

Elections and the future of international security support to Somalia

Thank you, Mr President, and may I start by thanking the briefers Jim Swan, Special Representative Madeira and also Executive Director Siyad, thank you very much for your briefings. Mr President, I will focus my remarks today on two issues: elections and the future of international security support to Somalia.

Mr President, this Council has followed the electoral process in Somalia closely, and the United Kingdom welcomes the completion of the Upper House process, which represents an important milestone as does the election of 26 percent of women to the Upper House – but, it was eloquently qualified by Executive Director Siyad's challenge, to meet the 30 percent quota in the Lower House elections and to see the full inclusion of women in the political, social and economic decision making in Somalia.

Back to elections, we remain deeply concerned by the very slow electoral progress overall. Somalia has committed to start the Lower House elections immediately and to conclude them by the 24th of December. It is vital that the elections are not delayed beyond this date. Further delays will continue to undermine progress on Somalia's national priorities, increase political uncertainty, provide Al-Shabaab with the opportunity to regain ground and boost its political influence and, as Executive Director Siyad said, disadvantage women.

Mr President, we have a collective interest in protecting against any deterioration of security in Somalia, and this leads me to my second point. With the expiry of the current AMISOM mandate fast approaching, we need to make urgent progress on security transition, to ensure continuity of international security support to Somalia in a manner which reflects the evolving situation on the ground.

It's clear that there is a broad range of views about what such support should look like. In our view, this support must be both realistic and affordable, and should support the progressive transition to Somali-led security provision as set out in the Somali Transition Plan. Our view is that the AU-UN Multidimensional Stabilisation Mission model endorsed by the African Union Peace and Security Council will not achieve this. In our view it would run counter to the idea of progressive transition to full Somali security responsibility.

Reaching agreement on a joint UN-AU proposal, in consultation with the Federal Government of Somalia and donors, as requested by this Council will mean moving past the current impasse and finding consensus on the way forward. Such a joint proposal should reflect our common objectives of preserving AMISOMs hard-won achievements but beginning the transition away

from external support to full Somali responsibility for security as this Council set out unanimously in UNSCR 2568. And the United Kingdom will continue engaging with all stakeholders, including the Federal Government of Somalia, the UN, African Union, Troop Contributing Countries and donors, to identify areas of common ground and help stakeholders reach consensus.

Mr President, Somalia faces important electoral and security transition in the months ahead. Successful completion of these processes will form a crucial part of enabling Somalia's security and prosperity for the long-term. We hope, and encourage, Somalia's leaders, the UN, the AU and donors will come together and collaborate to achieve lasting peace and security in Somalia. I thank you.