



# Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

**9438**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Monday, 16 October 2023, 10.10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. França Danese . . . . .	(Brazil)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania . . . . .	Mr. Spasse
	China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
	Ecuador . . . . .	Mr. Pérez Loose
	France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon . . . . .	Mrs. Ngyema Ndong
	Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Korbieh
	Japan . . . . .	Mr. Ishikane
	Malta . . . . .	Mrs. Frazier
	Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Afonso
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Switzerland . . . . .	Mr. Hauri
	United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mr. Abushahab
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America . . . . .	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

## Agenda

The situation in Libya

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*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:** 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 Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to participate in this meeting.

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

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Bathily and by Ambassador. Kimihiro Ishikane, Permanent Representative of Japan, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya.

I now give the floor to Mr. Bathily.

**Mr. Bathily:** I have the honour to address the Security Council today for the first time since Storm Daniel hit Derna and the surrounding areas on 10 September. I wish to express my condolences to all Libyans who lost loved ones, homes and livelihoods.

The Derna tragedy is unprecedented in Libya's recorded history. I visited the affected area with the Deputy Special Representative and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Libya and other members of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) leadership team. The human and material cost of that disaster is beyond imagination. In Benghazi, I visited the families displaced from the devastated city. Here in Tripoli, I also attended the funeral ceremony organized by relatives of the deceased and missing persons. Thousands of lives were lost as a result of this tragedy. In my visit to Derna a few days after the storm, I saw at first hand the magnitude of the disaster and heard from families about their houses and their losses, including from individuals who lost all loved ones. I saw an apocalyptic scene, where large portions of the city were literally swallowed up by the water. In support of the affected families and local communities, United Nations agencies and local

and international partners were on the ground within hours of the storm, providing life-saving assistance and conducting search-and-rescue operations.

Some six weeks after the floods, the humanitarian assistance provided by more than 24 humanitarian organizations has reached more than 146,000 people in need of humanitarian support and basic services. As the focus of response efforts transitions to early recovery and reconstruction, United Nations agencies have undertaken initial assessments of the damage, needs and requirements ahead of the next phase, which is aimed at supporting people to get their lives back to normal as soon as possible.

The Derna disaster has shown the spontaneous and admirable unity, solidarity and compassion of ordinary Libyans across the country. At the institutional level, the Presidential Council and the Government of National Unity stood ready and mobilized to receive the support, just as the House of Representatives and the House of Representatives-appointed Government, in their respective capacities, backed the rescue operations. The Libyan National Army mobilized its structure and established an operational room to support the activities of the rescue teams. In a remarkable show of solidarity, many armed formations from the west joined their colleagues from the east. Despite the lack of national coordination among different institutions, their individual mobilization immediately after the tragedy augured a national momentum of unity inspired by the disaster.

I would like to commend Libya's international partners, from the region and beyond, for the prompt and efficient support they provided to the Libyan people during this tragedy. The Derna disaster has revealed severe governance deficits through several issues, such as the lack of maintenance of the dam systems, the inadequate management of resources and the lack of an effective mechanism for disaster management and prevention. On the top of those issues, the absence of unified political decision-making at the national level made matters more challenging. Had those governance issues been resolved at the national level, they would have mitigated the impact of the tragedy.

I am deeply concerned about the continued divisions among the leaders of Libya with regard to the reconstruction of Derna and surrounding affected areas. The rivalries and competition among leaders continue as to which entity will exert exclusive

authority over the reconstruction efforts. Different initiatives are being conducted in the east and the west in that regard. From the outset, UNSMIL has called on the leaders to establish a unified national platform to assess the damage and undertake the reconstruction project, as the related costs will be borne mostly by Libyan national resources. Most international partners have expressed their readiness to support such a national mechanism as an instrument of transparency, accountability and efficiency. Uncoordinated initiatives could lead to further disappointment for the citizens of Derna and Libyans generally, who are hoping to see a quick recovery and efficient reconstruction in the bereaved areas.

I am pleased to announce that there has been some progress on the electoral process. The 6+6 committee completed its work early this month. Despite enormous pressure and difficult deliberations in Bouzniga in Morocco, as well as in Tripoli, Benghazi and the other cities in Libya where they met, the members of the committee achieved compromise on many contentious issues. The revised electoral laws were issued by the House of Representatives on 5 October and officially received by the High National Elections Commission on 9 October. UNSMIL commends the committee for its efforts and welcomes the progress that has been made. The Council is aware that UNSMIL has consistently advocated for electoral laws that are technically and politically implementable. In the light of that, there are some observations to be made about the new electoral laws. From a technical perspective, the revised laws are an improvement on the previous drafts, with several concerns identified by the Elections Commission and UNSMIL. They include voting eligibility for members of the military and clarity on the sequencing of elections, on seat distribution in the Senate and House of Representatives and on the electoral dispute resolution mechanism.

From a political perspective, the most contentious issues highlighted in my briefings in June (see S/PV.9351) and August (see S/PV.9402) remain unresolved, notably the mandatory second round of the presidential elections. Contrary to common practice, that provision requires that the two front-runners in the presidential elections participate in a run-off, irrespective of the percentage of votes won by each. It is linked to the eligibility criteria and illustrates the deep mistrust among the political class. It could potentially be misused to exclude candidates from the second round,

question a potential majority result and disrupt the whole electoral process. The linkage between the presidential and parliamentary elections is also an issue. While the presidential and legislative elections can be held on the same day, subjecting the validity of the parliamentary elections to that of the presidential elections results from an unspoken political statement and runs a high risk of disrupting the process. Another highly contentious issue is the formation of a new Government, which can only be the result of a negotiation among key actors. It also stands to reason that creating a level playing field for all candidates requires a unified Cabinet that enjoys public trust to lead the country to elections. However, if we are to avoid a repeat of the August 2022 crisis unleashed by the unilateral appointment of the Bashagha Government, it is essential to ensure that the new Government is the outcome of political negotiations among the major players.

The deletion of articles allowing holders of administrative numbers to register and vote, which were included in the June version of the draft electoral laws, may pose additional challenges to the implementation of elections in the south of the country and limit the inclusivity of the elections. Regrettably, the gender provisions for the Senate elections also remained unchanged, with only six seats out of 90 allocated to women in the Senate. The electoral laws provide that the elections have to take place within 240 days of their entry into force. However, the High National Elections Commission has informed UNSMIL that the implementation of the electoral laws will begin only once the issue of the new Government is resolved, in line with article 86 of the law on presidential elections and article 90 of the National Assembly law.

Finally, there are disagreements between the House of Representatives and the High State Council about the electoral laws. The High State Council disputes the amendments to the electoral laws that were adopted by the House of Representatives and insists that the Bouzniga version should prevail. The rejection of the amendments made by the 6+6 committee after Bouzniga by the High State Council does represent a political option, but it risks jeopardizing the hard-won gains of the two Chambers and the compromise that they have achieved.

A fragile calm has returned to Tripoli, although tensions persist between Tripoli-based armed groups. The inherent precariousness of the dynamics between those security actors reinforces the need for an

inclusive political process. In Benghazi, the Libyan National Army's attempt to arrest the former Minister of Defence in the Government of National Accord, Al-Mahdi Al-Barghathi, led to armed clashes in densely populated areas of Benghazi. The fighting that occurred between 6 and 8 October resulted in several casualties, material damage and a communication shutdown for almost a week. Thanks to the intervention of community leaders, the situation has calmed down for now. I call on all to embrace de-escalation through dialogue and to place the principles of the protection of civilians at the centre of their operations.

The human rights situation remains worrying, with continuing attacks on civic space and the rule of law, which is contributing to the deterioration of the overall situation. Arbitrary arrests and detentions, including of members of political parties and think tanks, have also been recorded across the country. I am equally concerned about the systematic deportations and mass expulsions from Tunisia into Libya of migrants and asylum-seekers, who are in desperate need of international protection.

I would like to commend the positive role and moral responsibility taken by tribal leaders in diffusing tensions across Libya, as seen in Tripoli in August and Benghazi last week. I call on those community leaders to strengthen their role as actors of peace and national reconciliation.

To conclude, the finalization of the electoral laws by the 6+6, in spite of the remaining issues to be fine-tuned and agreed upon through political compromise among the major players, offers the opportunity to break the current stalemate in Libya. However, the rejection of the amendments made by the 6+6 after Bouzniga by the High State Council constitutes a political option that risks jeopardizing the hard-won gains of the two chambers. I call on the High State Council to renounce that position, which risks obstructing the electoral process. The controversy between the House of Representatives and the High State Council over the laws, the highly contentious issue of the new Government, the linkage between the presidential and parliamentary elections and the possibility of misuse of the conditionalities attached to the mandatory second round of the presidential elections put the whole electoral process at risk of another political crisis, which could lead to a remake of the December 2021 scenario or the August 2022 crisis. In that regard, and in line with UNSMIL's conflict-prevention mandate, I

wish to alert members to the risks of violent conflict involved in a unilateral appointment of a Government by any of the rival parties, and I call on the Council to use its influence to prevent that dangerous occurrence and to mobilize the Libyan parties for dialogue.

Since my previous briefing, I have engaged with the major stakeholders at the institutional level and Libyans of all walks of life to encourage them to display their goodwill and good faith in regard to the success of the electoral process. Only the genuine commitment of all to serving the interest of the people for peace, stability and prosperity can produce a positive electoral outcome. Laws alone cannot, and will not, make elections happen. They must be supported by the buy-in of a wide range of stakeholders, including the major institutional players, but also military and security actors, political parties and candidates, community leaders, civil society organizations, women and youth groups, media professionals and other constituencies. I call on all stakeholders, including major leaders, to meet and agree on a binding political settlement towards a peaceful electoral process, the backbone of which will be a unified Government able to lead Libya to elections. UNSMIL stands ready to facilitate that process.

Finally, I also reiterate my call on all international partners of Libya to support the electoral process as the only way to provide the country with legitimate institutions and a future of peace, unity, stability and prosperity. Such an outcome is long-awaited by Libyan citizens, who wish to close the chapter of conflict and risks of disintegration in their country. The ongoing crises in the Sudan, the Sahel and the broader region, and their potential spillover effects on Libya, constitute serious threats that must not be taken lightly.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Bathily for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Ishikane.

**Mr. Ishikane:** 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 pursuant to the same resolution. The report covers the period from 23 August to 16 October 2023, during which time the Committee conducted its work using the silence procedure with the aim of facilitating the implementation of the sanctions measures.

Concerning the arms embargo, the Committee replied to a letter from Libya, on an interaction between

a Libyan-flag vessel and European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI. The Committee also received a vessel-inspection report from Operation IRINI. The Committee also received a letter from the Panel of Experts, as well as a communication from a Member State, concerning a prior note verbale received from Italy on the transfer to the Libyan Government of certain vessels for coastal patrol.

In relation to the assets freeze, no negative decision was taken by the Committee in relation to five notifications invoking paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011), four of which were submitted by the Kingdom of Bahrain and one of which was submitted by the United Kingdom. The Committee is also considering a response to a letter from the Libyan Investment Authority, a listed entity, on certain aspects of the assets freeze.

With regard to the travel ban, the Committee received a communication from a representative of Ms. Aisha Al-Qadhafi, a listed individual, confirming her return to Oman from Egypt and Italy, and a notification from the United Arab Emirates as a State of transit.

The Committee received a de-listing request from Libya for one individual, consideration of which is ongoing. The Committee also received a third communication from the focal point for de-listing established pursuant to resolution 1730 (2006) in connection with a de-listing request submitted by another listed individual. Consideration of that de-listing request is also ongoing.

Lastly, the Committee received a note verbale from Malta regarding its deployment of a naval vessel to the port of Tobruk, Libya, on a humanitarian rescue mission.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the Committee's commitment to contributing to the promotion of peace and stability in Libya.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Ishikane for his briefing.

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

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily for his briefing and the Permanent Representative of Japan for his update on the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution

1970 (2011), concerning Libya. I also welcome the participation of the representative of Libya in this meeting.

First, I want to express the United Kingdom's deep condolences to the people of Libya following the devastating flooding in Derna. The United Kingdom is committed to supporting those affected by the flooding. We have mobilized over \$6 million in support, contributing to the United Nations flash appeal and deploying United Kingdom emergency medical teams and technical engineering support. We will continue to coordinate closely with the United Nations and Libyan authorities on further support, as required. We welcome Special Representative Bathily's statement on the need for a national mechanism to direct recovery and reconstruction efforts. To be effective, any reconstruction efforts must be unified across eastern and western Libya, and coordinated with local, national and international partners. There must be full transparency, effective oversight and accountability to the Libyan people.

The devastating floods simply reinforce our assessment that the status quo is unsustainable and will not deliver what the Libyan people need. Libya's citizens continue to suffer from the lack of political progress. A unified and democratically elected Government is needed to respond effectively to citizens' needs.

In that regard, we note the assessment of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) that the updated electoral laws constitute a working basis to hold elections and require the commitment of all major parties to implement. However, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has made clear, contentious issues remain. Those need to be resolved through an inclusive political agreement. Therefore, we urge Libya's leaders to engage with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily in a constructive manner to give the process a chance of success. They should attend any United Nations-convened meetings and make necessary concessions in order to move Libya towards elections.

We look forward to working with Council members on the renewal of UNSMIL's mandate later this month. UNSMIL is an essential partner in Libya and vital to efforts to help create a path towards free, fair and inclusive presidential and parliamentary elections. We hope the renewal will provide the continuity that Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily needs



to lead the Mission and steer international support towards an inclusive political settlement for Libya.

**Mr. Pérez Loose** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Special Representative Bathily and Ambassador Ishikane for their briefings. I welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Libya, Ambassador Taher Elsonni.

I would like to begin by expressing Ecuador's solidarity with the people and Government of Libya following the devastating tragedy that occurred in Derna last September as a result of the passage of Storm Daniel. We express our condolences to the Libyan people for the loss of their loved ones.

The reports of coordinated work for those affected within Libya are encouraging. It has been positive to hear that the natural disaster has created a sense of national solidarity in which Libyan citizens have left behind political questions and have united to help those effected. Ecuador hopes that this show of unity will be translated to all sectors of society. Now more than ever, the Libyan people need unity.

Efforts aimed at the recovery and reconstruction of the areas affected by the disaster must be stepped up, with long-term strategies, focusing on the most vulnerable groups and prioritizing, among other things, psychosocial support for the affected populations. Ecuador echoes the call of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to all relevant national and local Libyan authorities and international partners to facilitate agreement on a unified and coordinated Libyan national mechanism to lead the recovery and reconstruction efforts and guarantee transparency and accountability, based on an objective assessment of the situation and the needs on the ground.

The impact of the disaster has underscored the urgency of overcoming the political stalemate. We note positively the work of the joint 6+6 committee in drafting the electoral laws, which were subsequently adopted by the House of Representatives. We trust that the relevant Libyan actors, supported by UNSMIL, will resolve any contentious issues to enable peaceful, transparent and inclusive elections to be held as soon as possible. My country reaffirms its support for the Special Representative's efforts to reach a viable political agreement in the interest of all Libyans.

Moreover, we must continue to pay close attention to the humanitarian situation of migrants and refugees

in Libya. It is important that international cooperation be redoubled to tackle illicit trafficking and human smuggling in the region and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

On the security front, it is important that efforts aimed at building confidence between military and security leaders in support of the political process continue to be undertaken to create a security environment conducive to the holding of fair and secure elections. The recent clashes in Tripoli and Benghazi are a reminder of the importance of having unified military and security institutions in the country.

UNMIL's mandate is days away from expiring. My delegation will participate constructively in the negotiations on the draft resolution with a view to extending the Mission's mandate and renewing the Council's support for the political process in Libya.

**Mr. Ishikane** (Japan): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing.

Let me begin by expressing Japan's deep condolences to those who lost their loved ones in the floods in eastern Libya last month. Japan commends the solidarity shown by people across Libya and welcomes the international community's prompt humanitarian response. Immediately after the disaster, Japan provided food assistance, as well as emergency relief goods, to those affected. In addition, earlier this month, Japan decided to extend emergency grant aid amounting to \$3 million through international organizations.

National unity and solidarity will be required more than ever in the reconstruction phase. That is especially crucial for the political leaders and public institutions. Japan takes note with concern of the recent statement by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) about the emergence of unilateral and competing initiatives from Libyan actors and institutions. We welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's call to establish a unified and coordinated Libyan national mechanism to direct the recovery and reconstruction efforts.

We repeat the strong call for the holding of national presidential and parliamentary elections across Libya at the earliest possible date. Elections are the only way to restore the legitimacy of the country's institutions. The Council must clearly show its continuous support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General by unanimously adopting a strong resolution at the end

of this month. Japan is committed to constructively engaging in the upcoming negotiations.

Japan also takes note of the efforts of the 6+6 joint committee in drafting electoral laws. While Japan respects the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned process, the solutions must be consensual and implementable to ensure a smooth electoral process.

On the security track, Japan is concerned about the clashes in Benghazi on 6 October. Japan reiterates its call on the Libyan parties to continue to implement the ceasefire agreement in full, including the withdrawal of foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries.

We encourage the 5+5 Joint Military Commission to further the reunification of military and security institutions. We also welcome its effort to create a conducive environment for holding free and fair elections.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my country's commitment to the support of the Libyan people at this crucial juncture.

**Mr. Afonso** (Mozambique): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3).

The A3 would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bathily, for his insightful and updated briefing on the situation in Libya. We extend our gratitude to His Excellency Ambassador Ishikane for his briefing, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. We welcome the participation of our brother, His Excellency the Permanent Representative of Libya, in today's meeting.

We would like to start by expressing our deepest condolences and sympathies to those who lost family members due to the devastating floods in Libya. We wish the injured a speedy recovery.

Rebuilding in the affected areas is a long and hard process. It requires a combination of multiple efforts. In that regard, we join the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in calling for a unified national mechanism to effectively and efficiently advance reconstruction efforts in the flood-affected areas.

Today the A3 wishes to emphasize three points.

First, on the political front, we note the bicephalic situation and political stalemate in the country, which raises fears of further instability in the conflict-torn country. We hope, however, that a political consensus among Libyan stakeholders on a viable draft electoral law will be reached as soon as possible. That would help pave the way for lasting stability in the country.

In that regard, the A3 commends the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's continued efforts with all relevant Libyan institutions and actors to address the unsettled issues related to the electoral framework. We encourage the Special Representative to continue his work with all stakeholders to establish firm timelines to deliver on the aspirations of the Libyan people for elections, without further delay. We reiterate our call for a Libyan-led and -owned political process, and we take note of the approval of the electoral laws by the House of Representatives.

We underscore the importance of ensuring the broad participation, in good faith, of Libyan institutions and society, including women and youth, in an inclusive dialogue. We see that as the sole guarantee of the lasting peace and stability that the Libyan people deserve.

Secondly, regarding the security situation, the A3 takes positive note that the 2020 ceasefire agreement continues to hold, despite the tense situation and security incidents in Libya.

Noting that the regrettable incidents, on 14 and 15 August, were isolated cases, we call on the parties to continue showing restraint by fully complying with the ceasefire agreement. That could pave the way to preserving the current positive momentum towards long-term and durable peace and security in the country.

In order to achieve that desirable goal, the A3 calls on Libyan authorities to pursue efforts and honour their commitment to unify Libya's security forces, mindful of the fact that the unification of such forces is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive approach.

Thirdly, the A3 reiterates its concern about the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in Libya. We continue to urge the Libyan authorities, with the support of the international community as a whole, to work effectively to improve the plight of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in Libya.

We reiterate our condemnation of the dire situation of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees, many of whom are being subjected to arbitrary detention and

experience ill-treatment, sexual assault, forced labour and extortion by members of armed groups, smugglers and traffickers. We therefore continue calling on the national authorities to ensure that migrants are protected from human rights violations.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our call for full respect for Libya's territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and national unity, in line with resolution 2656 (2022).

**Mr. Abushahab** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Special Representative Abdoulaye Bathily and Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane for their valuable briefings, and I welcome the participation of Ambassador Taher Elsonni in today's meeting.

I would like to reiterate our condolences and solidarity with the State of Libya and the brotherly Libyan people for their great suffering following last month's devastating floods, which claimed thousands of lives. Considering the enormous damage and losses caused by the floods, we stress that the upcoming period requires the international community to continue taking urgent and concrete measures to provide relief to the Libyan people and help the country recover from this ordeal. For its part, the United Arab Emirates expeditiously sent urgent relief aid and search-and-rescue teams to Libya.

The solidarity and cohesion demonstrated by the Libyan people during that disaster confirm that unifying the Libyan ranks is not an unattainable goal and that the people want that unity. We therefore express our support for what Mr. Bathily proposed regarding the need to find a unified national mechanism to mobilize support and help flood-affected areas to recover and rebuild.

The current situation calls for commitment to dialogue and concrete steps to overcome all outstanding issues in order to prioritize national interests above all considerations. This stage also requires the international community and the United Nations to intensify mediation efforts to build bridges and help the parties reach a Libyan-led and -owned comprehensive and just political settlement. In that context, we affirm our support for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and the efforts of Special Representative Bathily.

As we mentioned previously, the holding of parliamentary and presidential elections that were based on agreed laws and led to results that are respected by all parties remains an important milestone for ending

the transitional stage in the country. The efforts of the 6+6 joint committee in drafting those laws represent a step in the right direction, and the progress achieved in reaching consensus-based and feasible solutions must be maintained by all parties.

With regard to the draft resolution that the Security Council will adopt on the sanctions regime, we stress the need for the Council to continue to regularly assess the situation on the ground. If the situation improves, it should be possible to ease the restrictions imposed on Libya to help the country respond to the complex challenges it faces. That means the sanctions regime must be flexible enough to adapt to changes on the ground.

We also stress the need to take measures to ensure the preservation of the wealth of the Libyan people and its fair distribution, while preventing any attempts to exploit it in a manner that is at odds with Libya's interests. We welcome the inclusion in the draft resolution to be adopted of language confirming that frozen Libyan assets will be made available at a later stage for the benefit of the people. In addition, it is important that the draft resolution allow Libyan institutions to reinvest liquid assets, which would provide an opportunity in the future to quickly revive the economy and foster development in Libya.

There is no doubt that establishing sustainable stability in Libya will require continued efforts to achieve national reconciliation with the aim of realizing accord and peace across Libya. In that regard, we affirm our support for the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, which has helped to maintain the ceasefire. It is diligently making efforts to unify the military and security institutions in Libya.

In the same context, we continue to call for the simultaneous, phased and gradual withdrawal of all foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries from the country. In addition, addressing the complex security challenges in Libya requires continuous support for national efforts in combating terrorism, especially in the south, and ensuring follow-up to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates stresses the importance of intensifying efforts to help the Libyan parties turn the page on dispute and prioritize the interests of the Libyan people and their aspirations for security and stability.



**Mrs. Frazier** (Malta): I thank Special Representative Bathily for his briefing. I also thank the Permanent Representative of Japan for his briefing in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. I welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Libya in our discussions today.

I start by expressing Malta's deepest condolences to the people of Libya following the devastating flooding in eastern Libya. Our thoughts are with the thousands who have been affected. The consequences of the flooding that struck eastern Libya last month highlighted the impact of human-induced climate change and the catastrophic consequences that it can have on the Mediterranean region and elsewhere. The situation was further worsened by the ongoing political paralysis and the impact it is having on the maintenance of dams and infrastructure, which would have contributed to mitigating the scale of the devastation.

Furthermore, while we recognize the efforts of competing Administrations to address recovery and reconstruction needs, it is indisputable that those processes would proceed more smoothly and effectively through a central national mechanism. On that note, we echo the call of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to establish such a body to respond to the flooding and help coordinate a coherent humanitarian and recovery response, based on transparency and in line with humanitarian principles.

Beyond the major shelter needs that have arisen as a result of the flooding in Libya, a major scale-up in the health, water and sanitation sectors is essential for mitigating the lasting secondary public health consequences of the flooding. In that vein, it is important to give priority to gender-responsive humanitarian planning and distribution, with support for local women's organizations.

Malta remains supportive of all efforts seeking to overcome the political impasse. We continue to call on all Libyan parties to engage fully, constructively, transparently and in a spirit of compromise with all efforts towards that goal. We continue to support the Special Representative's efforts to facilitate such inclusive discussions and consultations. That is the only pathway to advancing a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process, under United Nations auspices, with the necessary political consensus and legal framework to conduct free, fair, transparent, inclusive and secure

elections. Recent efforts to that effect will advance such a process only if they are truly consensus-based and implementable.

The international community must remain guided by that overall goal. It must ensure that all political processes safeguard the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women.

A by-product of the continued political uncertainty is the fragile security situation. This year, we have seen clashes in various parts of the country. We remind all parties of their obligations under international law to ensure the protection of civilians and to safeguard their human rights.

We also regret to note the decreased space for civil society in Libya. We need to ensure that all Libyans can enjoy their fundamental human rights. We welcome and strongly support the efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya to address that. The prolonged disruption to communication services in Benghazi is also worrisome.

We remain concerned about the continued presence of foreign fighters, foreign forces and mercenaries, whose full withdrawal should be prioritized. Equally concerning is the proliferation of weapons under the control of various State and non-State actors. The continued work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and other initiatives that seek to stabilize the security situation require our full support. We believe that the assets freeze is meant to exist for the benefit of Libya and its people and that Libyan funds held abroad must be declared and frozen for eventual repatriation.

I conclude by reiterating Malta's support for a unified Libya that is able to provide an inclusive, peaceful, stable and prosperous present and future for all Libyans.

**Mr. De Rivière** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative and the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for their briefings.

I shall make three points.

First of all, I would again like to express France's solidarity with the Libyan people a month after the devastating flooding caused by Storm Daniel, which left thousands dead or injured. I extend my condolences to the victims' loved ones. France mobilized immediately at the request of the Libyan authorities and deployed

a field hospital in Derna, at which hundreds of people were treated. We support the United Nations in its emergency operations. France will continue to respond to needs following the United Nations call for a unified Libyan response to the consequences of the flooding.

Secondly, progress must be made in organizing presidential and parliamentary elections as soon as possible. That is the wish of the Libyan people. Their right to choose their representatives must be fully respected. In the wake of the work of the 6+6 committee in bringing together the House of Representatives and the High Council of State, relaunching the electoral process is urgent. France supports Mr. Bathily's mediation efforts in achieving credible, inclusive and transparent elections.

Finally, the security situation in Libya remains fragile. We must ensure the full implementation of the October 2020 ceasefire agreement. We call on the Libyan authorities to spare no effort in ensuring the security of the population. In coordination with the United Nations and all its partners, France will continue to support the Libyan 5+5 Joint Military Commission and the two Chiefs of Staff with a view to reunifying the Libyan army, which involves the creation of a joint force. As the renewal of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya's mandate approaches, the Council must encourage efforts to unify Libya's security and military institutions, which should enable it to restore stability and end the influence of the militias. That is the path that will allow Libya to regain its stability and unity.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Representative Bathily for his briefing. I would also like to thank the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, Ambassador Ishikane, for his briefing. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya to today's meeting.

Various parties in Libya have made great efforts recently to promote political dialogue, maintain security and stability and tackle the impact of the floods. Nonetheless, they are still facing unprecedented challenges. The international community and the Security Council should provide more support to help Libya get through the difficulties. In that connection, I would like to make three points.

First, it is important to maintain the momentum in the political dialogue. China notes that the various parties concerned have started a dialogue on the

formation of an electoral road map and the House of Representatives has announced its approval of the electoral laws. China hopes that all the parties will consolidate the results of the dialogue, resolve their disputes, narrow their differences and advance the political process with a view to creating the conditions necessary for the general elections. It should be pointed out that only a political solution that is Libyan-led and Libyan-owned is conducive to the country's genuine long-term stability. The international community should respect Libya's sovereignty and leadership and refrain from imposing external solutions.

Secondly, it is vital to make robust efforts to address the humanitarian crisis. The recent floods that ravaged Libya have led to more than 10,000 deaths and disappearances and to a large-scale displacement of the population. Housing, medical facilities and water supplies are among the infrastructure that has been severely damaged. In the wake of the floods, China announced it would provide ¥30 million in emergency humanitarian assistance, and on 25 September urgently needed humanitarian supplies from China arrived in Benghazi and were delivered to those in need. China calls on the international community to scale up its humanitarian assistance to help the Libyan people overcome the effects of the disaster and rebuild their homes. And while the floods are a natural disaster, there are also human-made factors at play. The NATO military intervention resulted in a decade of turmoil in Libya, with State institutions torn apart and massive damage done to infrastructure that has not been repaired to this day. NATO therefore bears an inescapable responsibility for the huge losses and casualties caused by the floods.

Libya urgently needs humanitarian aid, and yet its overseas assets are still frozen. China has frequently made suggestions about the issue during discussions of the Libyan sanctions resolution, and we hope that the Security Council attach great importance to our suggestions and take concrete steps in that regard.

Thirdly, with regard to the Security Council's upcoming consideration of the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), China hopes that UNSMIL will support Libya's efforts to promote dialogue and consultation, consider the legitimate concerns of all parties, and play a constructive role.

We have seen a resurgence of armed clashes in Tripoli and other areas in recent weeks. China urges all parties to take measures to prevent such incidents from recurring. Special Representative Bathily should continue to push the 5+5 Joint Military Commission to strengthen dialogue so as to make progress as soon as possible on the unification of troops and the establishment of a ceasefire monitoring mechanism. He should also urge the foreign forces, fighters and mercenaries in Libya to withdraw as soon as possible in a smooth and orderly manner.

**Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank Special Representative Abdoulaye Bathily and Ambassador Ishikane for their briefings, and I welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Libya in today's meeting.

First of all, on behalf of Switzerland, I want to express our condolences to those affected by the recent violent storms and floods in Libya, as well as to their families. The disaster showed the extent of the impact of climate change and revealed the concrete consequences of the deficit in the country's governance. In that context, I would like to address three points.

First, Switzerland urges the Libyan authorities to ensure that all the people affected receive essential food, medical services and sanitation facilities. Particular attention must be paid to women's health needs and their access to services, as well as the implementation of measures aimed at preventing sexual and gender-based violence. International humanitarian law requires the authorization and facilitation of humanitarian access, and humanitarian actors must therefore be able to work in a timely and independent manner.

Secondly, we note the 6+6 committee's recent revision of electoral laws. However, we also note that certain substantive issues remain unresolved. Switzerland echoes the call of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to all Libyan actors to work in good faith to resolve those aspects in order to make the electoral process possible. Without a political solution, we cannot rule out the risk of an unending stalemate, which is why Switzerland reiterates its call for coherent efforts in support of a political process under the auspices of the United Nations. Besides that, we are concerned about the restrictions imposed on civil society. The right of all individuals, including members of civil society, to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, in accordance with Libya's

international human rights law obligations, must be respected and is a key element in the political process.

Thirdly, according to scientific analysis, storms such as the one that hit Libya could recur more regularly, thanks to the effects of climate change. However, the tragedy in Derna is not just about climate change — it lays bare the governance deficit and the divisions within the country, which have had a detrimental effect on the maintenance of infrastructure and the prevention of risks. Amid the loss and suffering caused by Storm Daniel, it is heartening to see people and communities across the country joining forces in solidarity and compassion, and that unity should also be reflected at the political level. Libyans are demanding unity of action and leadership that puts the interests of the country and respect for human rights first, and we support that demand.

Finally, we look forward to collaborating with other Council members on the renewal of UNSMIL's mandate.

**Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America): Let me thank Special Representative Bathily for his briefing. I also thank the Permanent Representative of Japan, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, and welcome Libya's presence at this meeting.

We meet a little more than a month after devastating floods swept through parts of Libya and left enormous destruction and death in their wake. Our thoughts are with the victims' families and with those struggling to rebuild as they cope with unimaginable loss. We deeply appreciate the efforts of the United Nations to marshal a response to Storm Daniel. The United Nations visit on 16 September to the hardest-hit city of Derna helped to galvanize international relief efforts. For its part, the United States has provided more than \$13 million in humanitarian programming and more than 29 metric tons of commodities to thousands of people affected by the floods.

We strongly support the call by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya for a unified and coordinated Libyan national mechanism that will help to deliver humanitarian assistance and address reconstruction in a transparent and accountable manner and that will help to facilitate additional support and technical assistance from the United States and other international partners. As the Libyan people work to rebuild east-west cooperation on flood reconstruction, planning is

essential. The high financial committee established in July is one such avenue for cooperation. Nevertheless, whichever modality Libyan leaders adopt, it must approach reconstruction in a coordinated, apolitical manner in order to ensure the safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons. This is not a moment for division and political posturing.

The devastating floods, recent violence in Tripoli and turmoil along Libya's southern border also underscore the urgent need for unified Libyan governance. It is far past time for political actors to put aside their differences and work together, not only in the post-flood reconstruction effort but in the pursuit of a credible path to elections and a dignified Government that delivers for the Libyan people. The United States stands firmly behind Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily's work to convene key Libyan stakeholders, galvanize the political process and consolidate support for elections as soon as possible. A unified international voice in support of those efforts will be critical to making concrete progress.

We urge all Libyan actors to engage constructively and transparently with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily to reach a political agreement, finalize electoral laws and set Libya on a path to free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections. The United States also commends the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission to remove foreign forces, fighters and mercenaries from Libya and advance efforts towards possible disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. We also welcome steps towards the unification of east-west command to facilitate a joint unit that could help to reduce criminality in the south, secure Libya's borders and prevent the spillover of regional turmoil. However, we remain deeply concerned by the destabilizing activities of the transnational criminal organization Wagner Group, both in Libya and throughout the region. Wagner has made no secret of its disregard for Libya's sovereignty and territorial integrity, or of its ambition to deepen its foothold in the region.

We are fast approaching the second anniversary of the parties' broken promises to hold elections in December 2021, and that is shameful. The Libyan people deserve the opportunity to elect a unified Government of their choosing, and we urge Libya's political leaders to take concrete actions to deliver on that promise without delay.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, and the Permanent Representative of Japan, Mr. Kimihiro Ishikane, for their briefings.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere condolences to the Libyan people following the numerous casualties and large-scale destruction caused by the storm and flooding in the north-east of the country. I would like to convey our condolences and support to the families of the victims and wish the injured a swift recovery. Russia was one of the first countries to send emergency workers to the country, and necessary assistance and equipment were provided as well. We are pleased to note that many other countries followed suit. Libya, which has been trying to deal with the fallout from the illegal NATO intervention for more than a decade now, is finding it very difficult to cope alone with the aftermath of the disaster.

Despite the unity of the Libyan people against these elements, we note with regret that the political process in the former Jamahiriya is stagnating. Furthermore, given the ongoing existence of two seats of power, the outlook for finding a lasting settlement is still bleak. Even under the current conditions, the country remains divided. Unfortunately, that is reflected in the security situation as well. Recent months have once again been marred by clashes between armed groups. We are witnessing outbreaks of violence both in the west and in the east of the country. Once again, we call for restraint and for a rejection of the use of force to tackle the problems. Further destabilization is the last thing that long-suffering Libya needs at the moment.

The most important question for Libya is the preparation and holding of presidential and parliamentary elections and, following those elections, the establishment of unified authorities that represent all the country's regions and leading political forces in a just manner. That would bring an end to the current dismal situation. In that regard, we continue to closely monitor the situation on the constitutional track of the Libyan political process. We note the importance of the work of the joint 6+6 committee, representing the House of Representatives and the High State Council of Libya, aimed at agreeing on the legislative basis for the electoral process. After a significant period of time, its delegates have finally managed to reach a compromise and agree upon a final version of the



documents, the ratification of which was announced by the House of Representatives in early October. We call for the outcome of the committee's work to be taken very seriously.

We confirm once again that our position on the political settlement in Libya remains unchanged. The central role in agreeing the parameters of the political process must be played by the Libyans themselves, without any externally imposed blanket solutions or the establishment of unrealistic or artificial timelines. The electoral process must be transparent, genuinely inclusive and, in an unbiased manner, cover the entire spectrum of the leading political forces of the former Jamahiriya, including the representatives of the former authorities. We support Mr. Bathily's efforts to promote Libya-wide political processes, the cornerstone of which should be the organization of general presidential and parliamentary elections. The best scenario would be to conduct both elections at the same time.

We are convinced that under the current conditions, the required success in Libya can only be achieved by pooling the efforts of all interested Libyan parties and influential global and regional players, with the assistance of the United Nations. Once again, we underscore that our country stands ready to work with all interested players. We consider unacceptable any attempts to use the situation in Libya to tackle geopolitical and economic challenges, in particular, in the area of hydrocarbons and the related market.

With respect to doing away with foreign military presences, we have consistently advocated a synchronized, balanced, gradual and phased withdrawal of all non-Libyan armed groups and military units without exception, so as not to upset the balance of power.

In conclusion, I would like to express my concern about the ongoing difficult situation concerning frozen Libyan assets. In that regard, we would like to underscore that the attention of Security Council members should be focused on the real problem — the protection of Libyan funds held in foreign bank accounts. Those funds should not be used for the gain of non-Libyan financial and banking structures. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya has seen a sharp increase in the number of complaints from Tripoli. We urge all countries to take that particular matter very seriously and pay due attention to the requests of the Libyans.

**Mr. Spasse** (Albania): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily for his insights into the recent developments in Libya and for the mediation efforts he is making under the auspices of the United Nations. I would also like to thank Ambassador Ishikane of Japan, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for his briefing.

We were deeply shocked by Storm Daniel's humanitarian impact and the magnitude of the destruction it caused in eastern Libya, claiming the lives of thousands of people, and we express our sympathy to the families of the victims. We commend the Libyan people for the solidarity they have shown one another — a solidarity that should have been met with humility by all actors across the political spectrum in eastern and western Libya. In the circumstances, we want to emphasize that civil-society organizations and humanitarian and media workers must have unhindered access to the areas affected by the floods.

The Derna catastrophe is a dramatic reminder of the country's desperate need for unified and effective institutions. Libya's institutional and political fragmentation is a huge hindrance to its ability to provide immediate relief to the population, as we have seen during the aid operations on the ground. We therefore strongly support the establishment of a unified Libyan national mechanism to respond to the floods, and the role of the United Nations is essential in that regard. With the negotiations between the two Chambers at another impasse, we strongly support the initiatives taken by the Special Representative. The Libyan people simply cannot wait indefinitely for the results of endless negotiations.

Active and impartial mediation conducted by the United Nations is essential if we want to achieve sustainable stability through elections. We greatly appreciate Mr. Bathily's efforts and look forward to his intensified engagement with Libyan parties with a view to reaching an inclusive political agreement that can finally pave the way for elections. All the parties involved in the Libyan electoral process must understand that this is not a zero-sum game and that everyone can play an important role in the reconstruction of a reunited Libya. There is no doubt that the Libyan parties are aware of the need to act in good faith and to strive to reach a compromise for the good of the Libyan people, and that includes addressing the contentious issues through a political settlement.



We are deeply concerned about the security situation in Benghazi and the armed clashes there that have caused civilian casualties and disrupted communication. Another reason that the stabilization process in Libya remains a key priority is its impact on the stability of North Africa and the Sahel more generally. We note with concern that the work of Libya's 5+5 Joint Military Commission with the liaison committees from the Niger and the Sudan has slowed down, owing to the latest developments on the ground. At this stage, it will be vital to urge regional actors to play a more proactive role in support of United Nations mediation efforts, since the potential risks of a political vacuum in Libya, for its own people and the whole region, are enormous. We must therefore redouble our efforts and support every possible measure that — in full respect for Libyan sovereignty and the intra-Libyan dialogue — can lead us to that objective. To that end, I want to reiterate Albania's readiness for a smooth renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya later this month.

**The President:** I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Brazil.

I thank Special Representative Abdoulaye Bathily for his briefing, and the Ambassador of Japan, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for reporting on the activities of the Committee. I welcome the Libyan delegation to this meeting and join other members of the Council in once again expressing our condolences to the Libyan people for their losses as a result of the September floods.

Brazil underscores the importance of ensuring that Libya's stakeholders overcome their differences through dialogue and in a spirit of compromise. Their continued ownership of the political process implies their commitment to holding national elections, in accordance with the aspirations of the Libyan people and the relevant legal framework. We welcomed the announcement by the High National Elections Commission of its technical readiness to implement the electoral laws. Although outstanding issues may remain, the implementation of those laws should not be hindered purely because of political rivalry or expediency.

We strongly support the mediation and good-offices role of the Special Representative aimed at bridging the remaining differences. If he were to exercise any

alternative role, it would need to be clearly mandated by the Council. If requested by the relevant Libyan institutions and stakeholders, he can further facilitate consensus and contribute to creating conditions conducive to the reunification of the Government. As we negotiate the renewal of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) this month, Brazil hopes that the Council will continue to provide the Special Representative with a solid basis for supporting a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process, as necessary.

Brazil supports UNSMIL's call for a unified Libyan response to the flood-affected areas in eastern Libya. The urgent needs for assistance, protection, care and reconstruction continue to demand that Libyan leaders rise above political divisions. The solidarity and national unity shown by the Libyan people across the country represent a telling example of how to respond in moments of crisis. The unity shown by regional and international actors in supporting the humanitarian response to the tragedy in Derna is remarkable. A similar unity of purpose in the other areas where the international community interacts with Libya and its political leaders would be a much-needed development.

Brazil calls on all member States to respect the arms embargo. We also call for the synchronized withdrawal of foreign forces from Libya, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Council.

The necessary reunification of Libya's military and security institutions, under the auspices of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, remains heavily responsive to international dynamics. We commend UNSMIL's participation as a facilitator of the necessary regional coordination. Brazil would also like to point to the role that the Peacebuilding Commission could play, at Libya's request, in convening all the relevant international actors, for example in support of security-sector reform. The Peacebuilding Commission could also inform the Council's consideration of the situation in Libya from the perspective of the country's nationally determined priorities.

Reports about the erosion or misappropriation of Libyan frozen assets should be considered seriously. Brazil would like to remind everyone that the assets freeze is preventive rather than punitive, and is designed to preserve the sovereign wealth of Libya for the future benefit of the Libyan people. We reiterate the need for purely technical responses, with the necessary urgency,

in order to mitigate the risk of losses as an unintended consequence of the assets freeze.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Libya.

**Mr. Elsonni** (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I congratulate Brazil on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and thank Mr. Bathily and Mr. Ishikane for their briefings. I also want to thank the members of the Council for all their words of sympathy and condolence to the Libyan people.

Five weeks have passed since the tragedy that befell us through the floods and torrents that struck several areas in eastern Libya, especially the city of Derna, and in which thousands were killed. We are still finding bodies, weeks later, and we have continued to search for missing persons. The catastrophe is unprecedented in the modern history of Libya. We also lost many rescue teams, including from among the Red Crescent, military personnel and others who were some of the first to respond to the disaster. Despite the current situation in the country, the disaster did not stand in the way of solidarity among all the Libyan people. We have witnessed their altruism and their ability to overcome all their political differences. Aid and relief convoys have been sent from many cities to support those affected, revealing the true nature of the Libyan people and their strong national solidarity. That sent a message to all political parties to unite and overcome the current crisis.

Through a governmental crisis committee and coordination with the High State Council, the institutions of the eastern region and its crisis committees, including the local authorities and municipalities there, the Government of National Unity responded rapidly to the disaster, mobilizing all its capacity to provide the needed assistance and support for those affected and their regions. In that regard, following a plea from the Head of the Presidential Council for the support of the international community, with coordination to be provided by the Government, we would like to thank all the States and international organizations that have provided us with assistance and support to address the disaster, in the form of rescue teams and other assistance. We reiterate our call to the international community to continue to support Libya in overcoming the impact of the unprecedented crisis

and to effectively participate in development efforts and reconstruction in the affected cities.

We listened to Mr. Bathily's briefing on the political developments and the efforts to overcome the political crisis and the accompanying challenges, the latest of which was the aftermath of the adoption by the House of Representatives of the electoral law and the subsequent observations and disagreements of the different political actors. It is therefore important to quickly address the pending issues through a clear mechanism and to a set time frame in which the laws should be implemented. That requires the creation of appropriate conditions and support for the High National Electoral Commission to enable it to hold free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections with results that are accepted as soon as possible, thereby ending all transitional stages and divisions while fulfilling the aspirations of the Libyan people, who have suffered from the vicious circle of events and the current situation.

We have closely followed the negotiations on the draft resolution on the renewal of sanctions on Libya. In that context, we would like to reiterate the importance and legitimacy of our repeated demands to the Sanctions Committee with respect to the frozen assets and the list of sanctions imposed on individuals. With respect to the funds and frozen assets, as well as our requests to allow the Libyan Investment Authority to manage those frozen assets, it is important to reiterate the need for the Sanctions Committee and the Investment Authority to cooperate and agree on the mechanisms required to manage those frozen assets, with a view to avoiding more losses, erosion and the exploitation of the situation by certain countries. Such a draft resolution is presumed to seek to protect and preserve the wealth of Libyans, not to punish them. In that regard, we would also like to reiterate that the assets and funds of the Libyan Investment Authority must not be forced into any issues or cases involving compensation or other issues. The Authority is independent and sovereign. Hindering those funds and assets would be a violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. As for the individual sanctions, we hope that the positive initiatives of some members of the Council will be built upon in dealing with this file, and that Libya's repeated requests to remove the names of a number of individuals from the list will be met, whether for humanitarian reasons or because there were no grounds for their listing. We must cease to politicize that issue.

In conclusion, even though this is a meeting to discuss the situation in Libya and even though we have tried to make our voice heard by the Council, there is no voice louder today than the voice of the Palestinian people and their suffering. We can never ignore the screams of women, children and innocent civilians in the Gaza Strip caused by killing, shelling and siege, as well as the cutting off of water and electricity while preventing humanitarian assistance and undertaking attempts to impose forced displacement. The question on everyone's mind is: where are human rights and the protection of civilians today in Gaza? Are those not war crimes and crimes against humanity under international law? Does collective punishment not amount to genocide? Is the Council waiting for another Rwanda?

Today hospitals are being deprived of electricity and water, and they will soon turn into mass cemeteries. The bloodbath that has gone on for decades and affected thousands of innocent people must end. The killing of unarmed innocent civilians is unacceptable and condemned by all customs and religions. However, the peoples of the world are following the same double standard that is being followed by many States, conflating the victim with the aggressor and the right to self-defence with resistance against occupation. The Palestinian question cannot be reduced to the events of 7 October. We must take a comprehensive view of the roots of the conflict, the continued violations, the

injustice, the settlements and the destruction of the dream for peace. That has been going on for 75 years, in addition to the blockade of the Gaza Strip, the world's largest open-air prison. The residents of Gaza have become desperate, and whoever is born there is born dead.

In order to start to address the root causes of the current crisis and its consequences, we must immediately address three issues: an immediate ceasefire, allowing access for humanitarian assistance and ending any attempts to displace the Gaza residents. No one wants another Nakba. That position and those three requirements have been expressed as the unified Arab position, and today I convey it to the Council. We hope that the draft resolution before the Council will address those points. In this Chamber, we reaffirm Libya's firm and unified position towards the just Palestinian question, which all the Libyan people consider as their primary cause. They can see a solution for it only if it is based on justice, the restoration of Palestinian rights and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital.

**The President:** There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.*