**Meetings Coverage**

**Security Council**

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**9491st Meeting (PM)**

**SC/15511**

**1 December 2023**

Security Council Lifts Arms Embargo on Federal Government of Somalia, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2714 (2023)

Recognizing the benchmarks reached on implementing the security transition, the Somalia Transition Plan and the national security architecture, the Security Council today unanimously adopted a resolution lifting the arms embargo on the Federal Government of Somalia.

Unanimously adopting draft resolution 2714 (2023) (to be issued as document S/RES/2714(2023)), the 15-nation Council — acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations — decided to lift the arms embargo established in resolution 733 (1992), as amended. The organ further called on the Federal Government of Somalia to, inter alia, implement the national weapons-and-ammunition-management strategy and promote further professionalization, training and capacity-building for all Somali security and police institutions.

Further, by the text, the Council called on the Federal Government to take all measures necessary to ensure that weapons, ammunition and military equipment imported for use by certain national forces, as well as by licensed private security companies, are not resold, transferred or made available for use to any individual or entity not in their service. Among other things, the Council also requested the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to provide technical advice and capacity-building support to assist Somalia with implementing the national strategy and associated action plan.

Harold Adlai Agyeman of Ghana, also speaking for Gabon and Mozambique and noting their votes in favour of resolutions 2713 (2023) and 2714 (2023), said: *“We recognize the significant role that Somalia plays for the peace and stability of the African continent and the challenges it faces particularly from the terrorist group Al-Shabaab.”* The resolution, affirming Somalia’s sovereignty and its right to equip its own military, is essential, especially as the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) prepares to leave the country.

*“Furthermore, we commend Somalia for the progress made in weapons and ammunition management, which has been recognized in the resolution,”* he added. Somalia must continue such efforts, as effective weapons management will reduce the ability of Al-Shabaab and other actors to obtain illicit weapons and ammunition. Such efforts will also enhance the Somali security forces’ capability to analyse captured weapons, thus reducing the threat posed by terrorists not only in Somalia, but in the wider region. The consensual adoption of the two resolutions, even if one was not unanimous, is a strong testament to the power of collaboration, he said.

However, Anna M. Evstigneeva of the Russian Federation, while welcoming the lifting of the arms embargo on Somalia, reiterated her country’s longstanding call for a review of temporary sanctions regimes in African States as they impede the development of their national law enforcement and security agencies. Expressing satisfaction that the resolution does not mention the dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea, she said that is a matter of bilateral diplomacy and does not imply that the Council is not ready to pay attention to the issues. Nonetheless, some of her delegation’s proposals were not considered, including the impact of unilateral coercive measures, particularly for least developed countries, and the text’s wording on automatic exemptions on private security companies. While it stipulates that licenses must be issued by the Federal Government of Somalia, the Council has no list of such companies. *“We expect that Mogadishu will approach this responsibly and will not allow growing militarization,”* she said.

Shino Mitsuko of Japan, noting that her country voted in favour of the resolution, said that a renewed sanctions regime will enhance greater regional cooperation to degrade Al-Shabaab in the region. Welcoming the extension of the broad mandate of the Panel of Experts, she also commended the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia to fulfil the benchmarks of the sanctions regime.

Lana Zaki Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates said the resolution is an opportunity to reassess sanctions regimes in line with the reality on the ground. It sets a precedent in that regard and sends an important message that the Council stands with the Somali people. The resolution is also vital to continuing multilateral work and supporting Somalia to consolidate peace gains, as *“there is still a distance to go”*. She called on the international community and the Organization to create conditions for economic recovery and growth and underlined her country’s steadfast support for the Somali people.

*“We’re confident,”* said Dai Bing of China, *“that Somalia will seize this opportunity to strengthen security capacity-building, improve the management of weapons and ammunition, actively conduct counter-terrorism operations and inject new impetus to the maintenance of national security and stability.”* However, the resolution still requires the Federal Government to submit to the Council a list of imported weapons, a measure that is restrictive and will unnecessarily pose obstacles to efforts to enhance security capacity-building. On the other hand, the resolution continues to grant special exemptions to certain Western countries for arms import. Such a double standard is not in line with principles of fairness and non-discrimination, he pointed out.

Taking the floor, Abukar Dahir Osman of Somalia stated: *“The adoption of the current resolution on Somalia, which lifts longstanding arms embargo on the Federal Government, enables us to confront security threats, including those posed by Al-Shabaab.”* Sustainable peace and security can only be achieved through a comprehensive approach that integrates security measures with initiatives aimed at fostering long-term stability and prosperity, he said.

*“I am pleased to report that phase two drawdown of 3,000 ATMIS troops will conclude as scheduled on December 31st”* he reported, adding that the Federal Government is committed to fully implement the transitioning of the security responsibility from ATMIS to the Somali National Army within the agreed timelines. This represents a significant opportunity for his country to strengthen its ability to address security challenges, he said, declaring: *“We remain steadfast in our commitment to upholding human rights, promoting peace and ensuring the well-being of all our citizens as we move forward in this critical endeavour.”*