



Serving the people of Somalia



S-G Guterres

President Farmaajo

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UN Security Council renews UNSOM Mandate through March 2020

The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2461 that extends the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia through 31 March 2020.

The resolution sets out the mandate for the UN's special political mission, summarized as the provision of strategic advice and good offices, the building of capacity, and the coordination of international partners' support for the country. The Council also underscored that the UNSOM mandate is complementary to the mandates of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the UN Support Office in Somalia, and the support provided by other international partners.

The document also welcomed the recent commitment of the FGS and the UN to deepen their partnership.

The Council commended the FGS for the progress in economic, security sector and political reforms and encouraged further progress on the political agreements necessary to consolidate these reforms.

Taking Somalia's state-building and peacebuilding priorities as the basis for

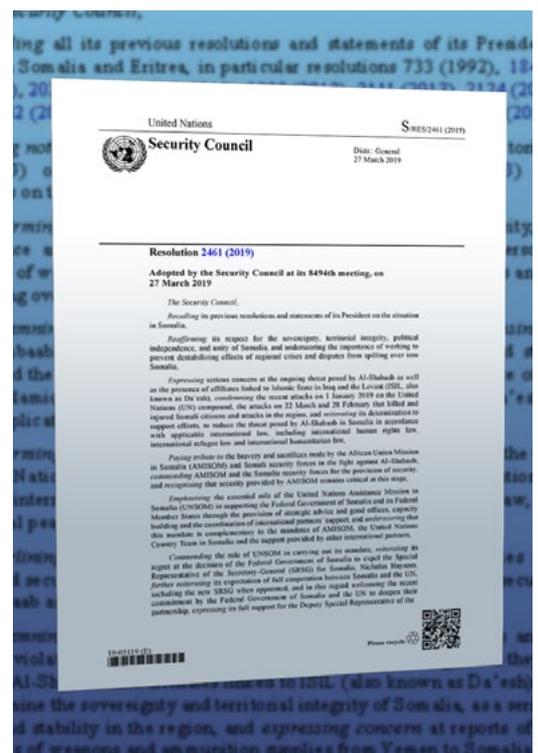
the mandate, the resolution covers UNSOM's role in supporting the country's ongoing constitutional review process, the development of an independent police and federal justice system, and implementation of security sector reform and the Transition Plan to transfer primary responsibility for security from AMISOM to Somali security institutions and forces, among other areas of the Mission's endeavours.

The Security Council also underscored the need to respect, protect and promote human rights, end impunity and hold accountable those responsible for violations or abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law. In this context, the Council also asked UNSOM to continue to support the efforts of the FGS to promote and protect human rights in Somalia.

The key priorities for support in the new mandate include ongoing support for the constitutional review process, mediation, prevention and resolution of conflicts, capacity building support for security sector and anti-corruption initiatives, and upholding human rights.

In addition, the updated text emphasizes the timelines regarding

the preparations for and holding of elections in Somalia in 2020. UNSOM's support for the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) will assist the FGS to hold inclusive, free and fair, one-person one-vote elections, and the resolution highlights the political, technical, operational and logistical support that UNSOM will contribute towards achieving this historic milestone.



Halima Ismail Ibrahim

“To have an election, you need a political will”

In 2020 Somalia will hold its first one-person, one-vote election in more than 50 years. The historic vote is a key component of the Federal Government of Somalia’s Roadmap for Inclusive Politics in 2018-2021, and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia is mandated by the UN Security Council to support the country’s preparations for that election.

The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) was established by the federal parliament in 2015 as the entity in charge of organizing and implementing a universal suffrage election in Somalia. The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) in Somalia, comprised of UNSOM and UN Development Programme staff, has been supporting the Commission since its inception in the planning and preparations for conducting the one-person, one-vote election.

The nine members of the Commission and its staff are currently focusing their efforts on organizing a voter registration campaign that is projected to take place in the first quarter of 2020 (see accompanying article). UNSOM NEWSLETTER interviewed

the NIEC chairperson Halima Ismail Ibrahim about the status of preparations for the 2020 balloting. Excerpts:

UNSOM NEWSLETTER: Good morning. How are preparations going for the implementation of voter registration early next year?

Halima Ismail Ibrahim: The preparations are at a beginning stage, and lately we have been focusing on finding polling stations where we can hold the voter registration.

We are thinking also of how we can do mobile registration since most Somalis are nomadic, and they move from one place to another.

Q. What is your estimate of the total number of eligible Somali voters who can be registered to cast ballots in 2020?

A. Owing to the security situation in various parts of the country, we have had to revise our targeted voting population estimate down to between three and four million.

Q. How much support do you, your fellow commissioners and the NIEC staff receive from the UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) in Somalia in planning and preparing for the voter registration exercise?

A. During the daily activity, IESG is supporting us wonderfully. We are getting support through advising, and support for the operational costs we are incurring. So

far, what we have been doing and where we are now are mostly through the support we have gotten from IESG.

Q. Can you talk about the recent use of geospatial information systems (GIS) technology that has identified 1,763 potential voter catchment areas nationwide?

A. We have been working on that for the last year. It is a satellite exercise, they got 1,763 sites, but we have to verify if they can be used or not. We did pilot projects in three districts in Mogadishu and Jowhar to see if these sites can be used or not. We found that they are mostly (usable).

“So this will depend on the international community and how they are going to support this election economically.”

Q. Did you find the use of this GIS mapping technology to be helpful?

A. For the pilot project we did in the three districts, yes.

Q. From your vantage point as NIEC chair, is 2020 still a feasible and realistic time frame for holding one-person, one-vote elections in Somalia?

A. We have to divide this response into four areas.

First, NIEC is responsible for the technical part to prepare the steps for the election and then conduct an election. IESG and NIEC are trying together to finalize the technical issues. And if we work hard, I think we can do it if we use wisely our time and prioritise the steps.

Second, economically, an election is very, very expensive, and it requires a lot of resources. Those resources have to come from the Somali government and from the donors. We know how the support that we may get from the government will be very, very minimal. So this will depend on the international community and how they are going to support this election economically.

Politically, the electoral reform bill has to be amended and approved because the electoral law is key to the elections.

Third, everybody knows how the security (situation) is in Somalia. We have Al-Shabaab in some areas. With the support of the government and the UN, we are going to form an election security task force in order to see where we can work and where we cannot work, where we can get support and deploy the police and military, whether they are AMISOM or they are Somali police and military. The Federal Minister of Internal Security is in charge (of the task force) in conjunction with AMISOM and UN security staff.

Fourth, politically, the electoral reform bill has to be amended and approved because the electoral law is key to the elections. And in order to have an election, you need political will. So all the leaders must come together and agree to have this election.



NIEC chairperson Halima Ismail Ibrahim



Map of potential voter catchment area in a district of Mogadishu

Using cutting-edge technology to prepare for voter registration in Somalia

The completion of a voter registration campaign in Somalia is an indispensable ingredient for the holding of a credible, free and fair universal suffrage election that the country intends to conduct in 2020.

The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) is the entity mainly in charge of the organization and implementation of a one-person, one-vote election. In 2018, the NIEC finalized a desk study that identified 1,763 potential voter catchment areas across the country on the basis of satellite images, tentative population estimates and data compiled from geospatial information systems (GIS) technology.

In November 2018, the NIEC deployed a pair of enumerator teams in three districts of Mogadishu and Jowhar to assess the suitability of over one hundred potential voter registration sites.

The results of the field research exercise were positive, according to NIEC Chairperson Halima Ismail Ibrahim (see interview).

Crucial to the preparations for the upcoming registration campaign is the NIEC's use of GIS technology, which is supported by the UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) in Somalia.

The application of GIS mapping technology has enabled the NIEC to acquire useful data for preparing the voter registration campaign without

unnecessarily putting its personnel physically in harm's way.

The IESG has provided technical support and held capacity-building workshops for NIEC staff members in the use of GIS mapping technology.

"Voter registration is the most complex and costly endeavor in the electoral process, so early planning and preparation are important," said IESG chief Hiroko Miyamura. "One of the areas where we have made significant progress is in using GIS technology to map out potential voter registration sites."

In addition, the IESG provided financial support to the NIEC to launch an internship programme focusing on the use of GIS technology. All of the eight interns who were hired in March of last year have since become full-time staff members of the Commission.

"The interns have worked very closely with NIEC and IESG information technology officers," noted Ms. Miyamura. "We are pleased that the NIEC is hiring promising young people."

The United Nations has been providing electoral assistance to the Federal Republic of Somalia since 2014 through the IESG, which comprises international electoral advisers drawn from the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Somalia.

Somali women take stock of their achievements to mark International Women's Day 2019

More than three hundred participants attended the Somali Women's Convention that was held in Mogadishu between 4 and 6 March 2019.

Delegates issued a document entitled "A Women's Charter for Somalia" at the conclusion of the convention, which was chaired by the federal Minister of Women and Human Rights Development, Deqa Yassin, and supported by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Population Fund, UN Women and the Somalia Stability Fund.

The charter, which was presented to Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire on the final day of the convention, calls for the full inclusion of women across the political, economic and social spectrum in Somalia. In particular, it calls for a 50 per cent quota for Somali women in all three levels of government, including elected and appointed positions in the public and private sectors.

The first convention of its kind ever to be held in Somalia, the conference took place during the run-up to this year's International Women's Day (IWD), 8 March. Participants reviewed the progress achieved by Somali women in recent years in the realms of parliamentary representation, economic affairs, and social advancement.

In observance of IWD, a roundtable was also held on 3 March in Mogadishu that focused on the need to enact a pending electoral reform bill that would enshrine a minimum 30 per cent gender quota in future federal parliaments.

Parliamentarians, members of civil society and the chairperson of the National Independent

Electoral Commission, Halima Ismail Ibrahim, were among the 21 women leaders who attended the roundtable, which was hosted by the Somali Women's Leadership Initiative and supported by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM).

Delegates noted with approval the significant rise in the percentage of female members in the current federal parliament in comparison with that in the previous national legislature, from 14 per cent in 2012 to 24 per cent in 2016.

"The increase of women in political representation is because of advocacy by women advocates, civil society organisations and support of the international community that pressured the previous government," said Zainab Hassan, founder and chairperson of the Somali Gender Equity Movement.

There has also been an increase in women's representation in most federal member state assemblies, apart from Puntland. But much more remains to be done, according to some of Somalia's prominent women politicians.

"We witnessed the elections in federal member states, and in those elections women did not get a 30 per cent quota or even five per cent," noted federal member of parliament Maryan Ahmed Harun. "In Puntland, we only have one female legislator out of 66 (members). Today, we're fighting for 40 to 50 per cent representation."

Advocacy for gender equality and the political empowerment of Somali women is an integral part of the strategic and technical advice UNSOM provides to the federal government. Among the Mission's most notable contributions has been its robust advocacy in favor of a 30 per cent allocation of seats for women in the 2016 electoral process, which delivered the current federal parliament with women comprising 24 per cent of its membership.

Ms. Harun recognized the contribution that UNSOM has made towards the quest for full gender equality and political participation of Somali women.

"UNSOM supported Somali women's struggle for equal political representation," she said. "The struggle to that end is still ongoing."



FGS Minister of Women and Human Rights Development Deqa Yassin

IN MEMORIAM



Oliver Vick

Oliver (“Olly”) was born a Briton but he was a true citizen of the world. Olly left his mark on the people and places he encountered including during numerous assignments working for international organizations. We were lucky that Olly spent much of his career working for the United Nations, and here in the UN family in Somalia, we will remember Olly for his

warm and open approach to all he met, his commitment and professionalism, and his optimism for the future of Somalia.

Our thoughts and heartfelt sympathies go to Olly’s family and friends for their tragic loss, and to the countless colleagues and the friends he made effortlessly everywhere he lived.

“I am devastated by Oliver’s death. Olly was a popular and energetic member of our community here. We will miss his energy and sunny personality, his enthusiasm for life, for friendship and for the work of the United Nations in Somalia”, said Raisedon

Zenenga, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Officer-in-Charge of UNSOM.

Oliver’s career reflected his global outlook. He lived and worked in East Timor, Iraq, Afghanistan, Nepal, Liberia, Cambodia, Ecuador, Colombia, Guatemala, Kosovo, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand and Somalia. Olly’s work included a wide range of assignments from political analysis, to supporting countries emerging from conflict to hold elections, and crisis management. His role in Somalia covered the breadth of United Nations support, coordinating political, security and humanitarian reporting and managing UNSOM’s Crisis Management Secretariat.

As well as handling a demanding role, Olly played an active role in the Staff Welfare Committee and provided support and friendship to many. He mobilized groups to conduct beach clean ups, social gatherings, and sporting events and he was a keen runner. In his time in Somalia he made a huge impact on a wide variety of people, and his positive spirit and enormous contribution to the life and work of the UN family in Somalia will be remembered by us all.

Oliver was a talented and passionate

We will miss his energy and sunny personality, his enthusiasm for life, for friendship and for the work of UNSOM

international civil servant whose sense of humanity and desire to transcend boundaries embodied the values of the United Nations across the world. We are privileged to have worked with Olly and will continue his work with him in our hearts.

IN MEMORIAM



“Jessica wanted to go into the deep field and difficult duty stations and high-risk duty stations,” recalls Julia Schtivelman-Watt, head of service for assignments and talent mobilization at UNHCR. “She definitely liked a challenge, but most of all she wanted to go closer to the beneficiaries, where the work really matters.”

Assigned to Somalia at a time when the country is striving to overcome nearly three decades of civil war and displacement, Jessica was tasked with managing relationships with donors, reporting the needs and impact of UNHCR’s operations there and encouraging support.

She joined UNHCR in Iraq in 2013, where she gained plaudits for her exceptional contribution to helping Syrian refugees, and internally displaced Iraqis, during an intense period of rolling emergencies. Jessica later moved to UNHCR headquarters in Geneva, where she continued to work on the Middle East and North Africa. She subsequently transferred to human resources, where she is remembered for her conscientiousness, her ability to always see the positive, and for championing interns.

“She felt very deeply about their conditions of service,” Schtivelman-Watt recalls, noting how Jessica initiated a dialogue that led to a new policy which enables UNHCR to offset some of the costs incurred by interns. “She certainly did not give up on anything ... She was always able to step in

and make sure that everything was done.”

Jessica’s dedication to humanitarian work reached back years. She earned a master’s degree in public policy from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Prior to joining UNHCR, Jessica had a long and distinguished service with Care Canada, Care International and UNICEF. She leaves behind close family, including two daughters, aged nine and 12, for whom she had immeasurable love.

“Jess’s greatest happiness and achievement was her two daughters,” recalls her friend and colleague George Ghikas. “They meant everything to her. She always put them first. Smothering them with hugs and love.”

He and other friends remember Jessica as a “force of nature, the glue that bonded her friends together and the life and soul of any social gathering.” They list other qualities that included empathy, organizational and leadership skills, a sense of humour and zest for life. They remember how she

Jessica Hyba

Generous, dedicated and utterly committed to helping those in greatest need, Canadian Jessica Hyba, 43, had been working as Senior External Relations Officer with UNHCR in Mogadishu since February.

Seeking an assignment in one of the toughest countries where UNHCR is engaged was typical of Jessica, say colleagues, who remember her energy, tenacity and sheer dedication to helping the most vulnerable.

“What the world needs are more people like Jess ... We must all aspire to act as she did.”

loved exploring the outdoors with her girls, on nature and camping trips, especially in Canada and France.

“Jess discovered the world by helping people, helping refugees. She was generous, an organizer, a giver, and that came across in what she chose to do with her life. We are so proud of her.

“What the world needs are more people like Jess. Losing Jess in such a tragic way reminds us of that. We must all aspire to act as she did. She will be deeply missed.”

IN MEMORIAM

Abdirahman Hosh Jibril

The UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) expressed its condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the Federal Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Abdirahman Hosh Jibril, over his untimely passing on 8 March 2019 in Dubai.

An attorney by profession, Mr. Hosh served as the Minister of Constitutional Affairs and Reconciliation in the Transitional Federal Government and played an instrumental role in drafting Somalia's Provisional Federal Constitution in 2012. He returned to the Federal Cabinet in 2017 and spearheaded the resumption of the ongoing constitutional review process.

"Somalia has lost a great, principled and courageous man whose contribution to the development of Somalia's Constitution cannot be overstated," said the Officer-in-Charge of UNSOM, Raisedon Zenenga. "Minister Hosh discharged his duties with energy and vision, and we pay tribute to his hard work and inclusive approach in reviewing the Constitution."

The late minister is survived by his wife and three daughters.



Christine Alalo

The United Nations family extends their deepest condolences to the loved ones, friends and colleagues of Christine Alalo, acting Police Commissioner of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), who died in the 10 March 2019 plane crash near the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa.

"Christine was an inspiration to all who worked with her," said Lisa Filipetto, Head of the UN Support Office in Somalia, during a memorial ceremony held on 19 March in the main UN compound in Mogadishu. "She wore her uniform with professionalism and humility. Her authority stemmed from her unremitting commitment to support Somalia in its vision for the future of policing in the country. Her career demonstrated her tenacity and reflected her experience and extraordinary capacity. She reserved a special place in her work for mentoring women to be the best they could be and uphold the values in which she believed. Christine Alalo's legacy in Somalia will endure."

She is survived by her sons Emmanuel and Alvin.