



# Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

**8996**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 16 March 2022, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

---

*President:* Mr. Abushahab . . . . . (United Arab Emirates)

*Members:*

Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil . . . . .	Mr. De Almeida Filho
China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
Gabon . . . . .	Mr. Biang
Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Agyeman
India . . . . .	Mr. Tirumurti/Mr. Ravindran
Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
Mexico . . . . .	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. DeLaurentis

## Agenda

The situation in Libya

---

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

22-28990 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation in Libya**

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and Ms. Jazia Jibril Mohammed Shuaiteh, civil society brifer.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Ms. DiCarlo, Ambassador T. S. Tirumurti, Permanent Representative of India, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, and Ms. Shuaiteh.

I now give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

**Ms. DiCarlo:** I thank the President for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Libya.

Since my last briefing to the Council on 24 January (see S/PV.8952), there have been several substantial developments in the country. The Libyan executive is facing a crisis that could, if left unresolved, lead to instability and parallel Governments in the country. The United Nations is exerting significant efforts to resolve this crisis. We aim to bring together Libyan stakeholders to agree on a constitutional basis for the holding of elections as soon as possible.

On the economic front, there has been some progress in advancing the reunification of the Central Bank. On the security track, the focus is currently on protecting the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC) from the negative impact of the political crisis and on facilitating progress towards the withdrawal of mercenaries and foreign fighters. Regrettably, the humanitarian and human rights situations continue to be sources of concern.

Allow me to expand on the points just outlined.

Following the postponement of national elections, originally set for December 2021, the House of Representatives and the High State Council focused on appointing a new interim Government. They also agreed to chart a process to amend the 2017 constitutional proposal and to a path towards elections.

On 10 February, the House of Representatives adopted the twelfth constitutional amendment, reportedly after achieving consensus with the High State Council. The process set out in the constitutional amendment calls for the appointment by 24 February by the House of Representatives and the High State Council of a constitutional review committee representing the three regions of Libya. The review committee never materialized.

On 10 February, the House of Representatives, with the endorsement of 52 High State Council members, also designated Mr. Fathi Bashagha, a former Minister for the Interior, to form a new Government, which would be presented to the House of Representatives for a vote of confidence.

The United Nations took note of both the vote on the twelfth constitutional amendment and the designation of a Prime Minister. We advised the House of Representatives that the vote of confidence on the proposed new Government should be transparent and consistent with Libyan laws and regulations. However, on 24 February, the High State Council rejected the formation of a new Government and the twelfth constitutional amendment.

On 1 March, the House of Representatives held a vote of confidence on the new Government. The United Nations received reports that the vote was marred by procedural flaws and threats of violence against some members of the chamber and their families. These shortcomings affected the credibility of the process.

In a statement on 2 March, the Secretary-General expressed concern that the vote fell short of standards of transparency and procedure. On 3 March, members of Mr. Bashagha's Cabinet were nevertheless sworn in by the House of Representatives.

Since the 1 March vote, the situation on the ground has remained relatively calm. However, we have observed increasingly threatening rhetoric, growing political tensions and divided loyalties among the armed groups in western Libya. The Government of

National Unity leadership has rejected the legitimacy of the vote, stating that it will only transfer power to an elected Government. Meanwhile, Mr. Bashagha insists he is heading the legitimate Government.

Our priority is to focus on fulfilling the aspirations of the more than 2.8 million Libyans who have registered to vote. They should be able to choose their leaders through credible, transparent and inclusive elections, according to an agreed upon constitutional and legal framework.

The Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, Ms. Stephanie Williams, has continued her consultations with a broad cross-section of Libyan political and security actors and civil society. The United Nations is focusing its efforts on building consensus among Libyan institutions to hold elections as soon as possible. We aim to convene a joint committee of members of the House of Representatives and the High State Council with the objective of achieving agreement by both bodies on a constitutional basis that would lead to elections this year.

On 3 March, Special Adviser Williams invited the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the High State Council to appoint six members each to form that joint committee. The leaders of the House of Representatives and the High State Council responded favourably to the initiative. Yesterday the High State Council nominated its representatives to the joint committee. We expect the House of Representatives to do the same in the coming days to avoid further delays in the process.

I am encouraged by the support the United Nations initiative is receiving from Libyans, but also from the Presidency Council. International partners have also welcomed the initiative. Separately, Special Adviser Williams has offered her good offices to mediate between Mr. Abdul Hamid Mohammed Dbeibah and Mr. Bashagha to overcome the current political impasse.

As long as the stand-off over executive legitimacy continues, Libya could again see two parallel Administrations. That could lead to instability, and possibly unrest, and deal a severe blow to the prospect of elections.

There have been worrisome developments since the vote of confidence that took place in the House of Representatives on 1 March. Local flights between Tripoli and cities in eastern Libya remain suspended,

while, on 9 and 10 March forces in western Libya supporting either side moved towards the capital. Special Adviser Williams engaged both sides and managed to reduce tensions. The United Nations continues to urge both parties to engage in a constructive dialogue to resolve the political impasse and refrain from unilateral actions that could result in further divisions.

On the security track, the 5+5 Joint Military Commission continues to take steps to implement its action plan for the withdrawal of foreign fighters, foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya. The ceasefire monitoring component of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) continues to work closely with the JMC to establish an operational hub in Sirte.

Libya's economic sector continues to suffer from a lack of oversight and clarity on public spending. Since there was no approved national budget in 2021, the Central Bank of Libya issued payments for public-sector salaries and subsidies on the basis of the last approved budget. Those payments are being supplemented by extraordinary spending measures requested by the Government of National Unity from the Central Bank.

A controversy over budgetary payments inhibited the functioning of the National Oil Corporation. On 9 January, negotiations between the Government of National Unity and the Petroleum Facilities Guard over non-payment of salaries averted a shutdown of oil production in parts of the country. Despite those concerns, I am nevertheless pleased to report that the Governor and the Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Libya launched a programme to reunify the institution, based on the recommendations of the independent audit of the Bank in July 2021.

The human rights situation in Libya remains deeply worrisome. UNSMIL observed an increase in hate speech, defamation and threats, as well as incitement to violence and acts of violence against activists, journalists and political actors, including women. State and non-State actors continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain human rights activists. In eastern Libya in particular, national security laws were often arbitrarily applied. Meanwhile, a lack of due process and fair trial standards marred proceedings in military courts.

Migrants and refugees at sea continue to be intercepted by Libyan authorities and transferred to formal and informal detention centres, where they reportedly suffer serious human rights violations.

Deaths in custody, torture, starvation and extortion also have been reported. The United Nations reiterates its readiness to work with Libyan authorities to strengthen migration governance and border control in line with international law and in cooperation with international partners.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, the United Nations recorded a further decrease in the number of internally displaced persons, from 179,000 at the end of 2021 to 168,000 by 5 March. However, forced evictions by local authorities are a growing concern. The need for durable solutions for the physical, material and legal safety of internally displaced persons remains a top priority.

Libya is now facing a new phase of political polarization. That risks dividing its institutions once again and reversing the gains achieved over the past two years. We know from experience what unilateral actions, divided Government and an unending transition may hold in store for Libya. We remain convinced that credible, transparent and inclusive elections, based on a sound constitutional and legal framework, are the only solution to the current stalemate.

I urge the members of the Security Council to convey this message to the Libyan parties, to call for responsible leadership by the Libyan institutions and to remain united in support of United Nations efforts to assist Libya in its path to becoming a peaceful and stable country.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ms. DiCarlo for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Tirumurti.

**Mr. Tirumurti**: In accordance with paragraph 24 (e) of resolution 1970 (2011), of 26 February 2011, I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee established by the same resolution. The report covers the period from 25 January to 16 March 2022. The Committee conducted its work using the silence procedure with the aim of facilitating the implementation of the sanctions measures.

Starting with the arms embargo measure, the Committee received a letter from the United Arab Emirates through which it elected to inform the Committee of the transfer of non-lethal material intended solely for security or disarmament assistance to the Libyan Government, pursuant to paragraph 13 (a) of resolution 2009 (2011), as modified by paragraph 10

of resolution 2095 (2013). The Committee is considering an exemption request submitted by Germany, invoking paragraph 13 (b) of resolution 2009 (2011), which pertains to the supply of small arms, light weapons and related materiel, temporarily exported to Libya for the sole use of, inter alia, United Nations personnel. The Committee also responded to a request for guidance from Turkey in relation to the arms embargo, as well as a query from Sri Lanka in connection with the sanctions regime.

In relation to the assets freeze, no negative decision was taken by the Committee in relation to a notification under paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011) submitted by Switzerland. The Committee is considering a notification invoking paragraph 19 (a) of same resolution submitted by Bahrain, which was previously submitted under paragraph 21 of that resolution. The Committee also received a notification submitted by Luxembourg, invoking paragraph 19 (a). No negative decision was taken by the Committee in relation to part of the notified amount, whereas, for the other part, the Committee advised that Luxembourg submit an exemption request under paragraph 19 (b) of the same resolution. The Committee is currently considering responses to letters received from Libya and Belgium on matters related to the frozen assets of the Libyan Investment Authority.

In connection with the measures aimed at preventing the illicit export of petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products from Libya, the Committee received letters from Libya and the Libyan Government focal point, appointed pursuant to resolution 2146 (2014), regarding an alleged attempt to illicitly export crude oil outside the umbrella of the National Oil Corporation. The Panel of Experts on Libya also reported to the Committee on the same matter.

With respect to the sanctions list, the Committee received a delisting request for five individuals submitted by a Member State. The consideration of four requests is ongoing, whereas the fifth request was not approved by the Committee. Separately, the Committee received a fourth communication from the Delisting Focal Point, established pursuant to resolution 1730 (2006), in connection with the delisting request of a listed individual. The Focal Point process is still ongoing. The Committee also updated some identifying information for an individual on its sanctions list.

As always, I would like to reiterate the Committee's commitment to facilitating the implementation of the measures and contributing to the promotion of peace and stability in Libya.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ambassador Tirumurti for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Shuaiter.

**Ms. Shuaiter** (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to participate in this meeting on the situation in Libya. I am a legal academic, a legal activist and a candidate for the upcoming parliamentary elections. I was already honoured to meet members of the Security Council, along with some of my friends from the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, at the end of November 2020. I join the Council today as a representative of Libyan civil society. In that capacity, I want to convey the concerns and aspirations of the Libyan people at this critical time in the life of the modern Libyan State.

The first concern of the Libyan people is the current developments, the ongoing impasse in the political process and its deviation from its correct path. In that regard, the Libyan people hope that the Security Council will urge that peace and stability be maintained and consensus among all the Libyan political parties be restored, in line with all the resolutions adopted by the Council on the situation in Libya.

It also gives me pleasure to convey the appreciation of the Libyan people for the efforts of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Libya, Ms. Stephanie Williams, to overcome this political impasse through her initiative to support the consensual path between the House of Representatives and the High State Council to agree on a constitutional and legal framework for the upcoming political elections.

The second concern of the Libyan people, which is also of equal importance as the first concern, is to adopt a permanent constitution for the country. All political leaders, whether appointed or elected, could not reach agreement on a consensual constitution. That constitutional impasse led to the prolongation of the transitional period. We have therefore reached this current political impasse at both the executive and the legislative levels.

The Libyan people are being deprived from exercising their inherent right to hold a referendum on the permanent constitution of the country due to the

intransigence of all the parties concerned. All rights and freedoms are now up to the legislative and executive authorities, especially given that the Supreme Court has refrained from monitoring the constitutionality of Libyan legislations.

The Libyan people initially look forward to the support of the Security Council in order to move forward towards the adoption of a consensual constitution with democratic and civil provisions that would guarantee their rights and freedoms and allow them to have their voices heard freely and clearly through a referendum to be held shortly.

The third concern of the Libyan people is to renew the legitimacy of the current executive and legislative authorities of the Libyan State. As Council members know, the current legislative authorities lack political legitimacy and societal acceptance, be it the House of Representatives or the State. Consequently, all executive authorities also lack legitimacy. That is because the last elections in which the Libyan people expressed their free will was in 2014 — almost eight years ago. The Libyan people have since lost confidence in all the authorities as they have witnessed wars, divisions and corruption.

The Libyan people are looking forward for the will of more than 2 million registered voters to be respected. They are eagerly awaiting free, inclusive, fair and credible elections, without intimidation by arms or corrupt money. That calls us to renew our request to the Council to support us through the international monitoring of elections, due to be held soon, God willing.

Lastly, one of the most important concerns of the Libyan people, especially civil society, is restoring their rights. The Council is aware of the human rights situation in my country. There are many examples of human rights violations — violations of the freedom of expression, the right to life and physical safety, as well as extrajudicial detentions, hate speech and many others.

I will focus on violations of women's rights, which have, on the whole, regressed significantly in the most recent period. The Constitutional Committee has failed to establish a women's council and to ensure a gender perspective. The current legislative authority is also delaying the enactment of a bill — submitted by many women with great expertise and supported by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya — to protect

women from violence. The same legislative authority also violated the 30 per cent quota set for women in the road map that was agreed upon by all political actors, with international support.

At the end of 2021, the legislative authority issued new election laws, with quotas of only 16 per cent. That means that the incoming House of Representatives will have only 32 women representatives out of 200. That is unjust for Libyan women, who have made great strides at the political, social, economic and cultural levels.

The legal and executive authorities recently joined forces to delay the Libyan plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. International Women's Day, on 8 March, was accompanied with an unprecedented loss of faith among women. Libyan women therefore look forward to the Council's continued support by urging the Libyan leadership to honour the commitments of the Libyan State under all the ratified treaties and conventions to respect women and ensure a gender perspective in all policies, legislation and national strategies.

In conclusion, I thank members for giving me this opportunity to address the Council. I hope to God that there will be more concerted efforts to put an end to this constitutional and political impasse in Libya through comprehensive national reconciliation and by stressing the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Libya and the prevention of war and incitement to war. I hope to see my country enjoy lasting peace, genuine and comprehensive security, stability and prosperity sooner rather than later.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ms. Shuaiteer for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Tirumurti and Ms. Shuaiteer for briefing the Security Council today. Tensions in Libya have risen since we last met on this subject (see S/PV.8952). Today's discussion is therefore particularly timely. I will make three points.

First, I would like to echo the Secretary-General's call for de-escalation. All actors, internal and external, should refrain from any moves that could undermine stability or deepen divisions in Libya and threaten to undo the hard-won progress achieved over the past two

years. The United Kingdom strongly supports Special Adviser Stephanie Williams and urges those on both sides of the current impasse to accept her offer to facilitate dialogue.

Secondly, as we heard today, 2.8 million Libyans have made their aspiration for elections clear. We support the efforts of Special Adviser Williams to mediate between the House of Representatives and the High State Council in order to establish a constitutional basis for elections. Libya's political leaders must set aside narrow interests and engage seriously to address the underlying conditions that prevented elections from going ahead in December. While Libya lurches between political crises, it is the Libyan people who continue to suffer from a lack of proper service delivery, an unstable economy and fragile security.

Thirdly, we call on all Libyan parties to protect the independence, integrity and reunification of public institutions. The National Oil Corporation should not be politicized and must be able to fulfil its duties without interference. Attempts to shut down oil production are concerning and are only to the detriment of the Libyan economy and its people. Libyan public institutions are there to serve the whole of Libya and should be empowered to do so.

In conclusion, Libya is at a crossroads. There is a real risk of dangerous escalation that could unravel the hard-won ceasefire and threaten Libya's stability. It is now incumbent upon all of us to facilitate a path to the elections that the Libyan people are waiting for.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): I want to thank our briefers — Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Tirumurti and Ms. Shuaiteer — and to welcome our colleague the Ambassador of Libya to this morning's meeting.

The deterioration of the overall situation on the ground in Libya since the postponement of the December elections is a matter of really serious concern. The fragile, hard-won unity and calm achieved since the signing of the ceasefire agreement in October 2020 is now in danger. For the sake of the Libyan people, it cannot, and should not, be eroded.

Reports of the mobilization of forces in and around Tripoli are deeply troubling. The serious political polarization we are witnessing is equally disconcerting. We reiterate calls on all parties to refrain from violence

and from any provocative or destabilizing deeds or words.

At this critical juncture, all actors have the responsibility to safeguard the progress that the Libyan people, supported by the international community, have worked so hard to achieve in recent years. Outstanding disagreements among Libyan stakeholders can be resolved only through peaceful dialogue. The Libyan people deserve nothing less.

We therefore welcome the recent proposal of Special Adviser Williams to convene a joint committee from the House of Representatives and the High State Council. We hope that the consensual constitutional basis envisaged by that committee can forge a pathway out of the current impasse. The destination is clear: the holding of credible, transparent and inclusive elections. The Libyan people have demonstrated clearly that they are ready to choose their own leaders; they should not be made to wait indefinitely to cast their votes at the ballot box.

Libyan women, like Ms. Shuaiter, have every right to participate fully and safely in the elections, both as candidates and as voters. That is intrinsic to the goal of achieving inclusive, sustainable peace. We call on all parties to engage in the joint committee process in good faith, to urgently nominate their representatives and to cooperate fully with the Special Adviser.

Full respect for the human rights of Libyans from all backgrounds is a prerequisite for them to shape the future of their own country. Weekly abductions and disappearances of journalists and civil society activists, as documented by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, are deplorable. A free civic space is the centrepiece of a democracy; its protection is paramount.

Just last week, we celebrated International Women's Day. Regrettably, it coincided with the announcement by the Libyan authorities that they had suspended work on a national action plan on women and peace and security, which was agreed in collaboration with UN-Women only last year. Landmark resolution 1325 (2001) highlights the crucial role played by women in building peaceful and inclusive democracies and calls for special measures to protect women and girls from violence. We sincerely urge the authorities to reconsider the suspension of that work, which we believe remains vital to Libya's peacebuilding efforts.

We also deeply regret the lack of tangible progress in addressing the conditions faced by detainees, migrants and refugees, including many women and children who are arbitrarily held in State- and non-State-operated facilities. Tragically, detainees continue to face heightened risks of sexual violence, including rape. We call on the Libyan authorities to urgently ramp up efforts to prevent those abuses and to end all practices of arbitrary detention. Furthermore, all allegations of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as other abuses of human rights, should be thoroughly investigated and prosecuted. It is essential that perpetrators be held accountable for such crimes.

We underscore that the vital work that is being undertaken by the Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya is a critical step towards justice and accountability.

Finally, we once again offer our full support for the efforts of the Special Adviser, who has been working tirelessly with the parties on the ground. And we look forward to the timely appointment of a special envoy and the renewal of the Mission's mandate next month, at what is a critical juncture on the path to peace in Libya.

**Mr. De Almeida Filho** (Brazil): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo. I also thank Ambassador Tirumurti for his briefing on the work of Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. I welcome the delegation of Libya to this meeting. I also thank the briefer from civil society.

The most recent political developments in Libya, unfortunately, were not entirely unexpected. Limited progress in the process of national reconciliation, the absence of a constitutional framework and the postponement of elections jeopardize the fragile stability achieved after years of conflict. Once again, the country finds itself divided between rival authorities, none of whom can claim the legitimacy of the vote.

At this time of uncertainty, we encourage Libyan political forces to act with restraint, refrain from violence and renew their commitment to national reconciliation. We also encourage the prompt definition of an electoral timeline, respecting the will of the 2.8 million people who registered to vote at the end of last year, and the establishment of a constitutional framework to define the relations between the powers and govern the elections.

Brazil supports the mediation efforts of Special Adviser Stephanie Williams, particularly her proposal of a joint committee from the House of Representatives and the High State Council to establish a consensual constitutional basis for elections. We believe that the United Nations Support Mission in Libya has played a key role in ensuring the preservation of the ceasefire and the continuity of a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned peace process, free from outside interference.

Elections and political dialogue are necessary to ensure the confidence of the Libyan population in national reconciliation. But it is also necessary to go further and express our firm condemnation of the spoilers of the peace process. Individuals involved in violence and human rights violations must not go unpunished.

Brazil reiterates its condemnation of the murder of hundreds of people in Tarhuna, found buried in mass graves. Incidents of this nature cannot be tolerated, and those responsible must be identified and held accountable for their crimes. We also condemn the undignified treatment of refugees held in detention centres. It is unacceptable that families forced to leave their countries of origin out of absolute necessity be subject to arbitrary detention and violations of their human rights.

The fight against impunity and ensuring the rule of law are the only way for the Libyan people to regain confidence in their institutions. Without that, no Government can claim any degree of legitimacy.

Libya's stability ultimately depends on the country being able to resume its development. Brazil takes note of recent institutional advances, such as efforts to reunify the Central Bank. We understand that it is also necessary for Libya to regain access to its assets held abroad. Those resources belong to the Libyan people and must be used for their benefit.

Brazil reiterates its support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Libya and expresses its solidarity with the Libyan people.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, and the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, Ambassador Tirumurti, for their briefings. We listened closely to the statement by Ms. Shuaiter.

We respect the desire of Libyans to resolve their internal problems independently. By the same token, we respect the House of Representatives' appointment and establishment of a new Government led by Prime Minister Bashagha. That is an important step towards a resolution of the protracted crisis.

At the same time, developments in Libya following the failure to hold general elections scheduled for December 2021 are a cause for concern. There is a risk of descending into a state of de facto diarchy and a deterioration of the situation in the country, which is fraught with risks of a resumption of armed confrontation. That must not be allowed to happen. We advocate resolving existing conflicts through negotiations and compromise.

We hope that, in the current difficult circumstances, the Libyan people will nevertheless be able to reach a national agreement and resolve the complex tasks related to the transitional period on the basis of an inclusive dialogue. It is essential to make meaningful progress on the issues related to the reunification of Libya's administrative and security structures and to strengthen the economy and the social sector. We attach particular importance to preparations for the holding of general elections within a reasonable time frame.

We have not yet seen significant positive progress on the military track towards a settlement. Of course, we welcome the fact that active hostilities in Libya have been halted for more than a year. We also welcome the regular meetings of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission. However, tangible steps to pre-empt a potential escalation of persistent armed hostilities are not being undertaken by the parties. Heavy weaponry has not begun to be withdrawn, nor have military units been redeployed. All that risks undermining the ceasefire and resulting in a fresh outbreak of violence following a deliberate provocation or an inadvertent incident.

With respect to the evacuation of foreign forces from Syria, our position here is well known. We have consistently advocated the synchronized, balanced, steady and phased withdrawal of all non-Libyan armed groups and armed units. We believe that that specific approach will help to avert a negative shift in the power balance that could result in armed hostilities.

We wish to emphasize that we look forward to the timely appointment of a new Special Adviser on Libya, whose work for a comprehensive settlement is more important than ever before. The Russian



position remains unchanged: that candidature needs to be acceptable to the Libyan people and must be supported by regional stakeholders and approved by the membership of the Security Council.

We are troubled by the fact that against the backdrop of current events that have had a serious impact on the political situation in Libya, members of the Security Council have received limited information from the Secretary-General about the activities of his Special Adviser, Stephanie Williams. We are also surprised at the fact that the penholders of the Libyan dossier in the Security Council also have failed to demonstrate their usual proactivity, which is being seen in other areas, preferring to cast a shadow over the serious processes that are taking place in Libya.

To conclude, I wish to underscore that we continue to be troubled by the problem of illicit migration and arms proliferation in Libya. That has an impact on the security of both the country itself and the Sahelo-Saharan region as a whole. Clearly, 11 years on, the country has still not managed to address the consequences of the collapse of Libyan statehood, spawned by NATO's unlawful intervention. We also wish to underscore that international restrictions should help facilitate the political process to restore stability in Libya and not obstruct efforts to that end, as well as ensure that Libya's assets are safeguarded and not capitalized on for the enrichment of Western States.

**Mr. Biang** (Gabon): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3), namely, Gabon, Ghana and Kenya. We thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo; Ambassador Tirumurti, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya; and Ms. Jazia Jibril Mohammed Shuaiteer for their briefings and insightful perspective on the situation in Libya. We also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Libya.

Listening to the people of Libya, we have repeatedly heard their keen desire for a secure environment in which to pursue their socioeconomic and political aspirations. In the past one and a half years, they have made significant progress in their peace process. Indeed, the current political stalemate in Libya, as well as the reported increase in the movement of armed groups around Tripoli, is concerning since it threatens to erode the gains attained painstakingly attained, including on

other tracks of the peace process. It is important that the stalemate be quickly broken.

We therefore call for calm and restraint from all parties and encourage them to utilize the mediation channels on offer by the United Nations and the African Union, neighbouring States and other partners of goodwill.

We acknowledge and support the desire of the people of Libya to hold elections. We commend them for having registered in large numbers as voters. It is important that the elections be grounded in a constitutional framework that enjoys the widest possible consensus.

*(spoke in French)*

We propose that the efforts of the United Nations and international partners be based on the following three imperatives.

The first imperative is national dialogue and reconciliation. The A3 has always underlined the importance of prioritizing national dialogue and reconciliation, which are vital for an enduring exit from the political stalemate. It is indispensable that national dialogue and reconciliation be integrated throughout all stages of the peace process, including the unification of national institutions and the implementation of the comprehensive action plan of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission of 8 October 2021. We also underscore the need for an inclusive process that takes all protagonists, including women and young people, into account, with a view to greater ownership and acceptance of the electoral results. We encourage the Libyan people to make use of the good offices of the Secretary-General and the African Union in the implementation of the national dialogue and reconciliation.

My second point concerns a more robust mandate for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). The mandate of UNSMIL is to support the peace process so as to give the Mission the resources necessary to respond effectively to the demands for peace at every stage of the process. The recommendations of last year's independent strategic review must be implemented. We encourage the members of the Council to work towards a consensus based upon those elements in the context of a substantial renewal of the mandate of UNSMIL for a significant amount of time.

Thirdly, there is a need for the implementation of guarantees against the consequences of instability in

the region. The presence and continued activity in Libya of foreign combatants and mercenaries undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country and complicates the peace process. That presence also constitutes a threat to the Sahel region, whose porous borders facilitate the free movement of those forces. Their withdrawal from Libya will require follow-up and coordination to ensure their disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) into their countries of origin.

It is therefore important that that DDR process be conducted in close coordination with neighbouring States based on the competent regional and subregional mechanisms and the support of the international community. We wish also to stress the fact that the regional fragility resulting from the accumulation of foreign combatants and mercenaries creates a climate that is conducive to the development of terrorism. In that regard, it is crucial to help Libya to bolster its capacity to combat terrorism.

Given the inextricable link between Libya, the Sahel and the whole of the African continent, we recommend that the Secretary-General make use of the vast body of African expertise available in the context of the high-level United Nations leadership to achieve progress in the dialogue between the parties and strengthen coordination with States of the region.

We reiterate our deep concern regarding the suffering of the thousands of migrants and refugees in Libya. The persistent interception and return to Libyan ports of migrants crossing the Mediterranean to seek a better life in Europe are not lasting solutions.

Moreover, the creation of waiting areas with inhuman conditions is unacceptable. We condemn the degrading treatment suffered by migrants and call upon all stakeholders to stop such practices. We also condemn the provision of targeted resources and the dissemination of information that shore up such treatment. Those concerned must respect the relevant norms of international law and cooperate with the international community to find viable ways to tackle the root causes of that migration.

As Europe shows its empathy for refugees from Ukraine, we urge the European Union to show the same compassion, in keeping with international humanitarian law, to Africans fleeing security and climate crises for which they are not responsible.

With regard to sanctions, we recall that all frozen Libyan assets must be preserved and eventually returned to the Libyan people. We therefore recall the need to protect them from loss or misappropriation.

We encourage the Libyan people to stay the course for peace. Despite temporary setbacks, they can build back better and stronger. But to build a strong, prosperous nation for themselves and their descendants, they must all show flexibility and compromise, choosing to put the interests of the country ahead of individual interests. We urge each side to forgo individual demands today for the collective good of tomorrow.

Finally, we reaffirm our solidarity with the Libyan people in the pursuit of a truly Libyan-led and Libyan-owned peace process. We also reaffirm our respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Libya.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, our colleague Ambassador Tirumurti and Ms. Shuaiter for their briefings. We welcome the representative of Libya to today's meeting.

In 2021, the international community witnessed the positive effects of the progressive pacification of Libya. Despite major challenges, the ceasefire and the formation of a Government of National Unity enabled the rapid reactivation of economic life, a significant decrease in the number of internally displaced persons and the reduction of humanitarian needs in the country.

Unfortunately, the current dispute over executive power in Libya jeopardizes the fragile but decisive progress that the political process has brought about. That is why my country urgently calls on all Libyan political groups to conduct themselves responsibly and find a negotiated solution to the fragile situation that prevails. We also call on international actors to use their influence to facilitate an agreement that preserves the political process, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Libya.

The pending tasks to be undertaken by the Government with the support of the Libyan political factions are manifold, with the organization of elections as soon as possible being the most important. The registration of almost 3 million Libyan citizens in the electoral registers at the end of last year shows the interest of the population in participating in elections and in moving towards a democratic transition.

The initiative of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Libya, Ms. Stephanie Williams, to create a joint committee to draft a constitutional basis for the elections is a step in the right direction. Accordingly, we invite the High Council of State and the House of Representatives to participate in this exercise in a constructive spirit. A solid legal basis, accepted by all political actors, is essential for ensuring that the elections are an opportunity to move towards national reconciliation and that they do not lead to further confrontations and fractures.

In the current context of renewed instability, we deplore the use of force that limits political participation, as well as abuses and human rights violations against the most vulnerable groups, such as migrants in Libya. We urge all actors in the conflict to guarantee the safety of the civilian population and collaborate with accountability efforts. Mexico reiterates its conviction that reconciliation in Libya will only be possible if the victims of the conflict have access to justice.

I conclude by noting Mexico's support for the work of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. We hope that the Security Council will be able to agree, at the next renewal of its mandate, on a configuration of the Mission that will allow it to respond more effectively to the reality of the conflict in Libya.

**Mr. De Rivière** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Ms. DiCarlo and Ms. Shuaiter for their briefings, as well as the Permanent Representative of India.

Libya is currently in a fragile situation. We must avoid jeopardizing the progress achieved in recent months by the Libyans themselves and under the auspices of the United Nations. I am thinking in particular of the ceasefire agreement, the remarkable work of the 5+5 Joint Military Committee and the political dialogue between all regions and all political forces.

The absolute priority today is to preserve stability, the unity of the country and respect for the letter and spirit of the ceasefire agreement. We must avoid anything that could lead to the division of the country.

France is concerned about the threats of force, calls for violence, acts of intimidation and obstacles to freedom of movement that have increased in recent weeks. We reiterate the importance of maintaining the freedom of movement throughout Libya in order

to preserve the unity of the country, including in the airspace.

Any individual who or entity that threatens peace, stability and security or hinders the progress of the transition in Libya is likely to be sanctioned by the Security Council. The holding of legislative and presidential elections is the precondition for stabilizing the country.

France would like to see simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections. We support the Secretary-General's call for them to be held as soon as possible. The holding of free, transparent and inclusive presidential and parliamentary elections, with the full participation of women throughout the country, should make it possible to complete the transition process, reunite political, economic, security and military institutions, and fight against impunity for human rights violations in Libya.

The population's expectations after a decade of conflict are high, as shown by the record rates of voter registration and the mobilization of citizens in favour of their being held. France encourages all Libyan actors to work towards the implementation of a credible road map for the elections. We support the efforts of the United Nations in this regard. The current political crisis can only be resolved through dialogue between Libyans, their political leaders and their institutions — a dialogue that must necessarily lead to the presence in Tripoli of a single Executive capable of governing the entire country and fulfilling the promise of democracy made to Libyans.

Preserving the independence and integrity of the National Oil Corporation and ensuring a transparent and equitable distribution of oil revenues throughout the country are necessary to stabilize the country. The Libyan authorities and the Libyan Central Bank have a responsibility to ensure transparent management of public funds.

Finally, France remains committed to the withdrawal of foreign mercenaries, fighters and forces. This process must be led and directed by the Libyans with the help of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and in coordination with the countries of the region. France calls for the United Nations to step up its contribution in this area. We will also remain vigilant with regard to the full implementation of the arms embargo.

In the current context for Libya's direction, France calls on all actors to preserve the gains made over the past year and complete the transition process. We call on international actors to work together to this end and ensure that the United Nations has all the necessary tools to support the intra-Libyan transition process, particularly with a view to renewing UNSMIL's mandate at the end of April and appointing a Special Envoy.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ambassador Tirumurti, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) and Permanent Representative of India, for their briefings. I welcome the presence of Ambassador Elsonni, Permanent Representative of Libya, at this meeting.

The 11-year conflict in Libya has brought about disastrous consequences for the Libyan people with far-reaching spillover effects on Africa as a whole, in particular the Sahel region and the Mediterranean. The Libyan people and the international community share the hope that the Libyan peace process will stay on the right course, make continued progress and achieve lasting peace as soon as possible.

However, according to the briefing by Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, for some time now the differences and tensions among the parties in Libya have intensified. The positive momentum of last year has been on the decline. The uncertainty regarding the political process has increased. All those issues are extremely regrettable and worrisome. China wishes to make the following observations.

First, the fundamental principle of peace should be upheld. The current ceasefire in Libya has been hard-won. A relapse into conflict will unravel all the peace gains made over the past two years. China has noted that all parties in Libya have generally remained calm and exercised restraint at this critical time. We hope that they will continue to seek a political settlement and avoid taking any action that may complicate the situation. All parties with influence to bear on the situation in Libya should adhere to the principle of a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned process and play an active and constructive role in that regard.

Within its mandate, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) should continue to work with the 5+5 Joint Military Committee in monitoring the ceasefire. The foreign fighters and mercenaries in

Libya should withdraw in a phased, balanced, orderly and organized manner without delay.

Secondly, there must be persistence in dialogue and consultation. The difficulties in Libya's political process are essentially due to the lack of consensus among the parties. We hope that all parties in Libya will restore the momentum of dialogue that prevailed some time ago, reach early agreement on issues vital to Libya's future, especially regarding the timeline and the road map for the political transition, tackle the direct causes for the postponement of elections and hold elections as soon as possible, while maintaining peace and stability in the country, so as to usher in a new chapter for Libya's national development.

China encourages UNSMIL to continue to actively facilitate peace talks. In principle, we support the renewal of the UNSMIL mandate and call for the prompt appointment of a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Libya, as provided for in Council resolutions.

Thirdly, peace should be promoted through development. Growing the economy and improving people's livelihood can help the Libyan people to reap the peace dividend and foster a force for peace. Restoring Libya's oil production to pre-war levels has not been easy to achieve. As the main source of Libya's national revenue, the stable production and export of oil should be ensured. The humanitarian situation in Libya has somewhat improved. China encourages the international community to actively engage in Libya's reconstruction and increase support for Libya's economic recovery and development. The Libyan Government has long been concerned about the losses suffered due to frozen assets. The Security Council and the Libyan sanctions committee should take that matter very seriously and adopt practical measures.

**Mr. Tirumurti** (India): At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing. I also thank Ms. Jazia Jibril Shuaiteer for her remarks, and we welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Libya at this meeting.

We noted with concern the recent developments and political disagreements in Libya. We hope that all outstanding political issues can be resolved peacefully by the parties concerned, keeping the larger interests of the Libyan people in mind. In that regard, we once again reiterate the imperative of holding the presidential and parliamentary elections at the earliest. We have seen

the enthusiasm among the Libyan people, who have registered in large numbers to vote.

The holding of the elections in a timely manner will be necessary to carry forward the momentum generated by the signing of the ceasefire agreement in October 2020. In that regard, we appreciate the efforts of the United Nations to form a joint committee of representatives from the House of Representatives and the High Council of State to decide on the constitutional basis for holding elections.

We have also noted, including from the briefing by the Under-Secretary-General, that serious challenges still remain in Libya, including the reported mobilization of armed groups in and around Tripoli. There has also been a resurgence in terrorist activity, and continued violations of the arms embargo are equally alarming.

The priority right now must be to ensure that elections are held at the earliest in a free, fair, inclusive and credible manner. We hope that all parties in Libya can unite around that common purpose. We also call on the Security Council and the international community to support the Libyan people in that endeavour. There should be a clear message against violence in all forms, which could undermine the progress achieved since 2020.

The sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Libya need to be safeguarded. The political process must be fully Libyan-led and Libyan-owned, with no imposition or external interference. We also stress the need for concrete progress in the full and complete withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries. We need to plan for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups and non-State armed actors.

It is also important for the international community to focus its attention on the threat of terrorism in Africa, particularly in the Sahel region. We must ensure that terrorist groups and affiliated entities are not allowed to operate unchallenged in Libya. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/31) highlighted the presence of training camps of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and its affiliates in southern Libya. It is critical for the Security Council to focus and act upon the growing threat of terrorism in Africa.

India has traditionally enjoyed close and mutually beneficial bilateral ties with the Libyan people, and we remain committed to supporting Libya and the Libyan

people in their endeavour to bring about lasting peace and stability in the country.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): I thank Under Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing and Ambassador Tirumurti for the periodic report of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya. I also want to thank Ms. Jazia Jibril Shuaiteer for her insightful briefing.

As we heard, the situation in Libya is fragile. We are concerned about a possible escalation of violence and fighting. It is critical that Libya preserve the gains made and not fall back into a spiral of violence. We urge all actors to refrain from provocative actions and rhetoric. The path for a stable and peaceful Libya is through dialogue. Differences can be solved only by political and diplomatic means.

While Libyans leaders call for a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process, the same leaders must show responsibility towards their own population, who demand improved public services, their say through democracy and a better future. Forces for the status quo cannot continue to neglect those demands.

We welcome the initiative of Special Adviser Williams to form a joint committee with representatives from the House of Representatives and the High Council of State to establish a constitutional framework for the elections. Cooperation and compromise are key. We urge the parties to contribute to that process in a constructive and flexible way, and all international actors should support the process.

The goal must be a peaceful transfer of power to democratically elected institutions. It is imperative that we not let spoilers create alternative undemocratic tracks. A total of 2.8 million Libyans have registered to vote. They deserve to have their voices heard. In this tense situation, it is particularly important that the ceasefire agreement be upheld, and we urge continued cooperation within the 5+5 Joint Military Commission. Similarly, it is critical that foreign fighters, mercenaries and foreign forces withdraw from the country, as Libyans themselves have called for.

Norway is gravely concerned about the reported arrest and detention of members of civil society, human rights organizations and international non-governmental institutions. We urge all political actors to continue working for equal rights and to ensure women's equal participation in political and economic

processes, and we remind Libya of the duty of States to fulfil their obligations to respect and protect human rights. Norway recognizes that the humanitarian situation in Libya has improved during the past year, with a 40 per cent reduction in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance.

The decrease in the number of internally displaced persons is also encouraging. But, at the same time, we remain concerned by the continued lack of protection of civilians. Violations of the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are unacceptable. The continuing reported situation of people held in unlawful and arbitrary detention is also highly worrying, especially incidents of sexual violence and child abuse.

Finally, Norway looks forward to the mandate renewal for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, which will take place next month. We sincerely hope the Council can agree on a substantial resolution to renew the mandate for one year. Furthermore, we support the implementation of the recommendations from the independent strategic review.

**Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America): I want to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Tirumurti and Ms. Shuaiteh for their briefings today.

Clearly, the current situation in Libya is deeply concerning. Multiple actors, whose political legitimacy is in question, are vying for control of the Government, raising the risk of escalating violence and further delaying the prospect for presidential and parliamentary elections.

The Libyan people have been clear that what they demand are elections — not continued delays or endless arguments among elites and the well-armed. Nearly 3 million Libyans clearly conveyed that demand by registering to vote, and they are waiting for their leaders to deliver on their promise to hold elections.

Free and fair elections are the sole path to stability and prosperity for the Libyan people, and we have an obligation to support the Libyan people's desire for elections. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser Stephanie Williams to generate dialogue among key political actors that leads to rapid agreement on a consensual and constitutional basis for holding genuinely free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections as soon as possible. We strongly urge the House of Representatives and High

State Council to participate in the United Nations-facilitated dialogue.

We also encourage and will materially aid continued efforts by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to support the admirable work of the High National Election Commission to prepare for eventual elections and deliver a free and fair voting process. Elections absent these conditions risk exacerbating the conflict.

We call on all parties to refrain from violence and to take part in negotiations to de-escalate current tensions. We reiterate our reminder to those who obstruct or undermine the successful completion of Libya's political transition that such activities may lead to listing by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), in accordance with resolution 2571 (2021) and other relevant Council resolutions.

We are concerned about the findings of the Panel of Experts on Libya, in its mid-term report, of an emerging pattern of targeting individuals actively promoting or preparing to be candidates in the 24 December. We encourage the Panel to continue to monitor efforts to derail elections and welcome recommendations on how to more effectively deter such action.

The United States strongly supports the full implementation of the arms embargo. I want to reiterate that the United States opposes all military escalation and foreign military interventions in Libya, including through proxies and mercenaries. Foreign actors exploiting the conflict pose grave threats to regional stability and global commerce. The continuing presence of private military companies on both sides is deeply concerning. That is especially the case for Russian Wagner forces, whose destabilizing role has now taken on a dangerous regional dimension.

The United States remains encouraged by the steady progress of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission as it implements its comprehensive action plan for the withdrawal of the armed groups. Challenges on the political track should not be allowed to spill over into the military domain and impede the substantial progress that has been achieved.

We call on all parties, Libyan or international, to refrain from politicizing or interfering in the work of Libyan sovereign institutions. We welcome progress on the unification of the Central Bank of Libya and the spirit of cooperation that has animated that process.

We likewise call for continued respect for the integrity and independence of the National Oil Corporation. We also share our concern over the closure of airspace to domestic air travel and, in the interest of preventing division, call for an immediate resumption of flights.

We are looking forward to close cooperation with the United Kingdom as penholder and other Council members on the resolution renewing UNSMIL's mandate. It is past time that we adopt a comprehensive mandate that gives UNSMIL the strongest foundation for its future work.

**Mr. Hoxha** (Albania): Let me also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Tirumurti and Ms. Shuaiteh for their remarks. I also welcome the presence of the Libyan Ambassador.

Libya is again at a crossroads. The latest confusing developments call for caution, patience and restraint. In that regard, I would like to make three brief points.

First, at this critical moment, the priority must be to preserve stability on the ground. All Libyan actors must refrain from unilateral steps, which may exacerbate political and institutional divisions. The current threats and attempts to disrupt oil production and to sell it outside of the formal channels are concerning and must not be condoned. All Libyan parties must allow the National Oil Corporation to continue its vital work for the benefit of all Libyans, as outlined in Security Council resolutions. We call on all stakeholders to act constructively and in a transparent and inclusive manner.

In that context, we are extremely worried by recent reports of violence, threats of violence, intimidation and kidnappings. Likewise, we are deeply concerned about the shrinking of the civic space in Libya, which also manifests in attacks against political activists, women human rights defenders and all civil society actors trying to make their voices heard. The killing in Misrata of Tayeb Al-Shariri, a blogger and civil society activist, is a crime, and those responsible for those hideous actions must be brought to justice.

Albania echoes the Secretary-General in urging restraint and the need to abstain from provocative actions, both in words and deeds. Mobilization and movement of convoys of armed groups increase tensions and remind us of the sad scenarios that the Libyan people have faced in the past. They will not do any good and must not be repeated. Libya must not undo

the gains of the past years. Anyone who undermines peace and stability in Libya or its political process must be held to account.

At such a critical stage, it is essential that all Libyan actors and institutions pursue a consensual approach in all further developments. All decisions and initiatives must be perceived, by both internal and external stakeholders, as legitimate and compliant with constitutional and inter-institutional arrangements and regulations in force, starting with the Libyan Constitutional Declaration and the Skhirat Political Agreement.

Secondly, we strongly reiterate our commitment to putting the political and electoral process back on track. We must encourage the Libyans to keep the focus on elections, based on solid and shared constitutional and legal bases and within a time-bound framework. Elections cannot be postponed indefinitely, because they are essential for the sustainable reunification and stabilization of the country and key to fulfilling the democratic aspirations of the Libyan people, particularly the 2.8 million who registered to vote.

To this end, in reaffirming our full respect for Libyan sovereignty and for the United Nations-facilitated, Libyan-led and -owned political process, we fully support Special Adviser Stephanie Williams' mediation, including efforts to agree the constitutional basis required to ensure that free, fair and inclusive elections take place as soon as possible. We encourage all Libyan stakeholders, including the leadership of both the House of Representatives and the High Council of State, to cooperate fully with the Special Adviser.

Thirdly, political instability may have negative repercussions for the military track. The withdrawal of mercenaries and of all foreign fighters remains a key priority. The concerning developments in Europe reinforce the sense of urgency of our call for the urgent and full withdrawal of mercenaries and foreign forces from Libya.

The current political stalemate risks compromising the crucial progress made in the past months by the 5+5 Joint Military Commission. However, its action plan remains a fundamental blueprint for withdrawing all external forces, including foreign mercenaries, from the country, and it should be implemented without delay.

The words of Ms. Shuaiteh are a clear testimony that Libyans need and deserve a renewed momentum of

democratic perspective. Narrow political interests with a negative impact on the political process and national reconciliation should not be allowed to come before the rights and wishes of the Libyan people.

We should therefore work together, in the Council and with international partners, towards meeting the common goal to stabilize Libya, for the sake of the Libyan people, and help them to build a more peaceful, stable future for the country and its people and to support its stability, independence, territorial integrity and national unity.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

I would like to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo and Ambassador Tirumurti for their comprehensive briefings. I would also like to thank Ms. Jazia Shuaiter for her valuable opinions and welcome Ambassador Taher Elsonni, the Permanent Representative of Libya, in our meeting today.

Regarding recent developments in Libya, we commend the Libyan parties for showing restraint and abstaining from conflict, despite the current uncertainty in the political process. The Libyan people have suffered greatly as a result of conflict, and therefore they should continue to choose peace as the sole path to achieving security, stability and prosperity in Libya. At the same time, the international community should remain committed in its support for the State of Libya during this critical period.

As a priority, all diplomatic efforts must continue to advance the political process. All efforts must be focused on the holding of free, fair, inclusive and credible presidential and parliamentary elections, as affirmed by resolutions 2570 (2021) and 2571 (2021), as well as the outcomes of the second Berlin Conference. This must be carried out as soon as possible and on a date agreed by the Libyan people.

We stress the need for all parties to respond to the Secretary-General's call to prioritize maintaining Libya's stability as a top concern. Parties should exercise restraint and avoid taking any measures that could undermine the progress made in resolving the Libyan crisis.

All parties should commit to focusing on a comprehensive national reconciliation process and engage in a frank and transparent dialogue with all

stakeholders that does not exclude any segment of Libyan society. This would maintain the country's unity and protect its national institutions from partisan interests and disputes. In this regard, we stress the need to involve women and youth in every step of Libya's State-building process.

In terms of the security situation in Libya, my country commends the critical work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission to achieve stability and peace in Libya. We also commend Commission's role in maintaining the ceasefire agreement, despite the uncertainty of the political situation in Libya. We look forward to intensifying efforts to make tangible progress in implementing the Commission's plan, which calls for the simultaneous, phased, gradual and balanced withdrawal of foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries from Libya. In that regard, we reiterate our previous calls to deal with the withdrawal in a serious manner, as this issue impacts all tracks in Libya, especially the security and military tracks.

Additionally, all regional and international parties must take serious and concrete steps to unify the Libyan military and security institutions and to maintain security and stability in the country, as well as in neighbouring countries. The unification of these institutions will also help to prevent the creation of a security vacuum. The remnants of terrorist cells in the country, especially cells affiliated with Da'esh, could exploit a security vacuum to reorganize their forces and form new hotspots of terrorism in the southern border areas, particularly in the Libyan desert and the Sahel region. In this regard, we appreciate the Libyan forces' role in confronting Da'esh terrorist elements in southern Libya.

The achievements made in the security environment have contributed to the improvement of the economic and humanitarian conditions in Libya. According to a report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of people in need of assistance has decreased by 36 per cent this year compared to last year. Therefore, we stress the need to continue strengthening humanitarian efforts, while focusing on implementing economic and financial reforms in Libya, as well as addressing any challenges that could undermine the gains made in Libya over the past several months.

Finally, the United Arab Emirates reiterates its full support for the United Nations Support Mission



in Libya calls for taking further steps to support the Mission in implementing its mandate more effectively.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Libya.

**Mr. Elsonni** (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month and to thank you for organizing this meeting, despite the current exceptional global circumstances. I would like also to thank Ms. DiCarlo, Mr. Tirumurti and our sister, Ms. Jazia Shuaiter, for their briefings.

It is no exaggeration to state that the biggest challenge of my briefing today is to adequately describe the current situation in my country. I noticed from their statements the inability of some Council members to clearly describe or even understand the recent developments, not because of their lack of knowledge, but rather because of the complexity of the situation.

As Council members know and as they have noted today, the situation in Libya is very sensitive. Members have noted the regrettable political impasse that has prevailed since the failure to hold elections in December 2021, which we had all hoped for. We are currently going through a very critical phase. We are at a dangerous crossroads, with the spectre of political and institutional division looming over us once again a year after the Geneva agreement and its outcome as well as many months-long local and international efforts.

We are witnessing this political impasse at a time when we are starting to see some community consensus and an end to war and armed conflict. Thus the only way forward is to work together seriously and positively during this period to avert further divisions. All efforts and initiatives must focus on de-escalation, and elections must be held as soon as possible, as mentioned in the outcomes of the Berlin and Paris talks and the relevant Security Council resolutions. The most important thing is that this would respond to the aspirations of the more than 3 million voters who are looking forward to an end to the transitional phase and would help to prevent any torpedoing of current preparations despite the many challenges that could lead to losing that momentum.

As soon as we see signs of détente in the Libyan crisis and advance one step, some attempt to push us back many steps. Differences and a lack of genuine consensus are still the primary features of the current

political landscape. That is the result of the political polarization resulting from the crisis, fuelled by multiple negative incidents of international interference by countries that have transferred their conflicts to us. Our stability is now subject to their concerns and their interests. Thus holding transparent and fair elections based on consensus laws and on a strong constitutional basis is the only genuine guarantee that can return legitimacy to the people, end the conflict and resolve the situation in the country. That is what we have stressed time and again and what was also reflected in all the statements made at this meeting.

In that context, we refer to the initiative of the President of the Government of National Unity announced recently. He presented, in keeping with his vision, means of addressing the political impasse in order to ensure the holding of elections. He explained the various mechanisms to achieve such a goal through the creation of political circumstances conducive to the elections without delay. That is in line with the Secretary-General's announced position that stresses the need to hold elections as soon as possible and put an end to the transitional period, based on recent United Nations initiatives that attempt to find a consensus between the House of Representatives and the High State Council to establish a consensual constitutional basis.

In that regard, and despite all obstacles, we call once again on all local and international actors, particularly the United Nations, to support the efforts of the High National Election Commission and send their own teams to assess existing needs so that we can prepare for the upcoming elections well ahead of time. That would send a clear message to all about how serious the international community is as to the holding of general elections when circumstances allow. That is the step to which everyone is looking forward.

The efforts of the Presidency Council are continuing to garner consensus among all Libyans, despite existing challenges. The members of the Presidency Council have held a number of meetings and talks among all national stakeholders throughout the country to find common denominators that would help resolve the current political impasse. It also aims to launch the process of national reconciliation.

In that vein, a committee of legal experts has been established to prepare a draft law to be submitted to the legislative authorities to be adopted. Over the past period, they have reviewed and assessed more than 30

draft reconciliation laws presented to the Presidency Council. Six of those were selected and will all be incorporated in one draft law. We will announce the first reconciliation congress very soon.

When speaking of reconciliation, we must recall the need to support the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, which has so far kept itself free of any political polarization. We call for its continued support to ensure the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement and to surmount any obstacles that prevent the implementation of all its terms, primarily putting an end to any foreign presence on Libyan territories, without exception. That is an unequivocal, sovereign request. We must also unify and build a military institution that is professional and under the control of a civilian authority, with the primary role of protecting the State and its national security and territorial integrity, a State that has monopoly over weapons under the umbrella of its security and military institutions.

Libya is not excluded from the regrettable circle of international conflict witnessed today. Unfortunately, the Security Council has so far failed to counter that challenge. For years it has failed also to find a solution to the Libyan crisis. Undoubtedly, the conflict has direct and indirect impacts on the situation in Libya and the region. Those impacts have a security and economic dimension owing to the multiplicity of intertwined and conflicting international actors on our territories. Thus we would warn against the attempt of some to use Libya to transfer their conflicts or settlement of accounts to Libya, especially the manipulation of the energy dossier. We would stress that we reject any prejudice against that dossier or its use to bring pressure to bear on the current international conflict. That would have dangerous domestic and international repercussions, especially if we return to a state of division. That wealth and its equitable distribution is the right of all Libyans without exception or marginalization of any city or region.

The political stability of Libya will ensure its economic and security stability, which would in turn contribute to the stability of the region, especially the neighbouring countries and the African Sahel.

To conclude, we must recall that the problem in Libya is not merely a legal one but a years-long series of accumulated political and community problems. Any proposed solutions must therefore be comprehensive and inclusive, and we welcome all local and international efforts aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the current crisis, particularly efforts aimed at bringing the parties together at the negotiating table. We thus call on all Libyans to uphold reason and wisdom and eschew wars and dissension.

In that vein, we commend all those who have contributed and are contributing to de-escalating the conflict and the confrontations that could have been possible over the past days, be they eminent persons or the security leadership. We commend them for their efforts, which flow from patriotism and a sense of responsibility.

The one positive development over the past period was the announcement by all active stakeholders in the Libyan political landscape that they unequivocally reject conflict and infighting. They all pledged to take the path of a peaceful political solution. We stress that we reject any further bloodshed, especially that of young people, through the launching of wars that would wreak havoc and bring in other countries for proxy wars, proving that the enemies of today are the friends of tomorrow and causing the blood of our sons to be shed.

It is high time to end the cycle of conflict that has lasted since 2011. It is high time to overcome the painful differences of the past and together initiate a genuine national compact that unites us, not divides us and makes us stronger, not weaker. We trust that with the will and persistence of our people, we will advance in the right direction towards reconciliation and the mending of rifts. No matter what the challenges are, we will build a State of institutions and law, a State of stability and prosperity.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.*