



Security Council briefing on Somalia, 19 February 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I also thank SRSg Laing and AU Special Representative El-Amine Souef for their briefings. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Somalia to this meeting.

We commend Somalia for recent positive developments, including its admission to the East African Community. This step underscores the importance of bolstered regional ties. The fulfilment of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries completion point marks a milestone, unlocking a potential for new financing international channels.

Malta also welcomes the conclusion of peaceful elections in Puntland and echoes the Secretary-General's call that Puntland be included in national state-building discussions.

Malta recognises the latest efforts within the National Consultative Council. We encourage consensus-driven and inclusive consultations to any constitutional amendments.



In this context, we welcome, the participation of President Hassan Sheikh to the inauguration ceremony of President Deni last January.

We remain concerned, however, that women remain marginalised from the deliberations of the National Consultative Council. We encourage Somali authorities to promote women's political participation and representation, and to take tangible steps in this direction.

The recent alarming increase in brutal femicides are gravely concerning. We call for immediate action to investigate these crimes, to strengthen legal protection, and end impunity.

We welcome recent trainings and workshops organised by UNSOM to enhance advocacy capacities on gender sensitive law-making. We also welcome the convening of the National Conference of Women Parliamentarians that brought together women parliamentarians, senior government officials and civil society representatives.



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Malta
2023-2024

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President

We take note of the recently presented Security Sector Development Strategic Framework by Somalia. At the same time, we recognise that the forthcoming departure of ATMIS, by the end of this year, warrants strategic planning.

Terrorism knows no borders. We therefore acknowledge Somalia's need of significant international support to build on the progress achieved through ATMIS and move on to the next phase of Somalia's security capabilities. Stabilisation remains at the forefront of any security progress, accompanied by strong local governance structures and reconciliation.

Al-Shabaab remains a serious threat to the peace, security, and stability of Somalia, and Malta strongly condemns all offensives by this group. We remain deeply concerned by the number of violations attributed to Al-Shabaab, including, as we just heard from SRSG Laing, the continued abduction of children for recruitment. We remain supportive of the efforts by the Somali Government in addressing these challenges.



We look forward to receiving a comprehensive Somali security proposal by the end of next month. We encourage this proposal to be shared and discussed with the African Union, the European Union, and other key partners, to ensure its feasibility and to outline a clear exit strategy with measurable objectives.

President

Cycles of droughts and flooding, driven by the El Niño, render Somalia one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. These climate security-related impacts exacerbate humanitarian crises, inhibit development, and create fertile ground for ethnic conflicts and violence due to scarcity of vital resources.

Malta continues to support the work of the Climate Security Advisor within UNSOM, whose role remains crucial in identifying climate-related impacts on the ground.



President

We follow with concern the recent developments in the region and joins calls for de-escalation in tensions between Ethiopia and Somalia. Malta fully supports Somalia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. We encourage the parties to engage in constructive dialogue in order to resolve the situation.

To conclude, Malta reiterates its full support to the Somali Government in achieving its national priorities, including the constitutional review process and security sector reform, both of which remain key to ensuring long-term unity, peace and stability for Somalia.

I thank you.