

UN Human Rights Council 42: UK statement on introducing the resolution on Somalia

The UK is proud to present this resolution with Somalia and the group of friends of Somalia, to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert on human rights in Somalia.

We commend Somalia for recent progress it has made in the field of human rights and recognise that Somalia's recovery from over 25 years of conflict is ongoing. In this regard, we welcome progress in upholding human rights and in strengthening political processes. We particularly commend the work by the Ministry for Women and Human Rights Development as the lead federal government body to advance the human rights agenda in Somalia. We congratulate Somalia for ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child in August 2019.

The resolution does not shy away from recognising the many challenges that remain. It calls for support to Somalia's institutions to build a stable, peaceful and prosperous state. It expresses concern at the attacks against and harassment of human rights defenders and the media in Somalia, including journalists, especially in the form of harassment, arbitrary arrest or prolonged detention. It calls on Somalia to promote freedom of expression and end a prevailing culture of impunity.

We recognise Somali's desire to transition towards deeper engagement with the OHCHR and other thematic experts, including Special Procedures. A specific paragraph in this resolution asks the incoming Independent Expert to work with the Federal Government of Somalia to propose a roadmap towards this transition and we stand ready to work with Somalia to identify specific areas that need addressing.

The cooperation shown by Somalia with a range of international mechanisms and this Council, demonstrates a willingness to move forward and improve the human rights situation. We are struck by the level of engagement Somalia has shown on this resolution and hope this can translate to improvements on the ground.

The oral revisions presented in this draft simply aim to streamline the resolution by combining Operative Paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 into one single paragraph.

It is clear we must continue to strengthen our combined support to Somalia. This resolution does exactly that, and we count on your support.