

'Gravely concerned' over northern Somalia clashes, UN and partners call for ceasefire

The United Nations and its partners on Thursday expressed grave concern over armed clashes which have broken out in northern Somalia, urging all parties to immediately halt the violence.

According to reports, heavy fighting began in the morning, local time, near the Tukaraq area of the Sool region between Puntland and 'Somaliland' forces, involving heavy weaponry.

"The international partners call on both sides to bring [an immediate halt to the fighting](#), start dialogue between military commanders on the ground, secure humanitarian access for displaced persons, and enter into talks to discuss a separation of forces and an exchange of detained security personnel," said a joint statement.

The statement noted that the violence was compounding "an already-difficult humanitarian situation that has recently been aggravated by the impact of tropical cyclone Sagar – the clashes only add to the suffering of the people in the area".

Thursday's call for an immediate ceasefire was endorsed by the UN, African Union, European Union, the African regional body known as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Belgium, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.