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Seventy-ninth year

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Monday, 16 December 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

President: Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America)

Members:

Algeria	Mr. Bendjama
China	Mr. Geng Shuang
Ecuador	Mr. Escobar Ullauri
France	Mr. Dharmadhikari
Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Japan	Mr. Yamazaki
Malta	Mrs. Frazier
Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
Republic of Korea	Mr. Hwang
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
Sierra Leone	Mr. George
Slovenia	Mr. Ponikvar
Switzerland	Mrs. Baersiwyl
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki

Agenda

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2024/895)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2024/895)

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 the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Stephanie Koury, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political Affairs in the United Nations Support Mission in Libya; and Mr. Ali Omar, Director of Libya Crimes Watch.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2024/895, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

At this meeting, the Council will hear briefings by Ms. Koury and Ambassador Kazuyuki Yamazaki, 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 Ms. Koury.

Ms. Koury: At the outset, let me first congratulate the Libyan people on the successful holding of local elections, on 16 November, for a first group of 58 municipalities across the country. That was a technically sound process organized by the High National Electoral Commission with the support of the police and security forces, which helped ensure a peaceful voting day. The holding of those elections is a reminder that the Libyan people yearn to exercise their right to select those who govern them. Municipal elections for a second group of 16 municipalities is set to start next month, and I urge all authorities to support that.

In a little over a week, Libya will mark three years since the indefinite postponement of national elections

in 2021. As unresolved issues continue to stall political progress, Libya's national unity and territorial integrity are under threat. Over the past eight months, I have met Libyans from all walks of life, and they have repeatedly conveyed to me a sense of urgency with regard to the holding of national elections. Libyans are anxious about their country's future. The status quo is unsustainable and has persisted for too long. Unilateral actions pursued by political elites have deeply eroded Libya's institutions into parallel and competing structures. The recent crisis over the leadership of the Central Bank of Libya exposed the fragility of the veneer of stability of Libya's prolonged political stalemate. It also served as a stark reminder that it is high time for Libya to build strong institutions to address issues of uncontrolled spending and a fiscal deficit and to establish a stable economy against the backdrop of the possible decrease in global oil prices.

Furthermore, the continuing divisions over the leadership of the High Council of State compromise its ability to exercise its functions. That is another sign that Libya's transitional architecture is crumbling under the weight of political polarization and the lack of a clear project for a permanent system of governance. National reconciliation efforts are also increasingly hindered by the political vision, political divisions and the vicious cycle of institutional competition.

Competition among various armed actors for territorial control and access to resources continue to threaten Libya's stability. Two days ago, fighting erupted in Zawiyah between two armed groups. Minor clashes flared up again in the oil-rich desert of Hamada on 24 October and 6 and 9 November. Although the situation has de-escalated for now, those incidents underscore the risks associated with uncoordinated unilateral troop movements and divided security institutions.

Last night I presented to the Libyan people the plan of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) for an inclusive, inter-Libyan political initiative to overcome the current political deadlock and move beyond the status quo towards national elections and the renewal of legitimacy of Libya's expired institutions. I intend to facilitate this process on the basis of the following objectives and concerns: first and foremost, preserving stability on the ground; secondly, pursuing Libyan ownership by building on the existing Libyan framework; thirdly, help unify and

strengthen institutions and their legitimacy; fourthly, inclusivity of Libyan political courts.

I also intend to facilitate this process through an incremental, flexible approach to enable progressive building. This instrument is also designed in such a way as to not predetermine any decision made by the next Special Representative and can be adjusted, as appropriate. In line with paragraphs 2 and 5 of resolution 2755 (2024), UNSMIL intends to establish an advisory committee to develop options for resolving outstanding issues in the electoral framework and to pave the way for the holding of general elections and one Government for all Libyans. It is my priority, based on my consultations with Libyans across the country, to address contentious issues in the legal framework for the elections. While the existing framework is the positive outcome of intra-Libyan efforts on a good basis, it remains highly contentious among Libyans and is unlikely to produce a viable and peaceful electoral event, without some tweaks. We must be mindful of past experiences, in particular of the failed 2021 election.

That is why I intend to establish a time-bound advisory committee tasked to review outstanding issues in the electoral framework and make viable proposals and options for an overall road map for the holding of elections. That committee will be composed of Libyan experts and respected personalities who are reflective of the spectrum of Libya's political forces, social, cultural and geographic components.

As the controversy of the executive authority ensues, we must be mindful of the successive transitional Governments in Libya's decade-long and open-ended interim arrangements. That is why I believe that any unified Government that might emerge from intra-Libyan negotiations to be strictly bound by principles, safeguards, milestones and timelines to take the country to elections as a condition for its international recognition and legitimacy.

Building on ongoing efforts by Libyans, UNSMIL also intends to convene with Libyan partners a structured dialogue to consolidate consensus around the unified national vision for the future of the country. Long-term conflict drivers have remained unaddressed and have prevented Libya from moving to a permanent system of governance centred on a shared collective vision of fundamental issues and relationships between the individuals and the State. Ensuring full, equal and meaningful participation of all segments of society,

particularly youth and women, remain UNSMIL's priority to fostering inclusivity, building national unity and enhancing the legitimacy of the political process. It is my hope that this process can build an important legacy and support the conclusion of the constitution-making process down the road. UNSMIL is continuing to support Libyan efforts to move forward its economic performance for the benefit of the Libyan people. UNSMIL will also continue to work to help advance unification of military and security institutions, and with the African Union and Libyan partners to advance national reconciliation.

Over the past weeks, I have shared broad parameters of our initiative with Libyan actors, as well as with regional and international partners. I am grateful for the constructive engagement and feedback. That feedback compels me to clarify what the first phase of this initiative is not. The advisory committee is not a dialogue group to take decisions, but rather to generate options for use in a follow-on phase by Libyan decision makers.

I am mindful of mounting challenges that must be overcome. Two and a half months after the resolution of the leadership crisis of the Central Bank of Libya, I am encouraged by steps taken to improve governance. The reinstatement of the Central Bank's Board of Directors on 21 October is an important milestone, following its suspension for over a decade. To effectively implement monetary policy and to contribute to economic stabilization, the Central Bank leadership and the Board must be free to act independently, transparently, with integrity, without conflicts of interest and in concert with other oversight institutions. Immediate priority must be given to supporting the Central Bank's stabilization efforts. I urge Libyan decision makers to urgently agree on a framework for spending in 2025, with agreed limits and oversights. I would also like to reinforce the critical importance of safeguarding the independence of Libya's oversight institutions and for authorities to adhere to the governance principles of transparency and anti-corruption, as outlined in the Libyan Political Agreement and successive Council resolutions.

Arbitrary arrests and detentions persist across the country, despite progress in the areas of capacity-building and partial access to detention facilities. I call on the Libyan authorities to grant UNSMIL unimpeded access to all detention centres. I am very concerned about deaths in custody. Since I last briefed the Council

(see S/PV.9709), four Libyans, including two women, have died in custody. Transparent investigations into those deaths are needed, and those responsible must be held accountable.

Regional instability also has a grave impact on Libya. Since the start of the Sudanese conflict in 2023, an exponentially growing number of Sudanese refugees crossed into Libya, with an average of 500 arriving daily. The human rights and protection conditions faced by migrants and refugees remains a top priority for the United Nations. I urge all stakeholders to ensure that migration management efforts are in line with international human rights law and that the United Nations remains committed to assistance.

To conclude, Libya's guns largely remain silent, but the country is neither stable nor at peace. Against a backdrop of persistent foreign involvement, regional changes and growing economic headwinds, we must collectively seize the opportunity to achieve a lasting political settlement. The members of the Security Council, as well as regional and international actors, have a concrete opportunity and an obligation to help Libyans resolve their differences, reunify their institutions and move towards a democratic, rules-based system of governance. Libya has the potential to become a beacon of stability and prosperity for the Mediterranean region and beyond — and one that serves its people.

The success of the United Nations-facilitated political process requires political will first and foremost, in addition to ensuring that Libyan actors refrain from unilateral actions that continue to entrench institutional divisions and polarization. Unity of purpose and coordinated support from Libya's regional and international partners are equally critical. The Libyan people have shown that not only do they desire change, but that they have the capacity to reach agreements and compromise, make lasting progress and hold elections, and they need the Council's united support.

The President: I thank Ms. Koury for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Yamazaki.

Mr. Yamazaki: 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 resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. The report

covers the period from 10 October to 16 December 2024, during which time, the Committee met twice in informal consultations and conducted additional work using the silence procedure, with the aim of facilitating the implementation of the sanctions measures.

Most recently, in informal consultations on 12 December, the Committee met with a delegation of the Libyan Investment Authority, a listed entity, at its request, on issues pertaining to the implementation of the assets freeze. We also heard remarks from the representative of Libya. An interactive discussion followed. Earlier, in informal consultations on 5 December, the Committee heard a presentation by the Panel of Experts on its final report, submitted in accordance with resolution 2701 (2023). Separately, the Panel also submitted information to the Committee on individuals who in the Panel's assessment meet the sanctions designation criteria. The Panel's final report was submitted to the Security Council on 13 December, and I therefore will not summarize its findings. In the interactive discussion that ensued, the Committee members expressed their support for the work of the Panel and are currently considering the Panel's recommendations for possible follow-up action. During the informal consultations, a Committee member asked me about the possibility of organizing a Committee visit, to which I responded by expressing my openness to discussing the matter with the Committee members during the remainder of my tenure as Chair and conveying the message to the incoming Chair.

With respect to the arms embargo, the Committee received a report on a vessel inspection conducted by the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI submitted pursuant to resolutions 2292 (2016) and 2733 (2024). One Committee member expressed differing views on the matter. The Committee also received a report on an attempted vessel inspection by Operation IRINI.

Concerning the assets freeze, the Committee took no negative decisions in relation to six notifications invoking paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011), submitted by Bahrain. Following the receipt of technical inputs from the Panel of Experts, as requested by the Committee, on three additional exemption notifications invoking paragraph 19 (a) — two from Bahrain and one previously submitted by Luxembourg — the Committee is currently considering responses to those notifications. The Committee is further considering additional information provided by Bahrain on two

previously submitted notifications invoking paragraph 21 of the resolution, as well as a request to transfer certain frozen assets from one jurisdiction to another. The Committee also responded to Belgium on a previously submitted notification invoking paragraph 21. The Committee acknowledged updates to the Libyan Investment Authority's short-term investment plan, conveyed by Libya. Finally, the Committee is considering a letter from the Libyan Investment Authority, through Libya, on the status of specific assets-freeze exemption notifications, as well as a letter from Libya on Committee correspondence.

The Committee is continuing its consideration of a delisting request received through the focal point for delisting established pursuant to resolution 1730 (2006). In connection with the informal consultations that the Committee held in early June to consider the interim report of the Panel of Experts, two matters continue to be under consideration by the Committee.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the Committee's commitment to contributing to the promotion of peace and stability in Libya. As this is my last periodic report to the Council in my capacity as Chair, I would also like to thank the members of the Committee, the Secretariat and the staff of my own Mission for their cooperation during my tenure.

The President: I thank Ambassador Yamazaki for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Omar.

Mr. Omar (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank you, Madam President, for giving me the opportunity to address the Security Council today.

My name is Ali Omar. I am a Libyan activist, human rights defender and a former prisoner of conscience. I am speaking to the Council from exile as the Director of Libya Crimes Watch, an organization that for five years has been dedicated to monitoring and documenting human rights violations in Libya and advocating for accountability. I have come before the Council today to convey the voices of the victims and survivors who are suffering in silence under the weight of the daily violations and crimes in Libya.

Since the beginning of this year, Libya Crimes Watch has documented 281 grave human rights violations perpetrated by both the eastern and western authorities in Libya. Those figures are not mere statistics but reflect the harrowing stories and real tragedies of

victims, including the most vulnerable groups, such as women and migrants, as well as activists, journalists, lawyers and others. The violations include torture in prisons, arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, practices that not only destroy the lives of individuals but sow fear throughout society and undermine any hopes for peace. These heinous crimes are not isolated acts but systematic and recurring, carried out and overseen by security agencies and military groups affiliated with all the parties to the conflict in Libya, including the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, the Government of National Unity, the House of Representatives-designated Government in the east and the Presidential Council.

Libya's prisons and unofficial detention centres represent an ongoing and serious problem. In those places, human dignity is stripped away and individuals are treated as mere numbers without value. In November, among recent examples of the horrible crimes in those prisons, Libya Crimes Watch documented the deaths under torture in an unofficial prison in Benghazi of three detainees, including a woman and two followers of the Sufi sect, one of the religious minorities that has been subjected to systematic violations for years.

Civil society in Libya continues also to face systematic repression and constant intimidation. This year alone, we documented the arrests of more than 50 female and male activists by security and military agencies in eastern and western Libya on vague charges justified by repressive laws such as the country's anti-cybercrime and anti-terrorism laws. Many decisions and regulations have been issued restricting the work of local and international organizations, making civil work from inside Libya almost impossible and forcing many activists to flee and work in exile. In October 2023, Libya Crimes Watch documented the internal security agency's arbitrary detention of five political activists in Benghazi for 10 months without trial. In April this year, one of those detainees was killed in mysterious circumstances in the prison, and no investigation was carried out.

To this day, the exercise of freedom of expression in Libya is considered a crime. In September, security services in the east of the country arrested 16 people, including four children, for participating in a demonstration in support of the former regime. Following the catastrophic collapse of the Derna dam in September 2023, demonstrators were arrested for expressing their opinion and demanding accountability

for those responsible for the corruption and negligence that led to the deaths of thousands of innocent people in the city of Derna. With the Council delegating the task of organizing elections to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), ensuring a secure and enabling environment for free elections has become a matter of urgency. That includes protecting the fundamental right to freedom of expression and inclusion for all, including vulnerable groups, minorities and civil society, which is a *sine qua non* for ensuring the integrity of elections in Libya.

The persistent violations pose a serious threat to social peace and stability in Libya. The political divisions and the continued existence of illegitimate bodies are deepening the crisis and disrupting the accountability process. The failure of the successive political processes that we have seen so far has not only prolonged the conflict but has created a breeding ground for impunity. It is therefore time for the Security Council to try another way, and that way is through accountability. How can a country where people who are accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity are in senior positions of power organize fair and transparent elections? Civil society in Libya and the human rights movement in the diaspora demand that accountability be a priority before any electoral process. No political process can succeed in the absence of justice and the presence of widespread impunity.

We call on the Security Council and Member States to take decisive action to bring an end to the protracted political conflict and division in Libya. Accountability must be a top priority before any political or electoral process. In that context, we call for the establishment of an independent international mechanism to investigate violations and ensure that those responsible are held accountable. Such a mechanism is essential for identifying individuals who exploit impunity and disrupt the political and transitional justice processes and reconciliation, and it will also ensure an environment that can enable the Libyan nation to determine its future through free and fair elections that reflect the aspirations of all.

We call on the Security Council to strengthen UNSMIL's mandate, with a greater focus on protecting human rights and monitoring violations. UNSMIL should work directly with the Libyan authorities in both east and west to put a stop to arbitrary arrests and torture in prisons and unofficial detention centres, release all arbitrarily detained individuals and reveal

the whereabouts of those who have been disappeared. We also stress the need for the Council and Member States to work together to urge the Libyan authorities in the east and west, along with all parties to the conflict, to halt the ongoing international violations and crimes, protect civil society and end the campaigns of repression against human rights defenders and activists. A stable and secure future for Libya cannot be built without respect for fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

In conclusion, I urge members to look the victims in the eye and hear their voices. Their decisions today could make a tangible difference in the lives of millions.

The President: I thank Mr. Omar for his briefing.

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

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): Let me thank Deputy Special Representative Koury, Ambassador Yamazaki and Mr. Omar for their briefings this morning. I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Libya in our meeting.

The briefers have given us a stark assessment of the fragile stalemate in Libya. The current situation is unsustainable, with some Libyan actors pursuing their own interests, which benefit only a handful of Libya's elites. The Libyan people deserve political stability in a unified country with peace, security and prosperity. I would like to make three points today.

First, we welcome the successful first phase of municipal elections in Libya, marking the first time that Libyans have gone to the polls in more than a decade. We must build on that success. We call on the Libyan authorities to provide the necessary resources and leadership for the second phase.

Secondly, we welcome the plan that Deputy Special Representative Koury outlined today for a new, inclusive, Libyan-led effort to lead the country towards elections and a sustainable, secure, prosperous future. The United Nations plan provides a framework, but the solutions can come only from the Libyans themselves. We encourage Libya's leaders to engage with the United Nations process in good faith and in a spirit of compromise, for the benefit of all Libyans. We stress our continued support to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and Ms. Koury in the implementation of her plan to achieve a long-term political solution and enable elections.

Thirdly, we welcome the Panel of Experts' recent report and recommendations. We share their concerns about the continued ineffectiveness of the arms embargo, the increasing smuggling of diesel and the violations and abuses of human rights. We look forward to working with Council members to renew the sanctions regime and the Panel of Experts' mandate next month.

Finally, we encourage the United Nations to appoint a new Special Representative as soon as possible.

With international unity and the engagement of Libya's leaders, we can work together to find political solutions and enable a better future for the Libyan people. The United Kingdom fully supports the efforts of the United Nations and Deputy Special Representative Koury in achieving that.

Mr. Bendjama (Algeria): I have the privilege to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council, namely, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and my own country, Algeria, as well as Guyana (A3+).

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Ms. Stephanie Koury, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), for her insightful briefing and update on the situation in Libya. We thank Ambassador Kazuyuki Yamazaki for his briefing on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and we also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Libya at today's meeting.

The A3+ welcomed the successful conduct of municipal elections in 58 municipalities across Libya, marking an important step towards strengthening local governance and promoting stability in the country. We commend the High National Elections Commission for the successful management of that democratic process. We also recognize the critical roles played by UNSMIL, the Libyan authorities, civil society and all the actors involved in ensuring the security of electoral operations across the country. We urge the relevant authorities to support the newly elected municipal leaders as they work to deliver services to the Libyan people. We welcomed the announcement of the High National Elections Commission regarding the start of the electoral process for a new list of 59 municipalities in January. That is vital to strengthening democracy

and empowering Libya's citizens to shape the country's future.

The A3+ welcomes and fully supports the appointment of the Board of Directors for the Central Bank of Libya. We see that development as a crucial step towards implementing the UNSMIL-facilitated Central Bank agreement signed in September. That breakthrough is crucial to safeguarding the Central Bank of Libya's independence, integrity, transparency and accountability, and will enable the effective management of Libya's monetary policy, ultimately contributing to the country's economic stability and prosperity. Libya's leaders have demonstrated their commitment to the nation's interests by successfully holding local elections and appointing the Central Bank's Board of Directors. To build on that momentum, we urge Libyan actors and institutions to refrain from actions that could undermine those positive steps, reverse the unilateral measures that are fuelling tensions and prioritize dialogue and cooperation, without preconditions and in a spirit of compromise.

It is imperative to address the deepening institutional divisions and erosion of trust among Libyan actors, which could have severe consequences. The role of the United Nations remains crucial in facilitating a Libyan-led national dialogue among key stakeholders, which is an essential starting point for resolving outstanding issues, conducting successful national elections and unifying Libyan institutions. Reaching consensus on those critical issues is essential to the success of Libya's national elections, which are a cornerstone of its progress. We strongly encourage further steps to cement a stable political landscape, including by unifying State institutions. With that in mind, the A3+ reiterates the importance of a unified focus on resolving outstanding issues related to the electoral framework so as to remove key obstacles in the path to national elections. In that regard, the A3+ welcomes UNSMIL's proposal to revitalize Libya's political process, foster trust among key stakeholders and pave the way for national elections while preserving stability on the ground. It is crucial that all parties involved in the Libyan crisis fully support and participate in UNSMIL's mediation efforts in good faith and without preconditions. Inclusive participation is key to achieving a sustainable and peaceful settlement. Ensuring that everyone, especially women and young people, has a meaningful and safe opportunity to contribute to the future of Libya is essential. Their active involvement in

the political process empowers them and fosters a more representative and just governance structure.

As we approach the end of the UNSMIL mandate in January, the A3+ is deeply concerned about the fact that there has been little progress in appointing a new Special Representative of the Secretary-General. That appointment is crucial and urgent, as it can enable the automatic extension of the mandate for a further nine months. We stress that continuity is vital in addressing the outstanding issues related to the electoral laws, and we strongly reiterate our call for a Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL to be appointed.

We took positive note of the meeting held in Tunis on 5 and 6 December to discuss the draft law on reconciliation proposed by the Presidential Council and look forward to its finalization to ensure a fair, transparent process that responds to the needs of the victims of gross human rights violations and promotes rights-based reconciliation in Libya. We also warmly welcome the announcement by the Chairperson of the African Union High-level Committee on Libya regarding the forthcoming national reconciliation charter, which is slated for presentation to the Libyans at the upcoming national reconciliation conference. Together, those two instruments can facilitate a comprehensive, inclusive reconciliation process.

The A3+ remains deeply concerned about the ongoing security challenges in Libya, including persistent clashes between armed groups, despite the 2020 ceasefire agreement. Yesterday we once again witnessed serious clashes in Zawiya around the key oil refinery in western Libya. The continued presence of foreign forces, fighters and mercenaries exacerbates tensions and threatens Libya's sovereignty. We demand their immediate and complete withdrawal with a view to creating an environment conducive to political dialogue and lasting stability.

The A3+ is gravely concerned about the findings of the Panel of Experts on Libya regarding the total ineffectiveness of the arms embargo, which is a critical component of our strategy to protect Libyan civilians. Despite the embargo, set by the Security Council in 2011, weapons continue to flow into Libya, fuelling the conflict. We urge all Member States to fully respect the embargo. The interim report of the Panel of Experts also revealed alarming violations of the protection of Libyan financial assets, undermining the intended purpose of

benefiting the Libyan people in future. The systematic depletion of those financial resources through excessive bank fees and illicit transfers is unacceptable. The credibility of the Council hinges on our ability to halt the depletion of Libyan financial resources, frozen by a Security Council resolution. Let us recall that the sanctions regime against Libya should not be a punitive measure, but rather a protective mechanism — a shield designed to foster peace and prosperity for all Libyans.

The humanitarian situation in Libya, especially the massive movement of migrants and refugees from African and other regions experiencing instability, highlights the urgent need for streamlined humanitarian aid and coordinated efforts from Libyan institutions. International cooperation is therefore crucial to ensuring their safety, dignity and human rights. We call on the Libyan authorities to uphold the principles of human rights. It is vital to create a society where all individuals, including women and young people, can thrive and contribute to the nation's progress.

In conclusion, the A3+ would like to express its full support to UNSMIL in facilitating an inclusive, intra-Libyan, multitrack process to unblock the current political stalemate. The A3+ would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its unwavering solidarity with the resilient people of Libya during these challenging times.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): I too thank Deputy Special Representative Koury, Mr. Omar and Ambassador Yamazaki of Japan, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, for their briefings. Since this is Ambassador Yamazaki's final briefing, I would like to take the opportunity to thank him and his team for their tireless work over the past two years in chairing the Committee.

Malta remains deeply committed to advancing a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process under United Nations auspices, which remains the only pathway for Libya to prosper. We are encouraged by certain developments that demonstrate the willingness and ability of some Libyan parties to overcome their political differences. We welcome the agreement facilitated by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) seeking to address the institutional crisis of the Central Bank of Libya. The resolution of the crisis must serve as a foundation for addressing Libya's economic and financial challenges, which include

reaching consensus on a unified national budget, ensuring a depoliticized approach to managing Libya's national resources and strengthening the equitable and transparent disbursement of State funds. We are similarly encouraged by the successful municipal elections across Libya and their organization by the High National Elections Commission, which demonstrates the wish of the Libyan people to participate in electoral processes and should be extended to the national level. UNSMIL's positive support in those developments reflects the central and constructive role that the Mission can play. Supporting UNSMIL and engaging constructively in the appointment of a new Special Representative of the Secretary-General remain paramount.

However, those positive steps must be contextualized, as political intransigence also persists. The broader situation remains largely at an impasse, with little progress in overcoming some pressing issues. The ongoing leadership dispute within the High Council of State continues to undermine that institution and hinders its ability to fulfil its role in line with the Libyan Political Agreement. Nor can we forget the lack of agreement between the House of Representatives and the Supreme Court on adjudicating constitutional matters and the lack of movement in advancing a national reconciliation process. They reflect a propensity for unilateral actions that undermines trust and entrenches institutional divides. To overcome Libya's various divides, all Libyan political actors must engage with each other constructively and transparently. We fully support Deputy Special Representative Koury in her endeavour to break the political deadlock.

Gender equality and ensuring the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in this process and subsequent national elections are of critical importance. The political uncertainties are having serious ramifications for every aspect of life in Libya. The security situation remains volatile. The frequent clashes between armed groups often lead to civilian casualties. A unified military and security apparatus is urgently needed. The presence of foreign fighters, foreign forces and mercenaries, the proliferation of weapons and the conflict in the Sudan are additional destabilizing factors. Measures aimed at fully implementing the Libyan arms embargo, including the European Union's naval Operation IRINI, continue to require our full support. Full compliance with the 1970 sanctions framework remains equally essential. The assets freeze is meant to exist for the benefit of

the Libyan people, and Libyan funds held abroad must continue to be safeguarded. The importance of fostering an enabling environment for civil society and advancing the rights of women and young people cannot be overstated. Ensuring freedom of movement, the right to work and active participation in public life will contribute significantly to Libya's progress. In that regard, UNSMIL's ongoing efforts to promote human rights protections remain invaluable.

During our term on the Council, we have strived to ensure that the voices of the Libyan people are heard. Their aspirations for peace, democracy and stability remain central to our deliberations. We repeat our call on all Libyan political actors, countries of the region and the international community to work together to establish the necessary framework for that right to be realized.

Mr. Dharmadhikari (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the Deputy Special Representative, Ms. Stephanie Koury, for her briefing. I would also like to thank Ambassador Kazuyuki Yamazaki for his briefing and his work as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and Mr. Ali Omar for his testimony. I welcome the presence in the Council of the Permanent Representative of Libya. Today I would like to highlight three points.

First of all, France welcomes the peaceful conduct on 16 November of the first phase of the Libyan municipal elections in 58 municipalities. We welcome the role played by the High National Elections Commission, the Libyan authorities and civil society, with the assistance of the United Nations. Those first elections in 10 years are an important milestone and reflect the Libyan people's desire to participate in the democratic life of their country. We hope that the second phase of municipal elections, in early 2025, will take place in favourable conditions.

Secondly, that positive step should encourage Libyan actors to relaunch the political process, in cooperation with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). We welcome the work of Ms. Koury and the mediation efforts she has undertaken with Libyan stakeholders in recent months. We support UNSMIL's efforts to achieve the formation of a unified Government capable of organizing simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections, in accordance with the Libyan people's demands. France encourages

all Libyan parties to engage in peaceful dialogue to that end. Only the successful conclusion of that political process will enable Libya to regain its unity, stability and sovereignty. We reiterate our support for the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special Representative for Libya who can build on the initiatives that Ms. Koury has put in place.

Thirdly, we remain concerned about the volatility of the security situation in Libya, in a context of serious regional instability. The country's stability and sovereignty can be guaranteed only by the full implementation of the 2021 action plan, endorsed by the United Nations, for the withdrawal of foreign forces, foreign fighters and all mercenaries from Libya. We reiterate our support for the efforts of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission on Security Arrangements to reunite Libya's military and security institutions and to implement the 2020 ceasefire agreement, for which it is crucial to ensure respect. We are delighted that the Security Working Group of the Berlin process, which France co-chairs, was able to meet in Sirte on 17 October.

We reiterate our concern about the numerous human rights violations in Libya, including arbitrary arrests and detentions, especially considering the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Ms. Stephanie Koury, and to the Permanent Representative of Japan, Ambassador Yamazaki, for their briefings. We also listened attentively to the statement delivered by Mr. Ali Omar. We welcome the presence here today of the Permanent Representative of Libya.

The situation in Libya continues to be a source of serious misgivings for us. The political process in the country remains at an impasse, despite numerous attempts to improve a situation that satisfies no one. There are no prospects for a political future for the country, and as a result the situation on the ground, including on the security front, has continued to deteriorate. Clashes among armed groups have become a grim reality of daily life. In the circumstances, we fully understand the desire of ordinary Libyans to see positive changes that can open up prospects for their country's progressive development as soon as possible.

We can see that domestic Libyan stakeholders are discouraged by the protracted transitional period linked to the Secretary-General's pending appointment of a new Special Representative on Libya. We urge Mr. Guterres to present a candidate for that extremely important position to the Council without delay. More than six months have elapsed since Mr. Bathily stepped down. We are concerned about the fact that the Security Council is now fast approaching an artificial and completely unnecessary deadline, 31 January 2025, by which time a candidate has to be appointed in order for UNSMIL's mandate to be extended. We should not omit to mention Ms. Koury's efforts, which have focused particularly on resolving the crisis around the Central Bank of Libya. It is important for the United Nations Mission, even in the transitional period, to continue making itself felt and for the Libyan people themselves not to forget its existence. At the same time, the current task for the current United Nations team in Tripoli, in our view, should exclusively be to create conditions favourable to facilitating a new round of United Nations-led mediation and to supporting the Libyan political process. At this stage it is vital to ensure that the Deputy Special Representative does not step outside the lines of the existing framework, promote far-reaching initiatives and plans or introduce innovations that do not fully enjoy consensual support by key Libyan actors.

Against a backdrop of a deepening divide among key Libyan stakeholders, we want to note the following encouraging factors, in particular the holding of the first round of municipal elections in the country. The record high voter turnout reflects the fact that ordinary Libyans are not indifferent to the fate of their country and want to contribute to advancing it in any way they can. Libya's High National Elections Commission can harness the experience gained when organizing a national election, to which there continues to be no viable alternative.

The national reconciliation track is no less important. We have seen the African Union scale up its efforts in that regard and the personal and unwavering focus on it of President Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo. There is a greater need than ever for painstaking, well-planned work with Libyans, taking into account the positions and visions of all influential Libyan forces. At the same time, the inter-Libyan dialogue needs to be Libyan-owned and Libyan-led, a principle that is reflected in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Excessive pressure on Libyan leaders, even with the noblest of intentions, can backfire. It is important to draw the lessons from past mistakes related to the international mediation in the former Jamahiriya. Furthermore, the importance of inclusivity must be taken into consideration. If certain political forces in Libya feel that they are being sidelined, the efforts will not bear fruit.

We continue to believe firmly that in order to redress the situation in Libya the entire international community must pool its efforts. Our Organization has been given a leading role in that regard. We would be well advised to leverage the fact that the members of the Security Council, including the permanent members, have no visible critical disagreements on the Libya file. Once again, we stress that the Russian Federation stands ready to cooperate constructively on the Libya dossier with all interested parties.

Against that backdrop we are baffled by Western countries' ongoing attempts to organize various kinds of get-togethers and separate groupings with regard to Libya. A clearly negative example in that regard was the conference held at the beginning of December in London's Wilton Park, to which it was not deemed necessary to invite a number of influential international and regional players, or even the Libyans themselves. At the same time, during the conference, the issue of developing a road map for a settlement in Libya was raised. Unfortunately, the involvement of the Deputy Special Representative in that gathering also sent the wrong message to the organizers. Nothing but damage to United Nations mediation and the standing of the Security Council should be expected from such initiatives. Furthermore, not only do they not bring any added value in resolving the situation in Libya, but they can also inflict serious damage there. It is also important to note that the recent excessive interest of Tripoli's Western partners in overseeing the work of Libya's key financial and economic structures goes beyond the framework of the tasks set out in Security Council resolutions.

In conclusion, I would like to draw attention to the issue of frozen Libyan assets. The most serious concern in that regard is the current practice of encroachment on those assets by a number of Western banks and financial structures. That issue is regularly raised by the Libyan side. Let us recall that those funds have been blocked not to punish any party, but rather to ensure that they are safeguarded. That is what we regard as the

Council's main task at this juncture: to safeguard Libyan resources at the current turbulent stage so that they can benefit the Libyan people in the future, as stipulated in the relevant documents of the Security Council. We urge all countries to approach this question with the utmost seriousness and to duly heed the requests of the Libyans.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): I extend my gratitude to Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Koury and Ambassador Kazuyuki Yamazaki of Japan for their briefings. And I also thank Mr. Omar for his sobering remarks and welcome the participation of Libyan Ambassador at today's meeting.

Against the backdrop of the stalling political process and the continuing dire humanitarian and human rights situation in Libya, as highlighted by the briefers today, my delegation would like to make the following points.

First, we closely watched the municipal elections last month. It is truly meaningful that the first nationwide local elections in a decade were held in a peaceful manner. The significant turnout of 77 per cent demonstrated the Libyan people's strong yearning for democracy. We believe that those municipal elections were a crucial step towards restoring the legitimacy of institutions in Libya and holding national elections to form a long-delayed unified national Government. We urge all Libyan authorities to continue to cooperate with the High National Election Commission during the second round of municipal elections next year. In that regard, my delegation also commends the key assistance role of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya during the election process. We especially support the efforts to promote increased women's participation in the political process. We expect that the proportion of women candidates, which stood at approximately 20 per cent in the recent local elections, will increase during future elections.

Secondly, we call upon all parties in Libya to refrain from unilateral actions that deepen institutional division, thereby hampering the political process. In that connection, we commend the appointment of the new governor and board of directors of the Libyan Central Bank, according to the agreement among Libyan authorities. In the same vein, we call for the early resolution of disputes regarding the leadership of the High Council of State, particularly considering its vital role in advancing the political process in Libya.

Thirdly, Security Council sanctions must be faithfully implemented by all States Members of the United Nations. We are particularly concerned about the continuous arms provisions by foreign Powers to Libya, in clear violation of the arms embargo. That contributes to the growing influence of armed groups and further destabilizes Libya, North Africa and beyond, as illegal arms flows through Libya bolster terrorism and create insecurity in the Sahel region. It should also be recalled that the commission of acts that violate international humanitarian law or that of acts that constitute human rights abuses is a listing criterion for the imposition of targeted Security Council sanctions.

We are particularly concerned that fragmented statehood exacerbates the migrant and refugee crisis in Libya, which serves as a main migration route through the Mediterranean Sea, posing grave risks in the wider African region and European countries. As such, we call on all parties to cooperate with the Panel of Experts, which is mandated to monitor the implementation of Security Council sanctions. We also stress that Libyan frozen assets must be protected for the future benefit of the Libyan people, and we hope that the Council can take concrete actions based on the recommendations of the Panel of Experts on Libya, in addition to taking into account the Libyan Investment Authority's views.

In October, the Security Council was able to reaffirm its commitment to the unity and stability of Libya by adopting resolution 2755 (2024). We now expect the Secretary-General to appoint a new, capable Special Representative of the Secretary-General within the next month.

In conclusion, we call upon all Libyan leaders to seize the window of opportunity generated by recent positive developments and to engage faithfully to reach consensus on electoral laws and a political road map. In that regard, I appreciate Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Koury's initiative, presented today, to advance the political process in Libya and I expect positive responses from Libyan leaders.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Deputy Special Representative and Officer-in-Charge Stephanie Koury for her briefing and her work, Ambassador Yamazaki and his team for their work over the past two years and Mr. Ali Omar, founder and director of Libya Crimes Watch, for his briefing. I welcome the participation of the representative of Libya in this meeting.

As this is our final speech on Libya as an elected member of the Council, we would like to highlight certain aspects that have guided our work over the past two years. We all know that the fragmentation of the country and its institutions continues, that human rights violations and abuses — as we just heard once again — persist and that national elections, while urgently needed, still seem uncertain. But the measures taken at the local level could serve as a basis for more far-reaching measures, if there is the political will to do so. That is why the Council must continue to focus on the following three points:

First, we thank Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Koury for presenting the action lines of the strategy of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) towards an inclusive political process. We will continue to work alongside UNSMIL to promote a Libyan political process based on the six principles described by Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Koury. In that regard, Switzerland is ready to make its peace policy instruments available, particularly with regard to human rights and international humanitarian law, to which we are committed alongside UNSMIL and the Netherlands.

In addition, Switzerland continues to work alongside the Presidential Council and the African Union to promote an inclusive reconciliation process based on the rule of law. In that respect, we encourage the relevant authorities to stop delaying the adoption of a law that complies with international principles in that area and that is linked to the political process. Like UNSMIL, Switzerland welcomes the holding of municipal elections in Libya. That represents a crucial opportunity for the Libyan people to exercise their right to choose their representatives and to promote responsible governance. Finally, we also encourage the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

Secondly, it is essential to create an environment conducive to the political process. That includes preventing violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. On 16 December 1966, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was adopted by the General Assembly (General Assembly resolution 2200 (XXI)). The Covenant contains important guarantees to protect the civil and political liberties of individuals and has been ratified by Libya. Over the past 24 months, Switzerland has tirelessly

reiterated that an electoral process guaranteeing the participation of women and all minorities, as well as a free and safe civic space, requires an improvement in the human rights situation in Libya. In that context, we would like to highlight an important milestone — the signing of a declaration of intent between the Presidential Council and the co-Chairs of the Working Group on International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights in May 2023. The declaration is aimed at ensuring the centrality of human rights at all stages of the political and reconciliation process and sets up regular and inclusive dialogue between the signatories to that end.

Thirdly, the security situation remains fragile. Armed groups wield considerable influence, and clashes among them negatively affect the civilian population. Actions likely to increase tensions, undermine confidence and further entrench institutional divisions and discord among Libyans must be avoided. We call on the main stakeholders to engage in dialogue and to work together. All members of the international community must consistently support that cause. Furthermore, we would like to express our concern about the increasing laxity of Member States with regard to violations of the sanctions regime, in particular the arms embargo and illicit oil exports, as highlighted in the most recent report of the Panel of Experts mandated by the Council (see S/2023/673). The lack of coherence and respect for international instruments designed to promote peace and stability in Libya will have long-term consequences, not only in Libya, but in the region as a whole. We therefore call on the entire international community to uphold their commitments and promote peace in Libya.

I would like to recall the words of Hala Bugaighis, our civil society briefer from last October (see S/PV.9743). She stressed that peace mediation efforts must be founded on a concept of power-sharing, rather than responsibility-sharing alone. Switzerland stands ready to pursue its commitment in that regard.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Koury and Ambassador Kazuyuki Yamazaki, Permanent Representative of Japan, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, for their briefings. I also listened closely to the briefing by the representative of civil society.

In recent months, Libya, with the support of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and other international partners, has seen the Central Bank crisis resolved and the political and security situation largely stabilized, with positive signs emerging. At the same time, there are still differences among the parties in the country, stalling the political process and presaging a long and arduous path towards national unity.

I would like to emphasize the following points.

The first involves continuously promoting political dialogue. The recent successful holding of council elections in 58 municipalities across Libya is an important step towards advancing the political process and strengthening local governance, which China welcomes. We note the most recent recommendations and measures by Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kouri to facilitate the political process in Libya. We encourage all parties concerned in Libya to cooperate actively with a commitment to dialogue and consultation towards an early consensus on the holding of general and parliamentary elections. It is our hope that the Secretary-General will expeditiously appoint a new Special Representative for Libya in accordance with resolution 2755 (2024), after fully consulting the relevant parties, and provide additional good offices in support of bridging the differences among the parties in Libya. Last week, President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo and Chair of the African Union (AU) High-Level Committee on Libya, visited the country and engaged with all parties to advance the AU-led national reconciliation process, which China recognizes. China supports African solutions to African problems and welcomes a greater role for the African Union in resolving the Libyan issue.

My second point concerns addressing security and humanitarian challenges. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2024/895) underscores the highly volatile situation in western Libya and clashes among armed groups over territory, about which we are deeply concerned. Against that backdrop, all Libyan parties should put the interests of the country and its people first, continue to implement the ceasefire agreement, refrain from any unilateral actions that would undermine stability and maintain the hard-won de-escalation of the situation. The problem of refugees and illegal migrants is a persistent challenge in Libya, with a lasting impact on its security and humanitarian situation, which is further exacerbated by turmoil in neighbouring

countries and regions. We call on the international community for closer cooperation and greater support for Libya to prevent the synergy of various risk factors.

Thirdly, a reasonable plan for frozen assets must be developed. Libya's frozen assets abroad are the collective wealth of the Libyan people. China fully understands the concerns of the Libyan authorities about the illegal misappropriation or erosion of its assets, supports safeguarding the safety, integrity and preserved value of frozen assets and calls on all relevant financial institutions to adhere to the principles of transparency and impartiality and to refrain from any arbitrary misappropriation or abuse. We hope that the Council will fully heed the legitimate demands of the Libyan authorities and, in connection with the upcoming consultations on the Libyan sanctions draft resolution, review and adjust the existing asset-freezing measures in a timely manner.

The Libyan issue has dragged on for more than a decade, the reasons for which merit our deep reflection. It has been demonstrated that external interference and imposed solutions cannot bring about peace. China hopes that all parties will respect Libya's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, adhere to the principle of Libyan leadership and ownership in advancing the political reconciliation process and jointly make tangible efforts to return Libya to the right track of peace and development as soon as possible.

Mr. Ponikvar (Slovenia): I thank Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Koury for her update and Ambassador Yamazaki for his final briefing in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya. I also thank Mr. Omar for bringing crucial perspectives to our meeting this morning. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya.

In October, we welcomed the United Nations-mediated agreement reached between the House of Representatives and the High Council of State on the crisis surrounding Libya's Central Bank, which had led to the rapid deterioration of the political, economic and security conditions in the country. We continue to hope that the agreement will mark a new beginning for future agreements between the parties. That is why today we welcome Deputy Special Representative Koury's efforts on a multitrack approach, which seeks to bring together key Libyan actors, as well as Libyan grassroots organizations. We look forward to hearing more

about the process as work continues, and we call on all Libyan stakeholders to engage constructively in order to overcome the outstanding differences and take the country forward towards the holding of long-overdue national elections. As we approach a new year, we urge all actors in Libya to refrain from unilateral actions and stress the need for Libya's State institutions to remain free from political interference.

Slovenia also welcomes the successful holding of a first round of municipal elections in Libya in November. While no substitute for national elections, that is an important milestone and a critical step in the democratic process. The high turnout demonstrates the keen desire of the Libyan people to go to the ballot box and exercise their democratic right. We note reports that the polling proceeded smoothly and peacefully and acknowledge the key role played by the High National Elections Commission, with support from the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). Ahead of the commencement of the electoral process for a second group of municipalities in January, we call on the Libyan authorities to allocate the necessary resources for that process. We also urge the continued prioritization of the participation of women in the elections, both as voters and as candidates, including through the important work of UNSMIL.

The convening of the Security Working Group of the Berlin process in October, with the participation of the 5 + 5 Joint Military Commission for the first time since July 2023, is an importance development. We call for the redoubling of all efforts towards reunifying security and military institutions in Libya and ultimately all of Libya's State institutions.

As Ms. Hala Bugaighis warned us in October (see S/PV.9743), we must not let the false sense of political stability in Libya deceive us. There remains much work to be done. Slovenia is concerned about the unprecedented level of influence non-State armed groups have on Libya's affairs in the east and the west.

Non-State armed groups are also responsible for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and the targeting of civilians, including human rights defenders and journalists. That is reprehensible. It is clear that accountability for the perpetrators of those crimes is essential in order to establish the rule of law and deliver lasting peace and justice for all Libyans.

In conclusion, Slovenia reiterates its support for the work of UNSMIL and Deputy Special Representative Koury. We look forward to the extension of the Mission's mandate, as well as the Libya sanctions regime, in January. And we hope to see a Special Representative appointed expeditiously.

Mr. Escobar Ullauri (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Deputy Special Representative Koury; the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, Ambassador Yamazaki; and Mr. Omar for their briefings. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya to this meeting.

In December 2021, Libya was on the verge of holding national elections and paving the way towards a democratic basis. Three years later, it is increasingly clear that the only way to overcome the political stalemate and achieve a peaceful transition is by holding free, inclusive and transparent national elections.

Ecuador welcomes the announcement by the High National Electoral Commission of the results of the first round of the municipal council elections held in November, which represent a significant step in restoring the legitimacy of Libyan institutions. My country acknowledges the high level of participation of the population and the work of the electoral authorities in organizing the electoral process and that of security institutions in ensuring a safe and peaceful environment. Ecuador supports a Libyan-owned and Libyan-led political and electoral processes. We hope therefore that the municipal elections laid the groundwork for the holding of national elections.

In the security field, it is necessary to support the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in order to set up a joint military force and ensure the effective implementation of the ceasefire agreement. Any effort to unify the Libyan army is a step towards reconciliation and national unity.

In that context, Ecuador considers as positive the recent dialogues held by the parties in Tunis to discuss the draft law on reconciliation proposed by the Presidential Council and the formation of the National Reconciliation Commission, a process that should have accountability as one of its pillars.

The success of any political process must be underpinned by economic and financial stability, which depends on the effective and transparent management

of Libyan resources and the responsible and technical management of institutions such as the Central Bank.

Ecuador reiterates its concern about the violence faced by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. It therefore calls on the authorities, with the support of the international community, to work to improve their situation and to dismantle the cross-border human trafficking networks operating in the country.

As this is the last time that Ecuador is participating during its term as an elected member of the Council, I wish to express our appreciation to the Deputy Special Representative and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) for their work. We are certain that UNSMIL plays a fundamental role in facilitating dialogue among the parties with the objective of building confidence, preventing conflicts and laying the foundations for lasting peace. In that regard, we have taken note of the political process put forward today by the Deputy Special Representative.

In order to give continuity to UNSMIL's mandate and in accordance with the provisions of resolution 2755 (2024), it is necessary to move forward with the appointment of the new Special Representative as soon as possible.

In conclusion, I renew my country's commitment to the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Libya.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): I thank Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Koury her update on the situation on the ground in Libya. I also thank Mr. Omar for his briefing and welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Libya, Ambassador Taher El-Sonni, at this meeting. As I have just completed my last briefing as the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, I would like to repeat my sincere gratitude, in my national and personal capacity, to the Committee members, Member States, the Panel of Experts and the Secretariat staff of my Mission for their cooperation.

In the case of Libya, the sanctions measures, especially the assets freeze on the Libyan Investment Authority, are not punitive but rather are designed to promote peace and stability in Libya and serve for the future benefit of the Libyan people. I hope that the Committee will continue to be guided by that principle until the regime accomplishes its purpose.

Today I would like to mention four points, drawing from what Japan has experienced during its Security Council term.

First, there is an urgent need to revitalize a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process facilitated by the United Nations. Over the past several years, there have been some key initiatives to restore the legitimacy and unity of Libyan State institutions through the holding of national elections. Those initiatives have not realized a solid outcome but have clearly shown that the stakeholders must compromise to move the process forward. Japan supports the new, inclusive approach that Ms. Koury has just announced and calls for the political parties to constructively engage and place the people's interests first instead of their own ambitions.

Secondly, Japan is gravely concerned about armed groups' influence on State institutions, which has increased to an unprecedented degree. While welcoming the negotiated resolution of the recent crisis at the Central Bank of Libya, we call on all Libyan parties to refrain from the use of any unilateral and forcible measures that increase tensions, distrust and fragmentation. In that vein, Japan supports the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in advancing the unification of the military and security sectors and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) in conducting its conflict prevention mandate.

Thirdly, Japan remains concerned about continuous reports of systematic human rights violations and abuses against Libyans and migrants and excessive restrictions on civic space. We support the role played by civil society and the international community to fight against impunity. We also support their efforts in ensuring the full, equal, effective, meaningful and safe participation of women and the inclusion of youth. Japan also welcomes the Libyan-led transitional justice and national reconciliation process complemented by the United Nations and the African Union.

Lastly, Japan calls on the Security Council to continue to back UNSMIL with a united voice. Under Ms. Koury's leadership, UNSMIL has conducted various tasks as an integrated Mission. Japan calls for the swift appointment of a new Special Representative of the Secretary-General. In the meantime, the Council should empower the Mission for the upcoming period by smoothly renewing its mandate even if one is not appointed before the end of January.

In conclusion, Japan joins others in congratulating the people of Libya for exercising their political rights through peaceful and transparent municipal elections. It expresses hope for political stability in future.

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

I would like to start by thanking Officer-in-Charge Koury for her briefing and for her continued leadership of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. We commend her efforts to reconstitute long-overdue political dialogue. Successful national elections are essential to ensure long-term stability in Libya. I want to thank Ambassador Yamazaki for his briefing and congratulate him on his participation over the course of his two years on the Security Council. I want to welcome the participation of the Libyan Permanent Representative in this meeting. And finally, I would like to thank Mr. Omar for his briefing and for his advocacy for greater accountability in Libya. We stand with all those demanding an end to human rights abuses, working to protect vulnerable and marginalized communities and safeguarding fundamental freedoms for the Libyan people.

Let us be clear: the status quo in Libya, especially with regard to the political solution, is unsustainable. That is what we heard this morning from Ms. Koury. And without a change, Libya would eventually face deeper divisions, the further erosion of Libyan sovereignty and a return to violence.

We need a new political process in Libya, as difficult as that might seem. And we continue to believe that the United Nations is the best-placed international actor to lead that process. We call on the entire international community to stand behind these United Nations-led efforts. Already Ms. Koury has done exceptional work engaging Libyan and international actors.

The United States also supports her proposal to hold parallel conversations in a more inclusive format. Real progress on the political future of Libya requires leaders to make tough compromises on contentious issues. But here is what we know: that kind of compromise is possible. The resolution of the Central Bank crisis demonstrated that. Consensus-based solutions, brought about through dialogue, are not out of reach; they are essential.

There is a pending Libyan request before the Security Council to strengthen coordination and

information-sharing among Libyan security forces, as well as Libya's counter-terrorism and border security capabilities. We fully support Libya's request to promote east-west integration, which is in the spirit of the security integration objectives enshrined in numerous Council resolutions and supported by Libya's 5+5 Joint Military Commission. Progress towards military integration and the broader reunification of Libyan institutions is key to reaffirming Libya's sovereignty and preventing it from becoming enmeshed in regional conflict. We must also all engage, encourage all sides to work on an agreement towards a unified east-west budget that would reflect the equitable distribution of Libya's oil revenues for the benefit of all Libyans.

There is increasing recognition among Libyans of the need to eliminate oil-for-fuel offsets to address the fiscal deficit and ensure that Libya's economy is on a sustainable path. More broadly, Libya's long-term economic stability hinges on the apolitical nature and technocratic integrity of key economic institutions, including the Central Bank of Libya, the National Oil Corporation and the Audit Bureau. Effective governance is key to the future of Libya and to people's faith in the institutions of their country.

Turning to sanctions, I want to thank Ambassador Yamazaki for the briefing on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, and look forward to the renewal of Libya's sanctions regime. We also thank the Panel of Experts of the Committee for previously briefing the Sanctions Committee and for their continued gold-standard public reporting and independent analysis on the implementation of United Nations sanctions. We should all be concerned about the Panel's reports on transfers of military equipment, in flagrant violation of the United Nations arms embargo, including Russian naval vessels unloading military materiel at Tobruk port.

We are also deeply concerned about the illicit exports of petroleum and petroleum products, which benefit criminal organizations at the expense of the Libyan people. It is critical that the Panel remain focused on that issue, particularly regarding information on those who are benefiting from this trafficking.

Finally, we welcome the Panel of Experts' identification of individuals and entities involved in embargo and other violations of United Nations-mandated sanctions. We are committed to using sanctions to deter threats to peace and stability in

Libya. That peace and that stability have eluded Libya for far too long, but change is always within reach. I therefore call on the Council to do everything possible to support the Libyan people as they write a better future for themselves.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Libya.

Mr. El-Sonni (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting. I also thank Ms. Stephanie Koury for her briefing, and I seize this opportunity to thank the representative of Japan for his ceaseless efforts during his chairmanship of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, which is about to complete its work. I would be remiss not to thank Malta, Mozambique, Switzerland and Ecuador for their efforts over the past two years.

After what we heard today — and I address the Council, members of the United Nations country team and former and current envoys — I believe that the Libyan people are owed an apology — because after listening to these briefings, the procrastination and delays and the United Nations plans, Libyans feel like they are living in a rerun of the same television drama, with the same events and director and even the same actors, with only slight changes.

We listened today to Ms. Koury's briefing and plan, of which we take note. We also listened to the briefings of the Council members. Once again, the only commonality is admitting a stalemate and the lack of a clear vision or a specific timeline, with a continually vague upcoming political path. Those indicators come at a time when the world is witnessing events and political developments that have rendered the Council more divided than in the past, which leads us to question if there is sincerely an international intention to resolve the crisis in my country.

As a reminder, during these same days, three years earlier, Libyans were registering their names in polling centres. They were optimistic, dreaming of a bright future that would remove them from the transitional phases that have continued for more than 10 years and hoping for a united country and the renewed legitimacy of State institutions. Unfortunately, three more years have passed, in addition to the 10 years that preceded them — and still none of their dreams have been

achieved, the political stalemate continues and division is the sign of the times.

A month ago, Libyans voted to elect their representatives in close to 60 municipalities throughout Libya. That was the first national election that coincided with the elections in the different municipalities, and the upcoming elections in January will include around 60 more municipalities. The conduct of that electoral process last month, under the supervision of the High National Elections Commission and the Government and its various agencies, without any recorded violations or security breaches, is further proof that the Libyan people, under the right conditions, are ready to continue the process towards democracy and political stability. That success, witnessed in multiple areas throughout Libya, proves as well that elections can be held despite the existing challenges, which confirms that the hurdles are not about logistics or technical matters, but about political will.

When we hear members say that it is important for the political solution to be Libyan-led and Libyan-owned, Libyans wonder why what they offer is being ignored. We wonder why, when national initiatives are presented and solutions are proposed, they are not incorporated. And why are practical measures not being developed to seek out Libyans' opinions about their future — a future that has been manipulated by a minority and through negative external interventions? That is why national dialogue remains the best path for overcoming the remaining differences in order to reach a consensus on completion of the general elections as soon as possible. Such a consensus would resolve the controversial issues through developing viable electoral laws. Such a national dialogue must be inclusive and non-exclusionary, with genuine Libyan ownership and leadership and broad participation from across the political spectrum and all segments of society. It must build on previous progress and uphold the Skhirat and Geneva political processes and their outcomes, and the participation of all institutions arising from those processes. It must be the primary reference point for reaching a lasting political solution.

The unification of State institutions and the holding of direct national elections are what the successive political agreements have sought to achieve. That led to the creation of the existing bodies, the most recent of which is the Geneva agreement road map, which has not been respected. This goal of Libyans to hold elections on 24 December 2021, has not been achieved,

and the obstructors in question, whether individuals or States, have yet to be revealed.

Why would you expect Libyans to trust the new processes to be put forward? That is the question. Therefore, any new political process or new political agreement that does not keep in mind and sight the holding of general elections directly is only a prolongation of the crisis my country is going through. The Libyan people are tired of repeated failed attempts, which have even further complicated the situation and kept the building of their State elusive, in turn preventing them from ending that vicious cycle. The Libyan people are tired of time being wasted in establishing interim executive authorities, whose legitimacy and representation of the people are questioned every time. The Libyan people are tired of the absence of a permanent Constitution that defines the parameters of the State, its foundations and principles and the nature of its governance. Therefore, out of respect for our people, the Council must decisively reject the attempts by some to amplify institutional divisiveness, either through unilateral measures or by intervening in our national decision-making.

Libya is never far removed from the ongoing rapid developments in the region, and that is because of the presence of many foreign interventions in the country, a proxy war waged by the same players and the clear use of Libyan territory as a springboard for serving direct and indirect international ambitions. The events currently under way in the Sudan and the implications of what happened in Syria are well-known to everyone.

The unification of the security and military apparatus under a civilian leadership is therefore imperative and must be a top priority of the current phase. This phase should focus on the outcome of the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, which would support stability in the country, combat terrorism and organized crime and create the conditions for supporting the political process and the envisaged electoral process. Those actions will contribute directly and effectively to achieving sovereignty over the entirety of Libyan territory, to ending all types of foreign presence in the country and to the State having sole possession of any weapons.

Reconciliation is a pillar of stability in Libya. In that regard, we commend the role of the African Union in moving forward the Libyan national reconciliation file and appreciate the visits to Libya by the African

Union High-Level Committee on Libya in October and in December to prepare for a comprehensive national reconciliation conference that will be held next year. In that regard, a few days ago, a meeting was also held in Tunisia that included representatives of the Presidential Council, the House of Representatives and the High Council of State to discuss a draft reconciliation law presented by the Presidential Council. We therefore call on the United Nations and the international community to provide further support to that process and to support it as a means for addressing all other political, security and economic issues, so that Libyans can adopt a national charter that contributes to turning the pages of the past and re-establishing trust among themselves. We emphasize that national reconciliation must be associated with the principles of transitional justice, truth, transparency, the recognition of wrongdoing, reparations, release of all forcibly detained persons, the return of all refugees and displaced persons, and discovery of the fate of missing persons. Only by taking such measures can we achieve genuine national unity and reconciliation.

Let me briefly conclude by reminding the Council, importantly, that the successive transitional phases do not contribute to the stability that Libya and the region should enjoy, nor do they support the stability

of our neighbouring countries, the Sahel or even the Mediterranean. In short, the Libyan people are tired of their country being used as an international testing ground, of attempts to impose influence and of the application of the same mechanisms and the same remedies that have proven to be unsuccessful for more than a decade. One cannot keep offering the same medicine to cure the same disease and expect different results. Therefore, if members of the international community are sincere in supporting Libya, they should lift their influence over Libya, stop their wars and proxy conflicts on our territory, work only towards creating conditions that are conducive to supporting purely national initiatives and solutions, and reveal who the obstructionists and their supporters are, whether they are individuals, groups or States. Only in that way can stability be achieved in Libya and the region, and only then will we take the first step towards building a modern Libya — a Libya that, with stability and its capacities, can be inclusive of everyone.

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 of the subject.

The meeting rose at noon.