

Ensuring the delivery of timely and inclusive elections in Somalia

- UK urges Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States reach an agreement to ensure timely elections
- UK highlights international cooperation crucial to seeking long-term stability in Somalia

Statement by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at the Security Council briefing on Somalia

I'd first like to express on behalf of the United Kingdom, our condolences to the government of Italy and to the World Food Programme following the attack on the World Food Programme convoy in the Democratic Republic of Congo earlier today, which resulted in the deaths of three people, including the Italian ambassador. Our thoughts are with their families and those who were injured.

Turning to the subject of Somalia, I'd like to start by thanking our briefers today.

The UK strongly condemns the terror attacks launched by Al-Shabaab in Mogadishu in recent weeks. These incidents have increased, as the prospect of national elections draws closer – a clear attempt to destabilise and disrupt the process. We express our condolences to the families of victims and stand in solidarity with Somalia in their fight against terrorism.

The UK welcomes the agreement reached by the technical committee on 16 February on the implementation of the electoral process in line with the 17 September agreement between the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States. This is the only legitimate basis for elections.

We are concerned by the violent clashes in Mogadishu on 19 February. Somalia's leaders must arrive at a consensus on the implementation of the electoral process without delay. That requires all parties to demonstrate flexibility. It is vital that inclusive national elections can take place as soon as possible. Any alternative outcomes, including partial elections or any unilateral actions that lack broad agreement will not receive support from the international community, risks further violence and may result in great instability.

Timely delivery of the electoral process would also allow Somalia's leaders to refocus on critical issues that require urgent attention, such as the ongoing humanitarian crisis. The UN has made an appeal for \$1 billion in 2021. Millions of Somalis experiencing severe food insecurity. The UN estimates the number of people in humanitarian need will increase to 5.9

million by the end of 2021.

Concerted support from the international community is essential to supporting Somalia's long-term stability. Our partners in the African Union and the AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries have made huge sacrifices in supporting Somalia as it works to retake control of its own security. The UK looks forward to constructive dialogue between members of this Council towards agreeing a mandate that sets a path towards greater Somali leadership on security.

To conclude, I want to emphasise three points:

First, it's vital that the Federal Government and Federal Member States reach an agreement to ensure dialogue to ensure the delivery of credible and inclusive elections.

Second, longer-term cooperation between FGS and FMS is essential to address issues critical to Somalia's stability, security and development.

Finally, the continued support of the international community is crucial to realising long-term peace and security in Somalia.