



Security Council

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Letter dated 7 October 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator pursuant to paragraph 49 of Security Council resolution 2444 (2018) on the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia and any impediments to the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia.

I would appreciate it if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve
Chair
Security Council Committee pursuant to
resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia



Letter dated 13 September 2019 from the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia

In accordance with paragraph 49 of Security Council resolution 2444 (2018), I have the honour to transmit the requested report on the implementation of paragraphs 48 and 49 and on any impediments to the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia.

The humanitarian community working in Somalia wishes to advise that, as with the previous 13 reports, it maintains the definition of “implementing partner” pursuant to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1916 (2010), which is as follows:

“Implementing partner” – a non-governmental organization (NGO) or community-based organization that has undergone due diligence to establish its bona fides by a United Nations agency or another NGO and that reports when requested to the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia on mitigation measures. Implementing partners have the following characteristics:

- (a) The organization is part of the humanitarian response plan for Somalia (or the Somalia Humanitarian Fund) process; and/or
- (b) The organization is represented in a cluster’s 3W matrix (*Who* does *What* and *Where*).

I remain available should you have any questions about the content of the report or need further clarification on the humanitarian situation in Somalia.

(Signed) Mark **Lowcock**
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
and Emergency Relief Coordinator

Report of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2444 (2018), the resolution succeeding resolutions 1916 (2010), 1972 (2011), 2060 (2012), 2111 (2013), 2182 (2014), 2244 (2015), 2317 (2016) and 2385 (2017), in which the Council established the reporting requirement. It is the fourteenth submission pursuant to the above-mentioned resolutions. The Council, in paragraph 49 of its resolution 2444 (2018), requested the Emergency Relief Coordinator to report to the Council by 15 October 2019 on the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia and on any impediments thereto.

2. The present report covers the period from 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019. It focuses primarily on the delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected people in areas under the control or influence of Al-Shabaab, which was included on the sanctions list pursuant to paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution 1844 (2008), by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, on 12 April 2010. As in the previous 13 reports (S/2010/372, S/2010/580, S/2011/125, S/2011/694, S/2012/546, S/2012/856, S/2013/415, S/2014/177, S/2014/655, S/2015/731, S/2016/827, S/2017/860 and S/2018/896), the present report outlines constraints to humanitarian access and operational implications. In addition, it summarizes mitigation measures established to address the risks of politicization, misuse and misappropriation of humanitarian assistance. The report is based on information synthesized in consultation with relevant humanitarian organizations active in Somalia and information from the Risk Management Unit in the Integrated Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia.

Humanitarian situation

3. The humanitarian situation in Somalia remains fragile owing to the impact of recurrent climate shocks, including the prolonged drought in 2016 and 2017, poor *deyr* rains in 2018 (October to December), unusually hot and dry conditions during the *jilaal* season in 2019 and the erratic and abnormal performance of *gu* rains in 2019 (April to June). Climate shocks, combined with other persistent drivers of need, such as armed conflict and protracted and continued displacement, have left millions of Somalis in need of assistance and protection.

4. According to the 2019 post-*gu* assessment results, released on 2 September by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, cereal production was up to 70 per cent below average in southern Somalia during the *gu* 2019 cropping season. The resulting harvest shortfall is linked to abnormally high prices of sorghum throughout the season. The situation is likely to be even worse in conflict-affected areas, where people are displaced from their land or face involuntary and illegal taxation by Al-Shabaab, reducing incentives for agricultural production. The results of the 2019 post-*gu* assessment indicate that, in the absence of humanitarian assistance, up to 2.1 million people across Somalia will face severe hunger by December 2019, which will bring the total number of Somalis expected to be food insecure to 6.3 million by the year's end.

5. Huge food and nutrition gaps remain largely among poor agropastoral, marginalized and displaced communities, where many vulnerable people have been pushed into the most severe food and nutrition insecurity phases. Severe acute

malnutrition rates among children are increasing, mainly among internally displaced persons, with preliminary assessment results indicating that 10 out of 33 population groups surveyed demonstrate critical levels of acute malnutrition, with a global acute malnutrition rate exceeding 15 per cent. Interventions to address high levels of acute malnutrition, mainly among children, must be scaled up. Without response, from July 2019 to June 2020, an estimated 1 million children will be acutely malnourished, including 180,000 children with severe acute malnutrition. The prevalence and increased risk of acute malnutrition, coupled with a serious lack of access to clean water, is further heightening the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks and is exacerbating existing fragilities.

6. Among the most fragile people in Somalia are 2.6 million internally displaced persons, who continue to face serious risks of marginalization, forced eviction and exclusion across the country. From September to December 2018, there were 188,000 newly displaced persons, and between January and August 2019, an additional 270,000 people were displaced. While the majority of internally displaced persons report armed conflict and drought as the main reasons for displacement, it should be noted that drought-induced displacement has been on the rise. In the fourth quarter of 2018 and from January to August 2019, 29 per cent and 41 per cent of internally displaced persons, respectively, noted drought as the main reason for displacement. Furthermore, more than twice as many people reported drought-induced displacement in July 2019 compared with June 2019.

7. Ongoing armed conflict and insecurity continues to be a driver of displacement, compounding the humanitarian situation and causing high levels of need and protection concerns. With respect to conflict-induced displacement, 60 per cent of internally displaced persons in the fourth quarter of 2018 and 52 per cent of internally displaced persons in 2019 cited conflict as the main reason for displacement. The Shabelle Hoose and Shabelle Dhexe regions are areas of particular concern, as the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali National Army have intensified military offensives against Al-Shabaab. The impact of drought, coupled with the protracted conflict, is worsening protection challenges as families lose their socioeconomic safety nets and capacity to cope with such shocks. Displaced women and children face greater protection challenges, including family separation, exposure to gender-based violence, disruptions to education and the forced recruitment of children by armed groups.

8. Aggressive forced child recruitment campaigns in areas of southern and central Somalia and in parts of the Bari region in Puntland have continued to drive civilians into displacement. For example, from January to July 2019, the country task force on monitoring and reporting mechanism reported that 869 children, including 8 girls, were recruited and used by armed forces and groups in Somalia. Al-Shabaab accounts for an estimated 81 per cent of children recruited in Somalia. Humanitarian partners continue to provide support to children who were subject to forced recruitment by armed groups. In 2018, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and its partners provided reintegration services to 1,466 children in Afgooye, Baidoa, Dhuusamarreeb, Garoowe, Kismaayo and Mogadishu. In addition, from January to July 2019, UNICEF and its partners delivered protection services to 513 children, including 47 girls, who had escaped from Al-Shabaab or had been released by armed forces in various areas of Somalia.

Humanitarian response

9. Humanitarian partners have continued to provide life-saving assistance alongside livelihood support. From September to December 2018, a monthly average of 2 million beneficiaries were reached with the provision of access to food assistance and safety net support. During the first half of 2019, resource constraints hindered the

delivery of aid, resulting in a monthly average of 1.2 million people receiving assistance with improved access to food assistance and safety net support. In addition, between January and July 2019, over 470,000 people were reached with the provision of access to sustainable safe water services, health services were provided to more than 757,000 people, and 155,000 people benefited from shelter and support with non-food items. Over the same period, the Nutrition Cluster treated 141,216 new cases of severe acute malnutrition and provided treatment for moderate acute malnutrition to 212,218 children under 5 years of age and 62,910 pregnant and breastfeeding women. While outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea have largely remained under control, with the exception of localized cases, there has been a sharp increase in other acute diarrhoeas, with the number of other acute diarrhoea cases in 2019 nearly double those recorded in 2018. Furthermore, there has been a significant rise in malaria cases when compared with the same period in 2018.

10. The deterioration in the humanitarian situation unfolded at a time when the Somalia aid operation continues to be underfunded, forcing aid agencies to limit or reduce relief efforts. For example, the Food Security Cluster is reaching 1.9 million people out of the monthly target of reaching around 2.3 million people with assistance. The 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia, which seeks \$1.08 billion to deliver aid and protection to 4.2 million people, was 45 per cent funded (\$508 million) as at 28 August 2019. Some clusters, such as protection, water, sanitation and hygiene and health, have been critically underfunded, having received less than 20 per cent of the funding requested. Compared with 2018, when climatic conditions were better, the response in 2019 is notably reduced across most clusters. For example, in May 2019, 1.2 million people were reached with activities aimed at improving access to food and safety nets, compared to 1.9 million people reached in May 2018, representing a 36 per cent reduction in the delivery of such assistance. Similarly, most clusters report that partners have been unable to provide enough assistance and services in areas affected by displacement, where beneficiaries are among the most vulnerable and have acute needs. Only 25 per cent of the target for family tracing and reunification was reached between January and May 2019. Gaps are also significant in water, sanitation and hygiene programmes in health facilities and schools, with only eight institutions reached with a full water, sanitation and hygiene package to date out of 150 institutions targeted in 2019.

11. Working closely with the Federal Government of Somalia and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, aid agencies launched a drought impact response plan in which \$686 million is requested to boost the response in the last seven months of 2019 and to provide critical life-saving assistance to 4.5 million Somalis. Since the end of May, some \$253 million in additional resources has been received for the Somalia response. Among other things, the additional resources have enabled aid agencies to reach more than 1.8 million people with food assistance since June 2019. As a result of such response efforts, humanitarian partners were able to prevent 1 million people from sliding into emergency and crisis levels of food insecurity.

12. Aid agencies are ready to scale up the response, drawing on recent positive lessons learned, to ensure that response efforts prevent a major humanitarian catastrophe that could jeopardize gains made in recent years. Mechanisms are in place for rapid scale-up and sustained response. Such mechanisms include significant cash programming, expanded partnerships with already-vetted local implementing partners and improved engagement with authorities and affected populations. As part of the famine prevention efforts of 2017, humanitarian partners established Drought Operations Coordination Centres to improve multisectoral coordination and information-sharing and facilitate joint planning. In 2018, because of the positive impact that the Centres had on famine prevention efforts and in recognition that such

coordination platforms could facilitate the response to all forms of disaster, the Centres were reconceptualized as Disaster Operations Coordination Centres. The re-establishment of the Centres will enable the initial increase in response close to the areas of origin in the hardest hit regions.

13. While aid agencies continue to do all they can to alleviate suffering and save lives, it is critical that everyone, including the Federal Government of Somalia, federal member states, the international donor community and humanitarian partners, rally behind the scaling up of the response in the worst-affected areas. Coordination on resource mobilization, prioritization of needs and response is critical for the effective delivery of life-saving assistance, including efforts to expand access to areas outside urban centres and to address bureaucratic challenges that slow down and significantly increase the costs associated with humanitarian efforts.

Humanitarian access constraints and operational implications

14. The volatile security situation in Somalia continues to create a challenging operating environment for humanitarian organizations. Insecurity continues to hamper the ability of humanitarians to reach people in need and sustain operations for the delivery of much-needed humanitarian assistance and protection services, and hampers people's ability to access basic services and assistance. Outside of major urban centres, the accessibility of some districts, particularly in southern and central regions of Somalia, remains limited owing in large part to insecurity along main supply routes. The presence of non-State armed groups across parts of Jubbaland, South-West State, Hirshabelle and Galmudug, and a high number of incidents of violence and conflict in Shabelle Hoose and Juba Hoose, limits the ability of humanitarian partners to assess needs and deliver assistance in rural areas and likewise restricts the ability of civilians to safely seek assistance. The threat of improvised explosive devices on key roads and areas newly under government control continues to affect access in many parts of southern and central Somalia. Reports of harassment and extortion at checkpoints continue to delay or block aid delivery. In addition, an estimated 2 million people are living within territory controlled by Al-Shabaab and remain largely out of reach. The most vulnerable populations are the least likely to be able to reach the relative safety of neighbouring districts or regions where humanitarian actors are currently responding. Recent trends in retaliatory violence, restrictions on the movement of goods and people, forced taxation and child recruitment underline the severe challenges and difficulties faced by affected populations in gaining access to safety and assistance in a safe, timely and unimpeded manner.

15. The multiplicity of local armed actors with varying command structures and geographical presence, rapidly changing national and regional forces and the presence of various bilateral support missions and AMISOM troops, alongside regional interventions, have resulted in an operating environment of shifting territorial control by loosely allied groups, and chains of command and control that are not always clear. Establishing and maintaining relations with those who have influence over humanitarian access to people in need is both challenging and uncertain. The capture of some humanitarian operations through the proxy control of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by security-linked national actors remains problematic. Notwithstanding those challenges, in 2018, the aid operation in Somalia increased the number of partners in some areas, notably in Galmudug and Hirshabelle, and managed to reach some 3 million people with life-saving assistance.

16. Access to areas under the control of the Federal Government and allied non-State armed groups remains largely possible. Access to areas recaptured by the Government and its allies is hampered by ongoing insecurity, including the presence of improvised explosive devices along key supply routes, lack of State authority

beyond major population centres and bureaucratic impediments, including interference by authorities in the selection of the beneficiaries and distribution of assistance. Humanitarians operating in those areas face risks associated with unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war. Displaced people returning to areas recaptured from Al-Shabaab face a lack of basic infrastructure and services, resulting in continued vulnerability. Serious protection concerns remain in many areas, including unexploded ordnance, ongoing and renewed fighting, and retaliatory violence by non-State armed groups, including interference with NGOs on the ground, forced recruitment of adults and child recruitment. In some areas, such as Shabelle Dhexe and Galmudug and parts of Kismaayo, assistance continues to be limited, including for marginalized communities, even where access is possible.

17. Access to populations under Al-Shabaab control is currently extremely limited, owing to concerns for the safety of humanitarians, opposition from other parties to the conflict and the reported unwillingness of Al-Shabaab officials to accept principled humanitarian operations in areas under their control. Heavy restrictions and retributions are imposed by Al-Shabaab for those refusing to comply with illegal taxation requirements, including the forced recruitment of children. Those seeking to leave Al-Shabaab-controlled territories and those who have fled to government-controlled areas are often subject to retaliatory attacks. Information on the humanitarian situation in those areas, as well as in areas controlled by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), is difficult to verify.

18. Alongside areas controlled by Al-Shabaab or ISIL, there are areas that are contested and where civilian movement is nearly impossible as a result of regular and active hostilities or military operations. These areas are often rural and civilian populations remain there despite active hostilities or heightened insecurity, owing to lack of resources to flee and fear of being discriminated against or even prosecuted along clan or other presumed affiliations for trying to reach safer areas. Subject to violence and volatile security conditions, these populations are often more vulnerable and can be in greater need of assistance. Access for humanitarians in such areas is hampered by ongoing hostilities, movement and security restrictions and poor infrastructure. Identifying safe access routes and obtaining assurances to enter remain important measures to mitigate the risk of major hindrances for humanitarian access, such as restriction of movement, the denial of access or interference in the delivery of aid. Although local partners have been more successful in securing access in conflict-affected areas on the basis of their lower security profiles, much more needs to be done to ensure the safe, timely, unimpeded and predictable passage of humanitarian assistance, goods and personnel to affected zones.

19. Violence against aid workers, including abduction and arrest, harassment and forcible seizure of assets, and restrictions on road movement by parties to conflict, continue to obstruct the ability of humanitarians to reach people in need. The heavy influence of gatekeepers, landowners and land brokers, and their role in addressing the impact and risk of forced eviction, continues to be a limiting factor for beneficiaries to gain access to services. Restrictions on the movement of national staff on the basis of presumed clan or other affiliations and targeting of particular groups, including intimidation and harassment, continue to affect the implementation of programmes in conflict-affected areas. The obvious issues of risk transfer to national staff, as well as national NGOs and civil society, which are most frequently frontline implementers, must also be considered. All stakeholders should renew their attention to the safety and security of national and local actors through training. A marked increase in air strikes in the latter part of 2018 and into 2019, including related damage to civilian property and infrastructure, remains a concern.

20. The safety of humanitarian operations remains a key concern owing to the volatile and unpredictable security situation. During the first eight months of 2019,

at least 51 humanitarian personnel were directly affected by security incidents, the majority of which took place in southern and central Somalia. In those incidents, 2 humanitarian workers were killed, 1 injured, 11 abducted, 5 arbitrarily arrested and temporarily detained, and 2 expelled by authorities for alleged infractions. The incidents vary in nature and include attacks directed against personnel, as well as indirect harm caused in the course of general insecurity or as an incidental effect of attacks. Security incidents further range in severity, from the most severe, including assassination, kidnapping for ransom, abduction, expulsion, looting and deliberate destruction of assets or facilities, arrest and detention, to the less severe, such as temporary detention, harassment and verbal and written threats. As in previous years, the collateral impact of attacks in populated places, such as in Mogadishu, continue to account for the majority of casualties of humanitarian personnel. In July, a complex attack on a hotel in Kismaayo resulted in the death of an aid worker. Mogadishu also continues to register increasing levels of assassinations. Although the targets of most of the assassinations are government officials and security personnel, there have been instances in which humanitarian workers have also been targeted, both in Mogadishu and in other regional states. The humanitarian community continues to call upon all parties to allow and facilitate humanitarian action, including by ensuring the security of staff, supplies and facilities.

21. Abductions of humanitarian workers remain a concerning trend. Beginning in November 2018, a rise in the number of abductions of humanitarian workers for ransom has been recorded, with at least six humanitarian workers, including community health workers, abducted. All the humanitarian workers who were abducted in November were released in between 1 and 10 days, following successful community-led negotiations. In May 2019, two NGO staff were abducted in Gedo Region in Jubbaland, and both were released in August following family and clan negotiations. In August, seven local NGO staff were detained by Al-Shabaab in Shabelle Hoose on suspicion of being United Nations personnel and working on stabilization activities in areas newly recovered by the Government. They were released days later following confirmation of their identity and non-involvement in stabilization activities, further demonstrating the tenuous operating environment and risk factors for operational partners. At least one international humanitarian worker is still being held, more than 16 months after abduction. The impact of the abductions is not only felt by the organizations affected, however. Abductions also affect the people in need of assistance and protection, who are often left without assistance when the affected organizations decide to scale down or suspend operations.

22. Al-Shabaab continues to implement hostile policies against most humanitarian organizations, directing local populations to not accept assistance packages from some humanitarian organizations, and further punishing communities that do not oblige and directly targeting the organizations' personnel or assets, or directing local populations to do so. For example, on 6 June 2019, Al-Shabaab ransacked two NGO-run medical centres in Balcad district of the Shabelle Dhexe region of Hirshabelle State. On 30 June, Al-Shabaab militias arrested 10 civilian beneficiaries in Waajid, in the Bakool region of South-West State, for participating in cash distribution activities.

23. Incidents of operational interference continue, in which armed actors seek to use force to coerce humanitarians to include them or their relatives on the beneficiary lists. In cases in which government-affiliated actors are involved, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs immediately follows up with the relevant authorities at both the federal and regional state levels, often receiving commitments from the authorities to work alongside humanitarian organizations to have such concerns addressed. The Office continues to undertake efforts to improve the timeliness of reporting of such incidents, as well as gathering the required evidence

to inform follow-up efforts with the authorities. In addition, some local community leaders have continued to address such violations, especially when clan militias are involved.

24. Despite some milestone commitments made by the Federal Government of Somalia and some regional states, including Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Puntland and South-West State, humanitarian organizations and the general civilian population continue to experience severe logistical challenges in an estimated 42 districts in southern and central Somalia and in Bari, Puntland. Extortion and other forms of violations are common occurrences at the numerous illegal checkpoints manned by both State and non-State affiliated armed actors. An estimated 142 such security checkpoints, many of which are fee-bearing, hinder safe, timely and unimpeded access. Incidents continue to be reported at the authorized checkpoints along all major access roads in southern and central Somalia, with the following access roads most affected: Mogadishu-Afgooye-Baidoa, Mogadishu-Balcad-Jawhar and Cadaado-Gaalkacyo. While several operations were conducted to remove the unauthorized checkpoints along some main access roads, including Mogadishu-Afgooye-Wanlaweyn, Mogadishu-Balcad-Jawhar, Gaalkacyo-Cadaado-Dhuusamarreeb and Garoowe-Boosaaso, the armed actors have adjusted by creating non-static checkpoints. Aid organizations continue to urge the authorities to build on the milestone commitments and efforts initiated in 2017 to prioritize the securing of the major supply routes.

25. Furthermore, siege-like warfare by Al-Shabaab on some government-held towns in Hirshabelle, South-West State and Jubbaland State has continued to hinder the transport of humanitarian and commercial supplies. The siege-like tactics have continued to be strictly enforced in Xuddur and Waajid in Bakool, Diinsoor in Bay, Buulobarde in Hiraan and Marka in Shabelle Hoose. In Buulobarde, Xuddur and Waajid, Al-Shabaab militants continue to target donkey cart drivers who are driving off-road in an attempt to transport essential supplies into towns. Al-Shabaab often confiscates or destroys the supplies, in addition to carrying out other forms of attack on the transporters, including killing them, subjecting them to physical assault and levying fines.

26. Humanitarian organizations continue to resort to accessing such towns by using significantly more expensive air transport. These include areas such as Buulobarde in Hiraan, Hirshabelle State, Diinsoor in Bay and Waajid and Xuddur in Bakool, South-West State, and Garbahaarey in Gedo, Jubbaland State. Humanitarian organizations have been able to access Buulobarde by air only since 2014, owing to Al-Shabaab's aggressive cutting-off of movement to and from the town by road. Al-Shabaab continues to frequently plant improvised explosive devices at the airstrip, which is not protected around the clock. Security forces conduct a security sweep only when flights are expected, and permanent security arrangements for the airport are required. Discoveries of improvised explosive devices at the airstrip continue to be frequently reported, raising safety concerns for civilians, including humanitarian personnel.

27. Al-Shabaab continues to sustain pressure on the Jawhar-Mogadishu and Mogadishu-Afgooye-Marka access roads by staging improvised explosive device attacks and coercing vehicles using such routes to pay "taxes". Trucks using the main supply routes in Hiraan continue to be subjected to Al-Shabaab attacks, a situation that has been long-standing because of the group's enforcement of its economic blockade on government-controlled towns. Road access along the Mogadishu-Afgooye-Baidoa route continues to be severely constrained owing to the mounting demands of and extortion by "State-affiliated armed groups" (that is, groups affiliated with the national Government), clan militia, criminal groups and Al-Shabaab. According to local communities, Al-Shabaab has, in particular, continued to increase its fees along some stretches of the Mogadishu-Baidoa and Mogadishu-Jawhar routes.

There are also increasing reports of intensified tax structures imposed on the commercial sector, including commodities imported through the Mogadishu seaport and market centres. In June and July, Al-Shabaab threatened business leaders in Mogadishu with death if they did not abide by their taxation structure.

28. Furthermore, throughout southern and central Somalia, civilians continue to face more rigorous taxation by Al-Shabaab, forcing many into displacement and causing the loss of productive assets, thus rendering those civilians more vulnerable to food insecurity. In Marka in Shabelle Hoose, taxation has been imposed on donkey carts that are supplying or collecting commodities. In many areas, traders are now forced to pay double taxation, both to Al-Shabaab and to the Government, which has often made small businesses non-lucrative and has led to price hikes for consumers. During the 2018 *gu* rains, regions with farming communities were reportedly obliged by Al-Shabaab to pay “taxes” to tend to their fields after good rains, while in parts of Galmudug, including in Ceel Buur, Ceel Dheere and Xarardheere districts, Al-Shabaab also increased taxation, requiring money and livestock to be provided as zakat or a “voluntary jihad” contribution. For example, farmers in Booshol village in Diinsoor, Bay region, in South-West State were directed to pay \$30 to tend to their farms and consequently several families were forced to vacate their farms and join settlements for internally displaced persons in Baidoa because they could not afford to pay. In Waajid in Bakool region, South-West State, internally displaced persons continue to express concern over Al-Shabaab’s excessive taxation and harassment whenever they attempt to tend to their farms outside town. It should be noted that some internally displaced persons were forced to abandon farming activities because of the “taxation” imposed by Al-Shabaab, and those who cannot afford to pay are being either forced to or coerced into surrendering their children for recruitment.

29. Al-Shabaab continues to maintain control of key areas and to take control of towns after the withdrawal of the Somali national armed forces and other-government affiliated forces, resulting in the disruption of humanitarian operations and, in some cases, the complete suspension of programmes. In 2018, the seizure of control of towns and villages, at times temporarily, by Al-Shabaab was reported in areas in Hirshabelle, South-West State, Jubbaland and Puntland. The reactions of the population upon the taking of the towns are often mixed. In some areas, Al-Shabaab carries out retaliatory attacks on civilians whom it deems to be government supporters or collaborators, while in other towns it only talks or preaches to local populations, without harming anyone. Since April 2019, military operations have been led by the Somali national armed forces in Shabelle Hoose to remove Al-Shabaab and stabilize the areas, including in Awdheegle, Bariirre and Sabiid. Al-Shabab continues to attack some of the newly recovered areas in an attempt to regain control. The operations have led to conflict-induced displacement and hesitation of people to return to their places of origin because of pending security concerns. In some cases, civilians have reported abuses and human rights violations by the Somali national armed forces in the newly recovered areas, noting that they preferred the conditions when Al-Shabaab was in control.

30. Conflict between Somaliland and Puntland over control of parts of Sool and Sanaag regions continues, with hostilities around Tukaraq in Sool region. Since June 2019, frequent armed clashes recurred in Sanaag region, which used to be calm compared with Sool region. Tensions remain high to date, while efforts to resolve the stand-off continue. All mediation efforts by external actors, including the United Nations, have failed and both parties have remained firm on their positions, setting prerequisite conditions for entering into negotiations that are unacceptable to the opposing side. Politicians on both sides have been fuelling the conflict with inflammatory statements, and both Puntland and Somaliland continue to mobilize and amass troops along the front line. The heightened tensions and the level of

preparedness demonstrated by both parties have elevated the risk of a full-fledged escalation of armed hostilities and continue to restrict safe, timely and unimpeded humanitarian access to the area.

31. Clan conflicts remain a major concern, particularly in Hiraan, Galmudug, Shabelle Hoose, Shabelle Dhexe and Sool regions, where clan violence costs lives and livelihoods and displaces families. Humanitarian programmes in the affected locations are often suspended until the conflict is resolved. Occasionally, local humanitarian staff belonging to warring clans have been victimized or caught up in the conflict. Clan-related conflicts are mainly recorded in areas in which pastoralist communities reside, owing to competition for scarce resources such as water and pasture, or in areas where farmers clash with nomads or over farmland. Galguduud and Hiraan remain the most affected areas with prolonged clan conflicts, and Galguduud region is particularly notable for clan skirmishes owing to the harsh environment and competition for resources. While clan elders and the authorities continue to prioritize negotiations to address ongoing clan conflicts, the payment of blood compensation remains the key determinant to conflict resolution. Even after reconciliation efforts have been successful, conflicts have the potential to reignite quickly over small or perceived provocations. For that reason, humanitarian organizations operating in the areas must be kept abreast of all incidents that can lead to clan conflicts, including those that may have occurred months or years in the past, to avoid falling prey to the revenge cycle.

32. Parties to the conflict have had an impact on telecommunication services, by ordering service providers to terminate services or attacking, destroying and damaging telecommunication installations. Disruptions to telecommunication services have affected some humanitarian programmes, including the provision of cash assistance and remote monitoring through call centres. In July 2018, the killing of two Hormuud Telecom staff and the destruction of the company's building and antenna in Ceel Waaq, Gedo region, cut off all telecommunication services, including Internet and telephone services, interrupting aid programmes. The incident was the third time that a Hormuud Telecom branch was reportedly destroyed by the Kenyan security forces that are not part of AMISOM since the beginning of 2018. Previously, those forces were accused of destroying the Hormuud Telecom installations in Dhamas and in the Gedo and Juba Hoose regions of Jubbaland State. In August 2019, another incident was reported in which a Hormuud Telecom mast was destroyed by suspected Kenyan forces. Humanitarian organizations continue to urge all parties to the conflict to respect civilian installations.

33. The continuing trend of forced evictions, fed by growing population density and property prices, as well as a lack of secure tenure, means that, even where access to services is established, it is often fragile and inconsistent. Forced evictions of internally displaced persons from established settlements destroy significant investments made by humanitarian partners to facilitate access to basic services, including the establishment of water points and other water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, maternal and children's health centres and education facilities. Evictions are often carried out with little or no notice, and at times with the complicity of uniformed armed security personnel enlisted by landowners. On average, more than 155,000 people have been evicted across Somalia every year since 2015, and over 11,000 internally displaced persons are, on average, evicted every month. Many have been subject to multiple evictions. Up to 2015, large-scale evictions mostly affected internally displaced persons inhabiting public land and buildings, but in recent years, forced evictions have increasingly targeted internally displaced persons hosted on private land. While in the first quarter of 2018, the forced eviction of 101,587 individuals was recorded, from January to August 2019, some 173,255 people were evicted, with the majority of evictions taking place in Mogadishu. Interventions by

humanitarian partners in the first half of 2019 prevented the eviction of more than 24,000 people; however, measures to prevent or mitigate the risk of forced eviction remain considerably low compared with the needs. The municipality of Mogadishu/Banaadir Regional Administration has confirmed its readiness to contribute to the prevention and response efforts. Humanitarian consultations and training were initiated early in 2019, and partners have worked with the authority to conduct an eviction risk assessment. At the federal level, the National Commission for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons and the Office of the Prime Minister, with the support of the International Development Law Organization, have worked to finalize drafts of the national policy on refugee returnees and internally displaced persons, the interim protocol on land distribution and the national eviction guidelines, which are under review by the Federal Government of Somalia. The Banaadir Regional Administration has also drafted eviction guidelines, including applicable human rights standards and other legal or policy provisions, and has signalled the commitment of the municipality to preventing evictions.

34. Parties to the conflict have continued to carry out air strikes in some areas in Jubbaland State, South-West State and Puntland. The targets have mainly been assets and personnel of Al-Shabaab and ISIL located outside residential areas or within isolated areas under their control. Although, to date, the air strikes have had no direct impact on humanitarian operations, the risk to operations located in the affected regions remains, in particular for vehicles moving supplies and personnel, which might be targeted in error. As a secondary impact, aerial attacks have reportedly made Al-Shabaab more suspicious of humanitarian organizations, on the basis that they could be collecting information to be used for air strikes.

35. Following the directive of September 2018 of the Federal Government of Somalia, many international NGOs have relocated their leadership from Kenya to Somalia. The Federal Government of Somalia has recently made statements to the effect that those that have not yet relocated are not welcome and will not be permitted to work in the country. International NGOs have continued to reiterate their request to the Federal Government of Somalia and regional states to expedite the establishment of a centralized and enabling framework, an initiative that has been under way for the past four years. The NGO bill, which seeks to regulate the operations, registration and oversight of NGOs through the Registrar General and Registrars, remains in draft form. In the absence of a centralized regulatory framework, aid organizations have continued to face demands such as arbitrary or duplicative taxation, the involvement of authorities in contracting suppliers and service providers, and interference in staff recruitment, including screening, interviewing, selection and vetting. These demands have continued to lead to disruptions, delays, intrusions on humanitarian facilities, arrests, the detention and expulsion of humanitarian workers and occasional temporary suspensions of humanitarian programmes. The recent influx of international NGO staff relocated to Somalia has created increasing challenges owing to the lack of explicit laws around registration and income taxation between the national and subnational level. Income tax requirements are being backdated until early 2018, with escalating cases of threats, detentions and expulsions for late payment or non-compliance. In August 2019, two related cases were reported involving the expulsion of a director of an international NGO and the prolonged detention of a staff member of another international NGO. While NGOs are being supported and encouraged to comply with the new taxation laws, advocacy efforts with the authorities are ongoing to discourage such extreme repercussions.

36. In April 2019, the humanitarian country team endorsed a revised access strategy which provides guidance for effective coordination on humanitarian access issues, strengthening a common analysis of access information, challenges and opportunities,

the coordination of access-related activities and preserving humanitarian access and principles as a shared responsibility among humanitarian actors, Member States and all parties to the conflict. The strategy is aimed at establishing and maintaining access to affected people using a three-pronged approach: (a) engaging in negotiations with relevant parties (State and non-State) to ensure the effective and principled delivery of life-saving assistance and the protection of vulnerable people wherever they are and regardless of who is in control; (b) providing evidence-based recommendations for prioritization, assessment and support to operational actors on the ground; and (c) providing the evidence base to support high-level advocacy. The humanitarian community, including the dedicated task force on access, are using the strategy and accompanying action plan to guide its priorities and coordinated approaches to many of the impediments to access that have been noted.

Risk mitigation measures

37. The United Nations and its agencies, funds and programmes have continued to put in place and implement enhanced risk management and control measures to ensure full accountability for their activities and funds channelled towards the humanitarian response in the challenging operational environment in Somalia.

38. The Risk Management Unit supports the United Nations system, the Government of Somalia, at both the federal and regional state levels, and other development and humanitarian actors operating in Somalia with the following services: (a) facilitation of the design and promotion of the adoption of the collective risk management and due diligence standards; (b) risk management advice; (c) training (online and in class) on risk assessment at funds, programmes and projects and on area and partner risk management; (d) information-sharing and information management; (e) maintenance and enhancement of the Contractor Information Management System; (f) provision of support to multi-partner trust funds and the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility; and (g) use of country systems and oversight of the national funding stream of the multi-partner trust fund for Somalia. All the risk mitigation measures, practices, tools in place and tailored recommendations are designed to support risk-informed decision-making and increased accountability for better impact. The Risk Management Unit works closely with the Office of Internal Oversight Services and audit and investigations offices of different United Nations agencies, and continues to establish and strengthen partnerships within the Organization and with the Government of Somalia, the NGO community, donors, law enforcement and other humanitarian and development partners.

39. As at 31 August 2019, the Contractor Information Management System database contains information contributed by the Risk Management Unit and 15 United Nations agencies on more than 4,060 contractors and suppliers to the United Nations in Somalia. The value of contracts covered therein is around \$6.2 billion. Regular updates include the listing of entities subject to Security Council sanctions, the extraction of data from the annual reports of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea and the Panel of Experts on Somalia for 2017 and 2018, the listing of contractors and individuals debarred from working with the United Nations and periodic updates of the World Bank exclusion list and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) list of wanted persons for Somalia.

40. The Risk Management Unit in the Integrated Office of the Deputy Special Representative/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia has been supporting the establishment and enhancement of risk management tools and practices in operations in other countries, such as Afghanistan, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Impact of paragraphs 48 and 49 of resolution 2444 (2018)

41. In paragraph 48 of resolution 2444 (2018), the Security Council decided that, until 15 November 2019, the measures imposed on Member States in paragraph 3 of resolution 1844 (2008) shall not apply to the payment of funds, other financial assets or economic resources necessary to ensure the timely delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance in Somalia by the United Nations, its specialized agencies or programmes, humanitarian organizations having observer status with the General Assembly that provide humanitarian assistance and their implementing partners, including bilaterally or multilaterally funded non-governmental organizations participating in the Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia. While organizations surveyed for the present report did not explicitly comment on the impact of paragraphs 48 and 49 of resolution 2444 (2018) on their ability to implement programmes, the humanitarian exemption has a significant impact on the ability of partners to deliver life-saving aid and protection.

42. Non-renewal of the humanitarian exemption would result in donor reluctance to fund humanitarian operations, and even small shifts in financial derisking would have a significant adverse impact on the ability to deliver assistance. In turn, the inability to deliver aid would deprive civilians of the essentials to survive while compounding the risk that the humanitarian situation will deteriorate. The suspension of aid would result in a greater likelihood of additional displacement, including potential refugee flows to neighbouring countries as well as internal displacement towards urban, government-controlled areas that are already underresourced and do not have adequate basic services. Furthermore, if Al-Shabaab were to impede civilians from leaving areas under its control, their needs would go unmet, and those soliciting aid, such as elders and leaders, might be subject to human rights abuses or violations of international humanitarian law, such as extrajudicial executions and child recruitment.

43. Importantly, the humanitarian exemption provides the basis for donors, contractors and finance and banking systems to enable the financing of humanitarian assistance in areas in which Al-Shabaab operates. Since the implementation of the humanitarian exemption and the establishment of corresponding national implementation measures, key donors have been able to maintain adequate levels of funding for humanitarian programmes. The importance of access to funding for aid has been well illustrated in 2019, when increased funding in June and July enabled partners to deliver a sufficient amount of food assistance to prevent 1 million Somalis from facing emergency and crisis levels of food insecurity.

Conclusions

44. After nearly three decades of turmoil, Somalia is currently on a positive trajectory towards peace and stability. When the renewed risk of famine became apparent early in 2017, donors and operational humanitarian agencies acted promptly to scale up the humanitarian response and to save lives. Similarly, in response to the consequences of poor and erratic rainfall in 2019, the humanitarian community has prioritized the drought impact response plan to reach 4.5 million people until the end of the year. The World Bank, through the Crisis Response Window, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, through the Central Emergency Response Fund, are also formalizing an initiative in Somalia towards anticipatory action ahead of emergencies. The pilot will enable rapid action, should triggers for extreme drought conditions be reached. It also reflects persistent efforts by humanitarian organizations to reach those in need, including in dangerous and insecure areas, to save lives and prevent the loss of livelihoods. Although large-scale famine has been averted to date in 2019, some communities in the most hard-to-reach areas in southern and central

Somalia remain at risk of famine. The 2019 post-*gu* assessment results are also serious cause for concern; the 2019 *gu* harvest yield is the lowest since records began in 1995, with agricultural production at 68 per cent below the long-term average. Additional resources and efforts are urgently required to ensure that the most vulnerable areas do not slip into famine in the coming months.

45. Humanitarian organizations in Somalia continue to strike a balance between their security concerns and ensuring the effective and principled delivery of assistance. Humanitarian partners will continue working to expand and sustain access to those in the greatest need, despite the security challenges. However, respect for international humanitarian law and the onus on parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate access to those in need remains critical for the delivery of aid. In addition to greater access to beneficiaries, humanitarian efforts require flexible and timely funding to effectively assist millions of Somalis and to ensure that the security needs of national and local implementing partners are properly factored into proposals and budgets.

46. In the light of the foregoing, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator invites the Security Council to renew the humanitarian exemption provided for in paragraph 48 of its resolution [2444 \(2018\)](#).