

**Security Council**

Seventy-fourth year

**8488**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 20 March 2019, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Delattre (France)

*Members:*

Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
Germany	Mr. Schulz
Indonesia	Mr. Syihab
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
Poland	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
South Africa	Ms. Sabelo
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
United States of America	Mr. Cohen

**Agenda**

The situation in Libya

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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**

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to participate in this meeting.

Mr. Salamé is joining today's meeting via video-conference from Tripoli.

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

As this meeting, the Council will hear briefings by Mr. Salamé and His Excellency Mr. Juergen Schulz, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

I now give the floor to Mr. Salamé.

**Mr. Salamé** (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate France on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council.

*(spoke in English)*

I should have liked to be in New York and to have the opportunity to brief Council members in person. However, it is no exaggeration to say that the situation in Libya has reached a crucial juncture. We are working to prevent recent developments and tensions on the ground from escalating, and instead to pivot to stability and a political compact, which will enable an end to the crisis in the country.

On 13 January, the forces of General Haftar peacefully entered Sabha. While there were some minor incidents, the arrival of Haftar's forces was generally perceived as a positive and stabilizing development. When those forces moved to take control of Murzuq in the south-west, there was active opposition from the Tebu community and affiliated armed groups. In

the fighting and in revenge attacks in the immediate aftermath, at least 18 residents of Murzuq were killed and a further 29 injured. Ninety homes were reported burned in revenge attacks by tribal forces under the command of the Libyan National Army.

While the Libyan National Army has brought a large measure of security and stability to the south, which enabled the parallel bank in the east to deliver bank notes to Sabha, it is unclear how long the campaign can be sustained, given the long resupply lines and the limited financial resources of the parallel Government. There has been some mobilization of Libyan National Army forces in Jufra, as well as the conduct of patrols towards Sirte. That has led to friction and a rise in tensions, with forces from the town of Misrata who remain positioned in Sirte after their operations countering the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham there.

In the east, the fighting in Derna came to an end. I am deeply concerned by reports of violations of human rights and humanitarian law during the recent military operations in Derna. The fighting reportedly resulted in many civilian casualties.

In the west of the country, local forces have mobilized in response to the current tensions. So far, such local mobilizations appear to be shows of force and no party appears imminently ready to launch an attack against any other. But there is a real risk of miscalculation or of extremist forces starting skirmishes in the hope of drawing others into a larger confrontation. The Tripoli ceasefire continues to hold, but the Greater Tripoli security arrangements plan remains only partially implemented

The United Nations Support Mission in Libya has supported two rounds of preparatory talks between the advisers of Prime Minister Al-Serraj and General Haftar, which took place in our Tunis offices. As a result of those talks, the two leaders met in Abu Dhabi and agreed to a number of important principles. Libya shall be a civilian and democratically governed State that enjoys full civilian control of the military and a peaceful transition of power. The parties also agreed on the need to unify Libya's long-divided institutions and for the scheduling of national elections before the end of the year. Many of these principles are not new. Indeed, these talks are the continuation of the process that started in September 2017. What is new is the sincerity to turn these words into the end of the transitional period through elections.

Let me now brief the Council on other developments and activities on the ground.

I am pleased to announce that the United Nations hub in Benghazi is open. After many months of its being almost open, United Nations staff are being deployed to Benghazi to better deliver across the east of the country. Discussion is now under way concerning a further hub in Sabha to support operations in the South of the country and United Nations programmes have also now visited Sabha for the first time since operations were halted there in 2013.

In my previous briefings, I warned against the consequences of the economy of predation. I am encouraged by action taken to combat illegal smuggling. On 7 February, the public prosecution issued over 100 arrest warrants against individuals accused of involvement in smuggling and the illegal disposal of fuel, and ordered the confiscation of 115 fuel stations. This organized fuel smuggling amounts to more than \$750 million annually.

Overall, Libya's infrastructure continues to deteriorate at an alarming rate. Basic services, including in health care, water and electricity, are eroding. The situation of water production is particularly fragile. With nearly four wells being disabled every month, the western branch of the Great Man-Made River, which is the primary supplier of water to the north-west, is in imminent danger of collapse.

The 2019 humanitarian response plan for Libya was launched on 5 February, seeking \$202 million to continue providing health care, protection, water and shelter to more than half a million of the most vulnerable people in Libya. An estimated 823,000 people, including migrants and 248,000 children, need humanitarian assistance in Libya.

The situation of the economy is mixed. The reopening of the Sharara oil field, in which the United Nations played a crucial role, resulted in increased oil production, which is returning to 1.2 million barrels per day. The foreign currency exchange fee, in combination with the liberalization of the opportunity to purchase foreign currency, continues to generate revenue and strengthen the dinar. This has increased purchasing power and reduced inflation and the profitability of the black market for currency. While important, these benefits may be short-lived without genuine economic reforms. Such reforms require a direct devaluation of the currency and the lifting of subsidies, which consume

nearly 10 per cent of the national budget. Working with the two branches of the Central Bank of Libya, the national audit review process will soon begin.

It is extremely positive that the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections will start a new round of nine elections in the southern and western parts of Libya on 30 March. In this context, it is essential that there be only one body managing municipal elections. The High National Election Commission is preparing for national elections. We are pleased to see that the Commission, with the help of the United Nations and international partners, has finally now moved into its secure new headquarters. It is now necessary for the government to provide the necessary operational funding for Commission to finalize preparations for elections.

The Mission has been in steady contact with a number of countries and regional organizations, including the League of Arab States, the African Union (AU) and the European Union. I joined the Secretary-General at the African Union Summit and welcome the AU's interest in supporting the United Nations action plan. I am grateful for the support expressed for our efforts during the visit of Commissioner Chergui and Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo on 12 and 13 March.

The national conference will be held from 14 to 16 April inside Libya. It represents a critical opportunity to end the transitional period, which began eight years ago. Ahead of the national conference, we are working with many parties to ensure as broad a buy-in as possible to the political process. What is clear is that the Libyan people fervently desire that their institutions be united as soon as possible. Unfortunately, they are up against powerful forces, which have materially profited from the country's chaos and division and are therefore loath to work towards a unification.

There is much at stake. If the opportunity presented by the national conference is not seized, then we will be faced with only two possible options: prolonged stalemate or conflict. This stalemate may also ultimately lead to conflict or conflict may erupt much sooner. A failure now to advance the political process would demonstrate absolutely that the country is totally controlled by force of arms. But today, we have the ability to step back from the edge of this precipice.

The national conference offers a crucial opportunity for all parties, without exception, to set aside their differences for the good of the country, to

unite, to avoid war and to choose the path of peace and prosperity. The national conference will choose whether to endorse the national charter, which is the product of the national conference consultative process. It will also chart a road map to conclude the transitional period, either through simultaneous parliamentary and presidential elections or through phased elections. It will provide recommendations on how to deal with the draft constitution produced by the Constitution Drafting Assembly.

The days ahead will prove to be foundational to the years ahead for Libyans and the region writ large. I call on Libyans to come together and to avoid acts of obstruction and incitement. There has been a notable uptick in the weaponization of media platforms as tools of incitement. This is tearing at Libya's fragile but vital social fabric and could well be used to instigate violence. At this sensitive time, I call on all actors to refrain from the use of inflammatory and alienating rhetoric in the public sphere.

I also call on all in the international community to put the interests of the Libyan people first and to act committedly and sincerely to pressure all parties to avoid conflict and conclude a peaceful formula to end the transitional period in Libya, for the sake of all of the Libyan people.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Salomé for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Schulz.

**Mr. Schulz** (Germany): In accordance with paragraph 24 (e) of resolution 1970 (2011) of 26 February 2011, I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee established by the same resolution. The report covers the period from 19 January 2019 to 20 March 2019. I would like to highlight the following developments relating to the work of the Committee.

First, with regard to the Panel of Experts, following the adoption of resolution 2441 (2018), the Secretary-General, on 2 January, appointed six individuals to serve on the Panel. On 8 February, the Committee held informal consultations and heard a briefing by the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on the Panel's work programme under resolution 2441 (2018). The Panel briefed on its intended areas of focus in its mandate, mainly the arms embargo, armed groups and attempts at illicit exports of petroleum and the assets

freeze. The presentation was followed by an interactive discussion between Committee members and the Panel. The Committee reiterated its support and appreciation for the work of the Panel and encouraged the Panel to intensify efforts to assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate.

During the reporting period, the Committee approved one request for exemption from the arms embargo, under paragraph 9 (c) of resolution 1970 (2011), submitted by Malta. The Committee further received, and did not object to, two notifications for exemption from the arms embargo, under paragraph 13 (b) of resolution 2009 (2011), submitted by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). The Committee also received one post-delivery notification from the Kingdom of the Netherlands regarding a previously approved exemption request. The consideration of four additional requests, submitted by Libya under paragraph 8 of resolution 2174 (2014), is ongoing. The Committee is also considering a guidance request from UNSMIL related to the arms embargo.

With regard to the assets freeze, the Committee provided guidance to Lebanon about the implementation of the relevant provisions. With respect to the travel ban, the Committee approved one travel ban exemption request pursuant to paragraph 16 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011) for Ms. Aisha Al-Qadhafi. The Committee further approved one travel ban exemption extension for Mr. Sayyid Mohammed Qadhaf Al-Dam. The Committee also received preliminary information from the Panel about a possible case of non-compliance with the travel ban by a designated individual, who reportedly travelled from Libya to Egypt through Tunisia.

During the reporting period, the Committee also responded to a prior communication from Libya regarding attempts to undertake illicit exports of petroleum from Libya. With respect to the 1970 sanctions list, the Committee sought additional identifying information from Libya regarding one designated individual.

During the reporting period, the Committee received one implementation report from the Kingdom of Morocco, pursuant to paragraph 12 of resolution 2441 (2018). While recalling that the primary responsibility for implementing the provisions of the sanctions regime rests with member States, let me reassure the Council that the Committee is committed to facilitating the implementation of such measures.

Finally, I would like to recall my intention to work proactively towards organizing a visit of the Committee to all agreed areas of Libya, as mentioned in the Committee's 2018 annual report (S/2018/1176).

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Schulz for his briefing.

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

**Mr. Esono Mbengono** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), for his comprehensive briefing on the situation on the ground and the work conducted by UNSMIL to address the crisis. We admire his commitment to the complex work of implementing the United Nations action plan and encourage him to pursue his efforts. We wish him every success in that endeavour and assure him that he has my delegation's full support.

We also thank Ambassador Schulz, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, for his briefing today.

Before I begin my statement proper, let me offer our warm and full support to the people and the Government of Libya in their current situation. As a brotherly country, we hope that, with the help of the African Union, the United Nations and the entire international community, we will soon be able to find a solution that restores peace to the Libyan people.

The crisis in Libya continues to raise serious concerns in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and throughout the continent, as reiterated at the thirty-second summit of the African Union, held in February. We appreciate the fact that the situation in Libya remains unchanged with respect to political instability and uncertainty, a protracted fragile security and humanitarian situation, cases of oil and weapons smuggling, along with the movement of foreign fighters across porous borders. The crisis has had serious consequences not only at the national level but throughout the region. It has an impact on other conflicts in Africa, which underscores the urgent need for a stable and lasting political solution in Libya that puts an end to the long transition process, on the basis of a political agreement that guarantees the rule of law and unified State institutions.

After eight years of a conflict that will end only through political solutions — various measures have already been taken to resolve the situation although the majority have been unsuccessful — perhaps it is time to reflect and adopt a different approach. That is why we welcome the initiative taken by African Union Heads of State at the aforementioned thirty-second summit, held in February. It is the African continent's duty to take the lead and join forces with the United Nations to reach a definitive solution to the crisis in Libya through negotiations that will allow presidential and legislative elections to be held at the end of this year and an inclusive national conference for peace and reconciliation to be held during the first half of July this year.

In addition, we welcome the visit of Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Ambassador Smaïl Chergui, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, whose outcome is expected to be significant in achieving a firm agreement aimed at improving the political situation in Libya. We also eagerly await the holding of the national conference, under the auspices of UNSMIL, which we hope will allow us to begin a process that will end with reconciliation as the basis for progress towards a free, peaceful, unified, stable and prosperous Libya.

In conclusion, we remain concerned about humanitarian and human rights issues. We hope that, sooner rather than later, a solution can be found for the current situation.

**Ms. Sabelo** (South Africa): My delegation joins others in thanking you, Sir, for convening today's meeting. Similarly, we thank Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), as well as Ambassador Juergen Schulz of Germany, for their comprehensive briefings.

South Africa remains concerned about the prevailing security situation in Libya, which continues to gravely affect peace and security efforts in the region. However, we are encouraged by the positive steps taken by the Government of National Accord to restore the rule of law in Libya and by the subsequent adoption of the security plan for greater Tripoli. In our view, that will contribute to improving the security situation in Tripoli and, in the long term, create an environment conducive to elections to take place.

We particularly urge the parties to commit fully to the ceasefire agreement reached in September 2018, avoid any further escalation of violence and give peace a chance.

South Africa fully supports the resolve of UNSMIL to address the conflict in Libya and is also encouraged by the international support for the implementation of the United Nations action plan, which would facilitate a national conference for reconciliation. We also welcome the positive role being played by the Libya quartet and urge neighbouring countries to keep pushing for a negotiated settlement in Libya. We support the ongoing efforts made by the African Union (AU) through its Peace and Security Council and the AU Ad Hoc High-level Committee on Libya, under the leadership of President Sassou Nguesso. In that regard, we look forward to a successful outcome of the Committee meeting scheduled for 5 and 6 April in Brazzaville. Additionally, we welcome the commitment of the AU representatives for Libya as they continue to engage with the main stakeholders in the country to find a peaceful resolution.

On the humanitarian situation, we remain deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in Libya. However, we welcome all the contributions that have already been made towards the Stabilization Facility for Libya and call for the additional funding needed for the Libya humanitarian response plan for 2019.

South Africa also welcomes the work of the Women's Empowerment and Support Unit of the Presidency Council to improve gender equality. We as a country have experienced positive results in terms of women participating in the peace process and therefore view this progressive development as an imperative to advance peace and security in Libya.

We wish to encourage the parties to the conflict to find common ground and to reach agreement on the outstanding constitutional amendments. This process is critical to ensuring that political agreement can be successfully implemented and that elections can be held during the agreed period, and to ultimately putting an end to the conflict and granting the wishes of the Libyan people.

On sanctions, South Africa reiterates its support for the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and we thank the Chair for his report. We are convinced that a strong message should be sent to all

individuals who are hampering the progress of the political process in Libya. We believe, therefore, that the strict implementation of the measures adopted by the Security Council is crucial to dissuading the parties involved. At the same time, South Africa believes that sanctions should not be an end in and of themselves but, rather, serve as a tool to create stability and build an environment that is conducive to finding political agreement for a lasting and durable peace.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Libya.

**Mr. Elmajerbi** (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the Franco-German co-presidency of the Council's work this month and to wish you every success. I also thank Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing on the activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). I thank as well Ambassador Juergen Schulz, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, for his briefing on the work and the activities of the Committee.

My delegation appreciates all the efforts undertaken by Mr. Salamé and certain sisterly and friendly countries to urge stakeholders with influence in Libya to participate in a political peaceful dialogue that is free from violence. In that regard, I note the commitment of the Government of National Accord to the democratic process, whose aim is to establish the unification of State institutions and to pave the way towards a civil, democratic and modern State and ensure that there is separation of powers.

The President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord met recently with Libyan stakeholders to discuss ways of extricating the country from the current crisis as well as to propose consensual solutions that could be built upon during the inclusive National Conference. In that regard, I wish to stress that the solution is not owned by one stakeholder; all Libyan stakeholders must be involved in order to achieve the desired stability and hold presidential and parliamentary elections by the end of the year on a solid constitutional basis.

The Libyan people have pinned their hopes on the inclusive national conference, overseen by the United Nations, to break the impasse that has marred the political process in Libya and to put an end to the

power struggle among the various Libyan stakeholders, who must stop ignoring the sacrifices made by the Libyans in order to establish a State that places the supreme interest of its citizens at its very heart and rejects policies of exclusion. These differences have had a negative, even destructive impact on the process of achieving stability and peace in Libya.

Those stakeholders are striving to advance their parochial interests, forgetting the sacrifices made by the Libyan people, who are seeking to live in peace in a civil and democratic State, like other peoples of the world who enjoy progress and prosperity. Those stakeholders have for years been presenting pretexts that can be interpreted only as attempts to maintain the status quo, under which fear and terrorism reign. This is undermining efforts to achieve national reconciliation and build the State so long anticipated by the Libyan people. We believe that free, fair and inclusive elections are the only way to emerge from the crisis. Those who are trying to undermine the efforts under way must understand that power is not a reward but a national mission subject to accountability. Those in power must fight corruption and make tireless efforts to bring about security, stability and prosperity in the country.

The Government of National Accord has been making tremendous efforts to bring about economic stability and security, but it is facing myriad difficulties and challenges imposed by certain stakeholders in Libya that do not hesitate to undermine those efforts. They have launched media campaigns in order not to ease the suffering of citizens but to create chaos, forgetting that the Government of National Accord is the Government of all the Libyan people alike and that it aspires to reach a consensus that would lift the country out of the crisis.

Despite all these challenges, my country's Government has initiated economic and financial

reforms that have yielded positive results. At the security level, despite the difficult circumstances plaguing the country, the Government is trying to make changes through programmes carried out by the Ministry of the Interior aimed at unifying and strengthening security institutions throughout the country in order for them to be able to discharge their duties in a professional manner.

The Libyan Government has consistently supported all efforts undertaken by the Libyan stakeholders to restore stability and combat terrorist groups. In that regard, we note the importance of cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders throughout the country in order to enable the State to provide the services necessary to ensure security and to put an end to practices of extortion, which are detrimental to vital facilities and have cost the national economy hundreds of millions of dollars.

In conclusion, my country's delegation calls on members of the international community and the Security Council to set aside their differences, take advantage of the current circumstances in Libya and support the strenuous efforts made by Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as well as the Libyan stakeholders, through the holding of an inclusive national conference aimed at reaching an agreement that would end intra-Libyan discord and begin a new phase of total peace throughout Libya.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

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

*The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.*