



**STATEMENT BY  
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UN  
ON BEHALF OF THE A3+1 DURING THE  
UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON SOMALIA  
20 August 2020**

*Mr. President,*

I would like to thank you for convening this important and timely meeting on the situation in Somalia. I have the distinct honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Niger, South Africa, Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

At the outset, the A3+1 would like to thank the Secretary- General for his report on the situation in Somalia. We also would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Mr. James Swan, and Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Mr. Francisco Madeira, for their briefings. We commend them for their efforts in Somalia.

Our statement will focus on four important issues and developments in Somalia, namely political developments, elections preparations, security and the humanitarian situation.

*Mr. President,*

***On Political developments***

The A3+1 welcomes and commends the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States for their recent meetings and consultations, which constitute an important first step towards building the political consensus necessary for the transition

in Somalia.

We agree with the Secretary-General's observation that the long-awaited resumption of dialogue between the Federal Government and Federal Member States leaders, and the steps taken towards normalizing the Federal Government relations with Jubaland, are critical for the restoration of collaboration between federal and state levels of government.

In this regard, we further welcome the meeting between President Farmajo and "Somaliland" President Muse Bihi in Djibouti, following their initial meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We appreciate the continued efforts of the regional, sub-regional and international community in bringing political stability to Somalia and the Horn of Africa. This is a positive development towards consolidating peace, security, and development in the region.

We urge all major stakeholders in Somalia to maintain this spirit of inclusive consultations and cooperation in all follow-up meetings, in order to reach a broad-based agreement on critical matters. We regard this and other developments in the relations between the Federal Government and Federal Member States as a first critical step towards building the essential political consensus on various important issues, including agreement on the electoral modalities, security arrangements, constitutional review and power-sharing.

As the Security Council, and the international community, we should all support the recent discussions held by the federal and state leaders in Dhusamarreb. The international community and partners of Somali leaders and stakeholders should also allow them to lead and determine their future, without interference and imposition.

Furthermore, we appeal to Somali stakeholders to undertake urgent and concerted efforts to reach a broad-based inclusive political agreement, including on the way forward on elections and the finalization of the revised constitution, amongst other key priorities.

*Mr. President,*

***On preparations for elections***

The A3+1 recalls its previous statement to this Council in which we noted that the preparations and holding of "one-person, one vote" elections in Somalia is a critical priority. We further underlined the importance of dialogue, inclusive political participation and resolution of political differences between the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States, which is critical to the success of these elections and national cohesion. We reiterate that this observation remains valid today.

Therefore, the A3+1 commends the recent developments related to the preparations for elections in Somalia, in particular, the adoption by the House of the People Amendments to the Political Parties Law, and four resolutions that address representation in Parliament by all Federal Member States including the allocation of seats to constituencies for both Houses and a minimum of 24 per cent women's representation in Parliament,

We are also pleased that the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) continues its preparations towards the national elections. This is evidenced by the two possible options for conducting the elections either in March or August 2021, depending on whether the elections are held through paper-based voter registration and polling or standard biometric voter registration.

The A3+1 urges all the stakeholders in Somalia to engage constructively in an inclusive dialogue to reach political consensus on the modalities and timing of the elections. We further appeal to the international partners to coordinate their support to ensure inclusive, credible and secure elections in Somalia.

*Mr. President,*

### ***On the Security situation***

The A3+1 remains concerned about the volatile security situation in Somalia. We strongly condemn attacks by Al-Shabaab on Somali civilians, security forces, AMISOM, the United Nations and the international community. We pay tribute to the ultimate sacrifices of AMISOM and the Somali National Army in their quest to bring peace, stability and development in Somalia.

We reiterate our previous calls urging the Federal Government of Somalia, with the support of the UN, AMISOM, and international partners, to continue the generation, training and resourcing of capable and effective Somali National Forces that will ultimately take over the security responsibilities in line with the revised Somali Transitional Plan and the National Security Architecture.

To this end, we again appeal for the international community and partners to mobilize the necessary resources, including the replenishment of the Trust Fund for AMISOM and the Trust Fund to support the Somali security forces, as they continue to make commendable progress to restore State authority, peacebuilding and state-building.

We commend in particular the efforts of the Somali National Army in securing all recovered areas thus far. We, however, do recognize the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the rains (from April to June) that have impacted the expansion of some security activities including liberating more areas.

We are heartened by a number of reconciliation efforts by the state administration and

communities aimed at ending the cycle of violence among clans. We support the peaceful resolution of tensions amongst the communities and peaceful co-existence between the clans.

*Mr. President,*

We strongly condemn reported incidents of civilian casualties, conflict-related sexual violence, particularly those affecting women and girls. We also strongly condemn grave violations against children in armed conflict including the use, abduction, recruitment, killing and maiming of children, that have been registered during the period under review. We support the calls that all the perpetrators of these crimes be identified and held accountable.

Furthermore, we have taken note of the developments in Parliament relating to the draft sexual offences bill and the introduction of an alternative bill. Although we recognize the prerogative of the Somalia Parliament to draft legislation; we call on the authorities to ensure that any new piece of legislation remains consistent with Somalia's international law obligations.

*Mr. President,*

### ***On the Humanitarian situation***

Somalia has been impacted by the triple threat and shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, infestation by desert locusts and floods. These challenges have deepened Somalia's humanitarian crisis. COVID-19, in particular, has exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities, disrupted socio-economic gains and affected livelihoods of ordinary Somalis.

We commend the actions by the humanitarian partners for the expansion of their support to Somali authorities to address the impact of COVID-19.

The A3+1 notes that the adverse impact of flooding due to climate change remains widespread in Somalia during the period under review. We are concerned that this situation will continue to exacerbate the displacement of people, food insecurity, outbreak of water-borne diseases, as well as to adversely affect the livelihoods of those made most vulnerable across the country.

In this respect, Somalia requires the continued support by the international community and humanitarian partners to mitigate the impact of the triple threat. We support the call by the Secretary-General for additional funding that is urgently needed to continue to deliver humanitarian assistance.

We deplore that the security situation remains a major constraint to humanitarian operations. We are concerned, and condemn, the recorded incidents against

humanitarian operations and providers, including recorded incidents that led to the killing, abduction and, in some instances, detaining of humanitarian workers.

*Finally, Mr. President,*

We commend the efforts and commitment of the United Nations through UNSOM and UNSOS, AMISOM, UNMAS, the Federal Government and Federal Member States of Somalia and the international partners for the continuous efforts and progress to bring stabilization, deepening federalism, and state-building in Somalia.

We urge a continued and strengthened working relationship between AMISOM and UNSOM to assist Somalia to take ownership of addressing its own security challenges as envisaged by the Transition Plan. We reiterate that the withdrawal of AMISOM from Somalia should be condition-based as the security situation remains volatile and is characterized by frequent terrorist attacks.

To conclude, the A3+1 support the continued presence of AMISOM and UNSOM in Somalia. In this regard, we support the renewal of the mandate of UNSOM for another 12 months when it ends on 31 August 2020.

I thank you