

[Top UN envoy to Somalia welcomes parliamentary review of media law](#)

25 September 2017 – The top United Nations envoy to Somalia today welcomed the recent introduction of legislation that would amend the 2016 media law, and urged lawmakers to give due consideration to the concerns raised by prominent members of Somalia’s news media about the existing law and the proposed amendments.

According to a [press release](#) from the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia ([UNSOM](#)), President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo’s cabinet approved a package of amendments to the media law in July that fulfilled a commitment he made to Somalia’s leading media associations within weeks of taking office.

The amendments drew criticism from those media associations and some international human rights groups for their limited scope and the introduction of new restrictions on existing press freedoms, the Mission noted.

“A free and independent news media is essential for accountability and democracy,” said the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and head of UNSOM, Michael Keating.

“Some provisions of the current media law do not appear to comply with international standards of media legislation and regulation. A careful and comprehensive review of the law and the proposed amendments will allow all key stakeholders to present their views.

“I hope the outcome of such a legislative process will promote a better environment for Somali journalists to practice their profession without fear.”

The proposed changes to the media law will be taken up by the Federal Parliament in the coming weeks.