UN Human Rights Council – 57th regular session
Item 10: Interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on Somalia
Oral statement

Delivered by: Nicolas Agostini

Mr. President, Madam Independent Expert,

We thank you for your report. We welcome your assessment of progress against the benchmarks and indicators. We stress that enhancing human rights compliance by police and other security forces and ensuring accountability for grave violations are absolute priorities. We also endorse your recommendations under Benchmarks 3 to 7.

We welcome constitutional and legislative developments and highlight the importance of a "one-person, one-vote" election system.

Human rights challenges remain numerous. In addition to grave abuses committed by terrorist group Al-Shabaab, we are concerned about violations committed by Somali security and intelligence forces. These include harassment and intimidation of independent actors. National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) officials must be held to account for their actions.

Many of the 1964 Penal Code provisions are contrary to the Constitution and international standards and are used to suppress media freedom. It is of utmost importance to investigate and prosecute attacks against HRDs, including journalists, and to provide redress.

Mr. President,

We call on the Council to extend the Independent Expert's mandate and to remain actively seized of the matter. Adequate financial and human resources should be allocated to the mandate, including to support the adjustments to the scope of the mandate suggested by Madam Dyfan.

Somalia-focused resolutions have been a model of a sensible use of agenda item 10, with the consent and ownership of the country concerned and access to the country for the Independent Expert, as well as scrutiny elements, which are intertwined with technical assistance and capacity-building. These resolutions are not mutually exclusive with, but complementary to, OHCHR technical support. They should continue for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for your attention.