



SECURITY COUNCIL INFORMAL EXPERT GROUP ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

SOMALIA

June 30th 2021

Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015):

*OP 5. Recognizes the ongoing need for greater integration of resolution 1325 (2000) in its own work in alignment with resolution 2122 (2013), including the need to address challenges linked to the **provision of specific information and recommendations on the gender dimensions of situations on the Council's agenda, to inform and help strengthen the Council's decisions, and therefore in addition to elements set out in resolution 2122 (2013), and in accordance with established practice and procedure: (a) Expresses its intention to convene meetings of relevant Security Council experts as part of an Informal Experts Group on Women, Peace and Security to facilitate a more systematic approach to Women, Peace and Security within its own work and enable greater oversight and coordination of implementation efforts.***

Security Council Resolution 2467 (2019):

OP 4. Recognizes the work of the Informal Experts Group on Women, Peace and Security, as expressed in resolution 2242, and expresses its intention to consider its information, analysis, and recommendations, acknowledging UN Women's important role in this regard, and emphasizes that sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and all other aspects of the Women, Peace and Security agenda should continue to be addressed in this forum.

Security Council Resolution 2493 (2019):

OP. 7. Takes note of the work of the Informal Experts Group on Women, Peace and Security as expressed in resolution 2242 (2015) to facilitate a more systematic approach to Women, Peace and Security within its own work and enable greater oversight and coordination of implementation efforts; and acknowledges UN Women's important role in this regard.

RECOMMENDATIONS¹

Considerations for upcoming decisions of the Security Council

In view of the upcoming negotiations on the mandate of UNSOM, the Security Council should retain all existing references to women, peace and security in both the preamble and operational paragraphs of resolution 2540 (2020), including on the women's quota and the Sexual Offences Bill. In addition, in a new mandate of UNSOM the Security Council should consider adding the following to its operational paragraphs:

Requests UNSOM to continue to take fully into account gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and to reinforce its efforts to support, engage, and consult with women's civil society organizations in all their diversity, at all levels and in all areas of its work.

Urges UNSOM to continue its advocacy on women's political rights with a focus on influential stakeholders, including the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States authorities, political parties leaders, Members of Parliament, clan elders, and the media, and call on the United Nations and the international community to encourage the Federal Government to ensure that women's political rights and equal representation and participation in public spheres, leadership and

¹ This background note, including the recommendations at the end of this document, is prepared by UN Women as the secretariat of the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security, in consultation with other UN entities.

decision-making are promoted and enshrined in the revised Constitution, and in the finalised electoral and political parties laws.

Urges the Federal Government of Somalia to recognize the efforts and contribution of women in peacebuilding and to create a positive environment for women's active and meaningful participation, including in formal processes and in decision-making.

Urges the Federal Government of Somalia to accelerate the finalization, adoption and implementation of its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, in close cooperation with civil society, and the adoption of the new National Action Plan for implementation of the Joint Communiqué to end sexual violence in conflict.

Urges the Federal Government of Somalia to ratify and implement the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and to pass legislation for the criminalization of sexual and gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation, marital rape and child marriage.

Urges the Federal Government of Somalia to investigate and prosecute without delay all reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence, including those perpetrated by security personnel, based on a survivor-centered approach, thereby reinforcing a zero-tolerance policy for such violations.

Calls on the Federal Government of Somalia to fulfill its commitments on gender mainstreaming in the security sector institutions, including developing and implementing gender strategies in all security sector institutions as stipulated in the national security pact and increasing women's participation and role in the security and defence sectors.

When negotiating the renewal of AMISOM's mandate later this year, the Security Council should retain all the existing language on women, peace and security in **resolution 2568 (2021)** and ensure that gender analysis and consultations with women's organizations inform the transfer of security responsibilities to the Somali authorities.

Other recommendations for the IEG and the Security Council

In addition, the IEG co-chairs and other Council Members should:

- Closely monitor and strongly advocate for the implementation of the 30 percent quota for women's representation on all electoral management committees and in the upcoming elections resulting in a minimum of 30 percent seats for women in both Upper and the Lower House, including by advocating for the use of reserved seats and a drastic reduction of the registration fees for candidates. Council members should also consider providing funds to women candidates to cover the registration fees and trainings, if needed. They should further urge the Somali authorities to ensure the safety of women candidates.
- Urge the Federal Government of Somalia to enact the original Sexual Offences Bill of 2018 and urge 'Somaliland' authorities to reject the Rape, Fornication and Other Sexual Offences Bill.
- Support the Federal Government of Somalia to strengthen investigation and prosecution capacities at the federal and regional levels with respect to sexual and gender-based violence, including through the operationalisation of specific help desks at police stations, and to undertake efforts to sensitize various stakeholders, including religious and traditional leaders, local authorities, the judiciary, and law enforcement about sexual and gender-based violence.

- Call on the Federal Government of Somalia and its international partners to increase investment and earmark resources to support the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.
- Provide more long-term and flexible funding for women civil society organizations and increased funding for services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including medical, psycho-social and livelihoods support.
- Invite the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict to brief the Sanctions Committee and ask the Secretary-General to appoint a dedicated gender expert to the Panel of Experts in line with resolution 2552 (2020) and, if needed, increase the number of experts in the new mandate.

Developments in the Security Council

On 12 March 2021, the Security Council adopted **resolution 2568 (2021)** reauthorizing the **African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)** for ten months until 31 December 2021. The resolution retained the language on women, peace and security of the previous mandate, including on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). In addition, the mandate now explicitly references resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions and authorizes AMISOM to provide security escorts providing specialised investigation expertise and community policing support in a gender-responsive manner.

On 4 December 2020, the Security Council adopted **resolution 2554 (2020)** renewing the **counter-piracy measures** off the coast of Somalia for 12 months. As its predecessor, the resolution urged all States to ensure that counter-piracy activities, particularly land-based activities, take into consideration the need to protect women and children from exploitation, including sexual exploitation.

On 12 November 2020, the Security Council adopted **resolution 2551 (2020)**, renewing the **sanctions regime** which includes the planning, directing or committing of acts involving sexual or gender-based violence (SGBV) as a standalone listing criterion. The violation of applicable international law in Somalia involving the targeting of civilians including children and women in situations of armed conflict, such as SGBV, is another listing criterion under the sanctions regime. In addition, the resolution calls on the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS) to investigate and prosecute individuals responsible for SGBV in conflict and post-conflict situations. None of the narratives of the individuals listed by the Committee includes references to SGBV or other violations of women's rights. Resolution 2551 (2020) also extended the mandate of the **Panel of Experts** until 15 December 2021 and retained the provision that directly requests the Secretary-General to include dedicated gender expertise. In the current composition of the Panel, the humanitarian expert is tasked with covering issues related to SGBV but there is no expert specifically and exclusively focusing on gender issues. In its **2020 report**, the Panel documented the killing of a local women's leader and NGO staff member through a targeted improvised explosive device attack for which Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility. The woman, who worked closely with the Dinsor district council, which is made up of 50 percent women, had previously received death threats from Al-Shabaab to force her to stop her advocacy for women's rights. Furthermore, the Panel recorded an incident where two Somali National Army officers stationed at a checkpoint assaulted and raped a girl and a pregnant woman. The Panel also reported that in July 2020 over 60 households in Markad, Sanag region, were forced to abandon their land after Al-Shabaab tried to enforce its authority over the village and demanded local women to marry members of the group.

On 28 August 2020, the Security Council adopted **resolution 2540 (2020)** extending the mandate of the **United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)** until 31 August 2021. The resolution expanded the provisions related to women, peace and security of the previous mandate, including by tasking UNSOM with (1.) the provision of technical advice and capacity-building to support the FGS in its efforts to enable

the full, equal and meaningful participation of all Somalis, including women, in reconciliation efforts, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and elections, including supporting Somali commitments to ensure that women fill at least 30 percent of the seats in both Houses of Parliament, and increasing participation and empowerment of women at all decision-making levels, and (2.) the provision of capacity-building support to the FGS in particular the Ministry for Women and Human Rights Development, to promote and protect human rights in Somalia, including to protect women and girls from SGBV. It also called on the FGS to ensure that sexual offences legislation be compatible with its obligations under international law and commitments on the protection of children and women. Relevant excerpts of all referenced resolutions are included in the annex below.

In **press statements** issued on 28 May 2021, on 28 February 2020, and on 25 November 2019, the Security Council repeatedly emphasized the importance of implementing the 30 percent minimum quota for women parliamentarians.

So far, **three women from Somali civil society have briefed the Security Council** in country-specific meetings. On 27 November 2020, **Zainab Hassan**, Founder and Chairwoman of the Somali Gender Equity Movement, expressed alarm about the steep decline in the number of women seats in all of the parliaments of FMS, with the exception of Jubbaland, and voiced concern about how the quota for women's participation will be guaranteed in the absence of an implementation mechanism and oversight committee. Emphasizing that many well-educated, experienced and active women of different ages are candidates for the -delayed- 2020 [now 2021] parliamentary elections, she called on the Security Council to urge UNSOM, UN agencies and international community partners to monitor the development of necessary mechanisms in order to implement the agreed electoral model, with a view to achieving women's rights, representation and a safe and secure election. She also called on the Somali Government to increase the budget for public education to reduce drop-out rates and improve the quality of education. On 21 August 2019, **Amina Arale**, Executive Director of the Somali Women Development Centre, called on the Security Council to urge the Government of Somalia to ratify and implement all regional and international legislation to protect the rights of women and girls, and ensure that all national legislation, including the Sexual Offences Bill and the FGM Bill, meet international standards and are rigorously implemented. Drawing attention to the retaliation against politically active women in Somalia, she asked the Security Council to urge UNSOM to work with the government to develop a mechanism to protect women aspirants and to provide updates on progress made in engaging with women's civil society, and to call on the Government to respect the rights of women human rights defenders. She also emphasized the importance of sensitizing various stakeholders including religious and traditional leaders and local authorities about SGBV and advocated for the creation of specialized SGBV courts and juvenile courts. Like Ms. Hassan, she asked the Security Council to call on the Somali government and state authorities to ensure that the 30 percent quota for women representation is implemented in the upcoming elections. On 27 January 2017, **Asha Gelle Dirie**, told the Council about her experience as Chairperson of the Committee of Goodwill Ambassadors, appointed by the President to help women secure 30 percent of the seats in both houses of Parliament in the 2016 electoral process.

Women's participation in peacebuilding and politics

Women play an **active role in peacebuilding in Somalia** as peacemakers, mediators, and negotiators. They serve on dispute-resolution committees in their local communities, engage in community planning processes, and publicly condemn violence and call for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Despite this, women are **largely excluded from formal and higher-level decision-making**. The cabinet formed in October 2020 has only four women among its 26 members and women make up less than 25 percent of federal and state institutions and only 22 percent of the members on the district-level peace and stability committees. The Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia noted in her 2020 report that the male-dominated clan system, accompanied by a conservative interpretation of sharia law is limiting women's participation and hindering progress.

In the **2016 elections** women obtained 24 percent of parliamentary seats which constituted a **significant increase** compared to only 14 percent in the 2012 elections. This achievement was the result of concerted advocacy campaigns of women civil society organizations and networks in collaboration with the Committee of Goodwill Ambassadors and with pressure and support from the UN and members of the international community. Women leaders identified women's limited access to financial resources as well as the opposition of traditional elders and male politicians as major obstacles for women's participation in the electoral process.

The 17 September 2020 Electoral Agreement and the 27 May 2021 Agreement for the **upcoming, delayed elections** reference the **30 percent quota for women's representation** in both houses of parliament and the importance of safeguarding it in the forthcoming election. However, women leaders warn that the indirect election model favors a small political elite and prevents an inclusive process. Furthermore, no concrete mechanism has been outlined as to how the quota will be implemented and how a minimum of 30 percent seats for women will be secured in the election and the 11th Federal parliament. The Electoral Law only states that political parties need to nominate at least 30 percent women candidates, but it is not requiring that 30 percent of seats in both houses are reserved for women. Women leaders warn that under the current circumstances it is very unlikely that the 30 percent quota will be met, especially considering the strong opposition of clan leaders towards women's participation. Some have suggested to reserve 30 percent of the seats for women as the only way to secure the quota and warn that the high registration fees for candidates (USD 20,000 for upper house candidates and USD 10,000 for lower house candidates) constitute an additional barrier for women candidates in the elections – a situation which has been further aggravated by the loss of funding and income due to COVID-19. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister has stated that the 30 percent women's quota is a key priority on the agenda and a Gender and Inclusivity Advisor has been included in Technical Elections Support Team (TEST) assisting the Prime Minister to implement the 27 May political agreement and its annexes. The launch of a Goodwill Ambassadors programme and issuance of a plan/guidance for the implementation of the 30 percent quota are among the priority agenda of the TEST. So far, **the electoral committees fall well short of the 30 percent quota**, and women's representation is closer to 20 percent.

Women leaders have expressed **concerns about the safety of women candidates**, noting that in the past women candidates have been harassed, kidnapped, and killed. They call for protection of each registered woman candidate, for women police officers to be deployed at every polling station and for women's organizations to be given the opportunity to monitor and document abuses in election venues. The revised national elections security plan provides for the establishment of a women's situation desk in each Joint Security Operations Centre. On 2 April 2021 the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development signed an agreement with the Ministry of Interior on ensuring protection of women during the elections, which was the result of months-long advocacy by Somali actors and the international community, including civil society actors, jumpstarted by a workshop for high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Interior, supported by UN Women and the Folke Bernadotte Academy. In January 2021, with UNFPA's support, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development established a call centre in Mogadishu for women aspiring for leadership positions. It serves as a meeting place for women to discuss political affairs and includes a police section in case a woman candidate feels threatened or faces restrictions imposed by her clan.

The picture of women's representation and participation in regional legislative bodies is worrisome and has dampened the optimism brought about by the 2016 federal elections. In the direct 'Somaliland' Parliamentary and Local Council Elections held on 31 May 2021, no woman was elected to the 'Somaliland' House of Representatives consisting of 82 Members. There were only 13 women candidates and none of them won their race. Prior to this, in September 2020, the House of Representatives of 'Somaliland' rejected the proposed 22 percent quota for women to be added to the 'Somaliland' Electoral

Law. Furthermore, only 15 percent of the members of the South-West State Assembly are women which constitutes a significant decrease compared to 22 percent women in the previous assembly. In Puntland and Hirshabelle States House of Representatives, representation of women remained at the same low level with 2 women MPs (3 percent) out of the total of 66 seats in Puntland and 6 women MPs (6 percent) out of 99 seats of the Hirshabelle Assembly. Galmudug Assembly has 8 women MPs (9 percent) out of the total 89 seats. Sustained efforts by Somali women leaders contributed to an increase of women's representation in the Jubbaland State Assembly during the Jubbaland State electoral process in August 2019, from three (4 percent) to nine (12 percent) of the total 75 seats. State Assemblies have established Parliamentary Committees on Women and Human Rights issues which are chaired by woman members of parliament. In addition, there are women Deputy Speakers in the regional assemblies of the South-West and Galmudug States. This has contributed to the establishment of women caucuses in these State Assemblies to advocate for women's issues in parliament.

In September 2019, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development, in collaboration with UN Women, initiated the development of a **National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security**. The draft plan is currently under review and is expected to be finalized in 2021. The **Peacebuilding Fund**, including through its Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, is also prioritizing WPS and women's participation in peacebuilding and leadership.

Although the 2017 **Security Pact** calls for the adoption of a "strategy to mainstream gender and the WPS Agenda across the security sector", inequality and societal patriarchal norms hamper the creation of an enabling environment to allow women's meaningful **participation in the security sector**, resulting in a low women's representation in national security and defence institutions.

Meanwhile, initiatives like the **Women's Charter for Somalia** keep calling for parity across government, the security sector, and public administration. The Charter was the outcome of a three-day Somali Women's Convention in 2019, and the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development, with UN Women's support, has identified and designated 30 Charter Champions across Somalia to advocate for parity and the other commitments in the Charter, from protection from female genital mutilation (FGM) or the promotion of women's socioeconomic rights.

Human rights issues, including conflict-related sexual violence

Somali women face **systematic discrimination and marginalization** in every aspect of their lives and women's rights activists warn that violence against women increased sharply over the past year. In 2020, UNSOM verified cases of **CRSV** perpetrated against 400 girls, 12 women and 7 boys, primarily attributed to clan militias and Al-Shabaab. The Somali National Army was implicated in 25 cases, the Somali Police Force in 16 cases, the Jubbaland Security Forces in 9 cases and the Puntland Forces in 5 cases. **Reports of sexual violence increased significantly in 2020** compared to 2019 and have been fueled by intensified clashes amongst clans related to land-based disputes, the fragile security situation in internally displaced persons (IDP) settlements, climatic conditions, and the food crisis. Assessments conducted in the areas affected by water shortages indicated the increased exposure of women and children to FGM, sexual violence, harassment, and abuse. Al-Shabaab continued to use sexual violence in areas under its *de facto* control using sexual violence, in particular forced and early marriage. 76 percent of reported GBV survivors are IDPs. Women from minority clan communities are particularly vulnerable to GBV and urban areas often present high risks for women who may be outside the protection regime of a dominant clan. During the **COVID-19 pandemic** the number of GBV survivor calls to GBV hotlines increased by 283 percent in FMS and by 767 percent in 'Somaliland'. Similarly, 2020 data of the GBV Information Management System indicates an increase in intimate partner violence, physical assault and rape compared to the 2019.

Early marriage is common in Somalia and adolescent girls are particularly at risk. According to the Somalia Health and Demographic Survey (SHDS), about 1 in 10 girls marry before the age of 15, and about 5 in 10 girls before the age of 18. This is despite a 2012 amendment to the Provisional Somali Constitution banning marriages for persons under 18. **Almost every woman in Somalia aged 15-49 (99 percent) has undergone female genital mutilation** and rates have increased even further during COVID-19 due to food insecurity and school disruptions. Families resort to FGM to ensure their girls' marriageability, reduce mouths to feed and provide some form of social and financial security through marriage. On 10 June 2021, the president of Puntland State and his cabinet approved a FGM Zero Tolerance Bill. However, Somali women rights activists emphasize that clan elders rejected the law in a subsequent press conference and highlight the importance of addressing social norms to achieve behavioral change as well as to have male champions joining the fight against FGM.

Survivors of SGBV face significant challenges in accessing competent **health services**. Facilities often lack qualified staff, resources, and confidential spaces. Referral services, including mental health and psychosocial support, are often difficult to access, especially from rural areas. Women and girls living with disabilities face exclusion and marginalization which further constrains their ability to access GBV services. The COVID-19 pandemic has also reduced service provision and access for survivors. UNSOM reported in November 2020 that the police reportedly **closed the one-stop centre** of the Somali Women's Development Centre in Madina Hospital which had been providing critical services, including medical and legal aid.

Somalia has **ratified neither the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** nor the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. However, in 2013, it signed a **Joint Communiqué** with the UN on the prevention of sexual violence and developed the **National Action Plan on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict (NAP/SVC)** with the support of UNSOM and the UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. After ending on 31 December 2016, the NAP/SVC was extended pending a revision, including bringing on all FMS. During the visit to Somalia of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict in July 2019 the FGS renewed its commitment to implement the Joint Communiqué and to develop a new NAP. The Somali Police Force, with UN support, is developing a Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct aimed at combating SGBV.

In 2018, following five years of wide-ranging consultations with women, civil society, and the international community, the Somali Council of Ministers unanimously endorsed a landmark **Sexual Offences bill** aimed at criminalizing a wide range of forms of GBV including rape, child marriage and sex trafficking. However, in 2019, the Speaker of the House of the People returned the bill to the Cabinet and requested several substantive amendments. In August 2020, legislators developed an alternative bill (the Sexual Intercourse-related Crimes Bill) and an UNSOM-led joint analysis of this draft bill concluded that it omitted numerous substantive offences, contained weak procedural provisions, and allowed for the marriage of minors upon physical maturation, irrespective of age, in contravention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Somalia has ratified. Similar concerns were expressed with regards to the **Rape, Fornication and other Sexual Offences Bill**, passed by the 'Somaliland' House of Representatives on 25 August 2020. The bill criminalizes homosexuality, permits sexual assault within marriage, requires force for an act to be considered rape, and imposes the death penalty for witchcraft to obtain sex.

Women's access to justice, especially for sexual violence crimes is limited due to discriminatory laws and cultural beliefs and practices, the lack of gender-responsive programs, corruption, and lack of financial resources. Pandemic-related movement restrictions further limited the ability of survivors to access judicial services and the adjudication of sexual violence cases was temporarily suspended. Most SGBV cases are handled according to *xeer*, which is a system of customary practices that focuses on the clan rather than the needs and rights of the survivor and often results in the victimization of women and girls. Women do not

participate in the negotiations and are typically not given a share of any awarded compensation. UNODC, in conjunction with the Somali Police Force senior management, oversees and supports the creation of specialist units to deal with complex and major crimes, including SGBV.

To strengthen the rights of **female prisoners**, in 2020, UNODC developed Standard Operations for Garowe Prison, focusing on the management and treatment of female prisoners who are pregnant or have delivered children. Furthermore, in 2021, two women graduated alongside 12 men from UNODC's Manager's Development Programme which focuses on training future prison managers.

On 23 March 2021, the **Head of the Somali Police SGBV and Child Protection Unit in Garowe was physically assaulted and beaten by four police officers**, including the commander of Garowe central police station. The female officer was reviewing the sexual violence cases registered at the police station, and the commander reportedly accused her of interference. The alleged perpetrators were arrested and released the same day, and the investigation into the incident has been suspended. The Police Commissioner of the Nugaal Region has reportedly prevented the officer from further investigating rape cases and prohibited her from visiting police stations in Garowe. On 24 March 2021, a female journalist was detained at Garowe central police station on the orders of the Police Commissioner of the Nugaal Region after following up on the assault and criticizing the Puntland police force on social media for its handling of rape cases in Garowe.

A 2019 Crisis Group Report found that while **Al-Shabaab** imposed severe limits on women's lives and access to the public sphere, its rules can offer women and girls a degree of safety. On some occasions, Al-Shabaab's courts protected the rights of women to some degrees in matters such as divorce and inheritance in a way the official justice system typically does not. Al-Shabaab also addressed some forms of GBV by punishing rapists and intervening on behalf of women in cases of domestic violence. The report also noted that women play active roles in the insurgency by recruiting and proselytizing, gathering intelligence, smuggling weapons, and raising funds. However, women are not present in Al-Shabaab's command structure, decision-making bodies or fighting force. UNSOM and IOM operate two **rehabilitation centers for female former Al-Shabab fighters**. As of 6 May 2021, there were 203 female beneficiaries and 361 male beneficiaries in the centres and since the beginning of the year 69 women and 42 men have been rehabilitated and reintegrated within host communities. The focus on women's rehabilitation has improved significantly over the last two years.

Humanitarian issues and women's socio-economic situation

With over 2.9 million internally displaced persons, Somalia has one of the largest displaced populations in the world. Women make up 47 percent of the total IDP population in 2020 and **over 60 percent of IDP households are headed by women**. IDP women and girls face an increased risk of GBV exposure because of insufficient services and inadequate locks, lighting, and latrines at IDP camps. Only 14 percent of IDP sites have latrines with access to lighting and only 19 percent of latrines have security locks. Somalia has **one of the highest maternal mortality rates** in the world with 1 in 1,000 women aged 15-49 years dying due to pregnancy-related complications. Only 33 percent of births are attended by skilled health personnel.

Women's labor force participation is at 23.5 percent (2019). Women's economic empowerment is limited by sociocultural, financial, and structural barriers. For example, there is a lack of investment in women-owned businesses by their families and women are facing difficulties accessing loans. While women make up a substantial number in micro and small-sized enterprises they are largely underrepresented in medium- and large-sized enterprises. In 2020, eight federal line ministries developed a comprehensive action plan to empower women in the maritime sector, following the launch of the "Women in the Maritime Sector" initiative in September 2019. The action plan includes concrete activities towards the implementation of the WPS Agenda, awareness-raising campaigns to encourage young women

to seek careers in the maritime sector, and possible donor support for women's maritime cooperatives and educational programmes, contributing to increasing women's employment, education, and economic opportunities.

Data from the SHDS indicates **some encouraging developments with regards to women's economic empowerment**. Three-quarters of women aged 15-49 own a mobile phone and 64 percent use their mobile phones for financial transactions. Furthermore, nine out of ten Somali women are deciding how their cash earnings will be spent either individually or jointly with their husbands, and 67 percent of women make individual or joint decisions on how their husbands' cash will be spent.

Women's literacy rate is estimated to be at 25.8 percent while that of men is a 49.7 percent. While 83 percent of girls are enrolled in elementary education, the number decreases significantly as they get older and are pulled out of school to support their families or become child brides. Infections after FGM are another factor resulting in girl's withdrawal from school. An Oxfam study found that only 10.1 percent of female respondents attended secondary school and only 7.53 percent had a university degree.

ANNEX: Relevant language in resolution 2540 (2020) [UNSOM]

Welcoming also the enactment in February 2020 of the Electoral Law, which represents a significant step forward, and the resolution of key outstanding issues by the Somali Federal Parliament, in collaboration with the NIEC, including the definition of constituencies, allocation of seats to constituencies, implementation of the 30 percent quota of seats for women to which Somalia has committed (...)

Condemning continued violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights, expressing deep concern in particular at violations and abuses committed against children and those involving sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, recognising that women and girls are disproportionately affected by these violations and abuses in Somalia, recalling the 2020 Conclusions on Children and Armed Conflict (S/2020/174), resolution 1325 (2000) and all subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (...), and reaffirming its support for the United Nations' zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse,

OP 5. Further decides that UNSOM should continue to coordinate UN efforts, in full cooperation with the FGS and FMS, with a particular focus on the following tasks: (d) provide technical advice and capacity-building to support the FGS in its efforts to enable the full, equal and meaningful participation of all Somalis, including women, youth, minority clans, persons with disabilities, IDPs and Somali refugees in reconciliation efforts, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and elections, including supporting Somali commitments to ensure that women fill at least 30 percent of the seats in both Houses of Parliament, and increasing participation and empowerment of women, minority communities and other marginalised groups at all decision-making levels; (h) provide technical advice and capacity-building support to the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and to the FGS, in particular the Ministry for Women and Human Rights Development, to promote and protect human rights in Somalia, including to protect women and girls from sexual and gender based violence, to promote accountability for human rights violations and abuses, including through working with civil society (...).

OP 8. Expresses its concern about all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights, including those involving sexual and gender-based violence in conflict, further calls upon all parties to comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law (...).

OP 12. Underlines the need for the FGS to establish and operationalise the National Human Rights Commission, accelerate the appointment of Commissioners, and establish and operationalise the Constitutional Court and the Judicial Service Commission in line with the Provisional Constitution and the relevant legislation, calls on the FGS to implement legislation aimed at protecting human rights and investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of crimes involving violations or abuses of human rights, violations of international humanitarian law, and sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, further calls on the FGS to ensure that sexual offences legislation be compatible with its obligations under international law and commitments on the protection of children and women, and urges the FGS, with the support of the United Nations, to accelerate the implementation of the Joint Communiqué and the adoption and implementation of the new National Action Plan to Combat Sexual Violence in Conflict, and commends the FGS for its commitment to fulfilling its reporting obligations under human rights treaty bodies;

ANNEX: Relevant language in resolution 2568 (2021) [AMISOM]

Recalling its resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions, recognising the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stressing the importance of their full, equal and meaningful participation and involvement in all efforts at all levels for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decisionmaking and leadership with regard to conflict prevention and resolution as envisaged in the Somali Women's Charter;

OP. 12 Decides to authorise AMISOM to pursue the following strategic objectives: (...) provide the following enabling support functions for the Somali Police Force (SPF) and civilian stabilisation and governance functions to support FGS and FMS efforts in institution and state-building, including civilian and police planning and liaison, joint patrols, providing security escorts providing specialised investigation expertise and community policing support in a gender-responsive manner;

OP. 17 Strongly underlines the continued importance of AMISOM forces carrying out their mandate in full compliance with participating states' obligations under international law, including with regard to the protection of civilians, especially women and children (...).

OP. 19 Reaffirms the importance of AMISOM's zero-tolerance policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and in this regard stresses the need to prevent such exploitation and abuse, requests the African Union and troop- and police-contributing countries to screen personnel, undertake risk assessments, deliver all relevant training to personnel, to protect and support the relief and recovery of survivors who report abuse, carry out timely investigations into allegations, to hold perpetrators accountable, and to repatriate units where there is credible evidence of widespread or systemic sexual exploitation or abuse by those units, and further requests the African Union to work closely with the United Nations in this regard;

OP. 20 Strongly encourages efforts to increase the percentage of female uniformed personnel deployed to AMISOM by the troop- and police- contributing countries, and urges AMISOM to ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation of women across its operations and to integrate a gender perspective throughout the delivery of its mandate;

OP. 34 Reaffirms the importance of the full, equal, meaningful and effective participation of all Somalis, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, reconciliation processes, peacebuilding and elections and other political processes, and acknowledges the significant contribution that civil society can make in this regard;

OP 35. Calls on Somali authorities to work with relevant partners to ensure protection for all from sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse and conflict-related sexual violence, to take appropriate steps to investigate allegations, strengthen legislation to support accountability in line with relevant resolutions, and to accelerate the implementation of the Joint Communiqué and the National Action Plan to combat sexual violence in conflict;

ANNEX: Relevant language in resolution 2551 (2020) [Sanctions]

(...) Further noting with concern reports, including from the Secretary General of the United Nations, which document worrying levels of sexual and gender-based violence in Somalia, and urging the Somali authorities to further strengthen efforts to address this, including by implementing measures in line with resolution 2467 (2019).

OP 4. Calls upon the FGS and FMS to enhance civilian oversight of their security apparatus, to continue to adopt and implement appropriate vetting procedures of all defence and security personnel, including human rights vetting, and to investigate and as appropriate prosecute individuals responsible for violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, and sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations (...).

OP 20. Recalls its decisions in its resolution 1844 (2008) which imposed targeted sanctions and its resolutions 2002 (2011), and 2093 (2013) which expanded the listing criteria, and recalls its decisions in its resolutions 2060 (2012) and 2444 (2018), and further recalls that the listing criteria includes, but is not limited to, planning, directing or committing acts involving sexual and gender based violence (...).

OP 21. Requests the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict to share relevant information with the Committee in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 1960 (2010) and paragraph 9 of resolution 1998 (2011), and invites the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to share relevant information with the Committee, as appropriate.

OP 30. Decides to renew, with effect from the date of adoption of this resolution, until 15 December 2021, the Panel on Somalia and that the mandate of the Panel shall include the tasks referred to in paragraph 11 of resolution 2444 (2018) and paragraph 1 of this resolution, requests the Secretary-General to include dedicated gender expertise, in line with paragraph 11 of its resolution 2467 (2019), and expresses its intention to review the mandate of the Panel and take appropriate action regarding any extension to the mandate no later than 15 November 2021;

ANNEX: Relevant language in resolution 2554 (2020) [Piracy]

20. Urges all States to ensure that counter-piracy activities, particularly land-based activities, take into consideration the need to protect women and children from exploitation, including sexual exploitation;