



Security Council briefing on Somalia, 3 October 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the UN, New York

Thank you, President and I also thank acting SRSO Swan, AU Special Representative El-Amine Souef and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their briefings. I also welcome the Foreign Minister of Somalia to the Chamber.

Malta welcomes ongoing discussions concerning UNSOM's transition with the Federal Government of Somalia. These include recent efforts towards a smooth transfer of responsibilities.

We value the work of UNSOM, particularly its technical, financial, and logistical support for reconciliation efforts. The collaborative agreements with Galmudug State on disputed lands, and capacity-building and training in the rule of law and countering violent extremism, are critical tools in this transition.



UNSOM's assistance has also been pivotal in drafting the electoral legal framework. As stated by the Secretary-General, an inclusive and implementable electoral framework is of fundamental importance.

Safeguarding the political rights of women and ensuring a minimum 30% quota for women in elected positions and appointed bodies must be maintained. Malta reaffirms the importance of women's participation in in Somalia's political processes.

As we have heard from Ms. Ilwad Elman their engagement is essential to lasting peace in Somalia.

We support recent efforts towards the finalisation of the bill on female genital mutilation, and commend the inclusive consultation process, led by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development, supported by UNFPA.



On the other hand, we are deeply concerned about the trafficking of young girls for forced marriages to Al-Shabaab members, and other incidents of conflict-related sexual violence. We are also alarmed by recurrent forced evictions of displaced people.

We welcome all efforts to end CRSV, enhance survivors' support, and strengthen the relevant legal, policy and institutional frameworks. We must end impunity and recognise the needs and rights of survivors.

President

Children's needs, in the face of alarming violations, cannot be overlooked. Malta urges Somali authorities and international partners to prioritise child protection in the transition.



On 17 August, four young adults in Galkayo, Puntland, were executed after being convicted and sentenced to death for crimes committed while they were under 18 and associated with Al-Shabaab. This is deeply troubling.

The Puntland Age Verification Committee advised against the death penalty and the UN is actively engaging with Puntland authorities, urging compliance with due process for all young adults associated with armed groups when they were minors. In this vein, Malta advocates for a moratorium on such executions.

The repeated use of improvised explosive devices by Al-Shabaab also remains a significant threat to Somalia's security. The attack on Lido Beach, and the group's escalated attacks in recent months, resulting in a 367% increase in civilian casualties, warrants our urgent attention.

At the regional level, we take this occasion to commend the recent talks between Ethiopia and Somalia, facilitated by Türkiye. We encourage continued dialogue between these neighbouring States as part of broader efforts to promote regional peace and security.



President

Somalia is also grappling with climate change challenges, perhaps some of the most devastating impacts, globally adding yet another layer to its security and humanitarian situation. We welcome recent efforts by the Green Climate Fund and their pledge of 100 million dollars for local climate adaptation plans. Malta continues to stress the need for integrating climate resilience within security planning, recognising the link between environmental challenges and regional instability.

As an EU Member State, Malta reaffirms the EU's strong partnership with Somalia, aimed at placing Somalia's ownership for its security at the centre.

Since 2019, the EU has provided five packages of support to the Somali National Army totalling 110 million euros. The EU will also stay engaged through financial support to the new AUSSOM, together with all security partners of Somalia, on the principle of burden-sharing. Let us continue to work collectively towards this next phase.



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I thank you.