



United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)

Briefing to the UN Security Council

by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia

Mr. James Swan

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Madam President,

Distinguished Members of the Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to brief on the situation in Somalia. I am pleased to do so once again along with the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira.

Madam President,

The conclusion of Somalia's electoral process last week is a major milestone for the country. The Presidential contest followed an unduly protracted and contentious process to choose members of the legislature. Once the Senators and Members of Parliament were sworn in on 14 April 2022, however, they moved quickly to elect the Speaker and two Deputy Speakers in each chamber of parliament and then prepare for the Presidential vote. On 15 May 2022, Hassan

Sheikh Mohamud, was elected Somalia's tenth president by a decisive margin in a joint session of parliament that was peaceful, orderly, and respectful of the rules of procedure. Outgoing President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed 'Farmaajo' graciously conceded, and congratulated and extended support to his successor. The new President was immediately sworn in and the outcome has been fully accepted.

As this Council has noted repeatedly, Madame President, it is past time for Somali leaders to move beyond the prolonged political contest to focus on urgent national priorities. I had the honour on 18 May, to hear directly from President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud about his immediate goals. He emphasized national reconciliation, improving relations between the central government and federal member states, addressing the security threat from Al-Shabaab, finishing the constitutional review and judicial reforms, completing election-related laws, ensuring compliance with International Financial Institutions' requirements for debt relief, and giving urgent attention to the dire drought conditions. We believe this is an appropriate list of initial priorities and look forward to learning more details as the new leadership takes charge and as a new Prime Minister and cabinet are named in the coming weeks. The entire UN system in Somalia is ready to work with the new Government in support of these shared goals.

Madam President,

While we welcome the end of the elections and look forward to progress on other issues, we must be clear-eyed about the shortcomings of the earlier stages of the process. Contrary to Somalia's Provisional Constitution, the Somali people did not have the opportunity to vote for the House of the People in a 'one-person, one-vote' election. Women were elected to just 21 per cent of parliamentary seats – well

short of the 30 per cent goal set by Somalis themselves. Many irregularities in the selection of MPs were noted throughout the process. And it was repeatedly marred by tragic incidents of violence with numerous civilian casualties recorded. We call on Somalia's leaders to do better for their people in the next electoral cycle. The UN stands ready to support such efforts.

Madam President,

Somalia's security situation remains highly volatile. Emboldened by domestic political tensions, Al-Shabaab in recent months maintained its modus operandi and focused attacks in Mogadishu, South West State and Hirshabelle. The spate of deadly incidents in March and April suggested an effort to disrupt the final phases of the electoral process.

I commend the courage and tenacity of Somali security forces and African Union Transition Mission in Somalia forces who safeguarded the electoral process and bore the brunt of Al-Shabaab's deadly attacks then and after. I want to extend special condolences for the losses suffered as a result of the 3 May 2022 complex attack by Al-Shabaab on the ATMIS Forward Operating Base in Ceel Baraf, Middle Shabelle.

Since the formal transition from AMISOM to ATMIS on 1 April, as per Council resolution 2628, both Somali and AU security officials have been heavily focused on electoral security. The UN has taken steps at the technical level to engage both the Federal Government of Somalia and ATMIS on the way forward on implementation of the Somalia Transition Plan and the ATMIS mandate. Now that the election is over, it will be important to reinvigorate structures previously agreed by the Security and Justice Committee to support coordination, prioritize force generation and integration, mobilize resources, and build capacity of the Somali

security forces. I call on the new administration to demonstrate its full political commitment and leadership in delivering the agreed security transition.

The UN Support Office for Somalia (UNSOS) continues to provide support under its mandate to ATMIS forces, and has established and staffed a transition cell to ensure it is well postured to meet the needs of the new AU mission. UNSOS also continues to support Somali forces under the terms of its mandate, albeit at reduced levels due to the depletion of the Somali Security Forces Trust Fund. While thanking those who have generously offered support, we call on partners to make further contributions to the Trust Fund. We would also welcome more clarity on plans to fund future ATMIS requirements that are not currently covered.

Madam President,

The humanitarian situation in Somalia is worsening following the failure of a fourth consecutive rainy season. The number of people affected by the drought has risen to 6.1 million. The country faces a heightened risk of localized famine in six communities if food prices continue to rise and humanitarian assistance is not sustained.

Humanitarians have scaled up their activities, prioritizing the most vulnerable populations and focusing on famine prevention. Yet, almost half-way through the year, the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan is just 15 per cent funded against its total appeal for \$1.45 billion. We call for additional urgent contributions.

On 26 April, a high-level donor roundtable in Geneva focused attention on humanitarian needs across the Horn of Africa, including Somalia. We are grateful to donors for the pledges and commitments. However, without immediate receipt of funding to expand humanitarian operations, we face the prospect of significant

loss of life in the period ahead. Even as we focus now on saving lives and averting famine, there is also a need to increase resilience, development, and climate responses so that those affected by recurring crises can adapt and thrive in the future.

Madam President,

In all of the UN system's activities in Somalia, we are guided by the principles of respect for human rights, and of full inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups. We continue to rigorously apply the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy and ensure both advocacy and technical support for protection of human rights. The UN and the Government have begun implementation of the flagship Women, Peace and Protection programme, funded by the Peacebuilding Fund. This programme promotes women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding processes and protection of women and girls from sexual violence in conflict. On the youth front, the UN continues to integrate youth dimensions in electoral participation, mediation, and civilian oversight of the security sector.

Madam President,

In closing, let me stress that the conclusion of the electoral process on 15 May offers a long-awaited opportunity for Somalia to make progress on other urgent national priorities. We call on Somali leaders to work together in a spirit of collaboration and national purpose. We call on Somalia's international friends and partners, including those on this Council, to offer constructive support and encouragement. Let us work together to capitalize on this moment of opportunity for Somalia.

Thank you.