

**Remarks of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya, Hanna S. Tetteh, to the Security Council on the situation in Libya**

Tuesday, 24 June 2025 (16.00, Tripoli)

Thank you very much Madam President, excellencies members of council, and the distinguished permanent representatives of Libya. Your Excellency, and if I may also wish all the female members of the council, and all of the diplomats there, a Happy International Women in Diplomacy Day.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Madam President, on Guyana's presidency of the Council for the month of June, and also to thank you for your flexibility in rescheduling this meeting.

*Distinguished members of the Council,*

I am pleased to inform you that on the 20 June, the Berlin Process International Follow-up Committee on Libya (IFC-L) met in Berlin under the auspices of the Federal Republic of Germany and UNSMIL, reconvening for the first time after a hiatus of 4 years. The meeting marked a significant shift towards reinvigorating international coordination on Libya and consolidating international support to UN efforts in advancing a political process. I would like to express my appreciation to the Foreign Ministry of the Federal Republic of Germany for its leadership and support, and to all the members of the IFC-L for their commitment to support UNSMIL's efforts to relaunch an inclusive political process, and for their constructive participation.

The meeting was attended by 19 Member States and 3 regional organizations. Participants urged efforts to strengthen the truce that is currently in effect in Tripoli, recognized the work of the Advisory Committee in outlining viable pathways to address contentious issues that had the potential to impede efforts to develop a new political roadmap for the holding of elections, and supported the four working groups (political, security, economic, human rights and IHL). They also agreed to convene regularly to coordinate and channel international support to the UN facilitated political process.

Cohesive international support is indispensable, as Libya is again at a critical juncture in its efforts to achieve the overall objective of strengthening democracy and moving towards electing a government that will unify state institutions, promote good governance and be accountable to its citizens.

*Madam President,*

*Excellencies, members of the council,*

Since my last briefing on 16 May, in the immediate aftermath of armed clashes in Tripoli, UNSMIL engaged extensively with the Government of National Unity, key political and security actors, community and tribal leaders, notables, civil society representatives and Member States with influence on the ground to prevent further violence. Our engagement was specifically to seek support to preserve the fragile truce that had been reached on the 14 May, develop mechanisms to facilitate a de-escalation of tensions in order to prevent further clashes, and ensure the protection of civilians.

On the 18 May, with UNSMIL's support, the Presidential Council established a Truce Committee composed of key security actors, with a mandate to monitor the upholding of the truce, facilitate a permanent ceasefire and ensure the protection of civilians. This was followed on the 4 June by the formation of a temporary Security and Military Arrangements Committee, also under the auspices of the Presidential Council, tasked with implementing structural measures to sustain peace and reorganise forces in the capital. This second committee also includes representatives from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Interior and the armed groups. The deployment of disengagement forces in sensitive areas also occurred and the de-escalation of tensions led to the withdrawal of the main, heavily equipped forces from the roads of Tripoli on the 11 June and they have since been replaced by police and military police. The truce, however, remains fragile and the overall security situation in our opinion, is unpredictable.

*Madam President,*

The armed clashes that erupted in Tripoli in May resulted in civilian deaths and injuries, as well as damage to critical civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, universities and a prison. Despite several stress calls, no humanitarian corridors were secured by the parties involved in the clashes. These incidents underscore the shortcomings of security actors in adhering to international humanitarian and human rights law. Following the clashes there have been ongoing demonstrations. But I would like to commend state security forces for the most part for facilitating peaceful protests in most instances, and continue to emphasize the need to allow that to happen and to protect civilians.

Following the clashes, I am particularly alarmed by the discovery of mass graves in the Abu Slim area. Emerging evidence indicates grave human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, torture, and enforced disappearances, that were allegedly committed by state security actors, notably the Stability Support Apparatus (SSA). The

presence of charred remains, unidentified bodies in morgues, and a suspected unofficial detention site at Abu Salim Zoo, underscores the scale and gravity of these abuses. These incidents highlight the urgent need for security reform rooted in human rights, and independent access to all detention facilities. While national committees have been announced, an independent investigative mechanism is also important to help ensure truth, justice, and accountability, and also to ensure this practice does not continue.

*Madam President,*

*Excellencies, members of the council,*

There are reports of continued build-up and fears among many Libyans that armed clashes may resume. The GNU describes the events of May as law enforcement operations against criminals, aimed at enforcing judicial orders issued by the Libyan Attorney General with the goal of upholding the rule of law and holding individuals accountable for grave crimes. This would also have the impact of consolidating state control over security actors. However, we have not that dynamics have developed, and narratives have emerged, that risks pitting cities and neighbourhoods within western Libya against one another, threatening social cohesion and potentially fomenting further escalation. The continued inflow of weapons into Tripoli has led to the proliferation of heavy arms and weapons depots in densely populated civilian areas, posing serious risks to civilian lives. There is also growing concern that further instability will draw in eastern security actors and undermine the 2020 Ceasefire Agreement. It is clear that these clashes and the risks they pose in the country, underscore the need for security sector reform as well as unified, professional military and security institutions. UNSMIL will continue to work to advance a security track in collaboration with key stakeholders.

We urge all political and security actors to refrain from provocative rhetoric and actions that would only serve to deepen the lack of trust and undermine all the de-escalation efforts being made to sustain the fragile truce. This is not the time for brinkmanship and unilateral actions, there is the urgent need for cool heads to prevail.

*Madam President,*

*Excellencies, members of the council,*

The large-scale demonstrations that followed the May clashes reflect public mistrust and frustration. These recent developments further affirm UNSMIL's long-standing position that the status quo is unsustainable and underscores the urgent need to advance the UNSMIL-facilitated political process.

Following the conclusion of the work of the Advisory Committee on the 5 May, and the publication of the Executive Summary of its report on the 20 May, UNSMIL launched a series of nationwide consultations on the Committee's proposed options. The objective

of these consultations is to facilitate a nationwide, inclusive public debate about how best to overcome the political impasse and gather Libyan views on the four options proposed by the Advisory Committee.

In addition to engaging with key political and security leaders, the Mission has met with representatives from municipalities, political parties, elders and notables, social councils, members of civil society, youth, women, cultural and linguistic components and persons with disabilities. So far, consultations have taken place in Tripoli, Benghazi, Misrata, Nalut, Zawiya, and Zintan, and there have also been meetings with interlocutors traveling from other areas in southern Libya including Sabha to engage with UNSMIL in Tripoli. Earlier this month, an online poll was launched to reach the wider Libyan public. To expand outreach further, additional consultations are ongoing and our objective is to complete these outreach efforts over the next month.

Across diverse backgrounds and political views that were expressed, there is a clear and unified message that has so far emerged:

- Many Libyans are deeply disillusioned with the prolonged transitional periods and have lost confidence in the current institutions and leadership, doubting their willingness to put the national interests above their own.
- There is a strong desire for a political process that promotes public participation, gives them an opportunity to elect their leadership and delivers a government with a clear mandate that will create the opportunity for genuine and visible change. They aspire to have the mandate of both the Executive and the Legislature renewed and to have one government, unified institutions including military and security institutions. More than anything else, they want accountable governance, that restores legitimacy and reflects the will of the people.
- Inputs from these consultations will serve as a basis to forge a consensus-based road map towards national elections and the reunification of institutions.

*Madam President, excellencies, members of the council,*

UNSMIL intends to present a time-bound and politically pragmatic roadmap reflecting the Libyan people's demand for tangible change with the goal of ending transitional processes. I hope to present this roadmap to the Security Council for endorsement during my next briefing. I urge all parties to engage in good faith and to be ready to forge consensus on this roadmap. We need all political actors to exhibit the willingness to negotiate, compromise and work in close collaboration with UNSMIL towards undertaking the necessary legislative reforms and administrative actions to facilitate the process. We will also need to agree on clear milestones with a definite timeline towards

holding elections that will create the basis for the next government to have a clear mandate that derives from the people of Libya, and which is inclusive of all parts of the country, tribes, cultural components, women, young people and people with disabilities through their participation in the political process, as candidates, as campaigners and as political activists in an atmosphere that is free of violence and political intimidation.

Unequivocal support from this Council, including its readiness to take measures against those obstructing the political process, or actively instigating violence and criminality will be critical and reassuring to all Libyans.

*Madam President,*

*Excellencies, members of the council,*

Alongside persistent instability and widespread frustration with the status quo, the purchasing power of the Libyan dinar has suffered significantly in recent months. On 6 April, the Libyan dinar saw a devaluation from 4.8 dinars to 5.56 dinars to the U.S. dollar – representing an almost 16 per cent loss in value.

To date there is no agreement on a unified budget and this is continuing to put increased pressure on the Central Bank. Moreover, with divided institutions and in the absence of agreement on spending or a budget, unilateral fiscal decisions risk destabilizing an already precarious financial situation. To this end, the House of Representatives' deliberation on the 3 June of a 69 billion Libyan dinar, three-year budget for the Libyan Development and Reconstruction Fund, would be troubling if approved. It has prompted concerns across the political spectrum, not only for its questionable sustainability, but also for the perceived lack of transparency and procedural legitimacy in the approval process. If implemented, such an expansionary fiscal measure risks undermining the Central Bank's ability to stabilize the exchange rate and contain inflation.

In the context of rising public debt, persistent deficits, and growing pressure on Libya's reserves, all public spending must be grounded in a balanced, unified, and legally sound national budget – developed transparently and in close coordination among the relevant institutions.

Equally important is protecting the independence and integrity of Libya's oversight institutions. In this regard, I welcome the agreement of 24 April – facilitated by UNSMIL – on the technical unification of the eastern and western branches of the National Audit Bureau and urge its speedy implementation.

*Madam President,*

*Excellencies, members of the council,*

The outbreak of armed conflict in mid-May temporarily disrupted United Nations development and humanitarian operations in Tripoli. This disruption was further exacerbated by the continued suspension of activities by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) in the western region. We urge the Government of National Unity to facilitate the full resumption of humanitarian operations, particularly those led by INGOs, which play a critical role in supporting vulnerable groups including Libyan women and children.

In May, the House of Representatives reviewed the draft law on protecting women from violence. I welcome this development as a step toward safeguarding women's rights and urge the swift revision and adoption of this legislation.

*Madam President,*

*Excellencies, members of the council,*

I know that there were Libyans who were looking forward to the announcement of a roadmap today in the light of the political tensions that we have seen. We also note the calls from many Libyans for UNSMIL to act swiftly to facilitate a Libyan led and owned political process that leads to credible elections and unified institutions. I would like to be clear that we fully intend to do so with the support of all relevant stakeholders, but we believe that this should be done through a consultative process. UNSMIL will intensify its engagements in the coming weeks, building on the momentum generated by the Berlin meeting.

I am encouraged by the vibrant and engaged responses of the Libyan stakeholders and the broader public to the Advisory Committee's proposals. This represents a vital step towards ensuring that the views of the people of Libya are meaningfully reflected in shaping the country's future. I extend my gratitude to the Advisory Committee for diligently undertaking this important task and my team at UNSMIL for all their support.

I count on the continued support of this Council.

Thank you.