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Situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 16 of Security Council resolution [2540 \(2020\)](#) and paragraph 37 of resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#). It provides updates on the implementation of those resolutions, including on the mandates of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). The report covers significant developments in Somalia from 5 November 2020 to 9 February 2021.

II. Political, security and economic overview

A. Political developments

2. The agreement on the electoral process reached on 17 September 2020 notwithstanding, divergence persisted with respect to its implementation, as the opposition Council of Presidential Candidates Union and some federal member states accused the Federal Government of unilaterally appointing committee members loyal to the President of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed “Farmajo”. Disputes also emerged regarding the selection of representatives to the indirect electoral and implementation team for Federal Parliament seats allocated to “Somaliland”. The agreement of 17 September provides for the Jubbaland state-level electoral committee to organize elections in Garbahaarrey, but details of the administrative and security arrangements have not yet been fully agreed between the Jubbaland administration and the Federal Government.

3. To address these issues, several attempts at dialogue have been made. On 24 December, the Presidents of Galmudug and Puntland agreed to work together in trying to resolve the dispute among various stakeholders on the implementation of elections. From 11 to 14 December, the Prime Minister of Somalia, Mohamed Hussein Roble, paid his first official visit to Puntland and discussed the political stalemate over the electoral process with the President of Puntland, Said Abdullahi Deni, but there was no breakthrough, including on the appointment of Puntland representatives to the federal and state-level election management bodies. Between 30 December 2020 and 2 January 2021, discussions on the margins of a conference in Garoowe among the Deputy Prime Minister, the Presidents of Puntland, Galmudug and Jubbaland, as well as some of the opposition presidential candidates, resulted in



proposals to resolve the political impasse impeding the advancement of the electoral process. Those proposals were conveyed to the federal leadership by the President of Galmudug. While all parties reportedly viewed those proposals positively, no significant progress was made.

4. On 15 and 25 December, protests in Mogadishu, called by opposition groups over the Federal Government's management of the upcoming elections, led to violence and the use of force by the Somali Police Force, resulting in one death and three civilians injured. Clan-affiliated militias reportedly took part in the clashes.

5. On 9 January, the Prime Minister announced that the Federal Government was ready to begin the electoral process in South-West State, Hirshabelle and Galmudug, as well as the Banaadir Regional Administration. The opposition condemned the move, warning that partial elections endangered the unity and stability of Somalia.

6. While significant attention was focused on the national electoral impasse, in "Somaliland", voter registration was conducted from 30 November 2020 to 13 January 2021, ahead of parliamentary and local council elections scheduled to be held on 31 May 2021. On 29 December, following a visit to Djibouti, the President of "Somaliland", Musa Bihi Abdi, attended the reopening of the border between "Somaliland" and Djibouti at the Loyada border crossing, which had been closed since 25 March 2020 in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

7. On 11 November, in Jawhar, Hirshabelle State, Abdullahi Ali Hussein "Gudlawe" from the Hawiye-Abgaal sub-clan was elected as state President by the regional assembly; Yusuf Ahmed Hagar "Dabageed" of the Hawiye-Hawadle sub-clan, was elected as Vice-President. However, several Hawadle stakeholders alleged that the elections were rigged and raised power-sharing concerns relating to their representation in state institutions and to the location of the state capital in Jawhar, Middle Shabelle. There were also public protests in Beledweyne. On 23 December, the regional assembly passed a resolution by which its tenure and that of the state presidency was extended from four to five years.

8. On 30 November, the Federal Government recalled its ambassador to Kenya and requested the Kenyan ambassador to Somalia to leave the country, citing interference in both the electoral process and in the relations between the Federal Government and Jubbaland. On 14 December, Somalia severed diplomatic ties with Kenya, further alleging interference in domestic affairs. The move came after a two-day visit to Kenya by the President of "Somaliland". On 15 December, Kenya and "Somaliland" announced a cooperation agreement to expand the movement of people and goods between Nairobi and Hargeysa, building on the existing movement of goods and people by flight between the two cities, and the opening of a Kenyan consulate in Hargeysa.

9. On 20 December, during the thirty-eight Extraordinary Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), participants agreed that Kenya and Somalia should resolve their differences within the IGAD framework. Following those developments, a Djiboutian delegation, composed of senior diplomats and military officers, visited Somalia in mid-January as part of an IGAD-mandated fact-finding mission on Somali complaints lodged against Kenya and reported back to the President of Djibouti, Ismaël Omar Guelleh. On 26 January, the fact-finding team released its report, in which it said that it found evidence that Kenya had violated Somali airspace but no evidence that it had interfered in Somali affairs. While Kenya welcomed the report as "factual", Somalia rejected it as "biased".

10. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General continued to conduct his good offices in support of efforts to overcome the electoral impasse. Meetings were

undertaken on a regular basis between the Federal Government and federal member state leaders. In addition, he visited all federal member states and “Somaliland” between January and early February 2021. The United Nations also facilitated numerous meetings between the diplomatic community and Somali political leaders. All those efforts were aimed at supporting and facilitating continued dialogue, compromise and consensus towards moving the electoral process forward. Numerous statements on behalf of the international partners of Somalia were also issued in relation to the political process.

11. On 30 January, President Farmajo announced the convening of a consultative forum with federal member state leaders in Dhuusamarreeb, as part of efforts to implement the agreement of 17 September. The President also announced that he would address both houses of the Federal Parliament thereafter. The consultative forum officially commenced in Dhuusamarreeb on 3 February, attended by the President, the Prime Minister, all federal member state leaders and the Banaadir Regional Governor. The forum ended on 6 February in a stalemate over the issue of elections in Gedo.

12. On 6 February, President Farmajo briefed the House of the People on the status of the ongoing talks and indicated his readiness to continue dialogue. On 8 February, international partners issued a statement in which they called upon political leaders to resume their dialogue to urgently reach a final agreement permitting national elections to be held. In the statement, they also underscored that any alternative outcomes, including a parallel process or partial elections, or any other actions that lacked broad agreement, would not obtain the support of international partners. On the same day, the Council of Presidential Candidates Union publicly stated that it would no longer recognize the legitimacy of President Farmajo, whose constitutional term ended on 8 February, and proposed the formation of the Transitional National Council. On 9 February, President Farmajo announced his intention to host a federal and state-level summit on the implementation of the agreement of 17 September in Garoowe, Puntland.

B. Security developments

13. The security situation remained volatile, with an average of 285 monthly incidents recorded. Most of those incidents were Al-Shabaab attacks, including using improvised explosive devices, both targeting Somalia security forces and for crime-related killings. Nevertheless, the number of civilians killed in 2020 from improvised explosive devices saw a 50 per cent decline compared with 2019, the first decrease in the past five years. This is attributed in large part to the reduction in the use of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices in Mogadishu, resulting from security operations in Lower Shabelle that managed to disrupt supply chains and infiltration routes, along with the increased effectiveness of security measures within the federal capital. Twenty-seven mortar attacks were reported during the period, compared with 16 between August and October 2020, targeting mainly the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and local security forces in Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Bay, Bakool, Bari, Galguduud and Hiraa regions. In Galguduud, Al-Shabaab launched a mortar attack on Dhuusamarreeb while federal and state leaders were present in town for electoral talks between 2 and 5 February. No casualties were reported.

14. Al-Shabaab maintained the capability to infiltrate Mogadishu and carry out high-profile attacks. During the reporting period, the use of person-borne improvised explosive devices by Al-Shabaab increased. On 17 November, in Mogadishu’s Xamar Jajab district, a person-borne improvised explosive device explosion inside a restaurant near the police academy killed six police officers and wounded four others

and two civilians. On 27 November, in Mogadishu's Wadajir district, an Al-Shabaab suicide bomber detonated himself at an ice cream shop frequented by government officials, killing 8 people and wounding 10 others. On 18 December, in Gaalkacyo district, Mudug, an Al-Shabaab person-borne improvised explosive device detonation in a stadium where a crowd had gathered to see the visiting Prime Minister resulted in the killing of 14 people and injuries to 14 others; several senior security officials were among those killed. On 2 January, a person-borne improvised explosive device explosion in Lafoole, on the outskirts of Mogadishu, targeted a road construction project, resulting in at least five people killed and six others injured; two Turkish nationals working on the project were among the fatalities. On 31 January, the group conducted a complex attack on the Afrik Hotel in Mogadishu's Waberi district. Reports indicated that up to 10 people were killed in the attack, including retired army general and former Minister of Defence Mohamed Nur Galal.

15. Al-Shabaab remained undeterred in attacking Somali National Army and AMISOM forces in Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Banaadir, Bay, Hiraaan, Bakool, Lower Jubba, Gedo, Galguduud and Mudug, with a monthly average of 140 attacks during the reporting period. The majority of the incidents were hit-and-run attacks, many of which involved brief exchanges of heavy gunfire. In a significant incident on 30 November, Al-Shabaab attacked a Somali National Army base in Bacadweyne, Mudug. The attack resulted in at least 15 Somali National Army soldiers and civilians killed. In the run-up to the elections, Al-Shabaab continued to use grenades and improvised explosive devices to target high-level federal and state officials. The federal Minister of Labour, the federal Minister of Agriculture, the Jubbaland Minister of Tourism, the Governor of Lower Shabelle, the Danab Unit Commander, district commissioners and members of the Federal Parliament were among the officials targeted during the period. At least one parliamentarian and five electoral delegates were killed.

16. Tensions between forces loyal to the former Minister of Security of Jubbaland, Abdirashid Hassan Abdinur "Janan", and the Somali National Army resumed in the Gedo region on 25 January in Beledxaawo. The clashes in town, which lasted a few hours, resulted in civilian casualties and displacement, although numbers were unconfirmed.

17. No attacks were attributed to pro-Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant elements. The United States of America conducted seven air strikes in December 2020 and January 2021. The repositioning of United States forces from Somalia to other bases in East Africa began in late December and was completed in January.

C. Economic developments

18. The 2021 federal budget, as approved by the Federal Parliament on 29 December 2020 and signed by the President on 1 January 2021, projected an increase in domestic revenues (\$260 million in 2021, compared with \$190 million in 2020) and tighter controls on expenditures. Given that social spending relies largely on donor grant financing, total foreign grants for 2021 were estimated at \$277.4 million.

19. Gross domestic product contracted by 1.5 per cent, from \$4.55 billion in 2019 to \$4.48 billion in 2020, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Somali economy was expected to rebound at 2.9 per cent growth in 2021 thanks to private sector recovery, persistent remittances and continued investment. The financial sector continued to demonstrate remarkable resilience: bank deposits remained stable, the provision of credit to the private sector continued and remittances to households and individuals surpassed 2019 levels.

20. IMF projected the Federal Government would record a small deficit of some \$11 million in 2020 owing to COVID-19 pandemic-induced uncertainty in revenue collection. The shared view of IMF and federal authorities was that the deficit could be absorbed by the authorities' cash balances, if necessary. However, final year-end data had yet to be published. Moreover, donor concerns with regard to political instability have led to disruptions in expected budgetary support. In federal member states, revenue performance is encouraging, especially in Puntland and Jubbaland, which have large ports. Expenditure has been broadly in line with the 2020 budgets, with the exception of South-West State, which has struggled with controlling spending.

21. Somalia continued to make steady progress under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, as documented in the IMF country report for Somalia released in November. Currently in the interim period of the Initiative, Somalia has to meet the completion point requirements to achieve full and irrevocable debt relief. The World Bank and IMF are providing joint technical assistance in debt management.

22. On 21 November, the Office of the Auditor General of Somalia released, for the second year, a consolidated compliance audit report on 35 reporting entities of the Federal Government for 2019. The report highlighted lapses in expenditure controls, deficient controls over the management of fixed assets, poor debt and weak procurement management, and failure to prepare financial statements and register contracts. The report represented an effort to identify and correct public financial management gaps.

III. Support for peacebuilding and State-building efforts

23. On 2 December, the Peacebuilding Commission convened to discuss Somalia, for the first time since 2015. Chaired by Canada, the meeting included participation by the Prime Minister. In a statement, the Commission welcomed the commitment of Somalia to durable peace and reconciliation and commended the use of dialogue and consensus-building to navigate obstacles to its peacebuilding and State-building trajectories. It highlighted the importance of the national development plan, the national reconciliation framework and the Somali Women's Charter in guiding national peacebuilding efforts and international support. The Commission committed itself to maintaining its attention on efforts aimed at addressing ongoing peacebuilding challenges in Somalia and mobilizing international support for the country's peacebuilding priorities.

A. Support for strengthening federalism

1. Preparations for elections

24. On 14 November, the Federal Government formally requested technical, financial, material and logistical support from the United Nations for the 2020–2021 indirect elections. The provision of international support has been delayed as a result of ongoing disagreements among Somali stakeholders with respect to the implementation of the agreement of 17 September.

25. The political impasse impeded the full establishment of federal and some state-level committees to oversee and implement the indirect elections. Nevertheless, the United Nations and partners worked to support the drawing-up of an electoral budget and to advance planning for electoral support activities at the technical level. Currently, the electoral committees that were established did not meet the requirement for 30 per cent women's representation. In November and December, the Office of

the Prime Minister conducted training for the nominated electoral management committee members on planning and managing the indirect elections.

26. A National Electoral Security Task Force meeting, supported by the United Nations, with the participation of international assistance partners, was held from 13 to 15 December with all Federal Government and federal member state security forces and institutions represented, including those of Jubbaland and Puntland. Each federal member state presented its security preparations. A revised national elections security plan, which provides for the establishment of a women's situation desk in each Joint Security Operations Centre, was presented and discussed.

27. On 1 December, the Joint Police Programme Executive Board met and approved requests for funding three election security-related courses as part of the "Somali police training plan 2020/2021". UNSOM police assumed the responsibility for coordinating election security training by implementing partners (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), AMISOM, Somali Police Force) in support of the National Electoral Security Task Force. Harmonized training manuals will be endorsed by the police professional training board and will serve as templates for training related to future elections.

2. Deepening federalism

28. As part of policymaking on decentralization, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation and the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs developed a matrix on functional assignments as a tool to help to identify federal, subnational, concurrent and local-level functions and responsibilities, and subsequently shared it with their counterparts from the federal member states for their consideration. Interministerial working sessions on functional assignments to consolidate state perspectives are to be designed and conducted.

3. Constitutional review

29. The three mandated institutions for the review of the Constitution, namely, the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs, the joint parliamentary Oversight Committee and the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission, met with the executive, legislative and civil society structures of South-West State, Galmudug, Hirshabelle and Banaadir during November 2020 to discuss the reviewed chapters of the Constitution and collect feedback. Those meetings served to distinguish between those articles requiring only technical amendments and those requiring further political consideration.

30. Those consultations were followed by an interregional conference for the technical finalization of the review of the provisional Federal Constitution, attended by the ministers of constitutional affairs of federal member states and regional parliamentary committees. The consultations resulted in the production of the third draft of the reviewed Constitution.

31. The United Nations advocated with the Speakers of both houses of the Federal Parliament to introduce new rules of procedure for the joint sitting of the two houses and a process for the adoption of the Constitution. Although the Speakers agreed to host the joint sitting, progress has been suspended since the issuance of a decree on 24 December by Mr. Farmajo, deferring the constitutional review process to the next Parliament.

32. Despite the good offices of the Special Representative and efforts by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Puntland and Jubbaland have declined to engage in the review of the Constitution, citing a lack of trust in the

Federal Government. Efforts are ongoing to sustain momentum to ensure that the eleventh Parliament continues the work of the tenth one.

4. Prevention and resolution of conflicts

33. On 4 December, the Minister of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation travelled to Beledweyne in a bid to address clan grievances in Hirshabelle region following the election of the new President of Hirshabelle. On 3 and 4 January, the Special Representative, in meetings with the President of Hirshabelle and the Minister of Interior, welcomed their efforts to promote reconciliation and stressed the importance of a broad-based dialogue among Hirshabelle partners to resolve the dispute, as well as pledged the assistance of the United Nations to the process. Throughout the process, the United Nations has consulted with Hirshabelle stakeholders. During his visit to Jawhar on 28 January, the Special Representative also discussed the ongoing reconciliation efforts with the President of Hirshabelle. On 7 January, the Hirshabelle administration concluded the reconciliation process between the Abdalla Aroni and Eli Oumar sub-clans, supported with United Nations funding. The sub-clans agreed, among other things, to the payment of compensation and the release of persons detained in connection with a land dispute between both sub-clans.

34. The Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, with United Nations support, conducted a conflict-mapping training in October for officials from all federal member states and the Banaadir Regional Administration. Participants are now collecting data using multiple sources of information to complete a conflict-mapping exercise intended to contribute to state-level reconciliation plans.

B. Cross-cutting issues

1. Gender equality and women's rights

35. The United Nations, in coordination with partners, continued its extensive advocacy efforts in support of the advancement of gender equality and women's rights and mainstreaming in key areas of mandate implementation. Somali civil society women leaders and the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development also continued their efforts to secure the 30 per cent quota for women in the 2020–2021 elections. In this regard, the Federal Minister and state-level ministries and women leaders have advocated with political and clan leaders and mobilized women aspirants in support of the 30 per cent quota. UNSOM, UNDP and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) are engaged and offering technical advice and guidance. The Ministry, with the support of UN-Women, also trained a team of 30 Somali Women's Charter champions to advocate the implementation of the 30 per cent quota.

36. On 15 December, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development hosted a national conference, supported by UNDP and UN-Women, in Mogadishu, on the implementation of the 30 per cent quota for women. The conference, which brought together women leaders, federal parliamentarians and senior federal authorities, including the Speaker of the House of the People and the Deputy Prime Minister, saw the adoption of a communiqué with actions for realizing the 30 per cent quota for women. Women leaders renewed calls for reserving 30 per cent of seats for women.

2. Youth empowerment

37. On 2 and 3 December, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) convened a forum attended by 300 Somali young people, which included talk shows and storytelling on peacebuilding. Additional training included the training of trainers on

youth for peace for 24 young Somalis and a two-week training-of-trainers course on art for peace.

38. On 12 November, UNFPA conducted a forum on the role of young people in the elections in Somalia. A total of 192 young people (80 women) representing university students, youth-led organizations, parliamentary aspirants and political activists in Mogadishu, attended the event. Similar forums were organized in Gaalkacyo and Baraawe, which were intended to create intergenerational dialogues with policymakers and elicit young people's interest in political participation.

39. On 10 December, the "Dalbile youth initiative" was launched. The multi-year project, implemented by UNFPA with European Union support, promotes employability and entrepreneurship skills while fostering an enabling environment for the development of young people. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization commenced discussions with the Ministry for Youth and Sports on developing a physical education and sports policy for Somalia.

40. A total of 441 young people involved in the UPSHIFT innovative livelihoods programme are now running businesses with support from partner business development officers and United Nations Children's Fund Youth and Innovation Associates. The initiative targets an additional 1,000 young people in Somalia, including children in conflict with the law, returnees, young people at risk of migration, gender-based violence survivors, and children associated with armed forces and armed groups.

41. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization expanded its network of enterprise development units in Mogadishu, Kismaayo, Baidoa and Beledweyne. The 24-member team of young experts in the units are delivering skills training and support access to finance solutions throughout the network.

C. Development coordination

42. On 7 December, the Federal Government, with United Nations support, organized the Somalia Partnership Forum, the highest-level partner coordination body in the country. The Forum, which combined a physical presence in Mogadishu and online participation, was chaired by the Prime Minister and brought together federal member state leaders, the Mayor of Mogadishu, Cabinet ministers, more than 35 international delegations, and civil society.

43. The discussion held at the Somalia Partnership Forum, which addressed issues across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, focused on the elections, the need to strengthen political dialogue between federal and sub-federal levels, the Somalia transition plan and the socioeconomic recovery from COVID-19 and climate-related shocks. The United Nations urged greater collaboration between the Government and partners on operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Participants took stock of progress made since the previous Forum, held in October 2019, against the priorities of the previous Mutual Accountability Framework and agreed on priority areas for action and support for a 2021 Framework, including outcomes to be completed by the end of the current administration. The structures of the recently operationalized refined aid architecture played a key role in preparations, reporting and negotiating forward-looking commitments.

IV. Human rights and protection

A. Human rights

44. UNSOM recorded 363 civilian casualties during the reporting period, comprising 200 killed and 163 injured, compared with 124 killed and 133 injured during the previous reporting period. Al-Shabaab remained the single largest perpetrator, responsible for 144 casualties, followed by 115 casualties by unknown actors, 76 by State security forces and 28 attributed to clan militias.

45. Authorities conducted 12 executions (6 in “Somaliland”, 3 in Mogadishu, 2 in Jubbaland and 1 in Puntland) and courts, mostly military ones, issued 10 new death sentences (23 in Mogadishu, 24 in Puntland 2 in South-West State and 1 in Jubbaland).

46. A total of 61 individuals were arbitrarily arrested and detained, including 7 Al-Shabaab suspects, 14 journalists and 25 alleged clan militia members suspected of being involved in the killing of a mother and her two children and the injury of another child in Warshiikh district, Middle Shabelle, on 8 November. To date, authorities have released 45 of the 61 individuals arrested and detained, while the others remain detained without charges or appearing before a court as required under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

47. On 10 December, authorities in “Somaliland” released the manager of Astaan Cable television after he had reportedly received a presidential pardon. The manager had been in detention in Hargeysa since 17 July 2020 on allegations of engaging in espionage against “Somaliland” and operating a media house without a media background. On 4 November, the Hargeysa Regional Court had sentenced him to five years’ imprisonment.

B. Compliance with the human rights due diligence policy

48. UNSOM engaged partners to support human rights due diligence policy mitigation measures for the additional 3,000 Somali security forces mandated under resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#) as eligible for UNSOS support. This engagement follows guidance from UNSOS to the Federal Government on the applicable human rights due diligence policy requirements to provide support. On 16 November, UNSOM participated in a joint technical support initiative to develop a human rights policy for the Ministry of Defence and the Somali National Army. On 29 November, UNSOM and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) held discussions on measures to strengthen human rights due diligence policy compliance in the context of UNOPS support for the Somali Police Force and the Somali National Army, including the need to initiate a review of the 2016 and 2017 risk assessments for the Somali National Army and the Somali Police Force, respectively.

49. UNSOM followed up on two incidents of alleged violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Jubbaland police and AMISOM on 30 November. The Mission also provided leaflets for human rights due diligence policy awareness and advocacy for the security forces.

C. Children in armed conflict

50. The country task force on monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children in armed conflict verified 1,121 violations affecting 1,112 children (924 boys and 188 girls) and including 8 attacks on schools. A total of 395 children were

abducted, 254 children were killed/maimed, 375 children were recruited and used and 88 girls were victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The violations were attributed to Al-Shabaab (774, or 69 per cent), unknown armed elements (161, or 14 per cent), clan militias (33, or 3 per cent) and federal and state armed forces (153, or 14 per cent).

51. As part of the implementation of the children and armed conflict mandate, UNSOM conducted a three-day virtual training on child protection and child rights for 55 Somali National Army middle-ranking officers from 24 to 26 November. In Galmudug, UNSOM held two face-to-face and additional virtual meetings in November 2020 with the state Ministry of Internal Security on the establishment of an inclusive children and armed conflict sub-working group in Galmudug, as set out in the 2019 road map for the implementation of the 2012 action plans on the killing and maiming of children and to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children.

D. Prevention of sexual and gender-based violence

52. During the reporting period, 163 verified incidents of conflict-related sexual violence were reported against 149 girls, 9 women and 5 boys. Those incidents were attributed to unknown armed actors (56); clan militias (45); Al-Shabaab (30); the Somali National Army (9); the Somali Police Force (7); Jubbaland security forces (9); and Puntland security forces (7). Cases attributed to unknown armed men and clan militias were due primarily to intensified clan attacks triggered by prolonged land-based clan disputes, as communities struggled with the impact of COVID-19 and other humanitarian crises. The fragile security situation in settlements for internally displaced persons also contributed to the increased targeting of women and girls. Al-Shabaab also continued to practise forced marriage in areas under its control.

53. Continuing the advocacy for the enactment of the 2018 sexual offences bill, UN-Women and UNFPA partnered with the National Union of Somali Journalists and organized a campaign supporting the submission of the bill in Parliament. UN-Women also undertook a public outreach campaign on the need to combat sexual and gender-based violence. Through 720 spot messages that were broadcast on radio and television, it is estimated that the campaign reached approximately 30,000 people across five federal member states.

V. Humanitarian situation

54. The triple threat of floods, COVID-19 and the desert locust upsurge aggravated the humanitarian situation by worsening pre-existing vulnerabilities, disrupting positive gains made in socioeconomic activities, affecting livelihoods and straining the health-care system. Since 16 March 2020, 4,814 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Somalia, including 132 associated deaths.

55. Adverse weather patterns, including the ongoing impact of La Niña in 2020 and 2021, continued to affect many parts of the country. Cyclone Gati made landfall in Bari region, Puntland, on 22 November, affecting 120,000 people, of whom 42,100 were temporarily displaced. Humanitarian partners scaled up assistance to people affected by the cyclone, aiding more than 78,000 affected persons. Emergency shelter, non-food items and food relief assistance for some 5,000 households are still urgently needed.

56. The desert locust infestation spread to central, southern and northern parts of the country, affecting close to 300,000 hectares of land. Almost 700,000 people remain affected by the infestation. Crop and pasture production was estimated to be 10 to 15 per cent lower than the long-term average. The situation is expected to remain

serious until at least March 2021. In addition to aerial control efforts, partners scaled up the response to affected populations, providing farming support to some 25,900 agricultural and agro-pastoral households during the *gu* and *deyr* seasons, with 7,468 farming households receiving cash support.

57. There was a decrease in reports of forced evictions. Through collective advocacy, the eviction moratorium of April 2020 was extended to March 2021, curbing the scale of evictions in parts of the country, in particular in Boosaaso, Garoowe, Gaalkacyo, Dhuusamarreeb, Caabudwaaq, Cadaado and Baidoa.

58. Outside of major urban centres, the accessibility of some districts remained limited, owing in large part to insecurity along main supply routes. As a result, in some districts the provision of humanitarian assistance relied heavily on airlifts, where the security around airfields and the physical condition of airstrips became important factors limiting access. The scale and extent of flash and riverine flooding had a critical impact on road access across affected parts of the country, in particular to Xaafuun, Bari, following Cyclone Gati. Targeted violence against both humanitarian workers and humanitarian assets continued to obstruct the ability of humanitarian workers to reach persons in need. At least 15 humanitarian workers have been killed, 13 injured and 24 abducted in Somalia since January 2020. There was also a significant increase in the number of access incident reports in 2020 (245) compared with 2019 (151).

59. By December, humanitarian partners had provided assistance to nearly 2.3 million people, having received 82 per cent of the \$1.01 billion in funding required. However, certain sectors were further from reaching funding target goals than others, with most clusters, including key sectors such as health and water, sanitation and hygiene, receiving less than 40 per cent of required funding.

60. The humanitarian situation will remain dire in 2021, and the total number of people in need is expected to increase to 5.9 million from 5.2 million in 2020. The Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia is being finalized, and humanitarians aim to assist 4 million people, including internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees, to ensure access to basic services and livelihood support, while providing life-saving food assistance to 3.1 million internally displaced persons and non-internally displaced persons in crisis and who are facing food insecurity emergencies. Approximately \$1.09 billion will be required.

VI. Comprehensive approach to security

61. On 1 December, the Prime Minister convened a meeting of the Security and Justice Committee involving senior representatives from the Federal Government and the federal member states, as well as international partners. The meeting saw the issuance of a communiqué that demonstrated a clear intent by all parties to revitalize discussions on the political-security nexus and ensure appropriate strategic direction of the strand committees, with key Mutual Accountability Framework commitments on security and justice also confirmed at the Somalia Partnership Forum of 7 December. The Committee agreed to meet quarterly in 2021, with the relevant federal security and rule of law ministries now leading the relevant strands.

A. Operations

62. The Somalia transition plan has been finalized by the Federal Government and will allow detailed operational planning to commence. A force generation conference, announced by the Prime Minister on 1 December, should also be convened early in

2021, to confirm the transitional commitments and the resources required to deliver the security transition by the end of 2021.

63. The Mine Action Service supported AMISOM and Somali security forces in improvised explosive device threat mitigation by providing 19 threat-analysis reports, 3 supply route vulnerable point studies and 20 improvised explosive device awareness reports.

B. Institutional capacity-building

64. On 16 November, the House of the People of the Federal Parliament approved five non-ex officio members to the Judicial Service Commission. Civil society organizations such as the Somali Bar Association opposed the appointments and claimed that they were based on clan affiliation and were unqualified in accordance with the Commission's Establishment Act. The Upper House has yet to endorse the nominees. In the same session, the House of the People also approved the nominations submitted by the Ministry of Justice for the nine members of the Somalia Anti-Corruption Commission.

65. On 3 December, the Chief Justice of the Federal Supreme Court swore in 17 judges, including 3 justices appointed by presidential decree. Eleven justices now sit on the Supreme Court, exceeding the five stipulated by law.

66. On 12 November, the Federal Supreme Court concluded a 10-day judicial training for 37 judicial personnel (33 men and 4 women). The National Integrity Coordination Unit of the Federal Ministry of Justice concluded a three-day workshop held on 10 December on combating and preventing corruption.

67. On 10 November, the "Somaliland" Minister of Justice convened the juvenile justice working group to strengthen the juvenile justice policy framework, and on 8 December, a three-day validation workshop of the "Somaliland" custodial corps bill concluded.

68. On 28 December, the Commissioner General of the "Somaliland" custodial corps reported that 32 male prisoners from Hargeysa central prison had completed a vocational training and educational programme administered in conjunction with Beder International University. The programme included vocational training on plumbing and electricity, along with classes in basic education and sharia law.

69. The United Nations supported the Galmudug administration in re-establishing the state police by coordinating training on human rights and community policing for 700 officers. UNSOM supported the state Ministry of Security in developing a strategy for reintegrating ex-militias into civilian life.

70. On 14 November, the Somali Police Force drafted a strategic plan for the period 2020–2025. UNSOM advised the Somali Police Force to align the plan to all strategic documents, including the national security architecture, prioritize community engagement, expand the Federal Darwish and criminal investigation capabilities and establish a diplomatic unit and a counter-terrorism directorate.

71. On 1 December, the joint police programme executive board approved funding to build police stations in Cadaado, Galmudug and Kismaayo, Jubbaland, and to procure equipment and pay stipends for police officers trained under the programme.

72. On 9 December, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea assisted in training 33 federal and state maritime law enforcement officials on ocean affairs and the legislative framework required to govern the country's maritime zones.

73. The Mine Action Service trained 39 the Somali Police Force personnel (29 men and 10 women) under the mobile vehicle checkpoint project. Significant progress was made in readying a base for the checkpoint teams from which to operate, as part of efforts to equip Somali forces to assume responsibility for security.

74. In December, the joint security sector governance programme supported the security ministries in South-West State and Galmudug in holding two workshops on security sector reforms, human rights and gender for 50 officials (10 women and 40 men). The programme, set to end on 31 December 2020, was extended for a six-month period to enable the design of the second phase of the programme, which will assist in the implementation of the Somalia transition plan, the electoral process and civilian oversight institutional development.

C. Supporting activities

75. From 5 November 2020 to 4 February 2021, the Mine Action Service provided explosive ordnance risk education to 1,178 women, 1,142 men, 2,233 girls and 3,016 boys. Risk education sessions were delivered in all regions of Somalia (except Middle Jubba), including in Galguduud, which has the highest number of explosive remnants of war/landmine accidents reported.

76. On 21 November, a new Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism Coordinator within the Office of the Prime Minister was appointed to advance the country's action plan on preventing/countering violent extremism. On 17 December, a United Nations preventing/countering violent extremism project steering committee was convened by the Office of the Prime Minister with international partners. The current project was extended until June 2021, and the road map of the consultant developing the new multi-year programme, expected to start in the second half of 2021, was adopted.

77. Rehabilitation centres continue to accept low-risk former Al-Shabaab fighters. As of 15 December, there were 302 men and 183 women beneficiaries in the centres. For the first time in the defector rehabilitation programme's history, 62 women graduated, in addition to 35 men. Female participation increased from 56 in June to 183 in December. In November 2020, the Office of the National Security Adviser, supported by the Panel of Experts on Somalia, the Mine Action Service and international partners, led an assessment of the Halane armoury, where high explosives are currently stored. The assessment report was circulated to all relevant stakeholders by the Office early in January 2021. Recommendations on how to ensure the safe management of high explosives will be taken forward.

VII. United Nations Support Office in Somalia support for the African Union Mission in Somalia and the Somali security forces

A. Support for African Union Mission in Somalia operations

78. In December, UNSOS completed the deployment of the contingent-owned equipment of the Ugandan military aviation unit to Baledogle camp. The aviation unit, under the command and control of the Force Commander, comprises a crew of 140 personnel and 4 helicopters, bringing the number of military aircraft to 7 of the 12 authorized for AMISOM.

79. In November, UNSOS completed the air movement of contingent-owned equipment of the Ghana formed police unit to Baidoa, except for eight oversized contingent-owned equipment vehicles that could not be flown and are currently in

Mogadishu. UNSOS awaits confirmation from the African Union, Ghana and AMISOM to repatriate the oversized contingent-owned equipment to Ghana. The arrival inspections of the Ghana formed police unit contingent-owned equipment and Ugandan aviation unit were conducted virtually owing to COVID-19 restrictions. The deployment of the Ghana formed police unit and Ugandan aviation unit are expected to enhance the operational effectiveness of AMISOM.

80. UNSOS airlifted an additional 100 Djiboutian troops and 75 tons of field defence stores to Dhuusamarreeb to enable the construction of a forward operating base. Currently, 227 Djiboutian troops are deployed and the Federal Government, AMISOM and the African Union are determining whether to establish a long-term AMISOM presence in Galmudug.

81. The forward operating base wellness programme is progressing in all sectors, albeit with delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and flood-damaged roads. To date, 57 per cent of the locations under the programme have received allocated field defence stores, with more than 4.7 km of ballistics barriers, 16 watchtowers and 11.5 km of ditches completed. UNSOS has recently received 30 armoured personnel carriers, which will be handed over to AMISOM as part of a mission enabling unit, to provide support in opening main supply routes. The water borehole drilling programme also continues in all sectors.

82. UNSOS supported the rotation of 2,108 Burundian troops from 1 to 30 November, 160 personnel of the Ugandan formed police unit from 12 to 28 December, 1,450 Ugandan troops from 14 to 31 December, and 850 Djiboutian troops from 6 January to 6 February. UNSOS has also supported the rotation of 3,416 Kenyan troops since 17 January. In accordance with COVID-19 mitigation measures, all incoming troops underwent 14 days of quarantine in their home countries and upon arrival in the mission. Similarly, outgoing troops were quarantined for 14 days in the mission prior to departure to their home countries.

83. The Mine Action Service, with UNSOS assistance, continued to support AMISOM security operations and stabilization efforts by providing improvised explosive device threat mitigation advice, analysis, training and mentoring concerning the use of specialized equipment, explosive detection dogs, and community liaison and explosive ordnance clearance teams. During the reporting period, the Mine Action Service trained 659 AMISOM uniformed personnel to enhance their capability to locate and destroy improvised explosive devices and to safely operate within the threat environment, specifically along the main supply routes. The Mine Action Service contributed to the safety and security of strategic infrastructure through the deployment of 24 teams working with 24 detection dogs to conduct searches of 7,433 pieces of luggage, 33,339 vehicles, 42 buildings, 17,000 m² of building areas and 2,727,300 m² of open areas throughout the sectors.

84. The Head of UNSOS held virtual meetings with senior officials from Burundi, Djibouti, Ghana, Kenya and Uganda as part of her outreach to AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries.

85. On 23 November, the Head of UNSOS met virtually with Federal Government senior officials, led by the Minister for Planning, Investment and Economic Development, within the framework of the joint host country relations committee, to discuss ongoing status-of-mission agreement-related violations. Among others, it was agreed at the meeting that UNSOS and Federal Government counterparts would explore the possibility of organizing a workshop to inform directors-general of federal line ministries on the agreement and the mandate of the United Nations. UNSOS and Federal Government counterparts would also work together to develop a standard operating procedure to resolve future commercial disputes involving United Nations contractors.

86. In mid-December, a Federal Government-UNSOS “contact group” was established, with participation from the Office of the Prime Minister, to examine issues and address concerns with respect to the employment of Somali workers and the identification of opportunities for local Somali-owned businesses. In a subsequent meeting, on 26 January, the contact group shared information on the opportunities currently provided with regard to the employment of Somali nationals by UNSOS and its contractors, including the number of contracts awarded to Somali contractors, and resolved to continue to expand the range of opportunities.

B. Support for Somalia national armed forces operations

87. UNSOS continued to support 10,900 Somali National Army troops and received confirmation from the Federal Government of which units would fall under the additional 3,000 Somali security forces personnel, pursuant to resolution [2520 \(2020\)](#). As advised by the Federal Government, additional support will be extended to 2,000 Somali National Army troops and 1,000 Somali Police Force personnel. As of 18 January, the balance in the United Nations trust fund in support of Somalia security forces was \$10.75 million, enough to sustain UNSOS support for the coming seven months at current levels of expenditure. The Special Representative and the Head of UNSOS, with the support of the Department of Operational Support, continued to highlight the dire state of AMISOM and the trust fund and urged donors to contribute generously to sustaining ongoing and planned security operations.

88. The Mine Action Service, with support from UNSOS, initiated the training and equipping of five Somali National Army route search and improvised explosive device disposal in situ teams, to enable safe operations in the high-threat improvised explosive device environment in Lower Shabelle. Such training and equipping of a further 15 teams are under way.

VIII. United Nations Presence in Somalia

89. United Nations entities continued to be present in Baidoa, Beledweyne, Berbera, Boosasso, Dhooble, Dhuusamarreeb, Doolow, Gaalkacyo, Garoowe, Hargeysa, Jawhar, Kismaayo and Mogadishu. As of 8 February, 389 international staff and 1,348 national staff were deployed throughout Somalia.

90. The United Nations in Somalia continues to conduct its COVID-19 response, including support for AMISOM personnel and operations. Adequate medical capacity has been established to support a population at risk in excess of 25,000, which includes the United Nations and its third-party contractors in Somalia, and AMISOM.

IX. Observations

91. Despite all the political challenges, Somali political leaders should continue to strive to maintain dialogue to achieve the consensus necessary to press ahead with the holding of elections. I therefore call upon all stakeholders to urgently resolve their remaining differences on the way forward in the electoral process within the framework of the agreement of 17 September and to hold elections within the shortest reasonable delay possible. I also reiterate the need to maintain the provisions made in the agreement for the attainment of at least 30 per cent representation of women in the electoral process.

92. In this regard, I would like to underscore that it is imperative to come to a broadly inclusive understanding on the implementation of the agreement of

17 September in order to safeguard the credibility of this process and to secure stability in the country. I therefore encourage Somali leaders to engage in regular dialogue until the conclusion of the election process, to identify and resolve differences when they arise. In addition, I emphasize that the conduct of elections must be peaceful and that the use or threat of violence is unacceptable.

93. UNSOM, jointly with UNDP and in collaboration with UNSOS, UNOPS and UN-Women, will provide support to the electoral process through its good offices and through technical, operational and logistical assistance to the Federal Government of Somalia, once outstanding disputes have been resolved and within the limits of its mandate and resources.

94. The holding of inclusive and peaceful elections as soon as possible is important to renew the legitimacy of the Somali federal institutions and allow the further pursuit of the many pressing tasks towards building sustainable peace in Somalia. These would include work towards the holding of one-person, one-vote elections in 2024–2025, to which the Somali authorities and partners committed themselves during the previous Somalia Partnership Forum.

95. Recent progress towards the security transition in Somalia in 2021 is encouraging. I welcome the key milestones of the past 18 months, which have led to this point, including the conduct of the joint Federal Government of Somalia-United Nations-African Union threat assessment, the revisions to the Somalia transition plan, the meeting of the Security and Justice Committee, the holding of the Somalia Partnership Forum and the report of the Independent Assessment, all of which have advanced the discussions and laid the foundations for the security transition to take effect in 2021. I call upon all stakeholders to continue to collaborate to sustain this momentum. The implementation of the Somalia transition plan, as well as the organization of a force generation conference, are important further milestones in this regard, all of which will support the review of the AMISOM and UNSOS mandates going forward.

96. I remain concerned about the dire state of the trust fund in support of AMISOM and Somali security forces. In this regard, I note the ongoing efforts of my Special Representative in Somalia, the Head of UNSOS and the Department of Operational Support to mobilize donors to make contributions to the trust funds in support of the transition of security responsibilities to Somali ownership and urge donors, both traditional and new ones, to generously contribute to the trust funds.

97. In relation to humanitarian matters, I remain concerned that, during the electoral period, there is a heightened risk of forced evictions of internally displaced persons, which has been one of the main triggers of secondary displacement. The general elections in 2016 saw the worst single mass eviction incidents, with more than 150,000 people evicted in Mogadishu alone. I also remain concerned about the looming drought for parts of Somalia, with indications of water shortages in several parts of the country due to poor or failed *deyr* rains and projected delays and a poor upcoming *gu* rainfall in 2021. While recognizing the current global economic predicament, I call upon international partners to continue to provide the funding necessary to save lives and alleviate poverty in Somalia.

98. Notwithstanding the challenges that it faces, Somalia has demonstrated remarkable resilience in facing COVID-19, with a low caseload. However, I remain concerned about any lingering health and socioeconomic effects that the pandemic may have, in particular on the country's most vulnerable groups.

99. Continued Al-Shabaab attacks on Somali civilians, government officials, Somali security forces, AMISOM and the international community are worrisome, especially the corrosive effect that they can have in disrupting the elections. I urge

the Federal Government of Somalia, in collaboration with international partners, to safeguard civilians and hold accountable those responsible for perpetrating these egregious acts.

100. I remain concerned about the high number of cases of conflict-related sexual violence, which disproportionately affects girls. I urge the Federal Government to take steps to protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence by enacting the 2018 sexual offences bill and by holding perpetrators of sexual violence accountable. I also reiterate my previous calls to establish a national human rights commission, which would contribute to improving the protection of human rights in Somalia.

101. Progress on peacebuilding and State-building in Somalia is contingent upon the continued support of the African Union, IGAD, the European Union, Member States, non-governmental organizations and other partners, for which I am deeply grateful. I pay tribute to AMISOM and Somalia security forces and remain mindful of the tremendous sacrifices that they have made to protect the Somali people and in the pursuit of peace and stability for the country.

102. I would like to conclude by expressing my appreciation to my Special Representative, James Swan, and the United Nations staff in Somalia for their firm dedication in implementing the mandate of the Organization in Somalia in challenging circumstances.

