

**Statement by Special Representative of the Secretary-General James Swan  
to the Security Council on the Situation in Somalia**

**New York, 15 February 2022**

Madame President, Distinguished Members of the Council,

Thank you for this opportunity to brief the Council on the situation in Somalia. I am pleased to do so again together with the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira. This underscores the important partnership between the AU and the United Nations in Somalia, and I once again commend AMISOM and Somali forces for their contributions to improving security in Somalia.

Madame President,

National elections in Somalia are now more than one year behind the constitutionally prescribed schedule. Since I last briefed this Council three months ago, the Upper House elections have concluded and the pace of the House of the People elections has progressed considerably following the January National Consultative Council. The Federal Electoral Implementation Team has signalled its intent to fill at least two-thirds of the House of the People seats in the coming weeks. Thus far, 130 of 275 seats have been elected, with an additional 60 seats announced for competition shortly. I call on the electoral management bodies, as well as Somalia's political leaders, to accelerate and quickly conclude the elections for the House of the People.

Twenty-eight women have so far been elected to the House of the People, or approximately 22 per cent. This falls well short of the 30 per cent women's quota Somalia's political leaders have committed to achieving for the two houses of Parliament. I urge all Somali actors to redouble their efforts to meet this target.

Thanks to the generous contributions of member states, the United Nations continues to provide technical, material and advisory support to the election management bodies, the Office of the Prime Minister, the National Consultative Council (NCC) and the women's Goodwill Ambassadors. As we continue to receive reports of alleged irregularities in the electoral process, I urge key actors to course-correct to improve the process whenever necessary. This is vital to ensure that the elections receive broad acceptance among the Somali public.

In addition to the support we provide to electoral institutions, the United Nations continues to coordinate with international partners, ensuring joint messaging. Together with our partners, we have consistently called for a timely and credible electoral process that will enable the next government to focus on advancing Somalia's broader national priorities, including security challenges, as well as the state-building and development agenda.

Madame President,

While political tensions among some Somali leaders continue to flare up sporadically, they have so far been contained and so have not derailed the electoral process. The risk remains, however, that a miscalculation could cause these tensions to spill over into conflict.

The United Nations has consistently sought to help Somalis reduce this risk, by directly engaging all parties and calling on them to address their political

differences through dialogue. Together with our partners, we continue to advocate for restraint, compromise, and pragmatic consensus-based solutions so that Somali leaders remain focused on completing the elections.

Madame President,

Al-Shabaab continues to pose the major security threat in Somalia. Political divisions and prolonged delays in the elections have allowed insurgent forces to make some recent gains. The group's modus operandi remains unchanged, with Banadir region and South West State the centre of its attacks. In recent months, operations have also intensified in Hirshabelle and Galmudug states as Al-Shabaab has sought to exploit local political and security tensions. We continue to see extensive use of improvised explosive devices, including a series of Person-Born IEDs and Vehicle-Born IEDs in Mogadishu in recent weeks.

With the future configuration of the African Union Mission in Somalia currently under review, the United Nations is actively engaged in discussions among the Federal Government of Somalia, the African Union and key donors. Progress was made during technical discussions held in Mogadishu from 27 January to 9 February. This included developing the joint African Union-Federal Government of Somalia concept of operations for a reconfigured mission, the joint African Union-United Nations proposal on a reconfigured mission, and the United Nations logistical options in support of a reconfigured mission and the Somalia Security Forces going forward, as requested under Resolution 2568.

Progress in the implementation of the Somali Transition Plan is key both for the reconfiguration of AMISOM and to determine the pace of the transfer of responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces. We encourage the Federal Government of Somalia to convene the next Somalia Transition Plan

Steering Committee meeting soon to advance this priority in collaboration with security partners.

Madame President,

The humanitarian situation in Somalia remains extremely dire, with 7.7 million Somalis requiring humanitarian assistance in 2022. Somalia is the most severely drought affected country in the Horn of Africa, with 4.3 million people impacted and more than 270,000 people newly displaced due to drought. With the next rains in April likely to be the fourth below-average cycle, Somalia is facing a potential humanitarian catastrophe.

While the Somalia humanitarian operation has the know-how to deliver life-saving aid to people in need, it requires adequate resources. Unfortunately, the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2022 is currently only two per cent funded. While I wish to express profound appreciation to the donor community for its continued commitment to Somalia, I once more call on donors to increase their support for urgent assistance to the most vulnerable Somali people.

While critical, any humanitarian response is not a long-term solution. The United Nations family is therefore taking action to strengthen the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding nexus. To this end, Somali-based Agencies, Funds and Programmes continue to pursue a joint approach to address challenges such as water management, durable solutions, fraud and corruption.

Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, as well as inclusion of youth remains central to our work. With support from the Peacebuilding Fund, the UN and the Government of Somalia jointly launched a new Women, Peace and Protection programme in November. This project aims to promote women's

meaningful participation in peacebuilding processes, particularly within decision-making and leadership roles. This is an investment enabling us to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the federal and sub-national levels as well as to improve critical areas such as protection of women and girls from sexual violence in conflict. On the youth front, the UN continues to support the Somali government to integrate youth dimensions to different areas, from electoral participation to local reconciliation and more.

Madame President,

While political, security and humanitarian conditions in Somalia are still fragile, I remain guardedly hopeful that the country will make further progress in these areas in the coming months and beyond.

This requires Somali leaders to put their differences aside for the good of the Somali people and to conclude credible elections as soon as possible. This overdue step will then allow leaders to refocus their efforts on the full range of urgent national priorities. To this end, the international community continues to accompany the Somali people on this journey by providing the necessary support.

Thank you.