

**AMNESTY
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UN Human Rights Council
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Item 10: Technical assistance and capacity-building

**Interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on the
situation of human rights in Somalia**

Mr President,

The people of Somalia continue to pay a heavy price in the armed conflict. The lull in fighting and hopes for peace brought by the appointment of Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) on 30 January 2009 year were unfortunately short lived.

The 15 September 2009 suicide attacks on the base of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in Mogadishu claimed by Al Shabab attracted widespread international condemnation. Yet at the same time, other instances of killings of civilians have been barely reported. These included the civilian casualties caused in the Hodan, Hawlwadag and Daynile districts by the firing of artillery by AMISOM and TFG troops following the suicide attacks and those in the Hodan district caused by fighting between armed groups and AMISOM troops at a junction of Maka Al-Mukarama street.

Civilians are primary casualties of the conflict. They suffer from indiscriminate shelling on populated areas by all parties. Journalists, humanitarian workers and civil society activists continue to be targeted, mainly by armed opposition groups. People in hundreds of thousands have again fled the conflict this year. They add to the numbers of displaced persons who lack humanitarian support, and populate the refugee camps in neighbouring countries. Increasing insecurity and attacks on aid agencies this year have further restricted humanitarian aid workers from access to a population desperately needing their assistance to survive.

Many of the abuses against civilians constitute serious human rights violations or war crimes and are carried out in a context of almost total impunity.

Amnesty International looks forward to the agreement between OHCHR and the TFG on a framework for technical cooperation. This must provide a basis for strengthening UN efforts to provide technical assistance to the TFG, notably in efforts to fight against impunity. Can the Independent Expert elaborate on measures that could be taken under the agreement towards improving accountability of perpetrators of serious human rights abuses?

Amnesty International looks forwards to the renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert and calls for increased monitoring and public reporting of human rights abuses in Somalia by OHCHR. We support the Independent Expert's recommendations to the TFG to take measures against those in the TFG forces who violate human rights. Mr. Bari, the international community is providing security assistance to the TFG; what role can they play to ensure greater accountability of TFG forces?

Thank you Mr President.

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