



Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

8855th meeting

Friday, 10 September 2021, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Kelly	(Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	China	Mr. Dai Bing
	Estonia	Mr. Lipand
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	India	Mr. Tirumurti
	Kenya	Mr. Kiboino
	Mexico	Mr. Ríos Sánchez
	Niger	Mr. Aougi
	Norway	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ms. DeShong
	Tunisia	Mr. Ladeb
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Pham

Agenda

The situation in Libya

Letter dated 6 August 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/716)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2021/752)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

Letter dated 6 August 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/716)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2021/752)

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: Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya; and Ms. Asma Khalifa, co-founder of Tamazight Women's Movement and the Khalifa Ihler Institute.

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/2021/716, which contains the text of a letter dated 6 August 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, and document S/2021/752, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

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

I give the floor to Mr. Kubiš.

Mr. Kubiš: Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, and Ireland on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month.

We are just over 100 days from 24 December, the date of the parliamentary and presidential elections agreed by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum in its road map and mandated by the Security Council in its

resolution 2570 (2021). During my recent visit to Libya, I met with or talked to major political actors and some civil-society groups and representatives and urged them to secure an agreement aimed at protecting the electoral path and managing the post-electoral situation. I would like to stress that the holding of elections in Libya, even in a less-than-ideal situation and with all the imperfections, challenges and risks, is much more desirable than no elections at all, which could only foster division, instability and conflict. As I heard from my interlocutors, that is the opinion of the majority of Libyans, notwithstanding all their valid concerns and fears as well as some contradictions and differences on the way forward.

In the meantime, the House of Representatives is in the process of finalizing the electoral law for parliamentary elections. I was informed by the President of the House of Representatives, Mr. Agila Saleh, that the presidential electoral law had already been adopted as law No. 1/2021, while the parliamentary elections can be organized on the basis of the existing law, with possible amendments that could be considered and approved within the coming two weeks.

The High National Elections Commission has also already received the presidential election law. The High Council of State complained that the law was adopted without consulting the High Council of State. As stated by the Chair of the High National Elections Commission at his press conference on 17 August, the High National Elections Commission was ready to start implementation upon receipt of the electoral legislation. The timeline for implementation would be reconsidered once the parameters defined in the electoral laws were known. At the press conference, the Chair stated that the High National Elections Commission would do everything possible to meet the 24 December timeline. Therefore, it is for the High National Elections Commission to establish a clear electoral calendar to lead the country to elections, with the international community's support for the efforts of the Government of National Unity and all respective authorities and institutions, and to deliver, to the extent possible, free, fair, inclusive and credible elections, under demanding and challenging conditions and constraints.

The international community could help create conditions that are more conducive for the holding of elections by facilitating the start of a gradual withdrawal of foreign elements from Libya without delay. To help ensure the integrity and credibility

of the electoral process and the acceptability of the results, international and domestic observation of the whole process is critical. I urge all Member States and regional organizations to send observation teams, in coordination with Libyan authorities and institutions, notably the High National Elections Commission and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, when the time comes.

The Presidency Council has become active in proposing a political dialogue to secure a smooth and peaceful political transition, as well as in considering ways to facilitate the holding of parliamentary and presidential elections on 24 December.

Finally, I welcome the action taken by the Government of National Unity to facilitate preparations for the holding of elections, especially providing adequate funding for the High National Elections Commission as well as for the various security preparations that are being undertaken, notably by the Ministry of Interior. The Government held a conference on 17 August, detailing the preparations so far, including the unveiling of an elaborate security plan for securing the elections.

Since mid-August, there have been numerous calls by the Parliament to question the Government of National Unity for the lack of performance, and even calls for a vote of no-confidence against the Government in the Parliament, as well as in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum. While firmly acknowledging the right of the Parliament to exercise its oversight functions, I have cautioned that attempts to change the interim executive so close to the date scheduled for elections only create more uncertainty about the elections and problems in preparing and securing the elections. It is the elections that will give Libyans an opportunity to validate their Government, presidency and Parliament. The Parliament held a session with Prime Minister Dbeibah and a number of Ministers on 8 September.

Elections are not just a moral or political commitment now. They are a political and security necessity to ensure that the positive developments achieved in Libya since October 2020 continue and that Libyans will move beyond the state of paralysing perpetual crisis and conflict and perennial transition to complete the political process and enter the phase of building together sustainable security, stability, unity and development. The people of Libya must have the opportunity to express their will to freely elect their representatives and give them firm popular legitimacy.

For many, aborting the drive for elections will be a signal that violence is the only path to power in the country. That cannot be allowed.

The international community must be firm in its support for elections and, at the same time, be sensitive to ideas and ways presented by the Libyans on how to conduct and safeguard the elections. A mixture of principled firmness and pragmatic engagement, based on Libyan solutions accepted by the majority, is needed.

I welcome the progress made so far by the High National Elections Commission on the preparations for the holding of national elections in December. I commend the Chair of the High National Elections Commission for the Commission's diligent efforts to plan and prepare for the conduct of elections in December. During the past two months, the High National Elections Commission managed to update its voter registry for in-country voting and launch a voter registration update for eligible Libyan voters residing outside of the country, which will continue until mid-September.

More than half a million new voters have recently registered to participate in the upcoming elections, bringing the total number of registered voters to more than 2.8 million, 40 per cent of whom are women. Most of the newly registered are under 30 — a clear testament to the young generation's eagerness to take part in determining the fate of their country through a democratic process. Libyan authorities and leaders must not let them down. The United Nations has supported the efforts of the High National Elections Commission and other Libyan actors in strengthening women's participation in the elections.

The country and its people need full clarity that elections will take place on 24 December. The existing uncertainty creates fertile ground for spoilers and sceptics to manipulate the situation against the political transition, thereby fuelling existing tensions in relations between diverse Libyan institutions and authorities. Public exchanges, confrontational statements and steps add to the tensions and fears that the conflict-riddled relationship, without a clear road map towards presidential and parliamentary elections, will further deteriorate, with political and security implications that work against the peace, stability and unity of Libya.

I am dismayed to report that the political stalemate experienced over this period is already casting a shadow over the security scene. Several western coastal

areas continue to be a hotspot of sporadic conflict, not least due to illegal activities and smuggling networks. Equally disconcerting, serious fighting among various units belonging to the security forces, under nominal control of the authorities, erupted in Tripoli on 3 September, and also later, in particular for control of some institutions. Both the Presidency Council and the Prime Minister acted quickly to quell the fighting, and they are to be commended. However, more work needs to be done for strategic deconflicting and to ensure control of the various armed units and militias.

The evidently fragile security situation needs further attention from the Government and the Presidency Council, in coordination with the Libyan National Army general command, to create the conditions for holding elections in a secure environment and to provide stability. I also reiterate the need for the Libyan authorities and institutions to work jointly, including with the 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC), to tackle all those issues and begin a series of targeted disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform programmes.

As a signal of Libyan ownership towards stability and unity in Libya, Foreign Minister El Mangoush has proposed the holding of a stabilization conference, with critical external partners of Libya, as a platform to implement the decisions of the Berlin Conferences on Libya, notably to support the withdrawal of mercenaries, foreign fighters and foreign forces, in a gradual, measured, balanced and modular way. The conference will also serve as a platform to prepare DDR and security sector reform and the unification of military institutions, all with international assistance, support and facilitation. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) is supporting that fully Libyan-owned and -led initiative, which nevertheless requires thorough preparations and substantive and consistent coordination and integration with the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, the Presidency Council and all respective institutions and authorities.

The ceasefire continues to hold, and there has been some progress on the implementation of some elements of the ceasefire agreement. The persistent efforts of the 5+5 JMC led to the reopening of the Misrata-Sirte coastal road, with the support of UNSMIL and the United Nations Mine Action Service. The people of Libya warmly welcomed that development, which brings about clear benefits for all Libyans.

Nevertheless, the continued presence of mercenaries, foreign fighters and foreign forces remains a cause of grave concern for Libya and the international community, including countries of the region, notably Libya's neighbours. In the ministerial meeting in Algeria held from 30 to 31 August, the timely and needed initiative of our Algerian partners, in cooperation with other countries and organizations of the region, including the United Nations, brought together Libya with its neighbouring countries.

Participants in the meeting stressed the need to continue efforts aimed at unifying State institutions and strengthening governance in Libya, achieving reconciliation and working towards the withdrawal of mercenaries, foreign fighters and foreign forces. Participants also emphasized that the withdrawal of mercenaries, foreign fighters and foreign forces needed to be handled in a transparent and organized manner and in coordination with neighbouring countries in order to prevent it from having a destabilizing impact on them and to foster cooperation in security, social and economic areas, including the joint management of the movement of people and goods across borders.

The ministers also discussed ways and means to enable neighbouring countries to effectively support the ongoing efforts under the auspices of the United Nations and requested their involvement in all regional and international meetings related to the crisis in Libya.

It is important that Libya and its neighbouring countries manage and control their borders. Positive developments in that regard include bilateral agreements currently being negotiated between Egypt and the Niger with Libya on the management of migration flows. At the same time, efforts to sign and operationalize bilateral and multilateral agreements to promote security and cross-border cooperation between countries sharing a common border with Libya are essential in maintaining regional security, fostering economic development and building trust for closer cooperation among themselves and with Libya. The border management Quartet agreement among Libya, the Sudan, Chad and the Niger is a positive example of such multilateral cooperation in securing common borders and tackling transnational crime, violent extremism and the activities of armed groups. In a recent visit, I was encouraged to hear about promising discussions between the Presidency Council and a number of countries of the region.

When in Libya, I am constantly reminded that Libyans need the help of the international community in order to better manage the security file. That has to start with the upholding of the Berlin Conference commitments and by heeding the calls and obligations set forth in numerous Security Council resolutions by halting violations of the arms embargo and the Libyan ceasefire agreement. In order to support Libyan authorities in making progress towards the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement, preparations continue to deploy the first group of 10 United Nations ceasefire monitors and support staff in the coming days.

On reconciliation, I highlight that on 5 and 6 September, respectively, Mr. Saadi Al-Qadhafi, along with several officials of the former regime, were released after seven or more years in prison. They were acquitted of the charges against them by a Libyan court in 2019. As noted by the Presidency Council, the Government of National Unity and UNSMIL, those releases represent a positive development that will contribute to national reconciliation.

Equally important, under the auspices of the JMC, the unilateral release of 17 prisoners from Misrata by the Libyan Arab Armed Forces positively contributes to confidence-building and reconciliation. That was followed by another unilateral release on 5 September of another eight detainees. The Mission welcomes those moves and reiterates its goal of the release of all unlawfully held detainees as part of a larger reconciliation policy. I was pleased to hear that the active engagement of the Presidency Council, in cooperation with the Minister of Justice, in order to ensure the release of all unlawfully held detainees, will continue and be accelerated. I call on the Libyan authorities to expedite their release.

I regret to note that violations of human rights and international humanitarian law nevertheless continue. Armed groups across the country and some of the armed units operating nominally under the State continue to be involved in serious human rights violations, including torture, killings, sexual violence, enforced disappearances and unlawful deprivation of liberty.

By August, there were 7,000 migrants and refugees arbitrarily held in official detention centres across the country. Many migrants were held in detention in inhumane conditions and subjected to abuses, including those committed by agents of agencies operating

under the authority of the State. I was encouraged to hear the commitment of the Ministry of the Interior to investigate and punish such criminal behaviour. I again urge Member States to revisit their policies, stop supporting operations to return individuals to Libya and work to protect the rights of refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers.

I am dismayed to report that all voluntary humanitarian evacuation, resettlement and return flights of migrants and refugees out of Libya were again suspended by the Minister of Interior's Directorate for Combating Illegal Migration. Those flights and departures, facilitated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, are necessary and urgent, with some 4,300 of the most vulnerable refugees and migrants awaiting departure. Considering the human and financial costs of those repeated suspensions, the IOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees have indicated that they are unable to resume such operations in the absence of a firm commitment of support from the Government of National Unity, with clear and predictable procedures in place that are jointly agreed and consistently implemented by all.

The members of the Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya (FFM) completed their first mission to Libya from 23 to 27 August 2021. The FFM had high-level engagement with Libyan governmental and judicial authorities regarding the situation of human rights in Libya. The Mission members considered their mission to have been a positive step in cooperation with Libya. Several focal points within the Government were appointed to respond directly to questions and inquiries from the Mission to facilitate its conduct of investigations, with full access to the country. That is a very positive development.

With regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the audit report on the Central Bank of Libya, the International Follow-up Committee economic working group met yesterday with the Central Bank's Governor and Vice-Governor. The meeting participants heard from the two branches of the Central Bank as to how they intended to implement the recommendations from the United Nations-facilitated financial audit review, which was transmitted to them on 8 July. Both Governors recognized the overriding need to unify the Bank and expressed their willingness to do so.

The healthy performance of the economy is essential for the country. I welcome the efforts made by the Prime Minister to ensure the continued smooth operations of the National Oil Corporation and stability in the oil sector, which is effectively the only source of wealth for all Libyans. Any attempts to close oil lines or disrupt the export of oil or disrupt the water system in Libya are unacceptable.

During a high-level World Bank mission in August, led by its Vice-President, ways to manage Libya's frozen assets were also discussed. Libya is interested in how to leverage the frozen assets, in cooperation with external partners, to manage them so as to achieve good returns on them.

Libya is at crossroads, where positive or negative outcomes are equally possible. With the elections, there is an opportunity for Libya to move gradually and convincingly onto a more stable, representative and civilian track. The international community also has a responsibility to support the positive developments in Libya and to stand firm against attempts at derailing those developments.

Not holding the elections could gravely deteriorate the situation in the country and could lead to division and conflict. I urge all Libyan actors to join forces and ensure inclusive, free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections, which are to be seen as the essential step in further stabilizing a uniting Libya.

The President: I think Mr. Kubiš for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Tirumurti.

Mr. Tirumurti (India): 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 22 May to 10 September, during which time the Committee met once in informal consultations and conducted additional work via the silence procedure.

At the informal consultations held on 25 June, the Committee heard a briefing by the Panel of Experts on its work programme under resolution 2571 (2021). The presentation was followed by an interactive discussion between Committee members and the Panel. In relation to the Panel's final report under the previous mandate (see S/2021/229), the Committee continued to implement the remaining agreed follow-up actions. Therefore, the Committee dispatched letters to Germany and the

Netherlands on aspects of the assets freeze in relation to the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA), a listed entity, and the Committee wrote to Jordan and Libya on a separate matter related to the same entity. The Committee received responses from Jordan and Libya.

With regard to the arms embargo, the Committee approved a request for exemption under paragraph 9 (c) of resolution 1970 (2011), submitted by the Netherlands. The Committee also conveyed to Libya and Malta its determination that the transfer of a certain type of item to Libya fell under the exception to the arms embargo set out in paragraph 10 of resolution 2095 (2013), and hence no approval by the Committee was required. In view of the establishment of the new Government of National Unity, the Committee dispatched a letter to Libya requesting updated information on some aspects of arms embargo implementation. The Committee received a notification from Egypt concerning the transfer of arms and ammunition for diplomatic protection. During the reporting period, the Committee also received seven vessel inspection reports, and three attempted inspection reports, from the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI, as well as a letter from the flag State of an inspected vessel.

With regard to the assets freeze, the Committee dispatched a letter seeking additional information from Switzerland on an exemption notification submitted pursuant to paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011). The Committee also exchanged letters with Bahrain and the Netherlands on assets freeze-related matters. The Committee also received four letters from Libya transmitting communications from the LIA.

With regard to the travel ban measure, the Committee approved a six-month extension to an exemption request, granted previously for humanitarian purposes, to three individuals on the Committee's list — Safia Farkash Al-Barassi, Aisha Al-Qadhafi and Mohammed Al-Qadhafi. The Committee received an exemption request for the travel of Mr. Saadi Al-Qadhafi, a fourth listed individual, the consideration of which is ongoing, as well as two letters from the Panel of Experts in that regard.

During the reporting period, the Committee received a guidance request from Turkey on the scope of claims provision set out in paragraph 7 of resolution 1973 (2011). The matter remains under the Committee's consideration.

The Committee also received a communication from the focal point for delisting established pursuant to resolution 1730 (2006), in connection with the delisting request of one individual inscribed on the sanctions list of the Committee. The focal point process is still ongoing.

Lastly, on general implementation matters, on 13 July the Committee dispatched a note verbale to all Member States in follow-up to paragraph 8 of resolution 2571 (2021), which calls upon all States to report to the Committee on the steps they take to implement effectively the travel ban and assets freeze measures in relation to all individuals on the Libya sanctions list. The Committee has since received two implementation reports, from Japan and from the Philippines.

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

The President: I thank Ambassador Tirumurti for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Khalifa.

Ms. Khalifa: I would like to thank the Irish delegation and presidency for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on Libya. I am a Libyan woman, an Amazigh and a human rights activist and researcher.

I am speaking to the Security Council today while millions of Libyans struggle with basic necessities of life. Not only is there not enough proper testing and monitoring of the coronavirus disease, but power cuts occur up to 18 hours a day, if not more, with temperatures in the vicinity of 40°C. The armed conflicts over the past decade have ravaged what little infrastructure existed. People are looking towards the elections in December, projected to take place in three months, for solutions. However, as of today there is no agreement about the legal and constitutional basis. There is uncertainty about the preparations and too many conflicting processes involving competing entities. People are therefore uncertain if the elections will even take place. There is an urgency for it to happen because Libyans are yearning for stability, but directing that yearning towards imminent ill-prepared elections without a firm democratic foundation and due process is dangerous.

If the elections do not happen, or if the results are disputed in a similar scenario to what we saw in 2014,

it would mean a more fractured society and a violent armed conflict that could destroy whatever is left of the country. A prerequisite for avoiding that is a solid, and currently missing, legal and constitutional foundation for the election. Such a legal foundation must be rooted in a real constitutional process that is truly inclusive of all the peoples of Libya, including full recognition and protection of the rights of Libya's indigenous peoples. Without that we are set up for failure, as an election would hinge on the protection of the future elected body from disputes and divisions that inevitably will lead to further violence.

The planned presidential election is at best a flawed attempt at instating democracy, at worst it leaves Libya to another despotic dictatorship. Without the foundation of strong and separate institutions, without dividing powers and ensuring checks and balances among the legislative, judicial and executive branches of Government, Libya is left to corruption and abuses of power that will be detrimental to human rights, peace and true democracy. The current constitutional basis, namely, the temporary Constitutional Declaration and what has been agreed upon by the process facilitated by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), is not conflict-sensitive and is already proving very divisive. The current legal documents are also based on the systematic exclusion and division of indigenous people in the electoral system, using a division of Libya into three regions that does not reflect the demographic realities, and that leads me to highlight another process that needs to happen in parallel with the constitutional process: reconciliation.

A truth and reconciliation process is greatly needed, and it has to be depoliticized, to allow for greater ownership and acceptance by the people of Libya. Support for efforts has to be given to Libyan-led initiatives, guided by conflict sensitivity and giving due consideration to inclusion of Libya's diverse ethnic groups. Accountability and justice are of the utmost importance for peace. For the future of reconciliation in Libya, the truth-seeking mission mandate should be extended and supported if it is to function properly, and it should reach to all parts of the country. This mission must take into account both recent and historic grievances.

UNSMIL's mandate must be more clearly defined, and its role must be effectively communicated. This role must be centred on mediating a brokered military unification, be set on a constitutional basis with a

broad range of respondents and involve a truth and reconciliation process based on international best practices. There is a current perception among Libyans that the Mission is being complicit in allowing corrupt political elites and spoilers to set the agenda for peace in Libya. This has to be checked to stop further disruptions and repair the damage that has been done to people's trust in the Mission. The best way to do this is to be more inclusive and to ensure that space is also given to the diverse groups representing civil and civilian society striving for a peaceful future for Libya.

All actors have repeatedly failed women in Libya over the past decade. Women are punished through exclusion for being non-violent actors in this conflict. There is a lack of political will to implement agreements and policies to integrate women meaningfully and properly across the various processes. Women are tokenized, and their work and visions for peace in Libya are not taken seriously. They have been disproportionately affected by the conflict. They make up half of the displaced population and lead more households owing to the loss of male family members and their livelihoods. Furthermore, women in Libya face the systematic violence of governmental bodies, which treats them as second-class citizens.

The space for civil society has been shrinking over the years — so much so that any work in relation to conflict and politics is life-threatening. Women human rights defenders and activists work every day in Libya at great risk not only for themselves but for their families and loved ones. The current road map put forward by UNSMIL has the question of human rights defenders and civil society activists as a pillar, but nothing has been done about it.

In five days, it will be the United Nations International Day of Democracy. I urge Council members to consider supporting Libya's democratic journey through support in bringing in local and international legal experts to define the electoral process and the constitutional basis so that it is linked to the current process; establishing an independent body to monitor, evaluate and ensure transparency and to hold the Government accountable to due democratic processes in order to minimize corruption and abuses of power; ensuring the withdrawal of foreign fighters, international militias and mercenaries, which is another key priority for efforts aimed at building stability in Libya; making the ceasefire monitoring mission under UNSMIL independent of UNSMIL,

ensuring that its mandate is made relevant to today's problems, rather than the problems that existed prior to its inception, and taking into account not only power vacuums but also indirect consequences and conflict-induced vulnerabilities; supporting accountability and justice for historic and current grievances through a truth and reconciliation process; and prioritizing the protection of civil society activists and human rights defenders, while ensuring broad representation, in all future programmes.

Libya's future might seem complicated to some and uncertain to others but there are some common sense and simple pillars that solutions should be built on: a legitimate Government connected to the people's desires, real security sector reform leading to the sector being free from foreign backed militias, and a truth and reconciliation process that centres on victims.

I thank the Security Council for its support as we strive towards a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future for my homeland.

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

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

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking Special Envoy Ján Kubiš, Ambassador Tirumurti and Ms. Asma Khalifa for briefing the Security Council today.

I would like to make four points. First, time is running out to agree a legal and constitutional basis for elections. We are at a critical point. There is clear demand from the Libyan people to participate in elections and have their voices heard. It is essential that those in authority who represent them reach an agreement on holding elections and that they commit to accepting the results of those elections. We welcome the efforts by the House of Representatives to find a solution to this issue and encourage further engagement to allow full agreement on and preparation for presidential and parliamentary elections on 24 December, as set out in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map endorsed by the Council in resolution 2570 (2021). The steps needed have not changed since the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map was agreed. But the task has become increasingly urgent. The United Kingdom will not hesitate to act against those who deliberately attempt to undermine the Libyan political process.

Secondly, the United Kingdom remains committed to championing women's full, equal and meaningful participation in Libya. In that spirit, we welcome Ms. Asma Khalifa's important contribution to today's discussion. As Asma said, women have been disproportionately affected by the conflict in Libya. Elections due in December offer an opportunity for the full and meaningful participation of women as voters, candidates and decision-makers in the political process.

Thirdly, I would like to welcome the opening of the coastal road last month and congratulate the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in securing this step towards building trust between east and west. There is much more to be done. It is essential now, just over a month from the anniversary of the signing of the 23 October ceasefire agreement, that there is a move from words to action. All foreign forces and mercenaries must withdraw from Libya without delay. We look forward to the initial deployment in the coming weeks of the United Nations ceasefire monitors in support of the Libyan Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism. The 5+5 Libyan Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism, supported by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), has the United Kingdom's full support in driving this process forward.

Finally, I would also like to welcome the independent strategic review of UNSMIL and thank Mr. Bathily and his team for all their work. The recommendations of the review must now be implemented so that UNSMIL is best placed to help facilitate the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process and build on the gains achieved by Mr. Ján Kubiš and his team.

Libya is at a critical point. The actions needed to build a stable, prosperous and inclusive future for all Libyans are clear and also urgent. The next major milestone is also clear: presidential and parliamentary elections on 24 December. The United Kingdom looks forward to working with international partners, led by UNSMIL, to support Libya over the months ahead.

Mr. Aougi (Niger) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ján Kubiš and Ambassador Tirumurti for their briefings. I also thank Ms. Asma Khalifa for her briefing.

The Niger commends the tireless efforts of United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) in assisting the Libyan authorities to implement the road map adopted by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum for the transition under way in Libya. We support it and welcome the recommendations contained in its

independent strategic review, which will undoubtedly enable it to be more effective and better in tune with the current environment.

The Niger reaffirms its steadfast commitment to working for a political solution to the Libyan crisis and fully play its role in helping the brotherly Libyan people recover from the effects of a decade of conflict, which has scarred their country. My delegation condemns the persistence of highly objectionable acts of foreign interference, violations of the arms embargo and the relevant Security Council resolutions and breaches of the commitments made at both Berlin Conferences by some of the actors involved in the war in Libya.

It is clear that the stabilization of Libya will require the holding of credible, inclusive and transparent elections on 24 December. We commend the recent efforts of the House of Representatives to establish the legal framework for holding the elections. In that regard, the stakeholders shoulder the historic responsibility to urgently agree on the effective implementation of the priority measures contained in the road map. The Niger commends the 6 September launch of the first stages of the national reconciliation process. We further welcome the announcement that the African Union will take steps to prepare the ground for holding an inter-Libyan national reconciliation conference in cooperation with neighbouring countries.

With regard to the security situation, the 5+5 Joint Military Commission has made tangible progress. The Niger welcomes the recent reopening of the coastal road linking the eastern and western parts of Libya. We encourage pursuing the implementation of the ceasefire agreements. The violent clashes in Tripoli last week are a reminder that even progress and gains made with regard to the cessation of hostilities can be reversed if we are not vigilant.

It is therefore imperative that we work as a matter of urgency on unifying the military institutions. That is all the more crucial given the fact that the areas in closest proximity to Libya continue to suffer the effects of insecurity and threats posed to their territorial integrity as a result of the activities of armed groups of every stripe. My delegation welcomes the establishment of a cross-border cooperation framework among Chad, the Niger, Libya and the Sudan to jointly monitor, secure and develop border areas. In that regard, we call on the Nexus Working Group to support the life-saving efforts of our countries.

Concerning the humanitarian situation, although we welcome its improvement in general since the establishment of the ceasefire, it nevertheless remains worrisome. Despite recent efforts by the Government, the provision of basic social services continues falls short of humanitarian needs in the country. One cannot address the humanitarian issue without mentioning the deplorable and inhumane living conditions of migrants and refugees in Libya. It is high time to take the necessary measures to end the abuse and violations to which they are continuously subjected.

The Niger recalls that, given the current situation, the repatriation and disembarkation of migrants rescued at sea off the coast of Libya violates international humanitarian law. Those vulnerable people, who have been rescued at sea, are in need of protection and should not be returned to Libya to be subjected to arbitrary detention and other forms of abuse by their jailers, who are beyond State authority.

Mr. Ladeb (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL); the Permanent Representative of India, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya; and the representative of civil society in Libya for their briefings. Tunisia also welcomes the last two reports of the Secretary-General on the strategic review of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and developments in Libya (S/2021/716, annex and S/2021/752, respectively).

The presidential and legislative elections that Libya is preparing to hold this year will be a watershed along Libya's political track, as they will symbolize the beginning towards lasting democracy and the foundation for the rule of law and State institutions in Libya. In that regard, Tunisia expresses its satisfaction that its Libyan brethren have emphasized their commitment to holding the elections as scheduled on 24 December, in accordance with the road map adopted in Tunisia and called for in resolution 2570 (2021).

Tunisia encourages the continuing constructive dialogue and finalizing the constitutional and legislative arrangements that will ensure the Libyan people their right to practice democracy and establish their permanent institutions accompanied with freedom, transparency and equality.

Tunisia appreciates the efforts of UNSMIL within the framework of its mandate to bring the parties together and prepare the ground for holding the elections as scheduled, including facilitating the work of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum and its subsidiary bodies. We also reiterate the importance of the role of neighbouring countries and regional organizations in supporting Libyans to promote their national unity and complete the remaining national issues. In that context, we also value the outcome of the previous ministerial meeting of Libya's neighbouring countries, held in Algeria from 30 to 31 August.

We also welcome the constructive steps recently taken in the context of strengthening confidence-building measures, especially with regard to the reopening of the coastal road linking the eastern and western parts of Libya and the formation of a joint force to secure the water supply, among other things. Tunisia also stresses the importance of moving forward with such measures to further consolidate security and stability and create an environment leading to progress on the political track.

Maintaining the ceasefire is crucial to the success of the political process in Libya. Accordingly, Tunisia renews its call on all parties in Libya to maintain their commitment to the full implementation of the terms of the ceasefire agreement, including accelerating the departure of mercenaries and foreign fighters from Libya. Their withdrawal is a prerequisite for supporting stability, given that their presence poses a serious threat not only to Libya and its transition process but to the entire region.

In that regard, we stress the need for the withdrawal to take place in close coordination so as to safeguard neighbouring countries and the region from any repercussions that would impact their security and stability, including the possibility of it being exploited by terrorist organizations operating in the Sahel and Sahara region to further spread chaos and violence. Tunisia calls on regional and international actors, including UNSMIL, to support the Libyan authorities and the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in that regard. We also emphasize the need for all parties to commit to implementing the arms embargo imposed on Libya and to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the country without interfering in its internal affairs.

At the economic level, we welcome the continued efforts to unify Libyan institutions, as well as the efforts of the Government of National Unity to advance the Libyan economy and improve services for Libyans. We also reaffirm Tunisia's commitment, under the directives of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Kaïs Saïed, to continue providing all forms of support to sisterly Libya. We are determined to further strengthen bilateral cooperation for the sake of the shared future, security, stability and development of both countries.

In conclusion, we once again express Tunisia's readiness to continue actively and constructively engaging in United Nations and international efforts to ensure security and stability in Libya, restore its status as an effective regional Power and promote peace and security in the region.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Special Envoy Ján Kubiš, the Indian chairmanship of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, and Ms. Asma Khalifa for their briefings.

Peace is within reach in Libya. We must remain mobilized to ensure that the window of opportunity does not close.

First and foremost, it is imperative that Libyan actors respect the electoral deadlines that they have set for themselves. In accordance with the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map, endorsed by the Berlin II Conference, and resolution 2570 (2021), parliamentary and presidential elections must be held on 24 December. The expectations of civil society are high. More than 2.8 million Libyans, 43 per cent of whom are women, have already registered to vote. Any challenge posed to that deadline could threaten the political transition process and the relative calm that Libya has enjoyed in recent months.

France calls on all Libyan leaders to assume their responsibilities to complete that process in a timely manner and to rise to the challenges ahead. France will support any Libyan decision with the backing of the United Nations to clarify the legal basis for the holding of elections.

In that connection, France welcomes the adoption by the House of Representatives of the electoral law for the presidential election and its transmission to the High National Elections Commission. We encourage

the House of Representatives to transmit the electoral law for the parliamentary election to the High National Electoral Commission without delay. That is essential for the Commission to be able to quickly launch the organization of the two elections in accordance with the expectations of the Security Council and the Libyan people.

The second priority is to make rapid progress in the implementation of the 23 October 2020 ceasefire agreement. France welcomed the announcement by the 5+5 Joint Military Commission of the reopening of the Sirte-Misrata coastal road in late July. That is an essential step forward in the implementation of the ceasefire agreement, as it allows for the free movement of thousands of Libyans and facilitates the delivery of aid. It is also a symbolic measure that underlines the determination of the armed forces to act together and, eventually, to reunite. Finally, it is proof of the effectiveness of the 5+5 Commission on security issues.

Those efforts must now be intensified so that all the provisions of the ceasefire agreement endorsed by resolution 2570 (2021) be implemented. The clashes between militias in recent weeks in Tripolitania serve to remind us of how fragile the situation on the ground remains. The deployment of observers from the United Nations Support Mission in Libya will be an essential step in ensuring the implementation of the ceasefire. We hope that they can be deployed on the ground and call for the establishment of a monitoring mechanism.

The withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries is another essential condition for restoring a stable, united and sovereign Libya. France fully supports the work of the 5+5 Commission, which will soon meet in Geneva to agree on a phased operational plan for the withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries, which should be implemented as soon as possible. A disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme must accompany that process so as to avoid jeopardizing the stability of the region and the Sahel.

Finally, the unification of Libya's economic and financial institutions must be achieved without further delay. A fair, equitable and transparent distribution of resources must be guaranteed for the benefit of the entire Libyan population. We reaffirm our commitment to the independence of the National Oil Corporation.

Only a stable and sovereign Libya will make it possible to put an end to the trafficking of migrants and the serious human rights violations to which they

continue to be exposed in Libya. The fight against impunity must continue. The Libyan authorities must cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court, as provided for in the relevant Council decisions.

France will continue to contribute, with its European partners, to the neutral and impartial implementation of the arms embargo decided by the Council through the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI. We will spare no effort in the coming months to accompany Libya on the path to peace. We call on the Council, as well as on regional and international actors, to work with us, the United Nations and Libyan actors.

Ms. Juul (Norway): I thank Special Envoy Kubiš for his briefing and Ms. Asma Khalifa for her insightful contributions. She has provided a powerful reminder of the significant ongoing work by Libyan women towards achieving reconciliation and sustainable solutions in Libya, as well as why women must participate fully, equally and meaningfully in the design and implementation of the ongoing political processes, including monitoring the ceasefire agreement.

Let me also highlight the conclusions from the independent strategic review. Such concrete recommendations are valuable and provide helpful input to the current process of renewing the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) mandate. Norway fully supports the recommendations and their implementation through the UNSMIL mandate renewal.

As expressed clearly by the Security Council, the presidential and parliamentary elections should be held as planned on 24 December this year. That is not only the expectation of the international community, but also, as we have heard, of the Libyan people themselves. Free, fair, and inclusive elections are essential for Libya to move forward and to avoid further destabilization of Libya as a whole.

We welcome the House of Representatives' adoption of the presidential electoral law and urge that the framework for the parliamentary elections be finalized as soon as possible. It is critical that the High National Election Commission be provided with the necessary legislation to continue its preparations for elections.

Much has been achieved, as illustrated by the ceasefire agreement in October 2020 and the formation of the Government of National Unity this year. It is critical now that those gains be preserved and that the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map of

November 2020 be implemented. We hope to see progress in the establishment of a ceasefire monitoring mechanism, including the deployment of ceasefire monitors as mandated in resolution 2570 (2021). Let me also reiterate the importance of all foreign forces and mercenaries leaving the country, as Libyans themselves have called for in the ceasefire agreement.

Finally, we are worried by the targeting and destruction of civilian objects, and in particular the lack of humanitarian access. As of Wednesday, there were only 23 active visas for the 180 international staff requiring access to the country. We urge the Libyan authorities to ensure full, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian workers and to improve the civic space in Libya.

Let me conclude by reiterating Norway's support for Special Envoy Kubiš and UNSMIL, especially in their efforts to support preparations for the Libyan elections to be held later this year.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ján Kubiš, for his briefing on the situation in Libya. We also thank the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, Ambassador Tirumurti, for his briefing on the work of that subsidiary body of the Council. We also listened carefully to Ms. Asma Khalifa.

We have been cautiously monitoring potential developments in the military and political situation in Libya. On the one hand, the situation in the former Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has improved remarkably as compared with the previous period. Thanks to the signing of an agreement on the cessation of hostilities in October last year, a general ceasefire has been maintained, which has made it possible to move forward on the political settlement track. The necessary conditions were created for the formation in February and March of joint transitional authorities. Libyans have begun gradually to overcome the mutual mistrust caused by the protracted conflict and to take joint steps to unify State structures and institutions.

At the same time, we cannot but be concerned at the fact that the implementation of the road map for the settlement endorsed by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum has begun to falter.

During the Forum meetings held in July and August, participants were not able to reach a consensus on the adoption of a legislative framework for organizing the national elections that are scheduled for December. At the moment, discussions continue within the framework of the Forum. We hope that the Libyans will be able to overcome the differences that have accumulated and to find common ground, because the future of the Libyan people is at stake.

It is regrettable to hear that some are already advocating postponement of the presidential and parliamentary elections or of their division into two stages. Such a development could nullify all the cumulative progress made in recent months.

We are convinced that the success of the future elections and the political process as a whole will directly depend, among other things, on the degree of inclusiveness, which implies the involvement of all the leading political forces of the country, representatives of all regions and the former authorities.

We note, on the military track, that the cessation of hostilities more than a year ago was a major achievement. However, further progress towards a comprehensive and final settlement of the armed conflict in Libya requires active efforts. The decisions taken within the framework of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, which plays an important role in unifying the country's armed forces and generally stabilizing the security situation, remain largely on paper. The full opening of the coastal route between the west and the east of the country is also awaiting final agreement.

Meanwhile, the parties are blaming each other for any failure to meet obligations. That precarious situation is directly related to the unresolved issue of the foreign military presence in Libya. We support an incremental and time-synchronized withdrawal of all non-Libyan armed groups and divisions. At the same time, it is important to maintain the current balance of power on the ground, thanks to which no new threat of a fresh cycle of confrontation has emerged. It is also important not to overlook the interests and experience of Libya's neighbours when it comes to the repatriation of foreign combatants.

We are convinced that there is no alternative to a comprehensive, peaceful settlement of the Libyan crisis under the auspices of the United Nations. We welcome the initiatives of Special Envoy Kubiš and Libya's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International

Cooperation of the State of Libya, Mrs. El Mangoush, aimed at stabilizing the security situation in the country.

We are ready to interact constructively with our international partners. We also believe the humanitarian initiative of the President of the Presidency Council, Mr. Mohamed Al-Menfi, to be important. That initiative involves launching a comprehensive national reconciliation project in the framework of which some concrete steps have already been taken to restore trust among Libyan forces. We trust that this initiative will make a significant contribution to Libyan reconciliation.

In conclusion, I would like to note that we continue to be concerned by the problem of illegal migration and the proliferation of weapons in Libya, which affects security in both the country itself and the Sahelo-Saharan region overall. We hope to see more effective inspection efforts off the coast of Libya, which should be carried out in strict observance of international law. At the same time, we would like to underscore that international restrictions should help the political process and the return of stability in Libya rather than harm it.

Work is currently under way to extend the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). We will be careful about revising the objectives and the structure of UNSMIL. We are convinced that the most important thing right now is to preserve all the progress made to date and the capacity of the Mission, especially during the pre-election stage, which is so important for the country. We believe that the United Nations should focus its efforts on this very track instead of spreading itself too thin.

Ms. DeShong (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Saint Vincent and the Grenadines thanks Special Envoy Ján Kubiš and Ms. Asma Khalifa for their thoughtful briefings. We also express appreciation to Ambassador Tirumurti, Chair of the Security Council Committee, established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for his forty-first periodic report and welcome the representative of Libya, Ambassador Taher Elsonni, to today's meeting.

Since our most recent meeting (see S/PV.8820) and the adoption of presidential statement S/PRST/2021/12, our sister nation, amid its many challenges, has made meaningful headway towards restoring peace and stability.

We maintain our unwavering support for the United Nations multitrack process in Libya, particularly the vital role of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) in facilitating the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process.

Likewise, we laud the very important work of the African Union, the League of Arab States, the European Union and the other international partners in advancing the political process and underscore the importance of respecting Libya's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

In approximately three months, Libya is expected, as we have heard, to hold critical national parliamentary and presidential elections, as set out in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map. We note the lingering impediments and welcome the efforts to finalize arrangements in the electoral legal framework. We also stress the urgency of clarifying the constitutional basis. We emphasize that elections are key components of representative democracies and essential to Libya's democratic transition.

Advances on the security front such as the creation of a new joint force, from both sides of the demarcation lines, comprising the 116 Battalion for Protection and Security and the Tarik ibn Ziyad Brigade, as well as the opening of the Misrata-Sirte coastal road, are indeed timely and welcomed.

We are pleased that the ceasefire agreement continues to hold but note the reported limited tangible progress in its implementation. We repeat our call for strict compliance, including the overdue and unconditional withdrawal of foreign fighters and mercenaries from Libya, as well as full adherence to the Security Council's arms embargo.

The withdrawal of foreign fighters and mercenaries must be conducted in a supervised and orderly manner so as to avoid grave ramifications for the Sahel and the wider region. It must also be accompanied by proper planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security-sector reform. We look forward to a properly coordinated and supervised approach, with neighbouring and influential States to assist in that regard.

Confidence-building measures, including the release of former officials, are positive and will augur well for the political process, national reconciliation, unity, peace and stability. The African Union's

supportive role in assisting with the comprehensive national reconciliation process would also be instrumental.

Libya's socioeconomic, security, humanitarian and human rights situations are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing and must be simultaneously addressed to achieve stability and development. My delegation remains concerned about the human rights situation, especially the challenges facing the groups made most vulnerable, specifically refugees and migrants, internally displaced persons, youth, women and girls. We reiterate our call for their full protection and safety, especially for those in detention centres, and repeat our persistent message that Libya remains an unsafe port of disembarkation for migrants and refugees. We also echo calls for the swift adoption of the draft law on combating violence against women and for the completion of the national action plan on women and peace and security.

Furthermore, the need to prioritize the unification of Libya's institutions cannot be overstated. We are satisfied with the completion of the international financial audit of the Central Bank of Libya. We believe that effort will serve to unite Libya's Central Bank and restore its integrity, which remains crucial to addressing socioeconomic difficulties and humanitarian challenges, now exacerbated by the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Of equal importance is the need to resolve the impasse on the budget in order to enable the Government to execute its duties, especially the delivery of basic services to the Libyan people.

Libya's existing realities demand the consolidated efforts of all Libyans. Standing together at this critical juncture will only redound to their benefit. The onus is on all Libyans to build on the positive momentum, forge a path forward, exhibit compromise and settle differences.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its solidarity with the Government and the people of Libya and will continue to work with the international community to assist with its restoration, stability and sustainable development.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Envoy Kubiš and Ambassador Tirumurti, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya,

and Permanent Representative of India, for their briefings. I also welcome the representative of Libya to today's meeting. In connection with the Secretary-General's report (S/2021/752), I would like to make several points.

At present, Libya's political process is at a critical stage, and Libya has started the process of national reconciliation. Various parties have held several rounds of consultations on the preparations for the general election. It is hoped that all parties will fully demonstrate political will, reach consensus on the electoral constitutional basis and electoral law as soon as possible, in accordance with the requirement of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map, as well as ensure that the general election will be held as scheduled and promote a comprehensive and inclusive political transition process. China supports the continued key role of the countries of the region, welcomes Algeria's convening of a meeting of Foreign Ministers of neighbouring countries and looks forward to injecting new impetus into Libya's political process.

Maintaining the ceasefire and achieving security and stability are the cornerstone of Libya's national reconstruction. With the promotion of all parties, especially the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, positive results have been achieved in deploying local ceasefire monitors and opening the coastal road. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) should deploy the ceasefire monitoring component as soon as possible and encourage regional organizations, such as the African Union (AU) and the League of Arab States, to actively participate.

The withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries is the core issue for security in Libya. Any plan to that end should ensure a balanced and orderly withdrawal, so as to avoid risks and challenges for domestic stability and guarantee the security of neighbouring countries. China encourages Libya to cooperate with neighbouring countries on border management; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, counter-terrorism and the prevention of illegal cross-border movement of armed elements and weapons, with the coordination of the AU and other regional organizations, so as to jointly safeguard regional security.

China attaches importance to the key role played by UNSMIL in ensuring peace and stability and supports the extension of its mandate. It is hoped that UNSMIL will fully respect Libya's sovereignty and the wishes

of the people, pursuant to the Council's mandate, support the Libyan-owned and -led political process and provide support for the preparation of general elections and national reconstruction. China has taken note of UNSMIL's strategic review report, submitted by the Secretary-General, and hopes that the UNSMIL adjustment plan will meet the needs on the ground and those of the political transition.

At present, the humanitarian situation in Libya is grim. The negative impact of the Security Council sanctions on civilians should be reduced. The Council should improve communication with the Libyan Government and explore the use of humanitarian exemptions and other means in order to use Libya's frozen assets for national reconstruction and to improve people's lives. We hope that the Sanctions Committee will earnestly pay attention to the Libyan Government's concern about the loss of frozen assets and come up with a solution as soon as possible.

Libya is in a crucial period of national reconstruction. The international community should actively lend a helping hand to Libya and provide more assistance and support for the country's economic development and pandemic response. China is ready to work with the rest of the international community to further contribute to lasting peace and development in Libya.

Mr. Tirumurti (India): At the outset, I would like to thank Special Envoy Ján Kubiš for his informative briefing. I also thank Ms. Asma Khalifa for her insights, and I welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya to this meeting.

There has been a sense of cautious optimism with regard to the situation in Libya over the past few months, especially since the signing of the ceasefire agreement on 23 October 2020. The Security Council witnessed and welcomed the political progress achieved, including the establishment of the Government of National Unity charged with the conduct of elections on 24 December 2021.

However, as we heard from the Special Envoy and noted from the Secretary-General's report (S/2021/752), despite the progress achieved, there are still causes for concern. The security situation remains fragile, the involvement of external forces in the internal affairs of Libya has negatively impacted progress on the political track, and terrorist forces have been raising their heads once again in Libya.

We are not far from December, when all the stakeholders in Libya agreed that elections should be held. As Libya embarks on its journey towards peace and stability, it is incumbent upon the international community, and the Security Council in particular, to continue to provide support to the country so that the political progress achieved does not whittle away. In that regard, I would like to make several suggestions.

First, elections need to be held as planned on 24 December 2021 in a free and fair manner. That point cannot be overemphasized, since the very essence of Libya's political progress hinges on that aspect. In order to achieve that, it is vital that the constitutional and legal basis for conducting elections be agreed upon early. We are happy to note the reports that the House of Representatives is in the progress of finalizing electoral law. We call upon all the parties concerned to work together to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution at the earliest date so that the elections can be held as scheduled. At the same time, we encourage the High National Elections Commission to continue to prepare for the upcoming elections.

Secondly, the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Libya needs to be safeguarded. The peace process must be fully Libyan-led and -owned, with no imposition or external interference. We also encourage all Libyan parties to continue to make concerted efforts towards the unification of all national institutions.

Thirdly, the provisions of the ceasefire agreement and successive Security Council resolutions need to be respected. Unfortunately, those provisions, in particular those related to the withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries, continue to be violated. It is equally alarming that the arms embargo continues to be blatantly violated, as repeatedly reported by the Panel of Experts on Libya. There needs to be a serious discussion within the Council on what further measures could be taken to ensure that its decisions on the withdrawal of foreign forces are implemented so that sustainable peace and stability prevails in Libya.

Fourthly, we must ensure that terrorist groups and affiliated entities are not allowed to operate unchallenged in Libya. The continued presence and activities of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Libya is of serious concern, as highlighted by the Secretary-General's recent report. This is a matter of grave concern due to the potential cascading effect it

could have throughout the Sahel region. It is unfortunate that the issue is not drawing the attention it deserves. The international community must speak in one voice against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Fifthly, we need to plan for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups and non-State armed actors. We appreciate the fact that the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) is prepared to render assistance to Libya in that process.

Sixthly, an inclusive and comprehensive national reconciliation process is the need of the hour. We hope that all the parties concerned will engage sincerely in that endeavour. We also urge the international community to support such a process.

We are working closely with other Council members on the renewal of the UNSMIL mandate. In that regard, we note the report of the independent strategic review of UNSMIL and its recommendations, which will, among other things, guide our thinking on the mandate.

In conclusion, India has traditionally enjoyed close and mutually beneficial bilateral ties with Libya. We remain committed to supporting Libya and the Libyan people in their endeavour to bring about lasting peace in the country.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I thank Special Envoy Kubiš for his briefing today and for his team's efforts to guide the Libyan people on the road to elections on 24 December. As well, I thank Ms. Asma Khalifa and Ambassador Tirumurti for their presentations. Today I would like to discuss three aspects of the situation in Libya: the threats to progress and free and fair elections, the need to address human rights violations, and the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).

First, we are deeply concerned by the outbreak of violence in Tripoli. That return to hostilities threatens the progress made since the 23 October ceasefire agreement. The people of Libya deserve a sovereign, stable and unified Libya with no foreign interference and a State that is capable of combating terrorism within its borders. That progress is critical for regional security. And it is necessary for the people of Libya. For that progress to happen, national elections must be held in December. Therefore, parties need urgently to agree on a constitutional and legal framework for elections. Fortunately, the Special Envoy's report indicates that

that work is progressing. We urge maximum efforts to consult and secure broad consensus.

The Libyan Political Dialogue Forum must resist polarization and cynical politicking. And the House of Representatives must adopt the necessary constitutional and legislative arrangements straight away. Unfortunately, the foreign forces and mercenaries who remain in Libya embolden those who obstruct progress towards free and fair elections. Those forces remain despite the ceasefire agreement, which was endorsed by the Security Council. And arms continue to flow into the country, despite a Council-imposed arms embargo.

It is time for the Security Council to live by its words. Council members must support the implementation of, and abide by, the ceasefire agreement and facilitate the withdrawal of all foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya without delay. Those who obstruct or undermine the successful completion of Libya's political transition may be subject to sanctions.

In the meantime, the Panel of Experts has worked diligently to expose violations of the sanctions regime. Its work shows that some Member States have imported weapons and armed personnel to Haftar-aligned forces, in violation of the arms embargo, and that others have done similarly for the Government of Libya and aligned forces. Those actions fuel conflict. They threaten stability. And they prolong the suffering of the Libyan people. It is time for them to end.

We also welcome the Panel's investigation into potential violations of the travel ban and assets freeze. That includes most recently their investigation into allegations that Saadi Al-Qadhafi departed Libya without any prior notification or exemption from the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya.

Secondly, the human rights violations and abuses committed by all parties in Libya are unacceptable. We are disturbed in particular by the reports of the arbitrary detention of politicians and Government officials, human rights defenders and migrants. The authorities must desist from arbitrary arrests and abide by Libya's international obligations. Everyone is guaranteed a fair trial. Detainees, including vulnerable migrants and refugees, cannot be treated inhumanely. Migrants and refugees are afforded protections under international humanitarian law; those protections must be enforced.

And the authorities must facilitate the swift and orderly closure of migrant detention facilities.

We are pleased that the Human Rights Council Fact-Finding Mission members were recently able to visit Tripoli. We hope that their important work in support of a durable political agreement can continue.

Thirdly, and finally, we commend the work of the United Kingdom in drafting the new draft resolution to renew UNSMIL's mandate. And we credit the work of Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily and his team to produce an independent strategic review of UNSMIL. We share its clear conclusion: the situation on the ground in Libya has changed since the UNSMIL mandate was last renewed. The October 2020 ceasefire agreement has created an opportunity for UNSMIL to engage directly with stakeholders on the ground in Libya to move the process forward.

We therefore support the review's recommendation that the Head of Mission relocate to Tripoli to intensify that engagement. Such engagement will be critical. We need progress towards a consensus framework for presidential and parliamentary elections on 24 December. We will continue to engage Council members with the goal of providing a mandate that empowers UNSMIL, which has a vitally important role in supporting those who act in the interests of Libya, including those who are working to implement the ceasefire and achieve peace and stability for all.

Mr. Ríos Sánchez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Special Representative Kubiš for his briefing on the fragile situation in Libya, and I acknowledge the hard work that he has done at the helm of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). I also would like to express appreciation for the briefings by Ambassador Tirumurti, as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, and of Ms. Asma Khalifa. I also recognize the presence of the representative of Libya.

Having listened to the briefers, it is crucial that Libyan political actors act responsibly, consolidate the achievements made in bringing about peace in the country and make progress in unifying State institutions.

In accordance with the road map of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, it is more urgent than ever that the legal basis for organizing the 24 December elections be adopted swiftly. The support of the

international community for the reconciliation process is also necessary, but always bearing in mind that it is solely up to Libyan citizens to decide on the future of their country.

In that context, I would like to draw the attention of the Security Council to three points.

First, Mexico believes that, given the upcoming date for the parliamentary and presidential elections, the efforts of UNSMIL should be focused on building bridges among the different political groups to achieve an inclusive, free and credible electoral process.

We welcome the progress made in the negotiation of the legal basis and the allocation of a budget to organize the elections, while we call on the 5+5 Joint Military Commission to agree on a security operation that allows for the mobilization of voters throughout Libyan territory. In that regard, Mexico calls for the timely deployment of the ceasefire monitoring mechanism, including the United Nations component authorized by the Security Council. Similarly, the widespread availability of weapons and the presence of foreign fighters and mercenaries pose a clear risk to the electoral process. With regard to the latter, we insist once again on their prompt and coordinated departure from Libya. The Security Council should provide full support to the Libyan authorities through UNSMIL to fully meet the objectives agreed in Tunis, including the equal, full and meaningful participation of women in the political process, in conditions of security.

Secondly, Mexico recognizes that, thanks to the ceasefire agreement, humanitarian needs have been reduced. We highlight, for example, that the number of internally displaced persons was reduced by approximately 180,000 people from November 2020 to July 2021. This is undoubtedly one of the most important dividends of the peace process. However, half a million people in vulnerable situations still depend on the work of humanitarian organizations to be able to feed themselves or have access to housing, drinking water or health services, which are particularly necessary in the context of the coronavirus disease pandemic.

We therefore reiterate our call to the Libyan authorities to facilitate the operations of humanitarian actors. Mexico expresses its concern, in particular, about the difficulties international non-governmental organizations have recently faced in obtaining the necessary visas for their personnel.

In addition, Mexico renews its request to UNSMIL for the rapid deployment of protection advisers for women and children. There is an urgent need to strengthen the Mission's capacity to address the needs of these two particularly vulnerable groups. The deployment of advisers is part of the recommendations emanating from the independent strategic review of the Mission that my country supports and considers relevant.

Thirdly, I wish to emphasize the urgency of providing an effective response to the situation of migrants. It is unacceptable that year after year there are repeated images of shipwrecks and reports of such tragedies as the explosion that occurred at the Abu Rashada detention centre in the face of the international community's inaction. Mexico calls on the countries of origin and destination to coordinate a strategy with the Libyan authorities that addresses the structural causes of the migratory phenomenon and guarantees the protection of the rights of migrants.

For all the foregoing reasons, I would conclude by affirming the importance of the renewal of UNSMIL's mandate and the constructive participation of my delegation in the corresponding negotiations.

Mr. Pham (Viet Nam): I think Special Envoy Kubiš and Ambassador Tirumurti for their comprehensive briefings. I also thank Ms. Asma Khalifa for her briefing. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya to today's meeting.

Viet Nam continues to closely follow the developments in Libya. We share the concerns of other Security Council members with regard to the limited progress on the political and security tracks in the past months. It is imperative to maintain the positive momentum achieved at the beginning of the year and address current challenges in a comprehensive manner.

In the light of the current situation, I wish to highlight the following three points. First, it is of utmost importance that preparations be completed to enable the holding of national elections at the end of the year in line with the agreed road map. We call on the relevant parties in Libya to resolve outstanding differences and expedite all necessary legal and logistical arrangements for the elections. We also underline the importance of ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and youth in this process.

Accordingly, the role of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), neighbouring countries

and regional and international partners will remain crucial to supporting the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process. UNSMIL and the international community should continue to foster support, dialogue, confidence-building measures and reconciliation efforts among the relevant parties.

Secondly, it is imperative for all relevant parties to fully uphold the provisions of the October 2020 ceasefire agreement, including the implementation of the ceasefire monitoring mechanism, with the support of UNSMIL. This must also be in line with upholding the arms embargo in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions on Libya.

We share the concerns expressed by many Council members about the impact that some aspects related to Libya have on the security situation in the region. We reiterate our support for the withdrawal of all foreign forces and mercenaries from the territory of the country, in line with ceasefire agreement and resolution 2570 (2021). This process must be carried out in a timely, orderly and comprehensive manner and not translate into instability in neighbouring countries and the region.

Thirdly, strengthened efforts are needed to further tackle the economic and humanitarian challenges in Libya. We commend continuing efforts aimed at facilitating the unification of Libya's economic and financial institutions. We call on international partners to continue to provide support to Libya, especially in order to address the needs of and challenges faced by vulnerable groups, particularly women, children, and migrants. We welcome the efforts of United Nations and other partners in supporting the coronavirus disease vaccination process in Libya and wish to see further assistance to the country in this regard.

In addition, it is greatly encouraging that the coastal roads have been fully reopened. We commend efforts to clear the coastal roads in Libya of mines and explosive remnants of war with the support of the United Nations Mine Action Service.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our support for the work of UNSMIL and Special Envoy Kubiš in this critical period. We support the renewal of the Mission's mandate at this crucial time and will continue to engage actively with Council members in this process.

Mr. Lipand (Estonia): I would also like to thank the briefers for their comprehensive overviews on the latest developments.

Libya has made great strides forward on the political, security and economic tracks over the past year. It is now important not to let the progress stall. The tasks ahead for the coming months are clear. All preparations need to be made to hold free, fair, inclusive and credible elections on 24 December, as set out in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum road map and in resolution 2570 (2021). In that regard, we are encouraged by yesterday's announcement that the House of Representatives has adopted draft legislation for the upcoming presidential elections. We call for further engagement of all relevant authorities and for urgently establishing the legal basis for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

With regard to political processes, we have to reiterate the crucial importance of ensuring the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women and the inclusion of youth at all stages and levels. Women must be able to participate in all aspects of political life — as candidates, as activists and as voters — without fear of retaliation.

We very much welcome the participation of Ms. Asma Khalifa at today's briefing and thank her for her insightful comments.

Estonia is encouraged by the progress in the implementation of the 23 October ceasefire agreement, especially the opening of the Misrata-Sirte coastal road. It is of utmost importance to continue with the full implementation of the agreement, in particular, the swift removal of all foreign fighters and mercenaries.

Another essential element of the ceasefire agreement is implementing the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned ceasefire monitoring mechanism. We welcome the Secretary-General's assurances that the United Nations is urgently proceeding with the initial deployment of a scalable ceasefire monitoring component of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, and we look forward to a swift deployment of the international support team.

Estonia remains alarmed at the humanitarian situation in the country, in particular, the lack of access for humanitarian aid and humanitarian workers. The situation of migrants and asylum seekers also continues to be of great concern. Arbitrary detention

and exposure to violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, needs to end.

All alleged human rights violations, mass killings, torture and enforced disappearances must be thoroughly investigated. It is crucial to continue the fight against impunity and ensure accountability.

Lastly, Estonia reiterates its full support for the work of UNSMIL. The United Nations-led mediation efforts in the framework of the Berlin process remain the basis for international efforts in support of achieving peace and stability in Libya.

Mr. Kiboino (Kenya): I wish to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš and Ms. Asma Khalifa for their briefings and insights. We also thank Ambassador Tirumurti, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for his periodic report. We also welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya.

Peace processes often entail a delicate balance between the urgency of decisions and the need to secure a level of inclusivity that guarantees ownership and sustainability. That requires patience and careful nurturing of the process, whose wheels often turn slowly. For that reason, Kenya applauds the people of Libya for each positive step they take towards peace and stability. Notably, the landmark reopening of the Misrata-Sirte coastal road, the registration of voters, including for Libyans abroad, and the continued dialogue within all the tracks are continued steps in that direction.

However, we note that there are critical elements in the peace process that are pending and creating a barrier to its progress. We believe that the desire and decision of the Libyan people to hold elections on 24 December can be better actualized if there is in place an appropriate legal framework and adequate budgetary provision. It is also imperative to ensure the equal, full and meaningful participation of women, not only in the preparatory process but also in the actual elections.

Kenya urges the Libyan people to consider how far they have come and how near they may be to the momentous end of the transition. We particularly call on the members of the political class to consider one another as fellow countrymen and countrywomen and exercise flexibility and compromise for the collective gains of their nation and their future generations. In that regard, we welcome the official announcement of

the launch of the comprehensive national reconciliation project by the President of the Presidency Council earlier this week. We appreciate the support of the African Union in that connection and are fully persuaded that national reconciliation is a necessary component that will contribute significantly to the holding of peaceful and credible elections.

The Security Council has repeatedly called for commitment to the ceasefire agreement and adherence to the arms embargo, including through resolutions 2570 (2021) and 2571 (2021) as well as presidential statements and other products. The need for all the parties to heed that call cannot be over-emphasised.

The Council has also been seized of the destabilizing effect of the continued presence of foreign forces and mercenaries — not only on Libya but also the region, especially the Sahel. Their long-overdue exit should happen without further delay for the desired truly Libyan-led and -owned peace process to be achieved.

It is important that regional and international attention be paid to the need for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. In that regard, we urge that the impending mandate renewal of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya acknowledge that, so as to help prevent the possible cyclical conflict in the Sahel region and beyond.

A regional perspective in the management of the peace process will be necessary to tackle the continued illegal migration challenge. We therefore encourage continued consultations between Libya and neighbouring states, with the support of the United Nations, and initiatives such as the quadripartite agreement among Libya, Chad, the Niger and the Sudan.

Kenya is concerned about increased reports regarding the activities of terrorist groups in Libya, including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida. Urgent counter-terrorism measures must be undertaken in order to sustain the peace process and protect the gains that have been made.

We note that Libyan assets are to be preserved for the future return to, and the benefit of, the people of Libya, in accordance with resolution 1970 (2011). We therefore urge that the implementation of the assets freeze always be done in liaison with Libyan authorities. A periodic review of the assets freeze will serve to ensure that its purposes are served, especially as Libya

looks towards the elections and for unified institutions and national processes.

To conclude, I reiterate Kenya's support for the tireless efforts of the Special Representative and the United Nations Mission in support of the peace process. And I reaffirm Kenya's solidarity with the people of Libya in their quest for sustainable peace and stability through a truly Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political peace process.

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

I thank Special Representative Kubiš for his briefing and Ambassador Tirumurti for his report. Let me also thank Ms. Asma Khalifa for her powerful contribution. Her insights and testimony have informed and enriched our discussion, and her personal commitment to inclusive and enduring peace in Libya will inspire the Security Council. Her eloquent words on the need for depoliticized reconciliation resonate strongly with us on the island of Ireland.

This is a pivotal moment for Libya and its people. The independent strategic review of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) paints a sobering picture of its challenges and constraints. Meeting those challenges will require leadership on the ground, and we therefore support the review's recommendation to relocate the Head of Mission to Tripoli.

The holding of national parliamentary and presidential elections on 24 December is vital to a successful, Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political transition. We were pleased that the House of Representatives recently adopted a law allowing for presidential elections. We call on the relevant authorities to urgently resolve outstanding disagreements to ensure that parliamentary elections also take place on schedule.

Asma's words to the Council today underline the indispensable role played by women, youth and broader civil society in building inclusive and peaceful communities. Seventeen members of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum are women, and Ireland warmly welcomes their important contributions. We also welcome UNSMIL's efforts to empower women further, including through assisting the Libyan Ministry of Women's Affairs in the development of a national action plan on women and peace and security.

However, we are appalled at reports of violence targeted at politically active women, including human

rights defenders, and we strongly condemn all such incidents. The strategic review's recommendation to implement a surge capacity in UNSMIL's gender advisory and human rights units must be implemented urgently, in particular the swift deployment of women protection advisers.

Reports of conflict-related sexual violence against women, including migrants in detention, are deeply disturbing. More must be done to combat those most heinous crimes. UNSMIL human rights officers must be able to carry out their critical work in safety and security, and to have the resources necessary to combat all forms of sexual violence.

Ireland welcomed the opening of the coastal road on 30 July, and we look forward to the forthcoming deployment of the first United Nations ceasefire monitors to Libya — important steps in implementation of the ceasefire monitoring mechanism.

The withdrawal of all foreign forces and mercenaries, as stipulated by resolution 2570 (2021), must be completed as soon as possible and in consultation with all stakeholders.

We are very concerned that the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has increased this year, compounded by the coronavirus disease pandemic. We are also concerned by reported visa backlogs for aid workers, whose work is crucial to providing humanitarian relief.

We call on the House of Representatives and the Government of National Unity to prioritize agreement on a national budget. That is vital for the provision of services, which is hampered further by fuel shortages and disruptions in water and electricity supply.

Finally, we continue to call for the upholding of international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law. Rule of law institutions and transitional justice mechanisms must be strengthened, and human rights officers must not be constrained in their ability to move freely across the country and adequately monitor human rights violations.

Ireland unequivocally condemns the smuggling, trafficking and arbitrary detention in inhumane conditions of migrants and refugees, where they are at heightened risk of sexual violence and exploitation.

We support the renewal of resolution 2546 (2020) and commend the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI for its important work.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Libya.

Mr. Elsonni (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I congratulate you, Mr. President, and the Republic of Ireland on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I thank Mr. Ján Kubiš for his briefing; Ambassador T.S. Tirumurti, Permanent Representative of India, for his briefing on the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya; and Ms. Asma Khalifa for her briefing — not only about women but also about young people of Libya, who have suffered over the years. We call on the Security Council to expand future participation in these meetings to include other sectors of Libyan society, including civil society, so that the Council may hear all views.

Our discussion today comes at an important and critical time in my country's crisis, one in which we have started to see some breakthroughs and real steps towards reconciliation among Libyans since the declaration of the ceasefire in October 2020 and the consensus that resulted in choosing the Presidency Council and the Government of National Unity through the Political Dialogue Forum, held in sisterly Tunisia, which we thank once again for everything it has done to support the Libyan people throughout the years.

Despite all the challenges facing the Presidency Council and the Government since its establishment, as well as the delay in consolidating the positions of the House of Representatives and the High Council of State, given the available capacity and the pending approval of the general budget, executive institutions have been largely unified and consolidated, while some basic service projects have also been launched. There is an urgent need to start addressing the most important issues that affect citizens, such as those having to do with energy and electricity and some important economic reforms. The coronavirus disease pandemic has been accorded special importance, by providing nearly 3 million vaccines, while 3 million more vaccines are on the way, in addition to preparing vaccination centres in several regions of the country. Work is under way to improve medical services to address the consequences of this global pandemic. We

take this opportunity to thank friendly countries and international organizations that recently contributed to providing support.

As part of the Government's work to deliver services to all parts of the country and establish the principle of decentralization and non-marginalization, the activation of the local administration law and the start of the national programme for transferring competencies to municipalities, enabling them to collect local revenues, and supporting municipalities in their service and development projects were announced.

In the same context, in order to fulfil the obligations of the executive authority towards the road map for general elections, a ministerial committee was formed to support and make the elections successful, so as to provide the necessary technical, logistical and material assistance to support the work of the High National Elections Commission and educate and encourage citizens to register for the elections at home. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also supervised the process of registering nearly 2.8 million voters abroad to date. A comprehensive plan was also prepared for securing polling stations by training more than 30,000 officers of the Ministry of the Interior.

In that regard, we call upon the bodies concerned to expedite consensus and properly complete the tasks entrusted to them according to what is set out in the political agreement and the road map adopted by the Security Council, so as to guarantee genuine national reconciliation and the non-recurrence of past conflicts and divisions, as well as to ensure that all parties accept the results of the elections scheduled for the end of this year without deviating from the democratic path that Libyans are searching for. We also call upon the United Nations once again to expedite the deployment of an elections needs assessment team to Libya to determine the technical and security preparations needed and the necessary support for State institutions to ensure a transparent and fair electoral process.

There is no doubt that national initiatives to resolve the crisis in Libya constitute the basis on which we can work to achieve stability. Through the statements of its members, the Security Council has repeatedly highlighted the importance of Libyan ownership and leadership of any political process that leads the country to stability and Libyan State sovereignty over the whole of the country's territory. Accordingly, the Government of National Unity has announced the launching of

the Libya Stability Initiative, an exclusive national initiative that aims to achieve sustainable stability and is based on two important and interlinked tracks, namely, security and economic tracks. To that end, all need to come together in order to consolidate military and security institutions under civilian authority, integrate combatants, ensure the State's monopoly over weapons and launch a comprehensive economic strategy based on social justice, equitable distribution of wealth and reconstruction.

In that context, we invite the Council to provide support for that national initiative, especially as it is based on the outcomes of the two Berlin Conferences and resolutions 2570 (2021) and 2571 (2021). We also invite the Council to participate in the international conference called by the Government for next month, which will be hosted by Libya and in which the United Nations, regional organizations and brotherly and friendly countries that wish to contribute effectively to supporting Libya and its stability will participate.

We extend our hand to the Council and welcome everyone to support the stability of Libya and rebuild confidence between the Libyan people and the international community, which had direct responsibility for the situation in Libya since 2011. This is an opportunity to prove good intentions, which the Council itself has recognized. We take this opportunity to welcome the recent international reconciliation and the review by several countries of their previous policies, as everyone is now convinced that there is no military solution to the Libyan crisis. Undoubtedly, all of this has a positive impact on the situation in Libya. We will not accept any kind of negative foreign intervention in our affairs again. We invite members to assist us in rebuilding, not destroying.

The Government of National Unity stresses the pivotal role of Libya's neighbouring countries in helping to achieve security and stability in our country and the region. We thank brotherly Algeria for hosting the ministerial meeting of neighbouring countries held a few days ago. We look forward to the second meeting, which will be hosted by our neighbour Egypt, to follow up on the dialogues that were held and during which there was emphasis on support for the initiative to achieve stability in Libya, support the political track and the outcomes of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, and the inevitable need that there is only a Libyan-led solution to the Libyan crisis, as well as to address the need to respond to the Libyan people's uncompromising

sovereign demand that all fighters, mercenaries and foreign forces leave the country at the same time and under the direct supervision of the Libyan State. That includes sitting together at the negotiating table and developing a joint mechanism to ensure that the conflict is not transferred to neighbouring countries, which would threaten the security of the region, especially African coastal States, of which the best example is what happened in neighbouring Chad. In that context, it has been announced that the joint quadripartite agreement among Libya, the Niger, Chad and the Sudan on achieving security in various dimensions along our common borders has been activated.

In referring to neighbouring countries and their roles, we cannot fail to thank brotherly Morocco for its ongoing efforts and its hosting of many Libyan political parties, on several occasions, to create the conditions conducive to finding peaceful and consensual solutions to the current crisis.

With regard to the human rights issue, my Government reaffirms that it is working seriously to ensure respect for human rights and that, after more than 10 years of conflict, no new violations be committed. The Government also stresses that the competent national authorities, working in cooperation with the United Nations and the Human Rights Council Fact-Finding Mission, have conducted several meetings and field visits, in particular to inspect the mass graves that are still being discovered in Tarhouna, as well as to meet the families of the victims. The Government is working to complete the necessary investigations of the war crimes committed and revealing the fate of the missing persons and those detained without legal reasons throughout the country, so as to establish the principle of no-impunity and bring criminals to justice. There is no statute of limitation for those crimes.

On the issue of migration, we reaffirm the importance of finding a solution to this international phenomenon and of working to establish comprehensive international cooperation mechanisms that contribute to the development of countries whose citizens are a source of international migration. We also reiterate that Libya is a transit country, not a destination country. Nevertheless, Libya's stability can contribute to dealing with this phenomenon, especially by virtue of its historical relations with its neighbours.

On every occasion, we cannot fail to recall the importance of the issue of comprehensive national

reconciliation, which has been absent for the past years. That clearly has had a direct impact on the failure of dialogue and many initiatives, although it is undoubtedly the basic building block for the success and sustainability of any political consensus and settlement.

In that regard, everyone has been following the first tangible steps of the path towards reconciliation and rebuilding confidence among Libyans. Thanks to the efforts of the Presidency Council and the Government of National Unity, in coordination with the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, the exchange of prisoners and detainees has continued and the coastal road between the east and west of the country was reopened. Moreover, a joint force was set up to secure several strategic locations. In addition, in compliance with the provisions of the judiciary and in coordination with the Attorney General's Office and the Ministry of Justice, many prisoners who had been previously acquitted and whose legal conditions required it were released

We invite the Security Council from this rostrum to support the national reconciliation commission announced recently by the President of the Presidency Council, as well as to support the efforts of the Prime Minister to start an integrated project for complete national reconciliation. As members know, the reconciliation journey is long and its paths are numerous and interconnected. It begins with activating the judiciary and implementing transitional justice. It begins with frankness, disclosure, acknowledgment of error, apology and reparation. It begins with the release of forcibly imprisoned people throughout the country. It begins with the return of the displaced and the disclosure of the fate of the missing. With those steps, we can achieve national harmony and genuine national reconciliation. We therefore need the support

of everyone, and reiterate our call to the African Union, which has experience and expertise in that regard, to support Libya on its national path. Coincidentally, yesterday marked the establishment of the African Union in the Libyan city of Sirte in 1999.

In conclusion, I call upon our Libyan people, whatever their affiliation or views, and whatever the wounds might be, to shake hands, forgive and stop ruminating on the past. I invite them to raise the torch of justice, reconciliation, peace and forgiveness when possible. As Nelson Mandela said when launching national reconciliation in South Africa, "Courageous people do not fear forgiving for the sake of peace".

We are going through a critical stage in the history of the Libyan nation. It is imperative that we work to make consensus among Libyans succeed and to overcome any obstacles. It is a stage in which we must support our youth, who have been wronged and pushed to take up arms and provided the fodder for war and conflict. Together we must end all kinds of destructive foreign interference and push back those who stand in the way of realizing the ambitions of the Libyan people in expressing their free will and self-determination. We assure everyone that Libya has begun to recover and will come back strong. It has not been, and will not be, broken, because the Libyan people have become aware of everything that has been put up against them in an attempt to weaken them and rob them of their will. But that will never happen; it has become impossible and unimaginable.

Long live Libya as a one, unified and civil State that is free and proud.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.