



**Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
to the United Nations**

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Statement

by

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Deputy Permanent Representative

The situation in Somalia

Security Council

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Thank you Madam President,

DSG Mohammed, we welcome your timely visit to Somalia to underscore the importance of women's full and meaningful participation and leadership in the country. Thank you for sharing your analysis of the situation. Your expression of solidarity for securing the 30% quota is both timely and necessary. We also thank Dr. Dini for sharing her expertise and experience, as researcher and civil society leader, with us today. Somali women's participation in politics and in the economy must be guaranteed and supported, and they must be able to do so free from violence and intimidation. We express condolences to the family of Hibaq Abukar, and all the victims of the attack in Mogadishu this past weekend.

Madam President,

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes the commitment demonstrated by the Federal Government of Somalia to achieving the quota. The appointment of the Advocacy Committee, goodwill ambassadors and champions, by Prime Minister Roble and the NCC, to advocate for women's inclusion in the elections, is evidence of this commitment. The reduction of the candidates' registration fee by 50%, as was done in the 2016/2017 election, is yet another significant decision taken by the FGS and NCC.

However, we acknowledge the concerns expressed by Ms. Batula Axmed Gabelle, Chair of both the Somali National Organisation of Women and the recently established Advocacy Committee, as she briefed the Security Council last month. Even as she welcomed the commitment and actions undertaken by the government to achieving the quota, she reiterated the importance of cooperation between the FGS and the FMS, the need to engage FMS and clan leaders on reserving parliamentary seats for women only, and the overall establishment of a concrete mechanism for the implementation of the quota. We reiterate calls for cooperation among members of the Federal Government of Somalia and between the FGS and FMS to ensure, not only the successful completion of the various phases of the election, but also to guarantee that the target on the election of women to parliament is either met or surpassed.

With organisations like the Somali Women's Research Centre, represented here by Dr. Dini, working at the intersections of gender and youth to focus on women's political participation, ending gender-based violence and women's economic empowerment, Somali women are at the frontlines of changing their societies. We must also not lose sight of the climate and security risks to which women and girls are made most vulnerable, and how transforming these arrangements require women's political participation and leadership.

Madam President,

AMISOM's and UNSOM's support to Somalia has been significant. We applaud UNSOM's provision of technical and logistical support, as well as the coordination of international financial commitments for the election in Somalia. Recent visits to Federal Member States, including the visit to Puntland by the Heads of AMISOM, UNSOM, and the EU and Swedish missions in Somalia, have been critical in underscoring regional and international commitment to FGS and FMS cooperation on the election, as well as Somali women's right to political participation and in broader state-building processes. We also welcome the visit by the delegation of international partners to Baidoa in the South West State to reiterate the same.

We commend the National Election Security Committee (NESC) in their efforts to coordinate security for the elections, and acknowledge the role of AMISOM, working alongside the

Federal and State Police Commissioners, in these efforts. The AU's commitment to the budgetary request made by the FGS, to supply equipment for the elections and their efforts, alongside Somali security forces, to thwart Al-Shabab's attempts at disrupting the elections, must also be commended.

In closing, let us not lose sight of the purpose for which the election is being held and why it is imperative that it is indeed inclusive. As signalled in both the 17 September 2020 and the 27 May 2021 Agreements, the election is critical to normalizing the security situation, addressing the urgent humanitarian needs, and accelerating socio-economic development. In short, the election is key to advancing the state-building process. Unless women are sitting at the decision-making table at all levels, unless women are crafters of policies and architects of actions, the possibility of equitable and just development will remain elusive. This is true of every society. Somalia achieved in 2016/2017 what a majority of countries in our United Nations, including developed countries, have failed to do: twenty-four percent of parliamentary seats were secured by women. The current election should set yet another milestone, thus achieving the aspirations Somali women have set for themselves.