



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

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New York

President: Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland)

Members:

Algeria	Mr. Bendjama
China	Mr. Dai Bing
Ecuador	Mr. De La Gasca
France	Mr. Dharmadhikari
Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Japan	Mr. Yamazaki
Malta	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
Republic of Korea	Mr. Cho
Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
Sierra Leone	Mr. Kanu
Slovenia	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2024/698)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2024/698)

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

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia.

In accordance with article 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr James Swan, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; His Excellency Mr. Mohamed El-Amine Souef, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia; and Ms. Ilwad Elman from the Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2024/698, 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, Madam President, for the opportunity to provide an update on the situation in Somalia. I am pleased to do so alongside the Somali Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi; the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Mohamed El-Amine Souef; and civil society representative Ilwad Elman, Director at the Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre.

I would like, from the outset, to honour the dedication and the commitment of the Somali and

African Union forces, who have made tremendous sacrifices to advance peace and security in the country.

The Federal Government of Somalia remains focused on its national priorities. Following the amendment in March of the first four chapters of the Provisional Constitution by Parliament, the Independent Constitutional Review and the Implementation Commission is now working on chapters 5 to 9 of the Provisional Constitution. Consultations have already begun with federal member states, civil society and other key stakeholders on proposed amendments covered in those chapters, such as power-sharing and resource-sharing between the central Government and the federal member states.

Progress has also been made in defining the process for one-person, one-vote elections, with the Federal Cabinet endorsing three foundational bills for universal suffrage elections, namely, the independent national electoral and boundaries commission bill, the elections bill and the political parties and organizations bill. The National Consultative Council, which convened yesterday with the leaders of the Federal Government and four federal member states, is expected to discuss the bills before they are submitted to Parliament for consideration. The transition from the previous indirect electoral system to the planned new system of universal suffrage will require broad and inclusive consultations and the willingness of all stakeholders to engage in dialogue in order to build political consensus. In that regard, I welcome the meeting of the National Consultative Council. The adoption of implementable electoral laws and then the establishment of an independent elections commission will be important indicators of progress towards delivering universal suffrage elections. The United Nations is committed to supporting Somalia as it addresses technical, logistical and other challenges and mobilizes financial support from donors in order to deliver timely and credible elections.

The fight against Al-Shabaab continues to be the key security priority for the Government of Somalia. While making commendable efforts to sustain military operations against Al-Shabaab, Somalia is, at the same time, tackling the challenges of force generation; taking over security responsibilities from the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS); planning the transition to the proposed African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia and implementing crucial stabilization programmes in recovered areas.

The United Nations continues to support the Federal Government in relation to those activities, working closely with the African Union and other partners. The United Nations Support Office in Somalia continues to enable the ATMIS drawdown, while fulfilling its ongoing support responsibilities. The lifting of the arms embargo on the national Government has facilitated its access to additional weapons and supplies, and I remind other entities operating in Somalia of the requirement of respecting the remaining terms of the arms embargo established by resolution 2713 (2023).

Al-Shabaab continues to demonstrate disregard for civilian life through its use of indirect fire on population centres, the use of improvised explosive devices and suicide attacks against civilians, including the heinous 2 August attack at the Lido Beach in Mogadishu. I underscore the condemnation (see SG/SM/22325) issued by the Secretary-General of such attacks and reiterate the United Nations support to the Government and the people of Somalia as they stand against terrorism and violent extremism. In that regard, I also note the increased presence and activities of the Somali affiliate of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh).

I remain concerned about the continuing regional tensions following the memorandum of understanding between Ethiopia and Somaliland announced on 1 January. Recalling the Council's affirmation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Somalia, I urge Ethiopia and Somalia to find a diplomatic solution that resolves the issue within the framework of international law. I commend partners' mediation efforts, including talks hosted by Türkiye in Ankara on 1 July and 12 August. I urge Ethiopia and Somalia to engage in good faith in those diplomatic efforts and to avoid actions that could lead to escalation. That is essential given the possible negative ramifications for stability in the region, including the potential impact on the post-ATMIS transition.

In a recent visit to Hargeisa, I also urged a de-escalation of the tensions in Sool and Sanaag and continued access for humanitarian actors, in accordance with the Security Council's press statement of 7 June last year (SC/15313), which called on all parties to facilitate humanitarian assistance in that area.

Humanitarian needs remain significant throughout Somalia. Intensifying climate shocks, conflict, disease outbreaks and widespread poverty continue to affect

millions. While the number of people estimated to require assistance countrywide has diminished, from 8.3 million people last year to 6.9 million people in 2024, Somalia remains in dire humanitarian need. I call for further support for the \$1.6 billion 2024 humanitarian needs and response plan, which is only 37 per cent funded.

Somalia's humanitarian and development challenges are intensified by climate shocks. A scarcity of resources and displacement of communities are, in turn, conflict drivers. Building greater resilience to the effects of climate change is essential for Somalia's stability. United Nations entities and other accredited partners have supported Somalia's access to the Green Climate Fund to build local-level resilience and engage in climate-smart interventions across Somalia.

The United Nations continues to mainstream human rights, gender, youth and disability inclusion in all United Nations activities in Somalia. One of many examples is our support of the National Disability Agency, including by providing legislative and policy advice on a rights-based approach to disability. In that context, I welcome the passage of the Disability Protection Bill by the House of the People during the current session of Parliament.

The proposal by the Federal Government of Somalia concerning the transition from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to the United Nations country team was transmitted to the Council by the Secretary-General on 30 August. That Somali proposal resulted from constructive and cordial discussions within a joint United Nations-Federal Government of Somalia technical team and additional consultations with Somalia's leadership, including the President, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. We look forward to working closely with the Federal Government of Somalia to implement the transition, and to continuing the support of the United Nations for Somalia's national priorities once a new mandate is received from the Council.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Swan for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Souef.

Mr. Souef (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to thank you, Madam President, very much for giving me the opportunity to address the Security Council today. I would also like to congratulate you,

Madam President, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and to thank you for convening this meeting on Somalia.

I am also honoured to be accompanied by His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, and by Mr. James Swan, Acting Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia. Our joint presence bears witness to the shared commitment and involvement of the African Union and the United Nations in Somalia.

Allow me, once again, on behalf of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), to express my gratitude to the Somali security forces and to military, police and civilian personnel of the Mission for their unwavering commitment to peace and security in Somalia, often at the risk of their own lives. I honour the memory of those who have paid the ultimate price in the performance of their duty, and I wish a speedy recovery to the injured. Their courage and sacrifice remind us of the true cost of peace and of the enduring power of bravery and honour.

(spoke in English)

Since my most recent briefing to the Council in June (see S/PV.9665), Somalia has continued to demonstrate great commitment to fostering stability and national development. The progress achieved thus far reflects Somalia's determination to enhance governance, security and inclusive growth, which are foundational for a glorious and prosperous future. Underpinning that progress has been the convening of the tenth National Consultative Council on 2 October, with a focus on military operations against Al-Shabaab, advancing the democratization process and reviewing the implementation of prior National Consultative Council agreements. We should continue to encourage Puntland to return to the National Consultative Council for inclusive dialogue and effective implementation of key national priorities.

In parallel, there has been progress on reviewing and amending the Provisional Constitution, with ongoing discussions to ensure that the views and perspectives of all stakeholders are considered in the review of chapters 5 to 9 of the Provisional Constitution. That development followed the approval by the Council of Ministers of the Federal Government of Somalia of a bill establishing an independent national electoral

and boundaries commission. That will strengthen the country's democratic processes and promote transparency and accountability in future elections.

We welcome the decision by the Federal Government of Somalia, under the leadership of His Excellency Mr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, to impose a total ban on the trade and smuggling of, and any other business related to, weapons and ammunition by non-State actors. Importantly, I commend Somalia for showing immense commitment to enhancing security and maintaining peace since the lifting of the arms embargo, and I further urge concerted efforts to advance the enforcement of Somalia's arms and ammunition control procedures, which are vital in preventing the proliferation of illegal weapons.

Despite those developments, tensions between Somalia and Ethiopia have persisted since January 2024. I therefore welcome the ongoing efforts to address the dispute between the two countries, and I look forward to an outcome that embodies the principles of sovereignty, respect for territorial integrity and adherence to international law, which are key to promoting peace and security and effective cooperation and development.

Turning to the security situation, the recent months have witnessed a fluid security landscape in Somalia, characterized by progress and setbacks. The Somali security forces intensified efforts to degrade Al-Shabaab's capabilities through improved targeted counterterrorism operations that led to the elimination of insurgent leaders and the dismantling of several operations bases. Nonetheless, Al-Shabaab has continued to deploy asymmetric tactics, including complex attacks, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), vehicle-borne IEDs and indirect fire. The recent mortar attacks on African Union/United Nations camps in Baidoa, Mogadishu and Kismayo and other forms of attacks against civilian and military targets in Mogadishu and across the ATMIS sectors demonstrate Al-Shabaab's resilience and underscore the need for robust intelligence-sharing mechanisms.

Moreover, reports of Al-Shabaab acquiring missiles and armed uncrewed aerial vehicles are a further source of concern, increasing drone threats and hostility to Federal Government of Somalia installations, ATMIS, United Nations and Somali security forces locations and civilian targets. Similarly, the growing risk of infiltration and collaboration between Al-Shabaab and the Houthis is a considerable security challenge,

threatening regional stability in the Horn of Africa and maritime navigation and shipping routes in the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Channel of Mozambique. Those concerns underscore the transnational nature of security challenges and the need for comprehensive and coordinated international efforts that prioritize effective and sustainable solutions.

Hence, as the Federal Government of Somalia advances the implementation of its security sector development plan to enhance force capabilities, sustained international cooperation and support is crucial to reinforce existing security frameworks, thus enabling Somalia to effectively address emerging security threats.

I am pleased to report remarkable progress in the transition of security responsibilities from ATMIS to the Somali security forces. In line with the Peace and Security Council's decision on the phased approach to phase 3 of the drawdown, ATMIS, with the collaboration and support of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), completed the transfer of six of the eight forward operating bases (FOBs) designated for handover to the Somali security forces.

With the very challenging environmental and infrastructural terrain in some of our areas of operation, we continue to work closely with UNSOS to explore possible solutions, and we are making notable progress, hoping that the last two FOBs will draw down by the end of this month.

In the same vein, the phase 3b drawdown of the additional 2,000 ATMIS troops was aligned to the concept of operations (CONOPS) of the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), which directed that such a drawdown constitutes phase 0 of the post-ATMIS Mission. That necessitated a pause of the phase 3b drawdown, which was scheduled for September, to ensure adequate planning for the eventual exit of ATMIS on 31 December 2024 and the deployment of the new Mission on 1 January 2025 in a manner that aligns with Somalia's operational priorities and prevents a security vacuum.

Turning to the post-ATMIS planning, transition planning is a complex process integrally tied to the dynamics of national leadership and ownership. In that regard, I commend the Federal Government of Somalia, under the stewardship of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, for assuming full ownership and responsibility for the planning process by promoting

enhanced collaboration and coordination among key stakeholders. That enabled the formulation of a CONOPS, jointly developed with the Federal Government of Somalia and inspired by the Somalia security development plan, in line with Somalia's security needs and the African Union's capacity to deliver. In turn, the CONOPS, which envisages a lean mission with a defensive and limited operational mandate that is limited in scope and size and has a clear exit strategy, provided the basis for the integrated mission planning in line with resolution 2748 (2024).

It is against that backdrop that the joint African Union and the United Nations team for the implementation of resolution 2748 (2024) recently deployed to Mogadishu in order to undertake extensive consultations with the Federal Government of Somalia, ATMIS, the United Nations and various security, stabilization and development partners so as to ensure comprehensive input and support, which are essential for a cohesive, coherent, flexible and responsive post-ATMIS plan aligned with Somalia's needs, support structures, anticipated contributions and sustainable outcomes. Closely linked to that process are the ongoing efforts to secure predictable, adequate and sustainable financial support in order to offset ATMIS funding gaps and secure funding for the successor mission.

Cognizant of the current financial constraints and competing priorities, the African Union adopted a multifaceted approach to resource mobilization, focusing on innovative funding sources and partnerships that enhance operational capacity. Hence, in collaboration with the United Nations, the African Union established a task force on the implementation of resolution 2719 (2023). That is supplemented by the decision of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia to designate the African Union High Representative for Financing the Union and the Peace Fund to propose financing options for the transition from ATMIS to AUSSOM.

It is in furtherance of those efforts that I thank all the partners — States and organizations — that have supported the African Union intervention in Somalia with financial or in-kind contributions and call for sustained backing to maintain the effectiveness of ATMIS, the Somali security forces and UNSOS. That will ensure that the ongoing integrated planning for the post-ATMIS mission and the ensuing operational plans are adequately funded and resourced to sustainably meet their goals.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that despite the challenges, there are clear opportunities to consolidate and make further progress. The next two months, up until the end of the year, will be a crucial period for Somalia. They will necessitate collective action and partnership, which are key to shaping the future of this resilient nation.

In that regard, I remain deeply convinced that the determination of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud to build trust and consensus and foster a culture of shared commitment and responsibility among all stakeholders in order to address emerging issues will be essential if we are to sustain the fight against Al-Shabaab and offer the best possible conditions for a smooth transition.

I therefore call upon the Council to reaffirm its support for Somalia and to continue encouraging sustained international support, including targeted capacity-building to national State-building initiatives as Somalia navigates its path towards sustainable peace, stability and development.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Souef for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Elman.

Ms. Elman: It is an honour to be here at the Security Council today. As I prepared for this briefing, I was reminded of the first time I briefed the Security Council in 2015 during an open debate on the protection of civilians (see S/PV.7374). Reflecting on the situation in Somalia then and on my appeals to this organ, I was struck by the political, economic, environmental and security reforms that Somalia has undertaken since then. The progress we have made is significant and visible; the hope and momentum within the country are palpable. For anyone who has worked in or on Somalia for more than a year, claiming that nothing is changing is simply inaccurate.

Today's briefing presents an opportunity to examine the current situation in Somalia and to collectively chart a path forward that includes often unseen and unheard perspectives. It is essential that we hold ourselves — both as Somalis and as partners to Somalia — to a higher standard of accountability. If we are not meeting this standard today, we must commit to listening and working together towards a future where we can hold ourselves accountable. We cannot afford to lose another generation to war. With 75 per cent of the population under the age of 30, of which 42 per cent is

under the age of 14, young Somalis deserve the chance to inherit a future defined by peace rather than conflict.

On 31 July, my organization, the Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre, hosted a festival in Mogadishu, the Jiilka Maanta Festival, which translates to “generation today”. The event was conceptualized to foster cultural pride; empower young leaders; platform them and their contributions to society; host workshops; develop new opportunities for positive identities; break down the barriers to opportunities by inviting business leaders, Government officials and artists and together not just dream about peace, but live it, even just for one day — and we did. Nearly 6,000 people — mostly youth — showed up in Mogadishu from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Not a single incident occurred, and memories were created of what, until now, youth tell me was the best day they ever experienced. We knew nothing like that had been imagined, let alone achieved, in the past 30 years in Mogadishu, but it was not until after the festival and what followed that the festival became a watershed moment for Somalia, at least to me.

Two days after the festival, on a Friday evening, horrific scenes and imagery of dead bodies — mostly of youth — on the beach targeted deliberately by Al-Shabaab took over the news cycle. The continued and disproportionate targeting by Al-Shabaab of youth, their education and cultural activities, exhibits that a young generation with a shared positive cultural identity and forward-looking hope for their future is viewed as an existential threat by the group.

While youth and women are recognized as critical stakeholders for sustainable peace in Somalia, their participation remains severely limited. Engaging those groups, alongside civil society organizations, must go beyond mere tokenism. Their involvement is essential for building resilience against extremism and fostering inclusive, community-led reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts. The need is especially pressing in newly liberated areas, where the complex social and political dynamics shaped by years of Al-Shabaab rule demand sensitive, context-specific interventions. Those who negotiate their existence and survival in those environments on a daily basis are best positioned to contribute meaningfully to those efforts. Engaging them is not just beneficial therefore; it is imperative for achieving lasting peace and stability in Somalia.

Among the issues that we see exacerbating that disconnect are siloed approaches, fragmented justice

systems and mistrust among horizontal and vertical actors. It is well documented that violent extremism in general cannot be defeated solely through military means. Similarly, it cannot be mitigated through purely governmental actors. The whole-of-society approach may never have been more valid than in Somalia.

Yet, as Somalia and its regional and international partners, many of whom are assembled here today, have been discussing the security sector reforms, the new strategies to guide the design of the mission to follow the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia and the realization of the Somali security development plan since His Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud announced his vision in New York last year, the only actor consistently missing from the table remains civil society organizations and, by extension, the Somali population at large, who seek to participate. And that is a hugely missed opportunity. In that context, I take the opportunity to remind the Council that civil society organizations in Somalia are not only providing immediate support and life-saving services from a humanitarian perspective. Civil society organizations in Somalia play a crucial role in fostering trust and cooperation between military forces and local communities. Therefore, engaging civil society organizations in early recovery efforts — including delivering essential services such as water, sanitation, health care and education — is paramount. We know that significantly reduces community reprisals compared to military-led initiatives, especially when the military is still working to gain acceptance in those communities.

A lack of understanding of local community dynamics consistently continues to hinder the preparedness of security efforts and ultimately their sustained impact. By incorporating the perspectives of civil society organizations, security actors can develop a more nuanced threat assessment that accurately reflects local drivers of extremism. Collaborating with civil society organizations for joint assessments not only provides access to communities but also yields vital insights that better inform stabilization strategies.

As Somalia prepares to assume a seat on the Council next year, its unique context positions it as a powerful case study in effective conflict resolution which others can learn from, despite the challenges we continue to face. There are many documented lessons and best practices, grass roots solutions to seemingly intractable conflicts, born out of necessity and tested over decades in Somalia, that offer invaluable, practical

lessons that are relevant in addressing the rising tide of armed conflict globally.

To effectively respond to today's global challenges, the international community must embrace more adaptive, flexible approaches that reflect the realities of contemporary conflicts in Somalia and beyond where traditional preconditions prescribed in the past are no longer fit for purpose. A new frame of reference and updated principles of peace are essential to navigate the global challenges.

Somalia has developed invaluable experience in strategy adaptability and agility and in contextualizing international frameworks to determine what works and what does not. From that, the country has created its own mechanism that can offer critical insights to United Nations Member States and others facing newer and emerging conflicts. Somalia's protracted conflict in that sense can serve as a valuable model for preventing the prolongation of newer conflicts we see developing around the world today and help to avoid the same pitfalls and challenges we have faced for more than 30 years. However, for Somalia to effectively leverage that expertise, it is essential that the country first prioritize the participation of civil society organizations in inclusive peacebuilding efforts.

Additionally, Somalia must invest in and prioritize the creation of a national knowledge repository to document its vast experiences and knowledge in that space — experiences that remain underrepresented and underprioritized. Such an initiative would not only preserve valuable lessons but also create a strategic resource for future peacebuilding efforts, both domestically and globally. That commitment is crucial to fully realize and utilize the valuable insights and experiences that Somalia has to offer.

As Somalia stands at a critical juncture with much to look forward to, the nation's people look to their leaders with high expectations. However, the reality is that Somalia is struggling to address the urgent needs of 2.8 million internally displaced persons. Furthermore, the absence of a functioning and effective criminal justice system has perpetuated a climate of impunity for those responsible for violent crimes, including sexual violence, leaving countless victims without justice.

Therefore, this is not the time for regress on critical issues and hard-won gains such as those initially proposed during the constitutional amendments, which seek to redefine the age of a child from under 18 years

old to just 15 for the age of maturity. That change directly contradicts international standards and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Somalia has ratified. With the age definition article on hold currently, the concern persists — especially because Somalia said at the 140th session of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Human Rights Committee meeting, earlier in March, that ultimately the people will decide on the matter of the age of maturity. Until that is possible in the form of a democratic vote on the matter, I urge Somalia to maintain the age of majority for both boys and girls at 18 years, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The primary responsibility to protect the population lies, first and foremost, with Somalia. And taking into account the gender-specific needs and vulnerabilities of Somalis and how such a change in the Constitution now will impact them today and in future is essential for that.

I urge the prioritization as well of legislation currently awaiting Cabinet endorsement, which Somalia has committed to adopting by the end of 2024, such as the sexual offences and indecency bill, as well as the anti-female genital mutilation bill. Those are just basic entry points for accountability and protection and should be treated as interim until Somalia develops more robust legal safeguards for the rights and well-being of women and children.

Just a few weeks ago, in Puntland state of Somalia, four young men were executed for crimes they committed while they were all under the age of 18. And that is not an isolated case, just a recent one.

Somalia must consolidate its approach on the prosecution of children associated with armed groups designated as terrorist organizations, bring detention conditions and access to legal services into compliance with international human rights standards and ensure fair trials and due process rights for all persons suspected of committing crimes.

Since 2012, Somalia has been developing mechanisms for the treatment and handling of children in armed conflict and making notable progress towards implementing its road map on ending and preventing the recruitment and use of children. The age assessment guidelines and its standardized checklist, which the Government endorsed in 2023, are a key milestone for Somalia that will continue to strengthen compliance on that agenda. The progress on the child rights bill and

the juvenile justice bill similarly indicates the tangible efforts being made by the Somali Government.

Implementation is crucial. The existing mechanisms — if followed and implemented — offer alternative pathways that hold minors accountable for crimes, such as rehabilitation programmes or juvenile detention. I have witnessed first-hand how the implementation of those mechanisms not only safeguards children throughout their reintegration but also has significant implications for transitional justice and the prevention of violent extremism. Those efforts foster proactive and comprehensive joint action for conflict prevention between Government and civil society, creating a stronger, more resilient community. By prioritizing the protection and reintegration of children, we lay the groundwork for lasting peace and stability.

The Elman Peace Centre has worked for decades on those issues. Our Drop the Gun, Pick Up the Pen campaign, started in the 1990s and lauded as Somalia's first disarmament programme — initiated and led by the community — continues to this day. In collaboration with the Child Protection Screening Unit of the Ministry of Internal Security and UNICEF, we have been actively working to support children associated with armed forces and groups. As the Somali Government progresses in implementing non-judicial measures for children associated with armed groups and accelerates the handover of those children from custody, similar advancements are expected from the international community and United Nations agencies tasked with that agenda.

The lack of resources and support for children in armed conflict in Somalia is unacceptable, particularly as the Government conducts more military operations, and subsequently encounters more children and is increasingly expediting their release from detention into child-friendly care. Civil society struggles to meet the resulting demand with the current funding allocated for child protection and armed conflict programming. With budget allocations and mandate renewals heavily focused on military spending, it is imperative to assess the proportion of those funds dedicated to child protection, social safety nets, resilience and sustainable peace.

Last month, the Elman Peace Centre hosted a women's peace forum in Mogadishu, bringing together more than 100 women leaders from across all federal

member states in Somalia. We were honoured by the presence of His Excellency General Bashir Mohamed Jama, Minister of Family Affairs and Human Rights Development, the European Union Ambassador and other distinguished guests to discuss the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Women, including young leaders from newly liberated areas like Bahdo and Burtinle, delivered a powerful call for meaningful participation in peace processes. They presented actionable recommendations, including the urgent need to abandon the limiting narrative that confines women's role to "soft" security positions, thereby preventing their full participation across all pillars of resolution 1325 (2000).

The misuse of weapons, particularly in fuelling gender-based violence, demands accountability and transparency in the flow of arms. Yet disarmament and arms control are insufficiently integrated into action plans on resolution 1325 (2000). A gender-sensitive approach to disarmament, anchored in a strong normative framework, could be transformative for Somalia if systematically implemented. Somalia's nascent and fragile peace cannot be sustained in an environment where the general populace is excluded from the processes that ensure their well-being.

This briefing comes at a pivotal moment for Somalia. As the country prepares to take a seat on the Security Council next year, we must recognize that sustainable peace requires a bottom-up approach — one that is internally driven, culturally rooted and locally facilitated. That vision for a sustainable peace in Somalia cannot be realized without the active and meaningful participation of the majority of its population, which is youth and women.

I urge the members of the Council to not only support the call for inclusive peace processes in Somalia but to contribute concretely to its realization. That can be achieved through dedicated resources, seconding Somali expertise, and deploying specialists on critical issues such as women and peace and security and children and armed conflict, especially as Somalia prepares for its Security Council seat.

I also recommend strengthening the engagement of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia with Somali civil society organizations for more accurate and timely community analysis and deeper cooperation. Many civil society organizations, including myself, are very eager to collaborate with the Mission to provide

on-the-ground insights that can inform effective peacebuilding strategies.

In addition, I urge Member States to move beyond expressions of solidarity and provide the financial and technical support necessary to sustain Somalia's progress. That includes allocating resources for peacebuilding functions and ensuring that the mandates related to peace, security and human rights are well resourced and effectively implemented. Close collaboration with civil society organizations is vital for that, to ensure that peacebuilding is inclusive, locally driven and aligned with the needs of Somali communities.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Elman for her briefing.

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

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan, Special Representative Souef and Ms. Elman for their briefings today. I also welcome His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Foreign Minister of Somalia, to the Chamber.

I will make four points on behalf of the United Kingdom.

First, we express our deepest condolences to the families of the 37 civilians killed in Al-Shabaab's horrific attack on Mogadishu's Lido Beach on 2 August, and of all other civilians killed in Somalia in recent months. We commend the continued efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia to tackle Al-Shabaab.

Secondly, we thank Somalia and the United Nations for their consultation on the future of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) mandate. As we look towards UNSOM's two-year transition, the United Kingdom is working with stakeholders to ensure a gradual, responsible and sustainable drawdown of the Mission, including the progressive and phased transfer of the Mission's tasks to the Federal Government of Somalia, the United Nations country team and other relevant stakeholders. It is essential that during the transition the Mission has the resources and capabilities necessary for continued delivery on those areas critical to Somalia's needs. We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the continued, constructive execution of his responsibilities. And as we move into the transition

period, the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General remains vital. We also look forward to working closely with all Council members this month on the transitional mission's mandate.

Thirdly, we note the upcoming federal member state elections. We echo the Secretary-General's call for all stakeholders to work together to resolve differences on electoral modalities and timelines, and we are watching closely the outcomes of the National Consultative Council meeting this week. I support Ms. Elman's comments on the importance of an approach that is inclusive of civil society, women and youth in Somalia's political and peacebuilding processes.

Fourthly, we welcome the continued progress on the planning for the African Union (AU)-led successor mission to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia. We underline the importance of the United Nations and AU consulting broadly, in line with resolution 2748 (2024), to ensure the overall mission design and financing options are viable and deliverable. We look forward to next week's interim update and the detailed reporting on 15 November.

Finally, I would also like to welcome Somalia and all incoming members as they begin observing Council proceedings this month. We look forward to working closely with Somalia from January on the full range of Security Council business.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I thank Ambassadors Swan and Souef for their briefings, and I thank Ms. Ilwad Elman for her courage and insight today. I would also like to welcome Foreign Minister Fiqi to this Council meeting. We look forward to working closely with him and with all incoming members of the Council.

We commend the leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)'s and the Mission's support to Somalia. The United States thanks the joint technical team for examining modalities and a timeline for an UNSOM transition. We are reviewing the Federal Government of Somalia's proposal and look forward to further discussions in the coming weeks.

UNSOM's role must reflect the progress Somalia has achieved, and we support updating elements of the mandate as appropriate. At the same time, peacebuilding, reform, political reconciliation and strengthening the rule of law remain critical issues where more work is needed. A special political mission mandated to support

Somali-led efforts is needed to advance progress on those fronts in the midst of insecurity, tense regional dynamics and a dire humanitarian situation.

Reaching an agreement on a post-African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) force is urgent. We welcome international consensus in support of the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia, the follow-on Mission to ATMIS, and urge stakeholders to complete the necessary transition planning as soon as possible. The international community must maintain focus on that transition, which is critical to our shared security. We recognize that some have advocated for applying the resolution 2719 (2023) framework to the new African Union Mission. This is not the time or place to apply resolution 2719 (2023). We must coordinate closely to ensure that the requisite mechanisms are fully in place in order to set a future resolution 2719 (2023) mission up for success. We believe, and many partners agree, that we must avoid a premature application of the framework, which would undermine its credibility. Successful application will be critical to maintaining international confidence in, and support for, that tool in the long run.

We are deeply concerned about the rising tension between Ethiopia and Somalia and the negative impact that it is having on shared security interests. The United States joins the African Union and other international partners in reiterating our support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia and rejecting any efforts to undermine it. We support Türkiye's mediation efforts and call for dialogue to de-escalate tensions. Regional tensions must not distract Somalia from critical State-building challenges or efforts to degrade Al-Shabaab. Regional tensions also cannot interfere with the planning for and deployment of a post-ATMIS mission. We cannot risk the creation of dangerous security gaps, which could worsen the humanitarian situation, or the additional expenses that would be associated with changes in troop contributors. Part of addressing ongoing threats in Somalia involves the close cooperation of the Federal Government of Somalia and the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 2713 (2023). We urge the Somali authorities to ensure access for the Panel so that it can continue its important work.

Finally, we look forward to engaging with Member States on the upcoming discussion to renew the mandate of the Panel of Experts and to review the relevant sanctions measures.

Mr. Kanu (Sierra Leone): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council plus (A3+), namely, Algeria, Guyana, Mozambique and my country, Sierra Leone.

We take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2024/698) and the updates on the implementation of the mandates of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). We thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Mr. James Swan, and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, His Excellency Mr. Mohamed El-Amine Souef, for their insightful briefings, and we thank Ms. Ilwad Elman for her contribution. We welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, in this meeting. We also look forward to Somalia joining the A3+ in January 2025.

The A3+ welcomes the constructive dialogue and engagement between the Federal Government of Somalia and the United Nations through the joint technical committee regarding the Somali request for a transition from a special political mission to the United Nations country team. We have taken note of the proposal from the Somali Government for the transition to take place over a two-year period, based on the discussions of the joint technical committee. We look forward to engaging fellow Council members on the future of UNSOM, taking that proposal into account.

On the political front, we are pleased with the developments towards the democratization of Somalia, including the commitment to institute measures by the Federal Government of Somalia on the constitutional review process, which is central to the State-building process. The transition to universal voting rights — that is, one person, one vote — underscores the commitment of the Somali authorities to enhancing democratic participation, especially for women and young people. We further encourage the Somali authorities to prioritize the minimum 30 per cent quota representation for women in elective and senior Government appointments. We encourage the relevant stakeholders and parties to collectively complete the revision of the Provisional Constitution through a consensus-based approach in consultation and engagement with the relevant stakeholders.

The A3+ also encourages the Federal Government of Somalia to prioritize engagement with the State authorities as part of the strengthening of the federal system. In that regard, we take note of the positive overtures by the Puntland authorities regarding direct dialogue with the Federal Government on a number of important issues. The A3+ further welcomes the efforts deployed by the Federal Government of Somalia to promote inclusion in the governance structures following the passing of the national disability bill. The A3+ looks forward to the adoption of that text in the Upper House.

Regarding the security situation, the A3+ commends the Federal Government of Somalia on the consolidation of the security gains realized by the Somalia security forces, through its offensive against Al-Shabaab with the support of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). We call for continued efforts to ultimately destroy the group's capabilities and the opportunistic attacks that it continues to carry out. Despite the gains made, Al-Shabaab remains a present threat. The group maintains its ability to carry out deadly attacks, which have endangered the lives of the Somali people. We wish to pay tribute to the Somali security forces and ATMIS personnel for their heavy sacrifices to protect the people of Somalia from the terrorist threat posed by Al-Shabaab. We are pleased with the collaborative work of the African Union, the Federal Government of Somalia, ATMIS and UNSOS on the ATMIS transition, while noting the progress on the security transition of forward operating bases to the Somalia security forces.

The A3+ welcomes the African Union's adoption of the concept of operations for the new African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia and looks forward to the update from the Secretary-General next week on the progress of work on the Mission design, including financing options, in accordance with resolution 2748 (2024). On that latter point, we stress the importance of predictable and sustainable financing for the new Mission and encourage all stakeholders to commit to building on the peace gains made in Somalia so far, including through their tangible support for the new Mission.

Regarding the economic situation, the A3+ commends the Federal Government of Somalia on 10 years of significant achievements, including in domestic revenue mobilization, public financial management and good governance. The approval of the income tax bill

is also very commendable. We stress that strengthening the security environment is critical for preserving and building on those achievements.

Nevertheless, we are concerned about the humanitarian situation in Somalia, which remains dire owing to recurrent and intensifying climate shocks, conflicts and disease outbreaks. Those conditions have led to water scarcity, diminished crop yields, displacement and the proliferation of diseases. We are also concerned about the level of internal displacement and the state of food insecurity. In that regard, we call on development and other partners to scale up funding on the humanitarian response plan, which is only 37.1 per cent funded at the moment.

In conclusion, the A3+ would like to express its appreciation to the African Union, UNSOM, UNSOS, the European Union and all regional and international partners for their collaborative efforts in supporting Somalia in its peacebuilding journey.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): I thank Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Souef, and Ms. Elman for their briefings. I also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia to the Chamber.

Malta welcomes the ongoing discussions concerning the transition of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) with the Federal Government of Somalia. They include the recent efforts towards a smooth transfer of responsibilities. We value the work of UNSOM, particularly its technical, financial and logistical support for reconciliation efforts. The collaborative agreements with Galmudug state regarding disputed lands, capacity-building and training on the rule of law and countering violent of extremism are critical tools in the transition.

UNSOM's assistance has also been pivotal in drafting the electoral legal framework. As stated by the Secretary-General, an inclusive and implementable electoral framework is of fundamental importance. Safeguarding the political rights of women and ensuring a minimum quota of 30 per cent women in elected positions and appointed bodies must be maintained. Malta affirms the importance of women's participation in Somalia's political processes. And as we heard today from Ms. Elman, their engagement is essential for lasting peace in Somalia. We support recent efforts towards the finalization of the bill on female genital

mutilation and commend the inclusive consultation process led by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development and supported by the United Nations Population Fund. On the other hand, we are deeply concerned about the trafficking of young girls for forced marriage to Al-Shabaab members and other incidents of conflict-related sexual violence. We are also alarmed by recurring forced evictions of displaced people. We welcome all efforts to end conflict-related sexual violence, enhance survivor support and strengthen the relevant legal policy and institutional frameworks. We must end impunity and recognize the needs and rights of survivors.

Children's needs in the face of alarming violations cannot be overlooked. Malta urges the Somali authorities and their international partners to prioritize child protection in the transition. On 17 August, four young adults were executed in Galkayo, Puntland, after being convicted and sentenced to death for crimes committed when they were associated with Al-Shabaab and under the age of 18. That is deeply troubling. The Puntland Age Verification Committee advised against the death penalty, and the United Nations is actively engaging with Puntland authorities, urging compliance with due process for all young adults associated with armed groups when they were minors. In that vein, Malta advocates for a moratorium on such executions.

The repeated use of improvised explosive devices by Al-Shabaab also remains a significant threat to Somalia's security. The attack on Lido Beach and the group's escalated attacks in recent months, which have resulted in a 367 per cent increase in civilian casualties, warrant our urgent attention.

At the regional level, we take this opportunity to commend the recent talks between Ethiopia and Somalia facilitated by Türkiye. We encourage continued dialogue between those neighbouring States as part of broader efforts to promote regional peace and security.

Somalia is also grappling with climate change challenges that represent perhaps some of the most devastating impacts globally and add yet another layer to its security and humanitarian situation. We welcome recent efforts by the Green Climate Fund and its pledge of \$100 million for local climate adaptation plans. Malta continues to stress the need for integrating climate resilience within security planning, thereby recognizing the link between environmental challenges and regional instability.

As a member State of the European Union (EU), Malta reaffirms the EU's strong partnership with Somalia, which is aimed at placing Somalia's ownership of its security at the forefront. Since 2019, the EU has provided five packages of support to the Somali National Army, totalling €110 million. The EU will also stay engaged through financial support to the new African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia, alongside all of Somalia's security partners, in line with the principle of burden sharing.

In conclusion, let us continue to work collectively towards this next phase.

Mrs. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): Let thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Swan, and African Union Special Representative, Mr. El-Amine Souef, for their updates. I am especially grateful for the testimony of Ms. Elman, and I welcome the participation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fiqi, at this meeting.

The briefings we heard today come at a crucial juncture for the future of the United Nations engagement in Somalia. In that regard, allow me to make three points.

First, I would like to express Slovenia's continuing support for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the United Nations Support Office in Somalia and the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). UNSOM continues to be a major stabilizing asset to State-building by Somalia. We especially commend UNSOM for its technical support during the constitutional review process and the drafting of the electoral legislation, which will enable peaceful, inclusive, transparent and credible elections to be held. In that vein, we join Somali women parliamentarians and other women leaders and activists in calling for a minimum quota of 30 per cent women in elected positions and appointed bodies in State institutions.

We welcome constructive dialogue between the Federal Government of Somalia and the United Nations with regard to the phased transition of the United Nations country team, which should ensure that UNSOM plays an active role even during the transition period. We take note of the proposal submitted by the Federal Government of Somalia on 28 August. The Federal Government of Somalia and the United Nations should continue working together on the preparation of a detailed transition plan and timeline for presentation

to Council members in advance of UNSOM's mandate renewal.

Secondly, Slovenia expresses its utmost concern regarding the substantial increase in civilian casualties and displaced persons due to Al-Shabaab's attacks. In particular, women and children continue to bear the brunt. Horrific attacks against civilians, such as the one in Lido Beach, are reprehensible; we condemn them in the strongest terms and express our deepest condolences to the families affected. Violence undermines the fragile humanitarian situation, causing further displacement and posing new risks to vulnerable groups. We also pay tribute to the sacrifices made by members of the Somali security forces and ATMIS. Countering Al-Shabaab's activities demands a continuous and coordinated holistic approach, while also addressing the underlying conditions that enable the terrorist group to operate. Since the threat of terrorism is a regional concern, the response must also be regional.

We remain concerned at persistent tensions between Somalia and Ethiopia. We urge both countries to de-escalate and refrain from any unilateral acts that could negatively affect their good-neighbourly relations. Only diplomacy and meaningful dialogue can lead to the sustainable resolution of disputes. We also encourage both countries to engage in all mediation initiatives, including those undertaken by the African Union and Türkiye, in order to find peaceful solutions on mutually acceptable terms and in accordance with international law.

We also take note of the African Union's adoption of the concept of operations for the mission that will succeed ATMIS. That represents a positive step towards avoiding a security vacuum that could appear after the final withdrawal of ATMIS in three months' time. The United Nations, the African Union, Somalia and all of Somalia's security partners should engage in a timely and constructive manner in order to prepare the overall design of the mission in line with the timetable set out in resolution 2748 (2024).

Finally, the negative effect of climate shocks on the population of Somalia is of continuous concern. Cycles of extreme weather events are occurring with greater frequency. Just this week, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Climate Prediction and Application Centre issued a warning about exceptionally heavy rainfall for northern Somalia that is expected to affect more than a quarter of a million people. The

preparation of local climate adaptation plans in all Federal states, with the support of the Green Climate Fund and the World Food Programme's climate-smart interventions, are welcome steps in ensuring greater resilience to climate shocks.

Although we welcome the decrease in the number of people in need, millions of people are still facing a water crisis and food insecurity. We welcome the proactive approach of humanitarian agencies, including the World Food Programme. This year, through the World Food Programme, Slovenia earmarked €280,000 for the alleviation of food insecurity in the Horn of Africa. We also invite other donors to continue supporting the humanitarian response in the field.

The next three months will be some of the most momentous for the future of Somalia. Slovenia stands ready to engage in order to further support the country on its path.

Mr. Dharmadhikari (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Swan, His Excellency Mr. El-Amine Souef and Ms. Elman for their briefings. I would also like to welcome the presence among us of Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia.

First of all, I wish to extend my condolences to the Government and the people of Somalia for the most recent attacks carried out by Al-Shabaab, in particular the attack of 2 August on Lido Beach, Mogadishu, which claimed numerous civilian lives. That reminds us of the persistence of the Al-Shabaab threat that Somalia continues to face. I commend the Somali President's quick response and assure him of our full support as the country undergoes a significant change in its external support.

First, with regard to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), France took note of the transition plan proposed by the Somali authorities, with a gradual drawdown of the special political mission over the next two years. France stands ready to support that transition so that it is carried out in conjunction with the United Nations. UNSOM's tasks must be transferred to country teams and to the Somali authorities, without prejudice to the support provided to the population. France is in favour of the Council adjusting the frequency of its meetings on Somalia accordingly.

Secondly, with regard to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), France is

concerned about the tight timeline for defining the mission that will replace ATMIS as of January 2025. The challenges in Somalia call for the utmost vigilance to ensure that those preparations are not delayed, lest the delay create a security vacuum. Between now and 15 November, France will carefully study the report prepared by the United Nations, the African Union and Somalia concerning the possible shape that that future mission may take, its exit strategy, the involvement expected of its donors, its budget and financing and the logistical support to be provided by the United Nations. We stand ready to participate in those discussions with a view to establishing an appropriate model.

France remains convinced that only a joint and coordinated response by all of Somalia's partners will make it possible to support effectively Mogadishu's efforts to curb the terrorist threat in accordance with international law. Civil society — and women in particular — must play a key role in that regard. Together with the European Union, one of Somalia's key partners, we have been working for a long time to support the future mission in a balanced and sustainable manner. We call on all Somalia's partners to contribute to that effort.

Somalia's stability, which is essential to peace and security in the Horn of Africa, requires continuous and peaceful dialogue with all Somali political forces and partners in the region, while respecting Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In that respect, we welcome Somalia's forthcoming membership of the Council, and we look forward to pursuing our engagement with Somalia in that context.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation in this meeting of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, and we thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. James Swan, the Head of the African peacekeeping mission in that country, Mr. Mohamed El-Amine Souef, and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their briefings and statements.

We are following the developing situation in the friendly country of the Federal Republic of Somalia very closely. We support Mogadishu's efforts aimed at stabilizing the situation in the country, and we commend the constructive role played by the National Consultative Council in fostering cooperation between the central leadership and the federal states. We

are pleased to see that, in the course of that entity's work, important agreements have been reached on cooperation in terms of implementing key national priorities. Those priorities include preparing a plan for transferring responsibility for security in the country from the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia to the Somali National Army, establishing an independent commission to draft a federal constitution and improving the electoral system. We hope that all participants in the political process will continue working to establish a sustainable model for a federal structure and to normalize the situation in the country.

We have taken note of Mogadishu's plan, which was circulated in the Security Council, for the staged transfer of the functions of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) to the federal bodies and the United Nations country team. We believe that it is the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia that should have the final say in determining the parameters of the special political mission's activities in the course of the agreed two-year period. We expect that the British penholder will take into account the position of the Somali side on that issue.

The conclusion of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia and the deployment of the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) open a new chapter in the history of pan-African efforts to rectify the situation in Somalia. We are highly appreciative of the consistent work done by the African Union in that regard. The most important thing now is to finalize, in the remaining few months, the agreement among Somalia, the African Union and the United Nations on all parameters for the continued presence of African peacekeepers within the framework of AUSSOM, including of course the financial aspects thereof. We are of the view that all tools at our disposal need to be activated to that end.

We consider the presence of African peacekeepers in Somalia to be one of the most important factors in containing terrorist threats and extremist and other unlawful activity; it is also a gauge of consistent movement towards strengthening the statehood of the Federal Republic of Somalia. For us, the most important goal in the area of security today is enhancing the effectiveness of federal law enforcement agencies in order to ensure that, upon completion of the AUSSOM mandate, they are able to act independently to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure throughout the territory of the country.

We remain seriously concerned about the capabilities of Al-Shabaab. That terrorist group continues to conduct large-scale attacks against Government facilities, units of the Somali National Army and civilians and staff of international organizations. We strongly condemn the terrorist attacks conducted on 28 September in Mogadishu and Middle Shabelle state, as a result of which six people died and an additional 10 were wounded.

The upcoming several months will be of decisive importance for dealing with the current situation in the Horn of Africa, where we can observe some worrisome trends. Stabilizing the situation there is a common denominator for all countries in the region, whose positions, for whatever reason, may currently diverge. In those conditions, it is especially important to ensure that coordinated work is being conducted by the United Nations and African Union presence in the country. We support mediation efforts aimed at finding mutually acceptable solutions among the countries of the subregion. We hope that they will act wisely and ensure that one another's interests are taken into account.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore our support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Somalia and to express the hope that there will be close cooperation with the country's delegation during Somalia's upcoming membership of the Security Council over the next two years.

Mr. Cho (Republic of Korea): I thank Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Swan, African Union (AU) Special Representative Souef and Ms. Elman for their informative briefings. I also welcome the participation of His Excellency Ambassador Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, in today's meeting. I look forward to working closely with Somalia as an incoming Council member.

The coming three months will be pivotal for Somalia as it navigates its State-building process, with key Council decisions pending on the transition of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the renewal of sanctions on Al-Shabaab and the establishment of a successor mission to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). In that regard, I would like to highlight four key points.

First, we recognize the political developments and are encouraged by the commitment of the Federal Government of Somalia to those processes. We also

welcome the convening of a high-level meeting of the National Consultative Council on 2 October. Continued progress on the constitutional review and the implementation of one-person, one-vote elections emanating from legislation and a long-term strategy will be vital. It is also crucial for both the Federal Government of Somalia and Puntland to engage in dialogue for inclusive constitutional and electoral processes. In order to foster a broad-based consensus, women and youth must be guaranteed full, equal, meaningful and safe participation. The protection of fundamental human rights, civic space, due process and the rights of journalists should also be respected by Somali authorities.

Secondly, addressing the ongoing alarming terrorist threat to Somalia's peace and security should continue so as to prevent a security vacuum. In that context, we are concerned about the ongoing regional tensions in the Horn of Africa, which complicate discussions on the successor mission to ATMIS. We commend Türkiye's efforts to de-escalate tensions and call for continued diplomatic engagement. The international community should also collectively focus on establishing an effective and financially sustainable AU-led post-ATMIS mission, authorized by the Security Council. That is crucial to preserving the counter-terrorism security gains achieved by ATMIS and Somali forces thus far and to preventing a security vacuum after the withdrawal of ATMIS. We look forward to the Secretary-General's upcoming report, based on the recent joint AU-United Nations visit to Mogadishu, on the overall mission design for the proposed successor mission, as requested in resolution 2748 (2024).

Thirdly, the dire humanitarian situation, exacerbated by climate change, demands urgent action. Nearly 4 million people are internally displaced in Somalia, 80 per cent of whom are women and children who face severe risks of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and forced eviction. In response, Korea will contribute \$2 million this year in support of those displaced women and children.

Lastly, we take note of the Secretary-General's report (S/2024/698) and the proposal of the Federal Government of Somalia on the transition of UNSOM. The proposed two-year transition allows limited time for a phased transfer of responsibilities and support for elections planned in May 2026. UNSOM is a critical political arm in the international community's comprehensive support to Somalia. We believe that

some of its current mandate is useful in facilitating dialogue and reconciliation in order to resolve intra-clan conflict. Korea stands ready to engage constructively with Council members for UNSOM's smooth and orderly transition.

In conclusion, we reiterate our unwavering support for UNSOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, ATMIS and key regional organizations so as to ensure a successful transition in Somalia.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): I thank Acting Special Representative James Swan, Special Representative Mohamed El-Amine Souef and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their informative briefings. I welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia.

Despite continued national and international efforts to the contrary, Al-Shabaab maintains its substantial presence and remains a formidable threat to the human security of the people of Somalia and the region. Japan pays tribute to all the personnel of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and the Somali security forces for their sacrifice for peace and security.

The recent attacks in major cities, including Mogadishu, demonstrate that Al-Shabaab can still launch major asymmetrical attacks against various targets. It also reminds us that containing the threat it poses is an arduous and time-consuming process. We must maintain a long-term perspective and a comprehensive approach based on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. That is all the more necessary during the critical transition time of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and ATMIS.

From that perspective, the proposal from the Federal Government of Somalia last month presented a reasonable two-year transition period from UNSOM to the United Nations country team, with a phased handover of responsibilities to Somali institutions. As the proposal rightly mentioned, a focus of the transition should be capacity- and institution-building, under Somali-led and -owned governance reform. We should not lose the hard-won gains and expertise, including with regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the women and peace and security agenda, in order to ensure a gradual, responsible and sustainable transition.

One of the major functions that UNSOM has played for Somali State-building is the provision of good offices to build cooperative relations between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states. Divisions arising from various factors, including clan dynamics, could create a vacuum to be exploited by Al-Shabaab, at a moment when solidarity in Somalia is most needed. We commend the leadership of the Federal Government of Somalia for steering the National Consultative Council using a consensus-based approach to critical national agendas. UNSOM should continue to work to prevent division and forge unity among stakeholders by being an active promoter of confidence-building measures, even during its transition.

We welcome the region-led ongoing deliberations on the post-ATMIS security configuration, with an African Union-led mission, and look forward to hearing updates next week. Whatever that configuration looks like, regional cooperation, especially support from the neighbouring ATMIS troop-contributing countries, is essential for the success of the Somali security transition. There should be no room for regional tensions to give breathing space for Al-Shabaab. Any regional conflict must be addressed through constructive dialogue, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Japan remains committed to contributing, together with all our partners, to the collective endeavour of advancing sustainable peace and stability in Somalia and the region.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I welcome His Excellency Mr. Fiqi, Foreign Minister of Somalia, to today's meeting. I thank Acting Special Representative Swan and Special Representative Souef for their briefings. I also listened to the statement delivered by Ms. Elman.

In recent years, Somalia has made important headway in national reconstruction and peace and security. Both the United Nations and African Union (AU) missions have entered a critical transition period. At this important stage, the support and assistance of the international community cannot slacken.

I would like to emphasize the following three points in that regard.

First, we must maintain the overall situation of political stability. Recently, the Federal Government

of Somalia has maintained communication with the governments of the federal member States and reached important consensus on the Constitution, elections and political parties. That deserves our recognition. We expect all Somali parties to maintain the momentum, strengthen dialogue and unity and stay committed to resolving differences through dialogue. China has consistently supported the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia to safeguard national unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The international community should support Somalia in exploring a development path that suits its national conditions and provide guarantees for Somalia to embark on the path of long-term and stable development.

Secondly, we must bolster the foundation of the security transition. The Secretary-General's report (S/2024/698) notes a recent increase in attacks on civilians and civilian casualties in Somalia, which shows that terrorism still poses a major security threat. China fully recognizes Somalia's efforts to combat terrorism and calls on the international community to provide more support for security capacity-building in Somalia.

In the next phase, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia will transition into a new AU mission. We hope that Somalia, the AU, the United Nations and others will enhance their communication and coordination in order to reach consensus on new mission arrangements and to ensure the smooth progress of the relevant work. Underfunding is an important challenge to the performance of the AU mission's mandate. China calls on the European Union and other traditional donors to maintain their funding for the new mission and to continue to contribute to the security and stability of Somalia. The Council should respond to the AU's initiative and actively study various effective options to provide sustainable and predictable financial support for the new mission.

Thirdly, the transition of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) should be carried out in an orderly manner. Over the years, the political transition in Somalia has continued to make progress, and the country's governance has continued to improve. UNSOM has done a great deal of work to that end. The Government of Somalia has repeatedly called for the transition of UNSOM to a United Nations country team and has recently submitted a two-year transition proposal to the Security Council. The Council should use that as a basis for adjusting and streamlining

the mandate of UNSOM in accordance with Somalia's national development priorities, with a view to ensuring a smooth and orderly transition.

China supports the peace and development process in Somalia, as well as the enhancement of Somalia's capacity for autonomous development, counter-terrorism and stability. We will continue to provide support to international peacekeeping operations in Somalia. At the Beijing summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation held last month, China announced the implementation of action for a mine-free Africa. Recently, the first batch of projects have been launched in Somalia to enhance its capacity for mine detection and mine-risk education. We are ready to work with the rest of the international community to continue to contribute to the realization of lasting peace and sustainable development in Somalia.

Mr. De La Gasca (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I want to thank Mr. James Swan, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia; Mr. Mohamed El-Amine Souef, Head of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia; and Ms. Ilwad Elman, civil society representative, for the information provided. I also acknowledge the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, in this Chamber.

We agree with the assessment of the situation in Somalia today with regard to the complex security situation involving the primary responsibility of the Federal State of Somalia to ensure stability, security and the protection of civilians throughout the territory. To achieve that goal, cooperation with the African Union, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia in the transition of operating bases to the Government of Somalia must continue.

Ecuador unequivocally condemns all terrorist acts and views with concern the increase in the number of victims. Human rights violations by Al-Shabaab and the use of improvised explosive devices must stop immediately. The fight against terrorism must be conducted within the framework of respect for international humanitarian law and human rights. Children who were victims of recruitment must be treated as victims and not as ex-combatants. The fight against terrorism requires comprehensive responses

that include recognizing that this scourge will not be defeated unless the root causes of violence and violent extremism are addressed, including poverty, the lack of opportunity, the lack of rule of law and, obviously, the lack of development.

On the political front, I would like to make three points.

First, the proximity talks between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia and Somalia, with the support of Türkiye, should be supported. That dialogue demonstrates the commitment of both sides to the peaceful resolution of their differences and the promotion of regional stability.

Secondly, the opening of the fifth session of the Federal Parliament of Somalia by President Mohamud and the progress in the revision of the Provisional Constitution shows his commitment to the democratization of the country.

Thirdly, the full, equal, meaningful and secure participation of women in political life is critical. In that regard, efforts to meet the 30 per cent quota for their participation must continue.

On the economic front, I highlight Somalia's access to loans from multilateral banks and the growth of the economy that is anticipated for this year. The improvement of financial management and the review of fiscal reforms will contribute to the country's stability.

However, the humanitarian situation in Somalia remains critical and international aid must continue. It is also critical that the international community not abandon the Somali people and that sustainable and predictable funding be promoted to avoid the financial constraints that affected ATMIS. Only continued and solid financial support will ensure stability and peacebuilding in Somalia.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Switzerland.

As my colleagues did, I would like to begin by warmly thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia for their briefings and their valuable work. I would also like to welcome in my national capacity His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the

Federal Republic of Somalia to this meeting. And I would also like to thank in particular you, Ms. Elman, for your briefing and commitment. I thank you for reminding us of the importance of civil society to the work of the Security Council at this crucial time — a time of hope, as you aptly put it. We heard your advice and your expectations of the Council and the international community.

I am going to focus on three points relating to the different transitions that were mentioned.

First, the transition of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) must be well managed to support the consolidation of peace in Somalia. We encourage the Federal Government and UNSOM to continue their constructive partnership on the proposed two-year transition to the United Nations country team and Somali authorities. Best practices from other United Nations mission transitions should serve as inspiration in addressing humanitarian, political and economic challenges, as well as the impact of climate change.

Secondly, with regard to the democratic transition, we welcome the Federal Government's intention to implement the principle of one person, one vote, as mentioned by several of my colleagues, as well as all efforts being made to move forward with the revision of the Constitution. For the reforms to succeed, a transparent, consensual and inclusive process is required, with the participation of all federal member states. As women's participation in political processes is essential, as we heard, to consolidate peace and advance national cohesion, the quota of at least 30 per cent representation in parliament must be fully implemented.

My third point concerns the security transition. Al-Shabaab remains the most serious threat to the country's peace and stability and in particular to the Somali people. We are deeply concerned about the growing number of civilian victims of those attacks, which we condemn in the strongest possible terms while calling on all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law. We must ensure that the protection of civilians is a priority during the transition from ATMIS to its successor mission and to the Somali security forces. Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights must guide the security transition.

Furthermore, we remain concerned about by the alarming number of serious violations of children's

rights and call for the implementation of the Council Working Group's conclusions in that regard. We condemn the recent execution of four adults in Puntland for crimes committed when they were minors and associated with Al-Shabaab. We note that the Age Verification Committee recommended that the death penalty not be imposed.

We are also concerned about the tensions between the Federal Government and certain federal member states and about the increasingly tense rhetoric between Somalia and Ethiopia. We encourage the parties to show restraint and give priority to dialogue. We welcome diplomatic initiatives in that regard, including with the support of third-party States. Given the many security challenges, unity is needed in the region.

In conclusion, we now look forward to further discussions in the Security Council next week. Consultations with the African Union's Peace and Security Council in mid-October will also be a key moment for further discussion on the design of the new peace mission, including predictable and sustainable funding. We will engage constructively in the negotiations on the various mandates. Switzerland reaffirms its full support for Somalia and its people during this transitional phase as they build peace and a prosperous future.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia.

Mr. Fiqi (Somalia): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Madam President, Switzerland's assumption of the presidency of the Council this month and to wish you every success. I pay tribute to Slovenia for the effective way in which it steered deliberations last month. I also thank the briefers — the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador James Swan; the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Mohamed El-Amine Souef; and Ms. Ilwad Elman, from civil society — for their briefings.

On the political front, the National Consultative Council meeting commenced yesterday under the leadership of the President, His Excellency Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, reflecting his commitment to inclusive governance and broad-based consensus on critical decisions. Preparations are under way for the agreement on the electoral process and the remaining

constitutional amendments, as well as for intensifying security operations against the terrorist groups Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS).

We recognize that substantial work is required from both national stakeholders and the international community for the conduct of a one-person, one-vote electoral process. At the national level, the Council of Ministers approved the draft bill establishing the Independent National Electoral Boundaries Commission and endorsed the elections bill and the political parties and organization bill. Moreover, in parts of northern Somalia, regional elections are moving ahead, to take place on 13 November, as planned. The Federal Government of Somalia is committed to ensuring that the electoral process is fair, free and credible in all regions in Somalia.

On the security front, we are engaged in consultations with the African Union and the United Nations on the groundwork for the post-African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) security arrangements in 2025. We welcome the establishment of a new peacekeeping mission in order to provide adequate, predictable and sustainable funding for the mission. Our forces are actively engaged in high-tempo offensive operations, successfully liberating numerous areas previously held by Al-Shabaab. To sustain and build upon those achievements, we are increasing our efforts in extending local governance into those liberated areas and ensuring that the gains made on the battlefield translate into lasting peace and stability.

In Somalia, we are confronted not only with the attempt to unlawfully annex our territory by Ethiopia but also with a narrative that seeks to justify that aggression under the guise of counter-terrorism. Let me be clear: the claim that Ethiopia is in Somalia to fight terrorism is a veil for their true intentions of a pretext

for occupation and annexation of Somali territory. The real motive behind the recent hostile attitude towards its neighbouring countries is an attempt to divert attention from its serious internal issues. The Somali Government has engaged in good faith, unlike its Ethiopian counterpart, in a series of meetings facilitated by the brotherly Government of Türkiye. As a landlocked nation, Ethiopia has no rightful claim to Somali territory for the establishment of a naval military base. Such actions are a violation of international law and a threat to regional stability.

In the past three months, Somalia has intercepted three large illegal weapons shipments crossing from the Ethiopian border destined for non-State actors in northern, central and southern states of Somalia. Those actions violate resolution 2713 (2023), regarding Al-Shabaab, and endanger the lives of countless civilians and troops involved in peacekeeping efforts. It fuels communal conflict and empowers extremist groups Al-Shabaab and ISIS. It is becoming evident that Ethiopia, as a troop-contributing country (TCC) to ATMIS, is acting outside the boundaries of its mandate and violating the principles of peacekeeping. The international community must recognize that funding a TCC that engages in such actions undermines our collective efforts for peace and stability in the region.

In conclusion, as this might be one of the last meetings on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, I would like to extend our appreciation for the United Nations team for their collaboration with Somalia over the past 11 years. We look forward to working together on a new mission for the next two years, on a gradual transition to a United Nations country team and on achieving the priorities articulated in Somalia's letter to the Council in August 2024.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.