



United Nations Somalia

Implementation of Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security

December 2015 – May 2017





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INTRODUCTION & MANDATE

Somalia is one of the youngest countries in the world. Therefore, engaging and empowering young Somalis is a requirement for the United Nations to deliver its mandates. Failure to meaningfully respond to the aspirations and needs of 81.5% of the country's population undermines the prospect of lasting peace and stability in Somalia.

Security Council Resolution 2232 (2015) *“reaffirms the important role of women and youth in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, stresses the importance of their participation in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security”* and *“encourages UNSOM to enhance its interaction across Somali civil society, including women, youth, and religious leaders in order to ensure that the views of civil society are incorporated in the various political processes.”*¹

On 9 December 2016, the Council unanimously adopted a ground-breaking resolution on Youth, Peace and Security, recognising that *“young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security”*. Resolution 2250 (2015) identifies five fundamental pillars for action: (1) participation; (2) protection, (3) prevention; (4) partnerships; and (5) disengagement and reintegration. This landmark resolution urges Member States to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels, and to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes.

Resolution 2282 (2016) on the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture refers explicitly to Resolution 2250 (2015), reaffirming *“the important role youth can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts,”* and calls upon *“Member States and relevant United Nations organs and entities to consider ways to increase meaningful and inclusive participation of youth in peacebuilding efforts.”*

Building on the recommendations from the above-mentioned Security Council Resolutions, the UN Youth Strategy for Somalia — part of the UN Strategic Framework (2017-20) — recognises the role of youth as partners in development efforts. The Strategy articulates an integrated framework for the efforts, programmes and initiatives currently being implemented by the UN, and aims to maximise coverage and impact to ensure sustainability, thereby contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the UN in Somalia.

Placing social, political and economic empowerment at the core of the UN Youth Strategy is a vital prerequisite for lasting transformation in Somalia. The multidimensional concept of empowerment – social, economic and political – provides ample scope to harmonise approaches to youth policies and programming, and harnesses the full potential of young people to become recognised social and economic actors, as well as peacebuilders.

¹ The latter operative clause on civil society was reaffirmed in Resolution 2275 (2016).



SITUATION ANALYSIS

Eight out of ten Somalis are younger than 35 years old.² However, avenues for youth to obtain an education and gainful employment opportunities are limited, and opportunities to engage politically, economically or socially remain weak or non-existent. Opportunities are even further restricted for girls and young women.

The participation of young people in decision-making has been challenging due to issues related to clan and cultural affiliations, gender, age, illiteracy and poverty, among other factors, including the prominence of elders in the political system.

Exclusion creates frustration and demoralisation among many youths. It limits capabilities and opportunities, and constricts the contributions of young people to peacebuilding and development in Somalia. It also forces many of them to embark on an often-dangerous journey across borders in search of better lives or joining the Al-Shabaab terrorist group. Those who stay behind are endangered by crime, drugs, radicalism, piracy and armed groups. Young women are particularly disadvantaged and face displacement with even fewer opportunities due to cultural biases and traditional practices.

The involvement of some young people – especially young men, but increasingly also young women – in extremist groups has led to a widespread portrayal of youth as a threat to peace and security. Consequently, the depiction of young people in conflict is marked by a dichotomy: they are either portrayed as victims or perpetrators. The reality is much more nuanced. Increasing evidence from the field and academic research show that youth play active and valuable roles in peacebuilding. Yet, the potential contribution and inclusion of young people to effective peacebuilding has received little attention and support. Young people's leadership and roles in preventing and resolving conflict, violence and extremism are rich resources essential to achieving sustainable peace that is currently untapped.

Improving the lives of young people is crucial for building lasting peace and stability in Somalia. Equally important is the recognition of Somali youth as partners in – not only beneficiaries of – our programmes.



² Approximately 81.5 per cent of the Somali population is under 35 years of age, according to the 2014 Population Estimation Survey (UNFPA Somalia)



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'YOUTH'?

There is no universally accepted definition of 'youth'. It is broadly understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adult independence and the awareness of interdependence as members of a community. This definition varies from country to country, since it takes into consideration the local context, including conflict, culture and history. Therefore 'youth' is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group.³

However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment. 'Youth' are often indicated as those between the age when one may leave compulsory education, and the age at which they find a first employment. This latter age limit is increasing, as higher levels of unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent household puts many young people into prolonged periods of dependency.

To ensure statistical consistency across regions, the United Nations defines youth as those between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States.⁴ All UN statistics on youth are based on this definition, as illustrated by the annual yearbooks of statistics published by the United Nations system on demography, education, employment and health.

In Somalia, in accordance with the African Union's definition, youth is most commonly defined as those between 15 and 35 years, to include many Somalis who did not have the opportunity to access services and public goods during the years of conflict and absence of formal institutions. The official age definition will be defined by the National Youth Policy, which is currently being finalised.

To this end, the UN in Somalia will collect individual age-disaggregated data and, when appropriate, cluster data on three generational stages of 'youth': adolescent youth (15-18 years old); youth (19-24 years old); and young adults (25-35 years old). The UN in Somalia uses the terms 'youth' and 'young people' interchangeably to mean those Somalis between the ages of 15 and 35.

LAUNCH OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2250 IN SOMALIA

On 17 December 2015, in partnership with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Somali youth-led civil society organisations, the United Nations hosted the Somali Launch of the Amman Youth Declaration and UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.

The Somali launch was the first national follow-up event to the Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security, hosted by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 21 and 22 August 2015. The event was an opportunity to highlight the positive leadership roles of Somali youth in preventing and resolving conflict, violence and extremism. The event in Mogadishu was also a unique opportunity to discuss and agree on specific recommendations for the practical implementation of the Resolution in Somalia.

The event was attended by officials including the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Youth and Sports, the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, the Minister of Women and Human Rights, and the Minister of Health, as well as 250 youth representatives from across the country.

The event produced the *Somali Youth for Peace Pact*, a compilation of actionable recommendations to promote socio-economic empowerment, to strengthen their role in preventing violence and building peace, to increase their participation and leadership in peace and security, and to advance gender equality.

³ <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf>

⁴ Secretary-General's Report to the General Assembly, A/36/215, 1981.



UNSCR 2250 IMPLEMENTATION IN SOMALIA

A crucial part of the work of the UN in Somalia remains its youth programming. The table below provides an overview of the main interventions targeting Somali youth being implemented in Somalia under the scope of the UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.

SCR 2250 Recommendations	UN Response in Somalia
Participation	
<p>1. Urges Member States to consider ways to increase inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict, including institutions and mechanisms to counter violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, and, as appropriate, to consider establishing integrated mechanisms for meaningful participation of youth in peace processes and dispute resolution;</p>	<p>As part of the UN Youth Strategy for Somalia, the UN is supporting the establishment of structured mechanisms of youth participation to ensure young male and female Somalis have a say in decision-making at different levels. Those mechanisms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – National Youth Conference – First held in December 2015 with over 250 participants from all regions, Second scheduled for August 2017. – Somali Youth Parliament – through UNDP, the UN is building the capacity of the Somali Youth Parliament, and facilitating its recognition by the FGS. – National Youth Council – UNSOM facilitated the establishment of the National Youth Council, composed of a representative of each of the seven regional umbrella associations. <p>The UN is also working to establish a UN Youth Advisory board with 13 young people representing different regions as well as thematic expertise to directly advise the UN leadership in Somalia. (waiting budget allocation to start).</p>
<p>2. Calls on all relevant actors, including when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to take into account, as appropriate, the participation and views of youth, recognising that their marginalisation is detrimental to building sustainable peace in all societies, including, <i>inter alia</i>, such specific aspects as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The needs of youth during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction; b. Measures that support local youth peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve youth in the implementation mechanisms of peace agreements; c. Measures to empower youth in peacebuilding and conflict resolution; 	<p>Apart from the mechanisms described above, the Somali Youth Cluster, established by UNSOM, is another platform created to ensure youth organisations have an established communication channel with the UN in Somalia. Forty youth organisations from different backgrounds are currently part of the Cluster.</p>



SCR 2250 Recommendations	UN Response in Somalia
<p>3. Stresses the importance of Security Council missions taking into account youth-related considerations including, as appropriate, through consultation with local and international youth groups;</p>	<p>Through its youth advisor, the UN in Somalia (both UNSOM and the UNCT) has consistently engaged in formal and informal consultations with youth constituencies throughout the country.</p> <p>The UN Youth Strategy was designed in close collaboration with youth organisations to ensure their needs and aspirations were reflected in the strategy.</p> <p>Youth consultations were also organised during the process of the UN Strategic Assessment, which given young people the opportunity to express their hopes and expectations in regards to the future of the UN operations in Somalia.</p> <p>Also part of the Youth Strategy, the UN is organising Youth Coordination Meetings in different regions. Those meetings bring together representatives from the Federal Government, Regional Administrations, Youth-led CSOs, INGOs, UN entities and donors to assess the state of youth and current youth-related programming in each region, identifying gaps and opportunities for collaboration. The Youth Coordination Meetings are also a unique opportunity to bring youth-led organisations and government representatives to the same table to agree on joint priorities and initiatives.</p>
<p>Protection</p>	
<p>4. Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to comply strictly with the obligations applicable to them under international law relevant to the protection of civilians, including those who are youth, including the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977;</p>	<p>The UN in Somalia, particularly UNSOM and OHCHR, have consistently monitored and reported human rights violations in Somalia. Currently, there is an effort to increase age disaggregated data collection to enable the UN to understand the impact on the youth population better.</p> <p>UNFPA continues to financially support Somalia Youth Peer Network (Y-Peer) to engage communities and universities on conflict prevention, which includes protection of young people from all forms of gender-based violence, including Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting</p>
<p>5. Further calls upon states to comply with the obligations applicable to them under the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugee and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;</p>	<p>Consultations were held with young people living with disabilities and youth-led disability rights organisations in Somalia to identify their specific needs and discuss opportunities for programming. Those recommendations were incorporated into the planning for a new initiative under the DSRSG/RC/HC targeting Somalis with disabilities (being developed).</p> <p>UNFPA trained over 22 line ministries, including the Ministry of Youth on the Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which is currently being pursued for accession and ratification. Somali youth are one of the key target groups being educated on the Convention and consulted for its accession and ratification.</p>
<p>6. Further calls upon Member States to comply with their respective obligations to end impunity and further calls on them to investigate and prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against civilians, including youth, noting that the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern has been strengthened through the work on and prosecution of these crimes by the International Criminal Court, ad hoc and mixed tribunals and specialized chambers in national tribunals;</p>	<p>The UN in Somalia, particularly UNSOM and OHCHR, have consistently monitored and reported human rights violations in Somalia. Currently, there is an effort to increase age disaggregated data collection to enable the UN to understand the impact on the youth population better.</p> <p>Young people being both survivors, and alleged perpetrators of GBV, UNFPA and UNICEF are promoting a social norm change community programs on GBV including FGM and child/forced/early marriages and sexual reproductive rights, led by community youths and Y-Peer Network.</p>
<p>7. Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take the necessary measures to protect civilians, including those who are youth, from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence;</p>	<p>GBV sub-cluster lead by UNFPA coordinates all actors in the prevention of GBV and provides necessary advocacy to call on all parties to protect civilians.</p> <p>UNFPA supports prevention and response to GBV by providing post-rape treatment kits all over the country, supports 17 GBV one-stop centres and engages young people as agents of change in the prevention of all forms of GBV.</p>
<p>8. Reaffirms that states must respect and ensure the human rights of all individuals, including youth, within their territory and subject to their jurisdiction as provided for by relevant international law and reaffirms that each state bears the primary responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity;</p>	



SCR 2250 Recommendations	UN Response in Somalia
<p>9. Urges Member States to consider specific measures, in conformity with international law, that ensure, during armed conflict and post conflict, the protection of civilians, including youth;</p>	
<p>Prevention</p>	
<p>10. Urges Members States to facilitate an inclusive and enabling environment in which youth actors, including youth from different backgrounds, are recognised and provided with adequate support to implement violence prevention activities and support social cohesion;</p>	<p>The Somali National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) recognises the key role Somali youth play in preventing and countering radicalization and violent extremism.</p> <p>The UN has supported activities such as the national male football tournament in Mogadishu (June 2016), the national female basketball tournament in Puntland (December 2016) and the 1st Mogadishu Marathon (March 2017) promoting sports as a tool to bring people from different clans and backgrounds together, foster understanding and cooperation.</p> <p>Currently, the UN Youth Advisor and the UN P/CVE Advisor are working to develop specific, youth-related initiatives to enable youth to lead prevention activities including using arts (theatre, painting, etc.), radio and sports.</p> <p>UNFPA supports Youth Peer Educators (Y-PEER), who engage in providing information in terms of governance, sexual reproductive health and rights among young people using theatre-based and peer-to-peer approaches.</p>
<p>11. Stresses the importance of creating policies for youth that would positively contribute to peacebuilding efforts, including social and economic development, supporting projects designed to grow local economies, and provide youth employment opportunities and vocational training, fostering their education, and promoting youth entrepreneurship and constructive political engagement;</p>	<p>Social, political and economic empowerment are at the core of the UN Youth Strategy. The multidimensional concept of empowerment – social, economic and political – provides ample scope for harmonising approaches to youth policies and programming, and harnesses the full potential of young people to become recognised social and economic actors, as well as peacebuilders.</p> <p>The UN is committed to supporting the Federal Government in the finalisation and implementation of a comprehensive National Youth Policy for Somalia. Through the UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth, both financial and technical support has been provided to the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports.</p> <p>Draft National Youth Policy developed, which is a necessary policy framework that will guide interventions. The new administration in place is making it a priority to review, validate and endorse.</p>
<p>12. Urges Member States to support, as appropriate, quality education for peace that equips youth with the ability to engage constructively in civic structures and inclusive political processes;</p>	<p>UNESCO developed the “Youth Peace Dialogue Forum”, which was first held in Mogadishu. The initiative brings together university students from different clans to discuss what is necessary for a peaceful future in Somalia. The initiative was an opportunity for young students to raise and discuss grievances and identify concrete steps to overcome those issues.</p>
<p>13. Calls on all relevant actors to consider instituting mechanisms to promote a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue that involve youth and discourage their participation in acts of violence, terrorism, xenophobia, and all forms of discrimination;</p>	<p>The UN is leading two research initiatives to better understand Somali youth and how the UN could best support them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The World Bank is leading research on the role of young Somalis in peace and State-building. – UNDP launched a research initiative to consider ways young Somalis can contribute to preventing and countering violent extremism. <p>The UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth is also in the process of developing a new joint programme, through the UN-MPTF, on youth and peacebuilding. The joint programme will support innovative youth-led approaches to peacebuilding, including through radio and theatre.</p>



SCR 2250 Recommendations	UN Response in Somalia
Partnerships	
<p>14. Urges Member States to increase, as appropriate, their political, financial, technical and logistical support, that take account of the needs and participation of youth in peace efforts, in conflict and post-conflict situations, including those undertaken by relevant entities, funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, United Nations Peacebuilding fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, UN-Women, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other relevant bodies, and actors at regional and international levels;</p>	<p>As previously described, the UN has developed a Joint Youth Strategy for Somalia, which articulates an integrated framework for the various efforts, programmes and initiatives being implemented by the UN. The strategy aims to maximise coverage and impact to ensure sustainability.</p> <p>Since 2015, the UN has a dedicated youth advisor supporting both UNSOM and the UN Country Team in coordinating youth programmes.</p> <p>Currently, the UN is in the process of establishing a youth funding window, through the MPTF, to support youth-led initiatives in Somalia.</p>
<p>15. Stresses the vital role the Peacebuilding Commission in addressing the conditions and factors leading to the rise of radicalization to violence and violent extremism among youth, which can be conducive to terrorism, by including in its advice and recommendations for peacebuilding strategies ways to engage youth meaningfully during and in the aftermath of armed conflict;</p>	
<p>16. Encourages Member States to engage relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts, address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, including by empowering youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, and all other concerned groups of civil society and adopt tailored approaches to countering recruitment to this kind of violent extremism and promoting social inclusion and cohesion;</p>	<p>In December 2015, the UN organised the launch of Security Council Resolution 2250 in Somalia, bringing together 250 participants from across the country to discuss the challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the Resolution in Somalia. The event was an opportunity for young Somalis to discuss peace and State-building with key government representatives. The event resulted in the Somali Youth Peace Pact, a series of Somali-specific recommendations for the government and the UN to improve support to youth-led peacebuilding in Somalia.</p> <p>Also, as previously described, youth was embedded as a top priority under the Somali National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE).</p>
<p>17. Encourages all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration to consider the needs of youth affected by armed conflict, including, <i>inter alia</i>, such specific aspects as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. evidence-based and gender-sensitive youth employment opportunities, inclusive labour policies, national youth employment action plans in partnership with the private sector, developed in partnership with youth and recognising the interrelated role of education, employment and training in preventing the marginalisation of youth; b. investment in building young persons' capabilities and skills to meet labour demands through relevant education opportunities designed in a manner which promotes a culture of peace; c. support for youth-led and peacebuilding organisations as partners in youth employment and entrepreneurship programs; 	<p>A Joint Programme on Youth Employment is being implemented by UNDP, ILO, FAO and UN-Habitat with an initial investment of USD 9 million. The programme provides vocational training and technical capacity to young people and aims to create sustainable job opportunities for youth by addressing challenges affecting the labour supply and demand factors.</p> <p>Among other things, the programme establishes youth vocational centres, which constitute safe spaces for young people to meet.</p> <p>With support from the UN PBF, the youth employment programmes led by UN-Habitat and UNIDO have been integrated as part of our support to newly recovered areas.</p> <p>UNICEF is supporting the implementation of a TVET programme across seven centres that has enrolled over 1,000 out-of-school youth and equipping them with employability skills training</p>
<p>18. Notes its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to consider their potential impact on the population, including youth;</p>	
Disengagement & Reintegration	
<p>19. Invites relevant entities of the United Nations, Rapporteurs and Special Envoys and Representatives of the Secretary-General, including the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the Special Envoy for Youth Refugees, to improve the coordination and interaction regarding the needs of youth during armed conflicts and post-conflict situations;</p>	<p>Through the Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth, the UN in Somalia has been working closely with the office of the SG's Envoy on Youth as well as Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development. The collaboration included briefings to HQ colleagues on the work being done in Somalia, as well as the participation of UN Somalia representatives in events at HQ level.</p>
<p>20. Requests the Secretary-General to carry out a progress study on the youth's positive contribution to peace processes and conflict resolution, to recommend effective responses at local, national, regional and international levels, and further requests the Secretary-General to make the results of this study available to the Security Council and all Member States of the United Nations;</p>	<p>The Youth, Peace and Security agenda is crucial in the Somali context, and therefore, we have been collaborating closely to ensure Somali youth voices are reflected in the final study.</p> <p>Both UN research projects in Somalia (World Bank and UNDP) will be embedded into the final report on SCR 2250. Our team is also involved in organising and supporting Somali participation in a regional (Horn of Africa) consultation for the study.</p>



SCR 2250 Recommendations	UN Response in Somalia
21. Also requests the Secretary-General to include in his reports in the context of situations that are on the agenda of the Council the measures taken in the implementation of this resolution, including information on youth in situations of armed conflict and the existence of measures relating to the prevention, partnerships, participation, protection, disengagement and reintegration of youth under this resolution;	



UN INTER-AGENCY WORKING GROUP ON YOUTH AFFAIRS

The UN in Somalia established a permanent Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth Affairs composed of designated youth focal points from different agencies, funds and programmes as well as UNSOM. This working group meet regularly to share each agency's work on youth and upcoming projects, as well as to discuss challenges and possible inter-agency collaboration.

The UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth Affairs has representatives from the following entities:

- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSOM
- Office of the Deputy SRSG, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia
- Office of the UNSOM Chief of Staff
- FAO
- ILO
- IOM
- UN Volunteers
- UN Women
- UN-Habitat
- UNDP
- UNESCO
- UNFPA
- UNICEF
- UNIDO
- UNSOM Human Rights and Protection Group (HRPG)
- UNSOM Rule of Law and Security Institutions Group (ROLSIG)
- UNSOM Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Group (SCPAG)
- WFP
- World Bank



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