



**A3 + 1 JOINT STATEMENT DELIVERED
BY AMBASSADOR JERRY MATJILA OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
DURING THE SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING ON THE
SITUATION IN SOMALIA**

23 NOVEMBER 2020

Madam President,

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

At the outset, this briefing takes place against the backdrop of Somalia embarking on a political milestone of holding the 2020/21 elections and having witnessed significant progress made by all Somali parties and leaders, especially with regards to the electoral model, electoral timetable and the procedures that will guide the implementation thereof.

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 the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Mr.

James Swan, and the 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 everyone for their abiding commitment and efforts to support the stabilisation and continued statebuilding processes in Somalia.

Our statement will focus on four important issues and developments in Somalia, namely political developments, which include, the preparations for the elections, the security and humanitarian situation as well as the role of the UN and AU missions.

**Madam President,
On Political developments**

The A3+1 commends the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States for their recent important consultations and agreements reached, which constitute significant steps towards reaching broad political consensus on key issues particularly the holding of the 2021 general elections.

To this end, we welcome the agreement reached by the Somali leaders on the electoral model and timetable that would ensure that the general elections would be held as scheduled at the end of 2020 and early 2021. We are encouraged by the unveiling of the draft National Election Security Plan. It is our considered view that the holding of successful and secure elections in Somalia requires the full participation, sharing of information and coordination between police, military, AMISOM and other international partners. This will further demonstrate that Somalia is making notable progress in addressing its security concerns and to countenance the propaganda and destabilisation efforts of armed groups.

Similarly, we applaud all the Somali political stakeholders, including civil society organisations, for their commitment towards consolidating democracy, in particular for ensuring the holding of timely and credible elections, guaranteeing the 30 percent quota for women representation in Parliament, and the imperative to protect Somalia's

sovereignty, independence, stability and unity. We urge all stakeholders in Somalia to maintain this spirit of national ownership and cooperation going forward in all aspects, in order to reach broad-based agreement on critical matters such as advancing their aspiration of moving the country to one person, one vote elections in future, concluding the drafting of the Federal Constitution, security arrangements and power sharing, amongst others.

In this respect, the A3 +1 congratulates H.E. Mohammed Hussein Roble for his election as the new Prime Minister of Somalia and his new inclusive and representative Cabinet. We hope that the new government will continue building on the significant advances made by Somalia in recent years on political, economic and security priorities.

**Madam President,
On the Security situation**

The A3+1 remains concerned about the continued volatile security situation in Somalia. We strongly condemn all attacks, in particular those carried out using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), by Al-Shabaab on Somali civilians, security forces, AMISOM, the United Nations and the international community, including on critical infrastructure. We, thus pay tribute to the ultimate sacrifice of AMISOM and Somali security forces in their quest to bring peace, stability and development to Somalia. We underline that those responsible for these heinous crimes should not go unpunished.

We reiterate our previous calls urging the Federal Government of Somalia, with the support of the UN, AMISOM, UNSOM and international partners, to continue the generation, training and resourcing of capable, efficient 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. The recent decision of this Council to further ease the arms embargo in Somalia will contribute towards strengthening the capacity and capabilities of the Somali security forces.

Madam President,

We strongly condemn reported incidents of civilian casualties, conflict-related sexual violence, which continues to disproportionately affect women and girls; grave violations against children including abduction, recruitment and use, killing and maiming, that have been registered during the period under review. More effective measures must be taken to prevent these violations consistent with international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We, thus, support the calls that all perpetrators of these crimes be identified and held accountable.

**Madam President,
On the Humanitarian situation**

Somalia has been impacted by the triple threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, 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 the Somali authorities to address the impact of COVID-19.

The A3+1 notes that the adverse impact of flooding due to climate change remained 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 of 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 regret that the security situation remains a major constraint to humanitarian operations. We strongly condemn the recorded, albeit continued, violent incidents against humanitarian operations and providers, including recorded incidents that led to the killing, abductions and, in some instances, the detention of humanitarian workers. Furthermore, we take note of the attacks against journalists and violations of freedom of expression mentioned in the Secretary-General's report and encourage the Somali authorities to take the necessary measures to address these issues.

As the A3+1, however, we do recognize the critical socio-economic challenges facing Somalia, that have negatively impacted the expansion of some security activities including liberating more areas. In spite of these, we commend Somalia on the progress it has made to meet all structural benchmarks under the first International Monetary Fund (IMF) review mission under the Extended Credit Facility. We further welcome the supplemental Development Policy Financing operation from the World Bank to support the triple crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, desert locusts and floods. These support measures have ensured that the Somali economy remains resilient amid the ongoing challenges.

**Madam President,
On the role of the UN and AU Missions**

We commend the sustained commitment of the United Nations through UNSOM, UNSOS, AMISOM, and UNMAS as well as that of the Federal Government, the Federal Member States of Somalia and the international partners for their continuous efforts and progress made in bringing stabilization, deepening federalism, and statebuilding in Somalia.

We are concerned that the United Nations Trust Funds in support of AMISOM and the Somali security forces are seriously underfunded. This will have a negative impact on AMISOM and the Somali security forces pertaining to the provision by UNSOS of essential logistical support, training, mentoring and equipment to counter the threat of IEDs. We appeal for more contributions to these trust funds as the lack of funding may

erode the gains made by Somalia as supported by the United Nations and African Union missions.

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 Somali Transition Plan. We look forward to the finalisation of the updated Somali Transition Plan, which will guide the handing over of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces. We, however, reiterate that the withdrawal and eventual exit of AMISOM from Somalia should be conditions-based depending on the security situation in the country.

The A3+1 supports the continued presence of AMISOM and UNSOM in Somalia, as the current security situation remains volatile and is characterised by frequent terrorist attacks. In addition, we concur with the observations of the Secretary-General that a successful transition is contingent on Somalia having adequate institutions, the generation of forces and the enhancement of the oversight, management and sustainment capacities of Somali security services, including through financial, operational and logistical support. More efforts must be directed to the realisation of these benchmarks.

We also recognise the relevance of the conduct of regular assessments and reviews to the assistance provided to Somalia by the United Nations and African Union. We wish to underline the critical importance of soliciting and taking into account the views of relevant key stakeholders on the Continent including the African Union, IGAD and TCC/PCCs on the future of international support to Somalia beyond 2021. There can be no real progress in Somalia, or elsewhere on the African Continent, without the active participation and contribution of its peoples in seeking solutions to African problems, and to silencing the guns.

To conclude, Madam President, we appreciate the continued efforts of the regional, sub-regional and international community, including the UN, AU, EU and IGAD amongst

others, in bringing political stability to Somalis and the region in support of the Somali-led and Somali-owned peace, security and peacebuilding processes.

I thank you