be identified to effectively address the issue of the slow pace of generation of the Somali National Army forces.

As I conclude, I should like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué 923 is broadly in line with paragraph 38 of Security Council resolution 2520 (2020) on the need for a comprehensive, independent assessment. In the spirit of the African Union-United Nations shared vision for Somalia, the African Union continues to call for a joint African Union-United Nations effort in delivering on this important assessment.

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

I now give the floor to those Council members wishing to make statements.

Mr. Roscoe (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan for his briefing and welcoming Ambassador Madeira and also thanking him for his comprehensive briefing, as well as Ambassador Osman.

On behalf of the United Kingdom, I want to first express my condolences to the families and friends of those killed in the recent Al-Shabaab attack on the Elite hotel in Mogadishu. I want also to reaffirm our solidarity with all Somalis in the face of such attacks. Deplorably, those attacks, despite coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the Secretary-General's call for a ceasefire, continue to undermine peace and security in Somalia. We condemn those attacks, and we pay tribute to the ongoing commitment and sacrifices of troop-contributing countries to the African Union Mission

in Somalia (AMISOM) and the efforts of the Somali security forces to counter Al-Shabaab.

As we have heard today, Somalia is at a critical juncture on its journey towards a long-term political settlement and the peace, security and stability that will enable. Somali leaders and international partners have committed to supporting and advancing democracy in Somalia. With the deadline for elections fast approaching, an agreement on a way forward is urgently needed. A timely and inclusive way forward is also critical — a way forward that respects the principles and commitments agreed to in the Mutual Accountability Framework, including at least a 30 per cent quota for woman parliamentarians. That agreement should represent clear progress from the 2016 election model, moving Somalia away from clan-based selection processes to direct elections, and enable as many citizens to vote as possible, as set out in the provisional Federal Constitution.

We therefore welcome the ongoing consultations between leaders of the Federal Government and the federal member states at Dhuusamarreeb. We have always been clear that the electoral model will require broad-based support among all Somali stakeholders. To that end, we regret — as Special Representative Swan and Ambassador Madeira both said — that President Deni of Puntland and President Madobe of Jubaland have not yet joined the talks. We call for them to attend as a matter of urgency. It is vital that all stakeholders — the Federal Government, federal member states, Parliament, the National Independent Electoral Commission and the joint parliamentary committee — work together in a spirit of compromise to reach agreement and avoid unilateral or provocative acts that would undermine the hard-won stability in Somalia and the partnership with the international community. We stand ready to support agreed outcomes that strengthen inclusive politics and include a significant element of direct voting.

Turning to the human rights situation, we too share the concerns expressed today by the United Nations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General about the bill regarding sexual-intercourse crimes. It was encouraging to see so many Somalis speak out against it. We urge the Parliament to give first reading to the original sexual offences bill submitted by the Cabinet. Any bill passed by the Somali Parliament must reflect its international obligations and commitments on the protection of children, women and girls.

I want also to express our deep concern about attacks on the freedom of expression and against journalists and media workers in Somalia. Media freedom is a vital component of our democratic society, and the media has a vital role to play in Somalia. We call for journalists and media workers to be able to perform their work freely and safely.

Somalia faces a protracted climate- and conflict-induced humanitarian crisis. That crisis has been exacerbated by the global COVID-19 pandemic, floods and locust infestation. We call on the international community to provide more funding for the humanitarian response and to step up efforts to build resilience and mitigate the long-term effects of climate change. The United Kingdom gave \$420 million to Somalia in the past financial year and is now working to support the COVID-19 response. It is vital that the Federal Government and the federal member states facilitate the delivery of relief aid to all those in need, and ensure the safety of aid workers in line with international humanitarian law.

I return to the security situation in Somalia. The country has made important progress in recent years, but the security situation, as we have heard, remains difficult. Next year's deadline for transition of greater responsibility to the Somali security authorities presents both a challenge and an opportunity.

It is vital that all those that are invested in supporting AMISOM and building Somalia's security forces now work together to agree to a future of international support for the security of Somalia. Without that, we risk wasting the progress and sacrifices made to date. A United Nations-led independent assessment on post-2021 security should offer the forum for such discussions, and I urge all partners to engage proactively with it.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize three points. First, I want to reiterate our call, which the Security Council has made many times, for the Federal Government and all federal member states to reach a decisive and inclusive agreement on elections, soon. Secondly, I want to underline the importance of the Council, the United Nations, the African Union and the wider international community continuing to support Somalia to achieve progress and political and security reform. Finally, I want to stress the importance of a united response in supporting Somalia in its fight against COVID-19 and protracted humanitarian crises.

Through the determination of the its people and the support of the international community, Somalia has come a long way. We should not lose sight of that. We stand ready to lend our support to navigate this next stage and to help Somalia realize its goal of peace and security.

Mr. Kridelka (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia for their briefings and actions. I would like to reiterate Belgium's full support.

Before saying a few words on the political situation and on human rights and security issues, I would like to offer, through Ambassador Osman, my condolences to the families of the victims of the attack on a hotel in the capital on Sunday. Such terrorist acts are unacceptable and demonstrate once again that the Somali Government and the Somali armed forces must prioritize the country's security.

With regard to the political situation, I wish to welcome the resumption, in July, of a high-level political dialogue between the Federal Government and the federal member states. That is an encouraging and entirely necessary development to address the urgent issues facing Somalia. We must ensure that the dialogue continues and that a consensus is reached between the Federal Government and all the federal member states. We hope that the removal of Prime Minister Khayre, in problematic circumstances, does not signal a change of direction. Time is running out to take important decisions on the organization of the elections, but such decisions must absolutely be the result of a compromise, not a unilateral decision taken by a Somali political institution or actor. We also encourage the authorities to broaden the democratic space in order to allow for the participation of a large part of the population, including women, young people and internally displaced persons, in those processes, which are crucial for the future of the country. In that context, Belgium also echoes the representative of the United Kingdom in expressing our concern about the attacks on journalists who are doing their work and exercising their freedom of expression.

With regard to human rights, we remain concerned about the grave violations against children. As Chair of the Working Group on Children in Armed Conflict, I am pleased to confirm that the Group very recently adopted conclusions on Somalia, with the ongoing

support of Assistant Secretary-General Virginia Gamba de Potgieter. The group welcomes those conclusions, in particular the efforts made by the Federal Government. Belgium encourages the Government to continue its efforts aimed at implementing the necessary legislation to combat several types of violations, including the draft law on sexual violence. On this point, we are concerned about the introduction in Parliament of a new text that appears to be incompatible with Somalia's international obligations.

Finally, Sunday's attack reminds us that Al-Shabaab remains the primary threat to the security and stability of the country. The development and deployment of the Somali army is essential to containing this threat and protecting the population. We await the review of the transition plan, which will be the key document to guiding Somalia, with the help of its partners, towards regaining control of its security and reconfiguring the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). I wish to recall the support that the European Union is providing to Somalia through the financing of AMISOM, the European Union Training Mission and the European Union Capacity-Building Mission in Somalia and the anti-maritime-piracy Operation Atalanta.

The support of the international community is not limited to the security sector. There is of course also humanitarian aid, which is badly needed by the population, as the number of food-insecure people is in the millions. There is also support for institutional capacity-building, as the restoration of State authority is not simply a military operation; it is a matter of the Somali authorities providing the population with the basic services and freedoms to which they aspire.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Mr. James Swan and Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira for the valuable and detailed information they provided.

The Dominican Republic welcomes the resumption of dialogue and collaboration between the Federal Government and the leaders of the federal member states in July and the agreement to establish a technical committee to make recommendations on the modalities of the upcoming elections. In this regard, we commend the efforts of the United Nations and international partners aimed at fostering political consensus among Federal and state leaders in order to advance the implementation of national priorities in Somalia.

A key element in achieving that objective is the adoption of the reformed constitution. We therefore urge the parties to continue to make the necessary efforts for the resumption of a constructive, inclusive and transparent dialogue in order to reach the political agreement that will make it possible to conclude the review process. Similarly, we commend the meeting between the Presidents of Puntland and Galmudug and their commitment to cooperating in the maintenance of peace, security and economic development, in particular in Mudug Region. We also commend the initiative of the President of Djibouti, Mr. Ismaël Omar Guelleh, to facilitate the resumption of dialogue between Somalia and “Somaliland”. We are convinced that achieving consensus through dialogue among political actors in Somalia will be the driving force for unifying the country and making the upcoming elections viable and based on electoral modalities acceptable to all Somalis.

We express our concern about the security situation in Somalia and condemn the attacks perpetrated by the Al-Shabaab terrorist group, some of which were carried out using improvised explosive devices. We particularly condemn the attack on 16 August on the Elite Hotel in Mogadishu. We extend our condolences to the families of the victims and hope that those responsible will be brought to justice.

In addition, we recognize the efforts made by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM) and the United Nations Development Programme to train and raise awareness among the population on gender issues and on the women and peace and security agenda. Similarly, we welcome the establishment by the South-West state assembly of a parliamentary committee on women, human rights and humanitarian issues that could spearhead the promotion of legislation that empowers women and promotes gender equality.

We understand that greater participation by women in the various areas of public and political practice is vital. Women have the power to change communities. Their representation in the political system is key to achieving sustainable peace. Similarly, the participation of young people is necessary to help overcome the challenges in Somalia. That is why care must be taken to ensure an enabling environment for their development.

We also express our concern about the fragile humanitarian situation in Somalia resulting from the triple threat posed by coronavirus disease, the desert

locust infestation and the floods that have affected thousands of displaced persons in recent months. In this regard, we would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of humanitarian partners in Somalia despite the difficult situation in the country. Accordingly, we also encourage the international community to contribute to the humanitarian assistance fund for Somalia in order to save lives and alleviate the needs of the most vulnerable.

In conclusion, we would like to highlight the role that the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, the African Union Mission in Somalia and UNSOM have been playing. At the same time, we recognize all the actors whose actions promote peace and stability in the country.

Ms. Norman-Chalet (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Swan and Special Representative Madeira for joining us today and for their comprehensive updates and briefings.

I also join you, Mr. President, in welcoming our new Belgian colleague, Ambassador Kridelka. It is really good to see him in person. Although I saw him on the screen yesterday, I want to welcome him officially to the Security Council today.

Somalia stands before a moment of profound opportunity. The country faces difficult circumstances and security challenges to get there, however, including in the attack on the hotel in Mogadishu last weekend, which the United States condemns. We express our condolences to the victims and their families. This and other attacks highlight the need for Somalia to keep the upcoming elections on track. Those elections are fundamental to advancing stability and security in the country. Uncertainties and delays in holding elections will have the opposite effect.

The challenges Somalia faces require concerted and unified efforts by its leaders. Unfortunately, the withdrawal of confidence in the former Prime Minister and his Government in July by the President and the Lower House of Parliament has only heightened the political tensions. We are concerned that such action has undermined the process of dialogue and negotiation among the Federal Government of Somalia, federal member states and other key stakeholders. We strongly encourage Somalia's Federal Government and member states to hammer out a way forward for the upcoming elections.

Elections need to be credible, timely, secure, practical, implementable and built on broad-based consensus in a Somali-owned and Somali-led process. We welcome the discussions under way in Dhuusamarreeb and encourage the parties to reach agreement on a model that meets the criteria and can be implemented by early 2021.

The United States further encourages Somali authorities to maintain momentum on the reform efforts that brought about the re-establishment of ties with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in March of this year. Reaching the heavily indebted poor country decision point is an important milestone for Somalia, as it lays the foundation for inclusive economic growth. But such reforms must continue as Somalia seeks to build long-term inclusive economic growth and resiliency.

The United States is and will continue to be a close partner of Somalia. I meant to say earlier that it is very good to have Ambassador Osman here in the Council with us. With more than \$5.3 billion in bilateral foreign assistance over the past 20 years, we are working alongside the Somali people in support of improved food security, health-care services, water, sanitation and hygiene. United States humanitarian assistance is helping Somalis overcome flooding, drought, locust infestation and food insecurity, affecting nearly half the population, with a quarter of the people also displaced by natural calamities and conflict.

The United States is also working alongside its Somali partners to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Since the crisis began, we have provided more than \$23 million to support Somalia's COVID-19 response, including for masks, hospital beds, testing-centre equipment and communication efforts.

Finally, as other colleagues have already highlighted this morning, Al-Shabaab remains a destabilizing force in Somalia that has also repeatedly demonstrated the will and capability to launch attacks against neighbouring States. We are encouraged that the Somali and African Union Mission in Somalia forces have made progress on the battlefield, and that those military gains have been followed up with vital stabilization efforts to hold liberated territory. We remain concerned, however, that the implementation of key elements of the Somalia transition plan are behind schedule. We urge all parties to take the necessary steps

to accelerate the transfer of security responsibilities to the Somali military and civilian authorities.

The United States remains steadfast in its commitments to promoting peace and stability in Somalia and to working with our international partners in assisting the country to reach its goals for a peaceful and prosperous future.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important and timely meeting on the situation in Somalia. I have the distinct honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Niger, Tunisia and South Africa, as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

At the outset, the A3+1 would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Somalia (S/2020/798). We would also like to thank Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM), and Mr. Francisco Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), for their briefings. We commend them for their efforts in Somalia. We would also like to welcome our colleague, Ambassador Osman of Somalia, to our meeting today. We pay tribute to all Somalis who have perished since our previous meeting on the situation in Somalia (see S/2020/573).

The A3+1 statement will focus on four important issues and developments in Somalia, namely, first, political developments; secondly, election preparations; thirdly, security; and, fourthly, the humanitarian situation.

First, on political developments, the A3+1 welcomes and commends the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member states for their recent meetings and consultations, which constitute an important first step towards building the political consensus necessary for the transition in Somalia.

We agree with the Secretary-General's observation that the long-awaited resumption of dialogue between the leaders of the Federal Government and the federal member states and the steps taken towards normalizing the Federal Government's relations with Jubaland are critical to the restoration of collaboration between the Federal and state levels of Government.

In that regard, the A3+1 further welcomes the meeting between President Farmajo and Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi in Djibouti, following their initial meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We appreciate the continued regional and subregional efforts, as well as those of the international community, in bringing political stability to Somalia and the Horn of Africa. That is a positive development towards consolidating peace, security and development in the region.

The Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa urge all major stakeholders in Somalia to maintain that spirit of inclusive consultations and cooperation in all follow-up meetings in order to reach a broad-based agreement on critical matters. We regard that and other developments in the relations between the Federal Government and the federal member states as a critical step towards building the essential political consensus on various important issues, including agreement on the electoral modalities, security arrangements, constitutional review and power-sharing.

As the Security Council and the international community, we should all support the recent discussions held by the Federal and state leaders in Dhuusamarreeb. The international community and partners of Somali leaders and stakeholders should also allow them to lead and determine their future, without interference or imposition.

Furthermore, we appeal to the Somali stakeholders to undertake urgent and concerted efforts to reach a broad-based, inclusive political agreement, including on the way forward on elections and the finalization of the revised Constitution, among other key priorities.

Secondly, on the preparations for the elections, the Niger, Tunisia and South Africa, as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, recall their previous statement to the Council, in which they noted that the preparations and holding of one-person-one-vote elections in Somalia was a critical priority (see S/2020/436, annex XII). We further underlined the importance of dialogue, inclusive political participation and the resolution of political differences between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states, which are critical to the success of the elections and national cohesion. We reiterate that those observations remain valid today.

Therefore, the A3+1 commends the recent developments related to the preparations for the elections

in Somalia, in particular the adoption by the House of the People of the amendments to the political parties law and four resolutions that address the representation in Parliament of all federal member states, including the allocation of seats to constituencies for both Houses and a minimum of 24 per cent representation of women in Parliament,

We are also pleased that the National Independent Electoral Commission continues its preparations for the national elections. That is evidenced by the two possible options for conducting the elections either in March or in August 2021, depending on whether the elections are held through paper-based voter registration and polling or standard biometric voter registration.

The A3+1 urges all the stakeholders in Somalia to engage constructively in an inclusive dialogue to reach a political consensus on the modalities and timing of the elections. We further appeal to the international partners to coordinate their support to ensure inclusive, credible and secure elections in Somalia.

Thirdly, on the security situation, the A3+1 remains concerned about the volatile security situation in Somalia. We strongly condemn the attacks by Al-Shabaab on Somali civilians, the security forces, AMISOM, the United Nations and the international community. We pay tribute to the ultimate sacrifices of AMISOM and the Somali National Army in their quest to bring about peace, stability and development in Somalia.

We reiterate our previous calls urging the Federal Government of Somalia, with the support of the United Nations, AMISOM and international partners, to continue the generation, training and resourcing of capable and effective Somali national forces, which will ultimately take over the security responsibilities in line with the revised Somali transitional plan and the national security architecture.

To that end, we again appeal for the international community and partners to mobilize the necessary resources, including the replenishment of the United Nations trust fund in support of AMISOM and the trust fund to support the Somali security forces, as they continue to make commendable progress towards restoring State authority, peacebuilding and State-building.

We commend in particular the efforts of the Somali National Army in securing all recovered areas thus far.

However, we recognize the challenges created by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the rains, from April to June, that have impacted the expansion of some security activities, including the liberation of more zones.

We are heartened by the number of reconciliation efforts made by the State Administration and communities aimed at ending the cycle of violence among clans. We support the peaceful resolution of tensions among the communities and peaceful coexistence between the clans.

We strongly condemn the reported incidents of civilian casualties and conflict-related sexual violence, particularly those affecting women and girls. We also strongly condemn the grave violations against children in armed conflict, including the use, abduction, recruitment, killing and maiming of children, that have been registered during the period under review. We support the calls urging that all perpetrators of such crimes be identified and held accountable.

Furthermore, we have taken note of the developments in Parliament relating to the draft sexual-offences bill and the introduction of an alternative bill. Although we recognize the prerogative of the Somali Parliament to draft legislation, we call on the authorities to ensure that any new piece of legislation remains consistent with Somalia's international law obligations.

Fourthly, concerning the humanitarian situation, Somalia has been impacted by the triple threat and shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, an infestation by desert locusts and floods. Those challenges have deepened Somalia's humanitarian crisis. COVID-19 in particular has exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities, disrupted socioeconomic gains and affected the livelihoods of ordinary Somalis. We commend the actions taken by the humanitarian partners for the expansion of their support to Somali authorities to address the impact of COVID-19.

The A3+1 notes that the adverse impact of flooding due to climate change remained widespread in Somalia during the period under review. We are concerned that that situation will continue to exacerbate the displacement of people, food insecurity and the outbreak of water-borne diseases, as well as to adversely affect the livelihoods of those made most vulnerable across the country.

In that respect, Somalia requires continued support by the international community and humanitarian partners to mitigate the impact of that triple threat. We support the call by the Secretary-General for the additional funding that is urgently needed to continue to deliver humanitarian assistance.

We deplore the fact that the security situation remains a major constraint to humanitarian operations. We are concerned at and condemn the recorded incidents against humanitarian operations and providers, including recorded incidents that led to the killing, abduction and, in some instances, detaining of humanitarian workers.

Finally, the Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa commend the efforts and commitment of the United Nations through UNSOM and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, AMISOM, the United Nations Mine Action Service, the Federal Government and the federal member states of Somalia and the international partners for their continual efforts and progress in bringing about stabilization and deepening federalism and State-building in Somalia.

We urge a continued and strengthened working relationship between AMISOM and UNSOM in order to assist Somalia to take ownership of addressing its own security challenges, as envisaged by the transition plan. We reiterate that the withdrawal of AMISOM from Somalia should be condition-based, as the security situation remains volatile and is characterized by frequent terrorist attacks.

To conclude, the Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa support the continued presence of AMISOM and UNSOM in Somalia. In that regard, we support the renewal of the mandate of UNSOM for another 12 months when it ends on 31 August 2020.

Ms. Lõuk (Estonia): We join others in offering our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the recent attack on the Elite Hotel. We also join others in thanking the briefers for their insightful overviews.

It is important that despite the multiple challenges, including the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Somalia keep moving ahead with the long-term goals of State-building. We commend Somalia on the progress made thus far and encourage them to stay on course.

Estonia warmly welcomes the resumption of dialogue between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states, and strongly encourages all stakeholders to continue their talks to pursue national priorities, including the modalities of timely and peaceful elections. Given the high stakes of the upcoming elections, it is crucial that no unilateral actions be taken and that broad-based political agreements be reached. We hope that the stakeholders can agree on timely and inclusive elections, which represent progress beyond the 2016 model.

We are concerned about the sexual-intercourse-related crimes bill proposed by the parliamentary committee and urge the Parliament not to pass any legislation that is in violation of international standards. We also call on the authorities to address the attacks on freedom of expression and to investigate attacks on journalists and media workers accordingly.

Lastly, we call on the Federal Government to take steps towards establishing the national human rights commission, which has a key role in promoting and protecting human rights. Estonia welcomes the fact that the Working Group on Children in Armed Conflict has agreed its most recent conclusions on Somalia, and we are looking forward to their implementation.

The security situation remains a major challenge. We condemn in the strongest terms the attacks by Al-Shabaab and offer condolences to the victims of the attacks. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, all stakeholders must ensure that progress is also made on the security front. We further call on the Federal Government of Somalia to accelerate the updating of the transition plan. Clear timelines, clear tasks and a clear vision are crucial in order to achieve the end goal of Somalia taking full responsibility for its security.

Finally, Estonia is deeply concerned about the current humanitarian situation, which has suffered the triple shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, a locust infestation and floods. We are concerned that the humanitarian response plan remains underfunded, with 3.5 million people facing severe food insecurity for the remainder of the year. We call on the international community to address the funding gap.

I would like to conclude by expressing Estonia's gratitude and support to United Nations personnel in Somalia, the African Union Mission in Somalia and the Somali security forces for their efforts, commitment and sacrifices to bring peace and stability to Somalia.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I wish to begin, if I may, by extending my heartfelt condolences to our Somali colleagues in the wake of the terrorist attack perpetrated by Al-Shabaab last weekend at the Elite Hotel in Mogadishu. I ask my dear friends to please accept our heartfelt condolences.

We are thankful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, James Swan, as well as to the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, Mr. Madeira, for their comprehensive briefings on the situation in Somalia. We also welcome to his first meeting in person the new Permanent Representative of Belgium, Philippe Kridelka.

The Russian Federation welcomes the efforts made by Mogadishu to achieve political stability, the normalization of the socioeconomic situation and the phased establishment of democratic institutions in the country. We steadfastly champion the maintenance of the territorial integrity and unity of Somalia.

In recent months, the Federal Government has achieved concrete results in its dialogue with the federal member states in the run-up to next year's scheduled elections. We trust that this week's summit in Galmudug will help to identify the modalities of the future vote.

The Security Council should fully support Mogadishu's commitment to holding one-person, one-vote elections. We remain convinced that the broadest possible implementation of the electoral model could potentially help extricate Somalia from the current political impasse and a state of permanent, all-out war. It could also deal a heavy blow to the positions of Al-Shabaab, which is keen on maintaining the traditional clan-based system of voting.

We value the now regular virtual consultations between the Federal Government and the leadership of the states of Jubaland, Galmudug, Puntland, Hirshabelle and South-West. We are concerned about the breakdown in August of the second round of talks between the delegations of Somalia and the self-proclaimed Somaliland. We urge both sides to explore possible compromises as a way of resolving their differences.

We concur with the conclusions of the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2020/798) that the security situation in Somalia remains volatile. Al-Shabaab has not stopped its terrorist activities. The fight against

extremists has been adversely affected by the poor supply of weaponry to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and its inability to procure military equipment, in particular helicopters, and is further compounded by the lack of engagement with the Somali National Army and the general passivity of the Somali authorities on the issues of restoring the local administration and security structures in the liberated areas.

We believe that it is our common task to identify the proper response to the threat posed to the country by improvised explosive devices, which Al-Shabaab increasingly relies on in its operations.

In these circumstances, AMISOM remains the linchpin in the fight against terrorism. We supported the extension of the mandate of the African peacekeepers until the end of February 2021. Given the prospects of the phased closure of the Mission, strengthening the capacity of the Somali National Army is critical. At the same time, we object to attempts by a number of countries to forcibly expedite the drawdown of AMISOM.

Given the current situation, we deem it judicious for the Security Council to jointly and systematically pursue its efforts to reach agreement on multifaceted assistance to the country's authorities with a view to achieving a definitive end to the internal crisis in Somalia.

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Madeira for their informative briefings and for their work on the ground at this very challenging time. I warmly welcome Ambassador Osman, Permanent Representative of Somalia, to our meeting today.

I join others in extending our deepest condolences to those who lost family members in Sunday's attack in Mogadishu or in other incidents in the country since our last meeting on Somalia (see S/2020/573).

Somalia is now at a historical turning point thanks to positive developments in the dialogue and collaboration between the Federal Government and federal member states, improved security and economic conditions, and the preparations for upcoming elections. However, the country is still facing substantial insecurity and challenges resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and weather-related crises.

On the matters under discussion today, I would like to share the following points.

First, on the election process, we welcome the communiqué issued at the July meeting between the leaders of the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states. It calls for timely and credible elections acceptable to all Somali stakeholders. We also welcome the adoption of the amendments to the political parties law by the House of the People.

Nevertheless, the threat of attacks and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have delayed preparations for the election and have made them more difficult. We support the election process and the implementation plan set out by the Government of Somalia and other stakeholders to ensure the participation of all people and political parties in elections. In that connection, we urge the Federal Government, federal member states and political parties to make further efforts to engage in inclusive dialogue to reach political consensus on the modalities and timing of the elections, including the political representation of women and minorities.

We call on the United Nations and the international community to provide further technical assistance and necessary measures to protect Somali citizens and political parties on the road ahead.

Secondly, we would like to stress the importance of national unity and reconciliation in Somalia as it moves forward. Given the recent positive developments, this is a precious time for the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states, especially Somaliland state, to work together in mutual trust and for the benefit of the Somali people. In that connection, we support the efforts of the Government and political leaders of Somalia to maintain a stable environment for dialogue. We therefore commend the recent consultative meeting in Djibouti between President Farmajo and the Somaliland President, Mr. Muse Bihi Abdi, and look forward to seeing their continued confidence-building efforts and specific follow-up actions, under the mediation of Djibouti and facilitation of the United States of America and the European Union.

Thirdly, on the fight against the triple shock, Somalia continues facing a number of long-standing threats and challenges. The triple shock of desert locusts, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted socioeconomic gains, livelihoods, food security and the humanitarian footprint in the country. The consequences of the desert locusts and

floods remain widespread and have affected at least 1.3 million people, of whom nearly a million are displaced and in need of humanitarian assistance. The risk of exponential COVID-19 infection also remains high across the country. Somalis need continued support to overcome these difficulties. We call on international partners to assist the Federal Government of Somalia in alleviating the socioeconomic impact of this triple threat.

Fourthly, on resilience for security, we condemn the attacks by Al-Shabaab against Somali civilians, local security forces, as well as the United Nations and personnel and facilities of the African Union Mission in Somalia. The suicide car-bombing attack on the Elite Hotel in Mogadishu on Sunday killed 15 people and injured more than 20. In that connection, we call upon international partners to continue to support Somali security forces through training, equipment provision and capacity-building. It is also incumbent upon international partners and relevant parties to uphold their responsibilities to strengthen cooperation measures and to take all necessary security measures against Al-Shabaab in order to protect civilians, especially women and children.

To that end, we commend the unceasing work and untiring efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia. We reiterate our support for its mandate and are committed to working constructively with the United Nations, regional and international organizations and relevant parties to promote peace, stability and development in Somalia.

Mr. Sautter (Germany): I would like to thank Mr. James Swan and Mr. Francisco Madeira for their briefings, and I welcome Ambassador Osman to today's meeting.

I would like to make five points.

First, with regard to the electoral process, we would like to underscore that credible, free, fair and direct elections in late 2020 will be key to the building of a democratic State in Somalia. The elections will be the yardstick by which the current Somali Administration will be measured. We acknowledge that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) makes this much more difficult, yet the existing proposals on the table are, in our view, not sufficient. That has been made clear by other delegations, and we agree with them. A return to previous forms of governance, where a few groups decide for the whole country, must be avoided.

What we need to see now is concrete progress towards implementing the principle of one-person, one-vote, wherever possible.

Secondly, with regard to the political cooperation between the federal Government and the federal member states, such cooperation is key. We take note of some positive developments, including the July leaders' summit. At the same time, we feel that more progress will be necessary. The speedy nomination of the new prime minister would be an important step towards ensuring an inclusive process. At the same time, it is a basis for achieving sustainable progress, including on the question of elections and the transition plan.

Thirdly, with respect to human rights, we are, like others, deeply concerned about the bill entitled "law on sexual intercourse-related crimes", proposed by a parliamentary committee. This is particularly concerning given that Somalia does not, unfortunately, have a good track record on sexual violence. Let me remind my colleagues that the Secretary-General, in his most recent report on children and armed conflict in Somalia (S/2020/174), reports that Somali security forces and regional forces were responsible for one in three crimes involving sexual violence between 2016 and 2019. We therefore strongly urge Somalia to respect its international human rights obligations and return to an inclusive and non-discriminatory text. In this context, we would like to welcome the agreement in the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict on the Somalia conclusions. These conclusions must now be implemented.

Fourthly, with regard to security, the complex attack on the Elite Hotel this past weekend shows that the security situation remains a major challenge. We condemn attacks by Al-Shabaab on Somali civilians, security forces, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the United Nations and the international community. We extend our condolences to the victims and their families. We encourage all stakeholders to increase their efforts and speed up the work on the update and implementation of the security-transition plan. In this respect, we are looking forward to the AMISOM independent assessment, which will contribute to the assessment of the abilities and gaps in the Somali security forces. While this is no replacement for a stakeholder agreement it is still important.

Fifthly, and briefly, on climate and security, we appreciate and support the work the United Nations

Assistance Mission in Somalia has been doing in this field in particular.

Mr. Bing Dai (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. James Swan, and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, for their briefings.

Somalia is entering a critical stage in its achievement of peace and reconstruction. Over the past three months, the Somali federal Government has made earnest efforts to advance the national reconstruction process and tackle the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. It has gradually resumed dialogue with leaders of the federal member states. At the same time, the country's security and humanitarian situation has remained fragile, as evidenced by frequent terrorist and other violent incidents. In this regard, I would like to make the following four points.

First, efforts to advance Somali's critical process must ensure that it is Somali-owned and Somali-led. China encourages the relevant Somali parties to further build mutual trust and gather momentum for dialogue, enhance federal institutions and move ahead with the constitutional review and other critical reform processes. China supports regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, in playing a mediation role for the political settlement of the Somali issue. The United Nations Mission in Somalia has been actively coordinating the various efforts of the international community and has played a constructive role. China supports the renewal of its mandate for 12 months.

Secondly, a critical task of the Somali political process is to hold successful elections. China welcomes the dialogue between the Somali Federal Government and the federal member states on specific electoral arrangements and encourages them to design electoral processes in the light of the situation on the ground and the people's wishes. The international community should respect the leading role of the Somali Government and support full consultation among the Somali parties in order to create conditions favourable to well-run elections.

Thirdly, eliminating the threat of terrorism is prerequisite for the long-term peace and stability of Somalia. China strongly condemns terrorist and violent incidents, which often claim innocent civilians as their

victims. We commend the African Union Mission in Somalia for its important role in maintaining stability. The ability of the Somali security forces to assume primary responsibility for maintaining national security is key to the timely completion of the Somali transition plan. The international community should assist Somalia in capacity-building in the security sector and continue to provide the necessary security support on the basis of a full assessment of local security situations.

Fourthly, the triple shock of COVID-19, flooding and locust infestations has had a grave impact on Somalia's economic and social development and aggravated its humanitarian crisis. China welcomes the supplemental financing from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and calls on the international community to step up efforts to help plug the gaps in Somalia's humanitarian aid, enhance its capacity to respond to the pandemics and disasters, and support the advancement of its national development plan.

China has always been an active contributor to the Somali peace process and a long-time provider of humanitarian assistance and economic and social development support. This year alone, we have donated two batches of medical supplies to Somalia and will continue to help to the best of our abilities. China stands ready to work with the international community in playing a constructive role in realizing the goal of peace, stability and development in Somalia.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I join in others in congratulating and welcoming Ambassador Philippe Kridelka, to whom I wish every success.

I also wish to join in expressing condolences, through the Somali authorities, to the families of the victims of the attack on the Elite Hotel in Mogadishu last weekend, which we very strongly condemn, of course.

I would also like to thank our briefers and make three points.

First, on the political level, France believes that Somalia remains at a critical juncture. We are closely following the ongoing discussions between the Federal Government and the federated member States. We note that those discussions led last month to an agreement to hold elections on time, but without specifying the modalities of the elections. For France, it is imperative that all Somali actors continue to work constructively in preparing for presidential and legislative elections

that are peaceful, inclusive, free and transparent and that enjoy the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia. It is also essential for the stability of Somalia that these elections be held as soon as possible, in early 2021. We regret the removal of Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khayre by the Somali Parliament, whose vote did not respect the institutional rules that we support. Unfortunately, this decision is not conducive to reconciliation in the country.

Secondly, on the security front, France also believes that Somalia remains at a critical juncture, since the Somalis themselves will have to assume responsibility for the security of their country by the end of 2021. In that context, it is necessary that the transfer of security responsibilities from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to the Somali federal and regional security forces continue. The Somali authorities must also update their transition plan for September, with a view to fully engaging in that process by 2021. We expect the authorities to accelerate the implementation of a plan for the generation of additional forces and to integrate the regional forces into the Somali National Army.

Thirdly, France calls on the Somali authorities and their main partners, including the European Union, the United Nations, the African Union and AMISOM troop-contributing countries, as well as bilateral donors involved in the security sector in Somalia, to seriously engage in discussions on international support to the Somali security sector after 2021. The European Union has shown its readiness to actively participate in such discussions. For our part, we would like to see a more proactive approach to the issue. It is critical that the Somali authorities implement the benchmarks established by the Security Council in resolution 2520 (2020), adopted in May. Decisions on international support for the security sector in Somalia after 2021 must indeed be directly linked to the progress made on those benchmarks.

Finally, France would like to recall that the current model of support for Somalia cannot be taken for granted. All options must be considered, including alternatives to AMISOM. In particular, we recall that the European Union's current financing model for AMISOM is not sustainable. If the European Union is to continue to support the security sector in Somalia, that support will be dependent on the establishment of accountability mechanisms, the participation of the

European Union in AMISOM's strategic decisions and the financial contribution of other partners.

Before concluding, I would like to reiterate our concern about the humanitarian situation in Somalia, which is exacerbated by the spread of the coronavirus disease pandemic. I also fully share the concerns expressed by the representatives of Germany and Belgium over sexual violence and violations committed against children. The protection of civilian populations and respect for their rights are key requirements that must be fully taken into account in the reform process in Somalia. We commend the efforts of United Nations, in coordination with other partners, to adapt their action and support the response of the Somali authorities.

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

I would like to thank Mr. Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, for their insightful briefings. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Abukar Osman, Permanent Representative of Somalia, to this meeting.

As the Secretary-General has summed up, Somalia is at a critical juncture. It is therefore crucial for all Somali stakeholders, supported by the international partners, to work together constructively. In that regard, I would like to highlight three points.

First, we welcome the discussions between federal and state leaders in Dhuusamarreeb in July. The Security Council has repeatedly highlighted the need for Somalia's federal and state leaders to come together in a spirit of unity and compromise. We would like to stress that only through dialogue can Somali stakeholders move forward with the reform agenda that it has committed to undertaking. We are hopeful that a consensus on the electoral modalities that enjoys the support of all stakeholders, particularly the Somali population, can be reached. It is also important to advance the implementation of national priorities and State-building efforts.

Secondly, we remain concerned over the security situation. We once again condemn all recent attacks by Al-Shabaab, including the attack on the Elite Hotel in Mogadishu last Sunday, as well as the mortar attack targeting the United Nations compound. In that regard, let me join others in extending our condolences to the

people and the Government of Somalia, in particular the families of the victims. We would ask that the perpetrators be brought to justice. We would like to reiterate that any attack on United Nations personnel is unacceptable and that all perpetrators must be brought to justice.

We are concerned that, despite the continued operations against Al-Shabaab and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Al-Shabaab remains capable of conducting larger, more complex high-profile attacks. It is therefore important to continue to build the capacity of the Somali National Army (SNA) and to equip it with the necessary training, including in countering improvised explosive devices.

We commend the continued operations by the SNA and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to recover areas under Al-Shabaab's control, as well as to disrupt its capacity to conduct terror attacks. In our view, it is important to accelerate force generation efforts so as to hold the recovered areas and pave the way for further stabilization activities.

Thirdly, Somalia is facing the triple challenge of COVID-19, flooding and desert locusts. Increased support from international partners is needed now more than ever, particularly in support of the humanitarian response plan. Sustained support is also necessary to alleviate the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to ensure the long-term recovery and resilience of the people of Somalia. We would also like to reiterate the importance of ensuring unimpeded humanitarian assistance and relief.

I reaffirm Indonesia's respect for Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and I convey our utmost tribute to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, AMISOM and all actors working to ensure lasting peace and stability in Somalia. What happens in the next few months will determine the future of Somalia. We hope that all Somali stakeholders will remain committed in their pursuit of dialogue and reconciliation to ensure peace and prosperity in the country.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): Allow me to begin by commending the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia and the Permanent Mission of Indonesia for their leadership as President of the Council for this month of August. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Kridelka of Belgium to New York and to the Security Council and to being a member of the United Nations family.

It is an honour to address the Security Council at this gathering of Somalia's partners at the Security Council. I want to reiterate that the Somali Government is strongly committed to its ambitious peace and State-building agenda. We are making very clear strides towards achieving inclusive politics, strengthening democracy and constructing the very rights-based institutions that are the pillars of strong societies. I am happy to report that we have held successful regional elections in some federal member states in the build-up to the planned one-person-one-vote national parliamentary election. We are determined to facilitate the success of that process through the electoral law recently adopted by the legislature.

The challenge for Somalia has been the monopolization of legitimate power by a few at the expense of the Somali people. Our Government, led by His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo, is determined to bring the people of Somalia to the centre of their democracy by giving them a historic opportunity to vote on their future path. That is a noble endeavour, which will strengthen the civic engagement and public trust in policy, while firmly instilling accountability within the Somali policy.

Today President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo is sitting in Dhuusamarreeb, a city in central Somalia, with key leaders of federal member states to discuss the modalities and strategies for making the ambition of universal suffrage a genuine possibility. The President also addressed the House of the People immediately before the Dhuusamarreeb meeting and promised to respect its constitutional mandate to legislate for the Somali people by bringing all electoral decisions back to it to deliberate and vote on to move forward from the Dhuusamarreeb meeting. For democracy and stability to thrive in Somalia, it is a must that we respect the key roles of Parliament, the Upper House and other mandatory electoral bodies, most specifically the National Independent Electoral Commission and the intergovernmental committee established to address the outcomes of the Dhuusamarreeb process.

Accordingly, we are determined to move Somalia away from the exclusive and exclusionary processes that determined our politics and shackled our people to voicelessness, especially our young people, our women and our minorities.

Of course, we in Somalia understand the need for negotiations and consensus-building to achieve our democratic goals, and through the Federal Government's commitment to the Dhuusamarreeb process, we have proved this. A stable, democratic and prosperous Somalia is in the interest of each and every Somali, and the achievement of this will be the best way to celebrate our joint effort with our valuable international partners in delivering a better tomorrow for Somalia and the world.

However, I am very sad that there are those who seek to derail the democratic processes that our Government envisages for Somalia with a narrow focus on old, broken, exclusive politics. Our Government will continue the engagement with all stakeholders openly and fairly but will not and cannot tolerate spoilers at this critical time in Somalia's history.

The international community should continue to support and encourage the Government's programmes of inclusive politics and democratization, and it must not give in to the unjust pressures of spoilers.

Security has been our Government's focus and its greatest public expenditure since it took office, because achieving other endeavours, including poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion depend on security.

Today we are building a well-trained armed force, rights-based security and accountable security institutions to take over the responsibility of securing Somalia. Our Government, in partnership with AMISOM and other key international supporters, is working hard to achieve this through the transition plan in line with the national security architecture.

These comprehensive reforms are not easy, but thanks to the commitment and absolute determination of the Federal Government of Somalia and its partners, I am convinced that Somalia's successful security-sector reforms will provide us with the best possible security apparatuses to safeguard the well-being and progress of the Somali people.

The Government of Somalia is working hard with its people to build a more sustainable future free from poverty, with strong social protections. Our approach to eradicating poverty is to create economic opportunities for our people, especially young people, and, to do so, we are engaged in an ambitious and successful fiscal and economic reform programme guided by the International Monetary Fund Staff-Monitored Program. We are proud of the fact that throughout the reform-focused benchmarks, we managed to achieve debt relief in the first quarter of this year, and we are working to further strengthen our economy to make it work for all our people. A key benefit of debt relief has been renewed confidence in Somalia's ability to change and the access to grant resources that have proved valuable through the coronavirus disease pandemic.

In conclusion, the Somali Federal Government is absolutely committed to socioeconomic and political reforms to improve the lives of the Somali people. It is our mandate and duty to do the heavy lifting to deliver stability, inclusive politics and opportunities for our people by working closely with our international partners. That is a commitment that we will continue to deliver on, God permitting. I thank all present for their partnership and friendship.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I will now adjourn the meeting so that the Council can continue its discussion on the subject in closed consultations. I would kindly ask all observers to promptly exit the Chamber directly upon the adjournment of the meeting.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.