

Speech: Advancing Peace and Stability in Somalia

Thank you Madam President and may I thank all three of our briefers for their very informative briefings today. But if I may, can I particularly thank Michael Keating for his work and commitment during this historic period in Somalia's state-building process, for his resilience whilst holding this challenging and dynamic portfolio. Michael, you have been an exemplary SRSG and I think the whole Council wishes you well in your future.

As Michael set out in the nearly three years he's represented the Secretary-General, there's been real progress to advance peace, stability and state-building in Somalia. But there have also been and remain significant challenges, and we have seen both in recent months. I think the biggest single positive, if we start with the positives, must surely be in the overall regional dynamic. It has been exciting, it has been inspirational to see the rapprochement brought about in the Horn of Africa in particular led by Ethiopia and Eritrea. And I want to take the opportunity to welcome to the Council the new Ambassador of Ethiopia, you're very welcome here sir. And to pay tribute, if I may, also to your predecessor who was such an influential member of this Council. I've known him for a decade. I learnt so much from him, and I count him as a friend. So I just want to welcome you and thank your predecessor for all he did for us here and for Africa in this Council.

In Somalia, I think the other positives we've seen are the agreement in principle on an electoral model and on resource sharing signed in June, and we welcome and need to see further progress to take these forward. And it's been extremely encouraging to see the strong progress on economic recovery, including efforts to tackle corruption, improve public financial management and commitments to ambitious reforms under the recently agreed third IMF program. We commend these efforts and their results and I agree very much with Michael on the economic potential of Somalia, which requires of course political commitment and courage if we're to get there.

We also warmly welcome the much needed improvement in the humanitarian situation following both the strong humanitarian response and the better than average rainfall. Recovery remains fragile. We must not be complacent and the situation is still concerning with 2.6 million internally displaced persons in urgent need of assistance.

Madam President, unfortunately though, as our briefers set out, significant challenges remain. The current political difficulties between the Federal Government and the Federal Member States urgently needs to be resolved. This is critical across all areas of state-building. A failure to resolve this challenge would seriously limit the opportunity for further progress. Co-operation between the parties is needed to meet the December timeframe for passing an electoral law, in particular to agree the final outstanding issue of constituency size; it is needed to complete the constitutional review process and to strengthen the federal system, and it is needed to take

forward the vital work of Security reform so we must have cooperation.

Now onto security. Let me start by condemning in the strongest terms the attacks in Mogadishu on the 2nd and 10th of September and sending my deepest condolences to all those affected. Security reform is at a critical juncture. Implementation of the national security architecture, including integration of and support for regional forces, is vital, and faster progress is needed. The national security architecture is the critical underpinning of a successful transition to Somalia-led security. So we welcome the development of a transition plan and we pay tribute to the ongoing commitment and sacrifices of AMISOM and the troop-contributing countries in the fight against Al-Shabab, and that was made very clear I thought by Francisco in his briefing.

It is important that the transition plan is delivered in a managed and coordinated way with close engagement from AMISOM, the Federal Member States and other partners. Support the practical requirements of transition AMISOM needs to reconfigure accordingly. And we all as international partners must play our part, and that's by coordinating the assistance we give as part of a comprehensive approach to security structures. And Michael again set out the importance of us coordinating together and ensuring we don't end up in a situation where essentially we are accidentally funding a set of different and private armies. We must bring together one army.

We must ensure the transition is sustainably financed. The United Kingdom announced in recent weeks an additional \$9 million in funding for AMISOM. I expect there will be a number of calls today around this table for predictable, sustainable funding for AMISOM, and I urge all those who make those calls to ensure that they also make similar contributions.

Madam President may I welcome here to the Security Council table and I hope to see how even more often Mrs. Mlambo-Ngcuka and I would just like to welcome very much her briefing. The rise to 73 female MPs elected to Parliament in 2016 was a significant change and really worthy of commendment. The country must build on this to support and strengthen the role of women as decision-makers and in leadership roles by strengthening the position of women, along with young people, people with disabilities, displaced people, and minority groups in the upcoming electoral law and constitutional review, I agree wholeheartedly with Phumzile that sustainable development and sustainable peace requires inclusion. And inclusion requires the inclusion particularly of women. Legislation is important to strengthen the protection for women and girls and ensure perpetrators of abuses are held to account, including for sexual and gender-based violence, and we look forward to further progress on the sexual offences bill and commend the progress made in Somaliland.

Madam President, overall, we believe that we are on the right side of the ledger in Somalia but we cannot be complacent. We must continue to work and we must work harder. I hope the remarkable and exciting progress in the Horn of Africa also has an impact in Somalia. The key is dialogue and cooperation. All Somali leaders must work together and find ways to set aside short-term interest and gain in favor of longer term stability which will be a far

higher political security and economic benefit to all in Somalia. That is the only way also to ensure the continuing international support. Thank you Madam President.