



HIGHLIGHTS

- UN Deputy Secretary-General visits Somalia
- International partners urge Somali leaders to reduce political tensions and focus on electoral process
- UN marks World Humanitarian Day in Somalia
- UN Special Representative James Swan briefs the Security Council on the situation in Somalia
- UN Security Council extends mandate of UNSOM until May 2022
- Somali public's views shared in latest round of consultations on constitutional review process
- UN congratulates Somalia on independence anniversary

IN MOGADISHU, UN DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL ENCOURAGES PROGRESS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AS WELL AS PEACEFUL ELECTIONS

In September, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed undertook a visit to Somalia in solidarity with Somali women's calls for full and equal participation in political life, and to express the support of the international community for timely, inclusive, peaceful and credible elections.

The Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the country's parliamentary elections as an opportunity to build on the progress made in women's political participation and emphasized that women's full inclusion in all sectors of society will contribute to greater resilience, peace, and stability.

"Somalia achieved a milestone at its last elections in 2016/17 with 24 per cent of parliamentary seats filled by women, and I am hopeful that the country will build on this by expanding women's participation

even further – ensuring the 30 per cent quota is met is an important first step to full representation and an inclusive society. The peace dividend will not happen without women," Ms. Mohammed said.

While in Mogadishu, the Deputy Secretary-General met with President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed 'Farmaajo.' She also met with Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble and the National Consultative Council (NCC), whose membership includes the leaders of the country's Federal Member States and which is charged with providing overall direction for the elections.

"Prime Minister Roble and other members of the NCC have shown great leadership and commitment to advance women's political participation, including through specific measures such as decreasing fees for women candidates and appointing Goodwill Ambassadors and Champions to advocate for greater inclusion. It will also be important to agree on a specific mechanism on how exactly the commitment of a minimum 30 per cent quota will be achieved in the upcoming elections," the Deputy Secretary-General said.

Ms. Mohammed met with Somali elders as well as women leaders and advocates from

a range of areas – electoral management bodies, goodwill ambassadors, champions and civil society leaders – and expressed her solidarity with their efforts to bring about greater involvement of women in the country's political sphere as well as in economic life.

“Women should be able to participate in the elections without fear of violence, intimidation and discrimination.”

She noted the concerns voiced on the overall situation of Somali women, including levels of violence and insecurity for women, and how this also impacts participation in political life.



“Women should be able to participate in the elections without fear of violence, intimidation and discrimination,” Ms. Mohammed said. “But the same also applies in going about daily life, whether in education, commerce or social life.”

I have confidence in Somalia’s leadership to de-escalate any tensions and avoid action that could lead to violence and further delay the elections or undermine its credibility.

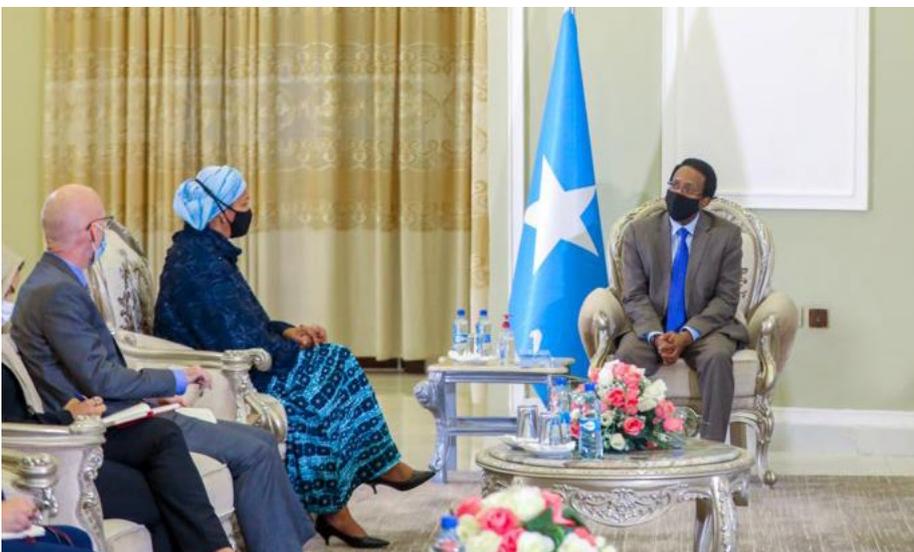
When asked about the case of government agent Ms. Ikran Tahlil Farah, the Deputy Secretary-General said the rule of law and access to justice are critical to protection from violence and are the right of all women.

On the elections and recent political tensions she noted, “Somalia has achieved considerable momentum with its electoral process, and I was encouraged to hear the commitment from all I met with to ensuring that this momentum is sustained and that critical elections move forward as scheduled.”

The Deputy Secretary-General further noted that political discord should not be allowed to threaten gains made in the country.

“I have confidence in Somalia’s leadership to de-escalate any tensions and avoid action that could lead to violence and further delay the elections or undermine its credibility,” she added.

Somalia is due to hold elections for its Upper House and its Lower House, known as the House of the People. The United Nations and Somalia’s other international partners have been heavily engaged in supporting national efforts to advance the country’s elections.



INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS URGE SOMALI LEADERS TO REDUCE POLITICAL TENSIONS AND FOCUS ON ELECTORAL PROCESS

In September, Somalia’s international partners* issued a statement in which they said they were concerned that the controversy surrounding the disappearance of Ms. Ikran Tahlil Farah was creating political tensions that could impact on the functioning of the Federal Government of Somalia and disrupt the electoral process.

“We urge Somali leaders to de-escalate the political confrontation surrounding this investigation and, in particular, avoid any actions that could lead to violence,” the partners added. “We call on Somalia’s leaders to work together to advance the implementation of the 27 May Agreement toward the holding of elections, recognizing the progress made to date by the National Consultative Council under the effective leadership of Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble.”

The partners went on to say that they continued to engage a wide range of Somali leaders to urge for a rapid resolution of this dispute, including a credible investigation of Ms. Tahlil Farah’s disappearance and the completion of the electoral process without any further delay.

*African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ethiopia, European Union, Finland, Germany, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, and the United Nations.



UN MARKS WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY IN SOMALIA

The Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Adam Abdelmoula, who also serves as the UN Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Somalia and Resident Coordinator, issued the following statement to mark World Humanitarian Day on 19 August:

“On this World Humanitarian Day, I wish to draw attention to the global climate crisis ravaging our planet. Its scale has become too enormous to ignore. We must act collectively and urgently to stave off further destruction.

Somalia is a prime example of how the climate emergency disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable, despite the fact that they contribute to it the least. The country's cyclical droughts and floods make water either a short supply with drought-like conditions or a destructive force that sweeps away all life in its path and breaks embankments. The effects of climate change also increasingly extend into the social, political and security realm.

In April, the Government, in consultation with the UN, declared a drought in the country after 80 per cent of the nation had experienced drought conditions. Other parts of Somalia were flooded, further driving displacement in a country where one out of every four people has been forced from their home.

Some 5.9 million Somalis urgently need humanitarian support. Despite growing needs, the Humanitarian Response Plan is only funded at 40 per cent. The cost of inaction will be devastating. Without additional support, the fragile gains we have made thus far will be easily unravelled.

We are in a race against time, a race to prioritise and address the needs of the most vulnerable Somalis and to break this vicious cycle of environmental degradation, displacement and loss of livelihoods. This means investment in short, medium and long-term solutions that can resist future climate shocks, use of nature-based solutions and low carbon energy sources, and strengthening resilience and adaptive capabilities of the affected communities. The recently launched Somalia's National Water Strategy is an important step forward.

I call on everyone to join the #TheHumanRace and ensure the concerns of the most vulnerable Somalis are at the top of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November.

Today, we also remember humanitarian workers who lost their lives or became injured in the course of their work. Every day, humanitarian partners in Somalia provide life-saving assistance to those who need it most. Risking everything, they ensure support is delivered in today's unprecedented times of climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and security challenges.

“We are in a race against time, a race to prioritise and address the needs of the most vulnerable.”

This year alone, 146 incidents impacting humanitarian operations have been recorded in Somalia. One humanitarian worker was killed, five injured, one abducted and three were detained or temporarily arrested. Targeting humanitarian workers is an egregious violation of international humanitarian law and such attacks must never be tolerated. I implore all parties to do their part to ensure protection of all humanitarian workers as they continue to provide support to the most at-risk communities.”



UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE JAMES SWAN

BRIEFS THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the UN Security Council meeting on Somalia, held in August, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Horn of Africa country, James Swan, delivered the following statement:

“Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to brief on the situation in Somalia. I am pleased to do so together once again with the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira. This underscores the importance of the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union in advancing peace, security and stability in Somalia. I am also pleased to be briefing alongside H.E. Ambassador Abukar Osman, the Permanent Representative of Somalia to the United Nations, and Ms. Batuulo Axmed Gaballe, Chairperson of the recently appointed women's Advocacy Committee.

Mr. President,

My last briefing to the Council took place two days before the signing of the 27 May Electoral Implementation Agreement between

Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble and leaders of the Federal Member States. I am pleased to report that significant progress has been made since then.

The Prime Minister has demonstrated strong leadership and initiative in moving the process forward. The National Consultative Council, which includes the Prime Minister and the Federal Member State leaders, has held regular meetings and dialogue on key issues related to the implementation of the Agreement.

Further, election management bodies at Federal and State levels have been established, and the elections for seats in the Upper House of Parliament have begun in four of the Federal Member States. The mandated ministerial committee comprised of Federal Member State representatives has held consultations in Garbaharey to prepare for the Gedo elections. The National Electoral Security Committee has been established and has begun preparations. And the Prime Minister has appointed an Advocacy Committee, whose Chairperson will brief the Council today, to attain the women's 30 per cent quota in the 2021 federal elections of Somalia.

At the same time, more progress is needed in certain priority areas. This includes more intensive and detailed preparations for electoral security, and clarity on plans to secure the quota for women. I am particularly

concerned that, unless strong measures are put in place now, the women's quota might not be achieved. There is also a need for greater inclusion of youth and historically marginalized communities in the electoral process.

The United Nations has been working closely with the Office of the Prime Minister and the election management committees at the federal and state levels on the implementation of the 27 May Agreement and election preparations. This includes the provision of technical and logistical support, as well as the coordination of international financial assistance. Recently, an agreement was signed with the Office of the Prime Minister to ensure that donor funds generously contributed by Member States are available for use by the Electoral Management Bodies.

As future challenges to the implementation of the agreement and the completion of the electoral process emerge, we urge that they continue to be addressed and resolved through dialogue.

Mr. President,

Beyond the electoral process, the United Nations continues to support broader peacebuilding efforts, including strengthening federalism, conflict prevention and management, and peace consolidation. In this regard, we recall that the 27 May Agreement includes a roadmap for the completion of the state-building process in Somalia, and we look forward to supporting its implementation.

With funding from the Peacebuilding Fund, the United Nations in Somalia will also step

up its support to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 and the role of women in peacebuilding through a new programme to address systemic barriers to Somali women's representation and participation in public life.

Mr. President,

Preparations for election security are key due to the continuing threat posed by Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabab continues terrorist attacks and insurgent operations, including by encircling communities; especially so in South-West State.

UNSOM has so far in 2021 recorded reports of 708 Somali civilian casualties (321 killed, 387 injured), mostly attributed to Al-Shabab. There are also alarming increases in sexual violence and violations against children being recorded and these remain a priority area of concern for the United Nations.

Mr. President,

AMISOM continues to play a critical role in Somalia. I pay tribute to all AMISOM and Somali Security Forces personnel, who work together on a daily basis to bring security to the country. Too many have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) continues to provide vital support to AMISOM and the Somali Security Forces.

UNSOS assistance to the Somali National Army and Somali Police Force is made possible by voluntary Trust Fund contributions. Additional

generous contributions are urgently needed to continue this vital support to Somali security forces, mandated by the Council.

The Somalia Transition Plan continues to be implemented. However, some goals for 2021 have yet to be achieved, including consolidation in Lower Shabelle and further gains in HirShabelle State. We note, however, recent Somali National Army operations to counter al Shabaab in HirShabelle and Galmudug States.

Mr. President,

The humanitarian situation in Somalia remains dire. The combined impact of conflict and climate change, including recurrent droughts and floods, as well as COVID, are likely to further exacerbate food insecurity. I would like to note the leadership of the Federal Government of Somalia in rolling out a national vaccination campaign, with the support of the Covax initiative.

Humanitarian access and significantly more funding are required to continue to deliver life-saving support. The 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan is only 38 per cent funded.

Climate change is contributing to the extreme crisis in Somalia, with potential negative effects on stability and security, as well as the humanitarian and development situation. The Council has recognised the adverse effects of climate change on Somalia, and the United Nations continues to work at Federal Government and Federal Member State levels to better understand, mitigate

and manage this.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

Following a prolonged period of uncertainty and heightened tensions, the long-awaited elections in Somalia are now moving forward, albeit somewhat behind schedule. Ensuring that this process continues to advance, and is inclusive and credible, will need constant effort by all parties involved, and continued leadership by the signatories of the 27 May Agreement.

The United Nations stands ready to continue to support Somalia in this election process and beyond, so that the country can renew its focus on core peace, security, and development goals.

Thank you."

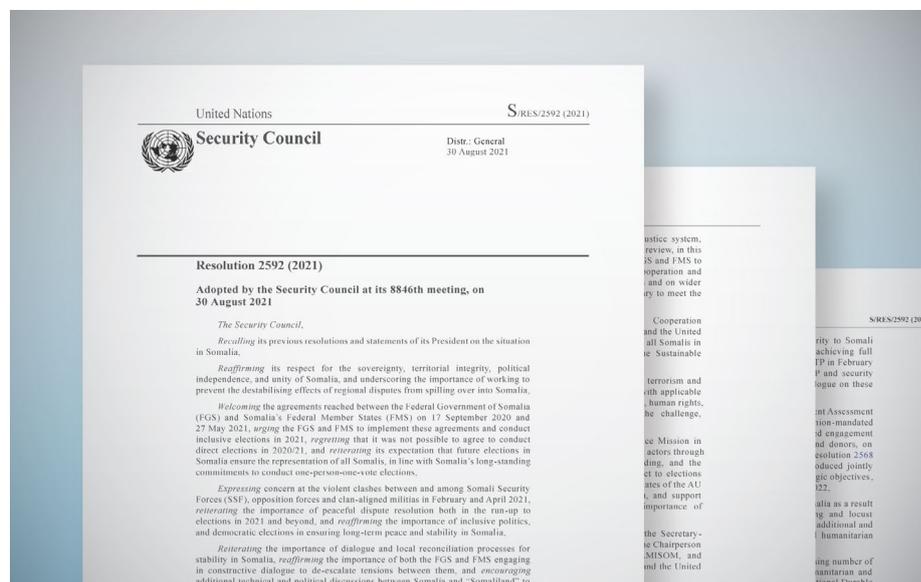


UN SECURITY COUNCIL EXTENDS MANDATE OF UNSOM UNTIL MAY 2022

In August, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) until 31 May 2022, and requested it to strengthen its presence across the country "as the security situation allows."

Unanimously adopting resolution 2592, the Council further decided that UNSOM should continue to coordinate United Nations efforts, maximizing joint approaches and programming, in full cooperation with the Federal Government of Somalia and the country's Federal Member States, focused in particular on supporting acceleration of government-led inclusive politics.

The full resolution is available [here](#).





SOMALI PUBLIC'S VIEWS SHARED IN LATEST ROUND OF CONSULTATIONS ON CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PROCESS

September saw the continuation of the latest round of public consultations on Somalia's constitutional review process, with members of the public from around the country providing more of their views on what should go into the final document to safeguard their rights on a range of issues.

“We need special treatment for persons with disabilities, and the most important issue is education. Education will help to develop everyone’s lives. The visually impaired and physically disabled people need special institutions to address the challenges they face. These should be included in the constitution,” said Ali Sheikh Rashid.

The 73-year-old, visually-impaired father-of-six added that he hopes the constitution, once finalized, will guarantee the rights of all Somalis and particularly ensure equal access to opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Mr. Rashid was among 50 people who attended a three-day public outreach session on the constitutional review process in Jowhar, the administrative capital of Hirshabelle.

In addition to Hirshabelle, similar consultations were held in two other Federal Member States, Galmudug and South West State. They were carried out by Somalia’s federal Ministry of Constitutional Affairs (MoCA) as part of its efforts to gather views from stakeholders on the new constitution.

“Speaking on behalf of persons with disabilities, it is appropriate that the government ensures that the disabled can access education and

healthcare, and address our special needs,” said Abdi Jama Ahmed, the chairperson of an association of persons with disabilities in Dhusamareb, the administrative capital of Galmudug.

Somali public’s views

The consultations, supported by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), are part of MoCA’s ongoing outreach efforts to garner the views of a wide range of Somalis around the

country to feed into the review process currently underway. Since 2012, Somalia has had a Provisional Constitution.

In addition to gathering the views of the public, MoCA officials also presented progress made so far, challenges encountered and the way forward.

“The public participation and response have been overwhelming, and participants were asking us to extend the public engagement meetings to district and village levels. From our assessment, more than seventy per cent of the public today have a better understanding of the constitution compared to four years ago,” said MoCA’s Director of Public Outreach, Abdikani Ali Adan.

“We have gathered views, answered questions, and shared the information we have been collecting for the last four years,”





he added. “We hope this constitution will be fruitful for the people and the country.”

The topics covered in the three consultation sessions covered the whole gamut of issues and concerns affecting Somali society. As well as the rights of persons with disabilities, other topics included justice, security, fair and equal representation, power-sharing, the rights of women and youth, resource-sharing and the status of Mogadishu.

Youth and women

A youth representative at the Dhusamareb consultations in Galmudug, Bashir Mohammed Salat, said it was vital to ensure youth’s views were included in the review process, especially in light of the fact that they account for such a large percentage of the Somali population.

“To guarantee the rights of youth, we want a provision in the Constitution stipulating the age bracket of youth and when they are allowed to seek leadership positions. Currently, there is a requirement that a person should not be below 30 years to hold a leadership position – we want the age lowered to 20 years to give a chance to young aspiring leaders,” said Mr. Salat.

“This is an opportunity for youth as they make up around 75 per cent of the country’s population, yet they are not in the decision-making process. This is an opportunity for them to contribute,” said Abdiaziz Gure Farah, a participant in the Hirshabelle consultation.

The role of women and ensuring their rights also figured prominently – both in taking part in the review process and within the final document.

“To address inequalities, women need to participate in the constitutional review process and political campaigns, and express their views and recommendations to achieve the 30 per cent quota [for women’s representation in parliament]. We can achieve this if women campaign for education and political participation. The constitutional review focuses on our self-determination as a nation and the development of women,” said Hawo Omar Abdirahman, a civil society representative in Baidoa.

The consultations in the three Federal Member States followed similar events held in other parts of the country.



UN CONGRATULATES SOMALIA ON INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY

In July, the UN Special Representative for Somalia, James Swan, congratulated the people and government of Somalia on the anniversary of their country’s independence.

“On 1 July, 61 years ago, the people of Somalia realised their independent sovereign nation and committed themselves to build a peaceful and prosperous nation based on unity, equality and justice,” Mr. Swan added. This commitment continues today and has been recently demonstrated through the successful summit of 27 May and the continued engagements to pave the way towards national elections.

“As Somalia celebrates Independence Day,” he continued, “the United Nations and international partners recommit their pledge to work with the Somali people and support a peaceful future for the country.”