



# Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

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Monday, 18 December 2023, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. De La Gasca/Mrs. Sánchez Izquierdo/ Mr. Montalvo Sosa. . . . .	(Ecuador)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania . . . . .	Ms. Dautllari
	Brazil. . . . .	Mr. Moretti
	China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
	France . . . . .	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
	Gabon . . . . .	Ms. Bouanga Ayouné
	Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Korbich
	Japan . . . . .	Mr. Yamanaka
	Malta . . . . .	Mr. Camilleri
	Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Afonso
	Russian Federation. . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Switzerland . . . . .	Mrs. Baeriswyl
	United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mr. Abushahab
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America. . . . .	Mr. Kelley

## Agenda

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2023/967)

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

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation in Libya**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2023/967)**

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

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

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2023/967, 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. Bathily and by Mr. Osamu Yamanaka, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, in his capacity as representative of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

I now give the floor to Mr. Bathily.

**Mr. Bathily:** Since my most recent briefing to the Security Council (see S/PV.9438), on 16 October, laws number 27 and 28 on the National Assembly and presidential elections were published by the House of Representatives in the official gazette on 1 November. For the first time since the elections failed in December 2021, Libya has a constitutional and legal framework for elections in place, considered technically implementable by the High National Elections Commission. We must now build on this important achievement.

As I already indicated to the Council, to enable successful elections and prevent a repeat of December 2021, the remaining politically contested issues can only be overcome through a political settlement among

the main Libyan institutional stakeholders committing in good faith. To that effect, in November, I formally invited the heads of five key institutions — the Presidential Council, the House of Representatives, the High Council of State, the Government of National Unity and the Libyan National Army — to a meeting in the coming period. Those chosen actors have the capacity to either reach consensus and advance the political process or prolong the stalemate and prevent Libya from holding peaceful elections. Their rivalry and lack of trust lie at the core of this prolonged crisis and stand in contradiction with the unity ordinary Libyans long for. As a first step towards the five major actors' meeting, I have requested them to nominate three representatives each to participate in a preparatory session to agree on the parameters of the meeting of the principals, including the date, venue and agenda. I am pleased to report that none of the institutional players outright rejected my invitation. However, some have set out conditions for their participation.

The Presidential Council has shown clear and concrete support. President Menfi is displaying his good will and exploring every way to make this dialogue successful. I will continue working with the Presidential Council on this effort.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr. Agila Saleh, has conditioned his participation in the agenda, focusing on the formation of a new Government for elections, while also rejecting the participation of the Government of National Unity and Mr. Al Dabiba.

The President of the High Council of State, Mr. Takala, has submitted the names of its three representatives to the preparatory meeting, despite his initial rejection of the version of the electoral laws published by the House of Representatives.

The Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity, Mr. Al Dabiba, also submitted the names of the Government of National Unity representatives. While ready to discuss outstanding issues on the electoral laws, he categorically rejects any discussions on a new Government. Libyan National Army Commander Khalifa Haftar is ready for dialogue but has conditioned the Government of National Unity's participation on the inclusion of the House of Representatives-appointed Government. Alternatively, he would agree to participate if both Governments were excluded.

I learned of the Cairo meeting on 16 December among the President of the Presidential Council, the

House of Representative Speaker and the Libyan National Army Commander and have taken note of the ensuing acknowledgment of the mediation role of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).

As members will see, some Libyan leaders continue to drag their feet and do not, for now, show a decisive commitment to end the long-standing stalemate that has caused so much suffering for ordinary Libyans. Electoral laws alone cannot make elections happen if relevant actors are not genuinely committed to their implementation. The formation of a unified Government to lead the country to elections, required by the electoral laws and welcomed by Libyan citizens on all sides, can be realized only if the major actors act in a spirit of political compromise, with a renewed commitment to the unity of their motherland, Libya. We must avoid a repeat of the August 2022 situation, when the formation of a Government led to a violent conflict resulting in the death of many Libyans.

In parallel to my efforts described earlier, and to ensure a more inclusive process, I continue to consult with other segments of Libyan society, including political parties, notable persons, security actors, civil society, cultural groups, women, youth and the business community. I have invited those stakeholders to share their proposals on how to resolve the remaining contentious issues through a truly inclusive, Libyan-led, Libyan-owned and peaceful process. Throughout my meetings, at least two messages were consistently conveyed: first, an ever-stronger call for elections to take place as soon as possible; and secondly, a sense of extreme fatigue and disenchantment with the delaying tactics of some political actors.

In addition to extensive bilateral engagements with representatives of international partners in Tripoli, I travelled to Algeria and Morocco in late November and to Tunisia in early December to seek their support for United Nations efforts. That builds on my visits earlier this year to Qatar, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates. Other appointments are pending on my agenda. I cannot understate the importance of a unified regional and international front to maximize the chances of success for this process. I am also grateful for the expressions of support received and thank the Council for its unanimous renewal of UNSMIL's mandate, through resolution 2702 (2023), and for reiterating support for my good offices and mediation role.

The absence of unified and legitimate State institutions operating for the benefit of the people was a contributing factor to the scale of destruction and tragic loss of life caused by Storm Daniel in Derna and surrounding areas in September. More than three months after the devastating floods, the United Nations and humanitarian partners have reached over 203,000 people with humanitarian assistance and continue to work with Libyan authorities to ensure full, unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need. As the flood response moves to early recovery and reconstruction, the United Nations is engaging with Libyan authorities, affected people and development partners on the need for a coordinated national platform for the reconstruction effort. I urge political leaders, in the east and the west, to recall the unity and solidarity shown by Libyans at the onset of the Derna crisis and establish a coordinated national platform for reconstruction in the best interests of people whose lives and livelihoods have been severely affected by this disaster.

While the ceasefire continues to hold, sporadic armed clashes and other security incidents continue to be recorded in each of the regions. On 29 October, heavy clashes erupted in the city of Gharyan — 100 kilometres south of Tripoli — between two coalitions of local armed groups. The fighting ended quickly, although it reportedly resulted in injuries, loss of life and damage to public and private property.

During the past few months, military expansion in the western region, with a particular focus on the border crossings of Ras Jadir and Ghadames, led to increased tension in nearby cities such as Zuwara — adjacent to Ras Jadir — and Ghadames. The repeated pattern of such incidents in the east and the west highlights the necessity for sustained stability and unity of military and security institutions. The south remains a hunting ground for different armed groups, mercenaries and illicit entrepreneurs.

From 7 to 9 November in Tunis, with the co-Chairs of the Security Working Group of the Berlin process, UNSMIL facilitated a retreat of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC), a key partner of the Mission that is committed to Libya's unity. It examined progress in the 2020 ceasefire agreement and discussed other provisions, including the withdrawal of foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries, the implementation of which is compromised by the political stalemate in Libya and the degenerating situation in the Sudan and the Sahel region.

I continue to be concerned with the ongoing restriction of civic space and arbitrary detentions. Members of political parties, academics and activists continue to languish in detention in Benghazi, Sirte and Tripoli, without access to justice. Over the past nine months, security actors arbitrarily detained at least 60 individuals, including children, for their actual or perceived political affiliation. The real number may be much higher. That not only infringes their fundamental rights but also erodes the rule of law in Libya and further reduces public trust in the justice system and political process. I reiterate that a thriving civic space, where Libyans engage through dialogue, dissent and mutual understanding, is critical for the political process.

The humanitarian situation of migrants and refugees remains a grave concern, as is our ability to ensure their protection and human rights. Yet again, dozens of migrants and asylum seekers drowned last Saturday when their boat, departing from north-western Libya overturned in the central Mediterranean Sea. I express my deep condolences to their families and wish a speedy recovery to the survivors. Also, collective expulsions of migrants and refugees into Libya and from Libya to neighbouring countries continue, with conditions in detention centres becoming increasingly dire. Forced expulsions are strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law and must end.

Despite the enormous wealth of their country, Libyan citizens are being increasingly exposed to economic and social hardships. Their demands for the end of corruption and mismanagement are loudly echoed from all corners of the country. Reports by the Central Bank of Libya and other oversight bodies are clearly showing growing public expenditure through questionable procedures, while the high financial committee established by the Presidential Council has yet to become fully operational.

In conclusion, allow me to say that, with the exception of a few political office holders whose terms of office have expired and who are keeping the country hostage to their particular ambitions, Libyans of all walks of life express their strong aspiration for a unified Government to lead the country to elections, legitimate and unified institutions, peace, stability and the unity of the country. Community leaders, stakeholders, political parties, women and youth groups, civil society organizations, the business community, the 5+5 JMC and other prominent military and security actors express their full readiness to ensure peaceful,

inclusive and successful elections. The High National Elections Commission is also technically ready to start preparations for the electoral process.

The national mood is ripe for a new political deal in Libya, a new dispensation for a brighter future for the country. One group of unwilling officials clinging to their seats must not be allowed to fail the people of Libya and put the region at the risk of further chaos.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ambassador Yamanaka.

**Mr. Yamanaka:** I deliver this statement on behalf of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, Ambassador Shino.

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 1970 Committee. The report covers the period from 16 October to 18 December 2023, during which time the Committee conducted its work using the silence procedure, with the aim of facilitating the implementation of the sanctions measures.

On 19 October, the Security Council adopted resolution 2701 (2023), through which it extended the time-bound measures aimed at preventing the illicit exports of petroleum from Libya, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, until 1 February 2025. The arms embargo, the travel and the asset freeze were not time bound and continue to apply.

The Council also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Libya until 15 February 2025. The Panel is requested, *inter alia*, to provide recommendations in its final report on possible actions that could enable the re-investment of the Libyan Investment Authority's frozen assets for the purpose of preserving their value and benefiting the Libyan people at a later stage. On 20 November, the Secretary-General appointed six individuals to serve on the Panel.

Concerning the arms embargo, the Committee received a final written report from the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation IRINI concerning a vessel inspection conducted on 18 July 2022 and the disposal of the corresponding seized cargo. One Committee member expressed a different view with regard to a possible follow-up on the matter, referring to the implementation of resolution 2292 (2016).

There is a lack of consensus among Committee members in that regard. In relation to a separate vessel inspection conducted on 15 September 2023 by Operation IRINI, the Committee notified the flag State of the inspected vessel. In relation to the asset freeze, no negative decisions were taken by the Committee with regard to four notifications invoking paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011) — two of which were submitted by the Kingdom of Bahrain and the other two by Luxembourg and the United Kingdom. The Committee is currently concerned about the two notifications submitted by Bahrain, invoking paragraph 21 of resolution 1970 (2011).

On 4 December 2023, the Committee issued its implementation assistance notice 7, “Guidance to Member States on the application of the humanitarian exemption established by resolution 2664 (2022) to the asset freeze established under resolution 1970 (2011)”. The Committee responded to two letters from Libya, concerning certain aspects of the asset freeze. In the follow-up to one of those letters, a note verbale was also sent to all Member States on asset freeze exemptions and exceptions, including in relation to the Libyan Investment Authority. The Committee also received a letter from Libya in relation to the final report of the Panel of Experts (see S/2023/673).

With regard to the travel ban, the Committee extended, for a sixth time, the six-month exemption to the travel ban, granted for humanitarian purposes to individuals on the Committee’s list — Ms. Safia Farkash Al-Barassi and Mr. Mohammed Al-Qadhafi. On 16 October 2023, the Committee granted the request of a listed individual, Ms. Aisha Al-Qadhafi, received through the focal point for delisting established pursuant to resolution 1730 (2006), and decided that Ms. Al-Qadhafi was no longer subject to the travel ban measures imposed pursuant to paragraph 15 of resolution 1970 (2011). Ms. Al-Qadhafi remains subject to the assets freeze measure, and the list of sanctions imposed on individuals was amended accordingly. On 29 November, the Committee amended five entries on its sanctions list, pursuant to the recommendations contained in the final report of the Panel of Experts. The Committee received a second communication from the focal point for delisting in connection with a delisting request that remains under consideration.

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

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ambassador Yamanaka for the information he has provided.

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

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily and the representative of Japan as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for their briefings today.

We welcome the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to convene representatives of the five major stakeholders in a preparatory meeting as a next step towards resolving the outstanding issues related to elections. We note, however, that only three of the five invited parties — the High State Council, the Government of National Unity and Presidential Council — have so far nominated representatives, with others setting preconditions for their participation. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General has been clear that the preparatory meeting will provide space for all parties to express their concerns. We therefore reiterate our expectation that Libya’s leaders will respond to the invitation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General constructively. We call on all parties to engage in good faith without preconditions. To do otherwise prevents progress towards the elections that 2.8 million Libyans have registered for.

We remain concerned at the shrinking space for civil society across Libya, alongside the alarming trend of human rights violations — particularly in regard to migrants and refugees — that continue without accountability. Civic space must be protected to allow Libyans to hold their leaders accountable and empower everyone to play a role in developing an open, democratic society with freedom of association, operation and assembly. We also regret the tragic death of at least 61 migrants, who drowned following the shipwreck off Libya this weekend.

As Libya begins reconstruction in response to the devastating floods in September, it remains vital that that be funded through a unified Libyan approach, with full transparency, effective oversight and accountability. Libyan public funds must be used for the benefit of all Libyans, with the Libyan people having a voice in how public money is spent.



The benefits of setting Libya on the path towards a democratic, united and stable State would be enormous. It would allow the full reintegration of Libya's people and economy into the international community. We urge those invited to the preparatory meeting of the major stakeholders to fully engage in order to fulfil their responsibilities to the Libyan people. The United Kingdom will continue to support the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and work across Libya's divides to deliver for the Libyan people.

**Mr. Camilleri (Malta):** I also thank Special Representative Bathily for his briefing. I welcome the briefing on behalf of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, and the participation of the Permanent Representative of Libya.

It has now been two years since the planned Libyan presidential election was postponed indefinitely. The country continues to suffer from a state of political paralysis, which continues to negatively impact the daily life of ordinary civilians. Malta remains supportive of all activity seeking to overcome that impasse. We reiterate our steadfast support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his efforts to facilitate inclusive dialogue towards that common goal.

We can positively note that, following the work of the 6+6 committee, the electoral laws were published on 1 November. Nonetheless, a few contentious issues remain, and unless those issues are resolved, the political consensus and trust among stakeholders required to initiate the electoral process will remain lacking. We continue to call on all Libyan parties and stakeholders to be guided by good faith and the national interest and work towards a peaceful electoral process. We wish to highlight that the continuation of the status quo will further entrench divergent positions.

In that vein, Malta highlights the continued work by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to facilitate inclusive discussions and overcome remaining obstacles. We commend those stakeholders who have positively engaged with those efforts. We call on all those remaining stakeholders who have not been forthcoming in responding to the call by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to nominate representatives to initiate efforts aimed at bringing them around the table for dialogue. That is the only pathway to advancing a Libyan-led and

Libyan-owned political process, under United Nations auspices, with the necessary political consensus and legal framework to conduct free, fair, transparent, inclusive and secure elections. We underline that any such process must ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women as voters, candidates and observers. Facilitating the views of a diverse spectrum of Libyan stakeholders must also include the active, meaningful and inclusive participation of young persons and civil society.

The fragile political environment continues to foment episodes of insecurity, as evidenced by the recurrence of armed clashes throughout 2023, and provides fertile ground for further hostilities. The lack of a secure environment undermines the country's ability to fulfil its economic potential, to the detriment of the population's economic and social well-being. That insecurity is only worsened by the continued presence of foreign fighters, foreign forces and mercenaries, whose full withdrawal should be prioritized, and by the proliferation of weapons under the control of State and non-State actors.

We also express concern about the potential destabilizing effects of events in the region, including in the Sahel, on Libya. The continued work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and other measures aimed at stabilizing the security situation require our full support. We commend the continued support extended by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to the Commission, including by organizing last month's workshop in Tunis in the presence of the co-Chairs of the Security Working Group.

We regret to note the decreased space for civil society in Libya. We need to ensure that all Libyans can exercise their fundamental human rights. That is also necessary to ensure an environment conducive to reconciliation and the holding of elections. We welcome and strongly support UNSMIL's efforts to address that. I conclude by reiterating Malta's support for a unified Libya and for all efforts to advance Libya along the path to long-term stability and prosperity for all its citizens.

**Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*):** I would like to thank Special Representative Abdoulaye Bathily and Deputy Permanent Representative Yamanaka for their briefings.

Before elaborating on three points, allow me to refer to the tragic shipwreck off the coast of Libya last Saturday. Sixty-one migrants drowned. Thousands of

people die and disappear in the Mediterranean every year. We are saddened by the news of this shipwreck, and we express our sincere condolences to the victims and their families.

Against that backdrop, the protection and promotion of human rights remains a priority. Last week, we commemorated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We echo the warnings of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk, who issued a wake-up call that should make us aware “that failure to respect human rights results in instability, suffering, more inequalities and economic crises”.

However, seventy-five years later, there is still a long way to go. That wake-up call also applies to Libya. By redoubling its efforts to guarantee respect for human rights, Libya can catalyse its democratic transformation and lay the foundations for a secure environment conducive to elections. Nevertheless, we are witnessing the repression of human rights defenders and a narrowing civic space, for example, through arbitrary detentions. Moreover, the voices of journalists, academics and members of civil society are being silenced, threatening the right to the freedom of expression. To that end, as co-Chair of the Working Group on International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, Switzerland co-organized a meeting of the four groups established as a result of the Berlin process. The meeting made possible identifying synergies to promote human rights in the political, economic and security spheres. We will maintain our commitment in that regard.

My second message concerns the elections. After a delay of two years, it is high time that be they held, and in an inclusive manner. “Inclusive” means with women’s participation. It is imperative that women be able to vote and present their candidacies, free from threats or reprisals. “Inclusive” also means with the participation of young people. Their participation in the electoral process is vital to the country’s future. In order to meet the aspiration of the Libyan people for the holding of elections, compromise and collaboration are imperative. That is why Switzerland supports the Special Representative’s efforts to bring the key players together. We call on the latter to accept the Special Representative’s invitation to a preparatory meeting.

My last point concerns sanctions. I would like to stress the need to fully implement resolution 2664

(2022), for which an implementation assistance notice was adopted by the Sanctions Committee. The exemption created by the resolution authorizes activities necessary for the delivery of humanitarian aid and in support of other activities aimed at meeting the people’s essential needs by humanitarian organizations. The exemption provides the various actors involved with the necessary clarity and predictability. Switzerland will continue to remain committed to the consistent implementation of resolution 2664 (2022).

In returning to what the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said, human rights must not remain words in the margins of our statements, but must be at the heart of our governance, as envisaged by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 75 years ago. That has also been Switzerland’s commitment, and we expect the same commitment from the international community, including Libya, with regard to Libya.

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

The A3 thanks Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, for his insightful briefing and update on the situation in Libya. We pay tribute to Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane of Japan for his dedicated work as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. And we are grateful for the report of the Committee presented by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan. We welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Libya at this meeting.

We are six days away from marking two years since elections in Libya were postponed, in 2021. We note with deep concern the continued political stalemate in the country, as there is no clear pathway to elections. The situation raises fears of further catalysing the multidimensional instability in our brotherly country. In that context, the A3 would like to express its deep appreciation for the continued efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General involving all the relevant Libyan institutions and actors to address the unsettled issues on the electoral framework. We commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his initiative in organizing a meeting of the institutional stakeholders aimed at reaching a

settlement on the politically contested issues related to the implementation of the electoral process in Libya.

As the A3, we advocate for all potential participants in the initiative to cooperate fully, constructively and with goodwill. By doing so, they can work towards meeting the aspirations of the Libyan people for elections, within a Libyan-led and -owned political framework. We reiterate our call for ensuring inclusive participation in the process, including women and youth. We see that as the sole guarantee for lasting peace and stability, which the Libyan people deserve. We urge Libyans to remain committed to dialogue and reconciliation at all stages of the peace process. We also acknowledge the commitment made by the African Union during this decisive period.

With regard to the security situation, the A3 takes positive note of the fact that the 2020 ceasefire agreement continues to hold. We call on the parties to continue to show restraint by fully complying with the ceasefire agreement. However, we would like to express our deep concern about the recurrence of armed clashes across Libya. That reality is of deep concern for the A3, as it signals the fragility of the political and security spectrum in Libya and compels us to call for an urgent resolution of the political stalemate. In order to achieve that desirable goal, the A3 reiterates its calls on the Libyan authorities to pursue their efforts and commitment to unify Libya's security forces. We are mindful of the fact that the unification of the Libyan security forces is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive approach.

Concerning the humanitarian situation, the A3 reiterates its deep concern about the continued dire situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Libya. We therefore continue to urge the Libyan authorities to work effectively with the support of the international community towards improving the plight of migrants and refugees in Libya and to hold the perpetrators of violations to account.

The A3 expresses its deep concern regarding the accumulation and flow of sophisticated weaponry and illicit small arms and weapons in Libya and the Sahel region from foreign origins. The trafficking has created conducive cross-border support infrastructure for global terrorist actors and their facilitators in the region. Furthermore, we would like to reiterate our call for the immediate departure of foreign forces and fighters from Libyan soil. Their presence undermines

Libya's sovereignty and ownership of the peace process and reconciliation. Consequently, their departure is essential for a favourable and conducive environment for the advancement of the ongoing political process. We also emphasize that such a withdrawal should be effected in close coordination with neighbouring States and with a corresponding disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, to avoid the export of conflict into the region.

Finally, we reaffirm that the preservation and future return of Libya's frozen assets is a matter of great importance. Those assets, which are currently held in trust, are meant for the benefit of the Libyan people. It is crucial that their integrity and value be maintained so as to ensure that they serve solely the interests of the Libyan nation.

Our commitment to Libya's independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty remains steadfast. We stand in solidarity with the resilient people of Libya during these challenging times.

**Ms. Dautllari** (Albania): Let me thank Special Representative Bathily for his briefing and reiterate Albania's support for his work and efforts. I would also like to thank the representative of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for his report.

In December 2021, Libya was about to hold elections and chart its path towards the future — that did not happen. Two years have passed, and the deadlock in the Libyan political process continues to delay the most important and only way towards building a democratic future for the country, that is, the holding of free, fair, inclusive and transparent national elections. The political future of Libya continues to remain in a long-overdue stalemate, and political leaders continue to disregard the urgent need to engage and act in good faith towards reaching a compromise that includes addressing the issues through a political settlement.

Special Representative Bathily continues to explore new paths towards advancing the political process in Libya. We welcome and commend those efforts. The recent invitation to key Libyan institutional stakeholders to meet with the purpose of reaching a settlement on the outstanding political issues related to the implementation of the electoral process is a step in the right direction. We also take note of the three parties that have agreed to join the dialogue proposed by the Special Representative. We call on them to show



commitment to overcoming the status quo through compromise, while bearing in mind the future of the Libyan people, and to ending the political deadlock as soon as possible.

It is important that the political dialogue, reconciliation efforts and future elections be conducted in a context free from fear and arbitrary detentions and arrests. We share the concerns over the continuing decrease in civic space and increase in violations of human rights.

We also take note of the role of the African Union in supporting the reconciliation project led by the Libyans and of the outcomes of the Sabha meeting, whereby Sirte was selected as the location for the national reconciliation conference to be held on 28 April 2024. We hope that the conference will be a success in terms of achieving the comprehensive and inclusive reconciliation of the Libyan people.

Political instability in Libya has also impacted the security situation in the country. Despite the relative calm, Libya's stabilization process remains a key priority, including because of its impact on the stability of North Africa and the Sahel. We praise the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission on the full and effective implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the relevant action plans. Every effort towards the unification of the Libyan army is a step towards national reconciliation and unity. We also reiterate our call for the full withdrawal of all foreign mercenaries and forces from Libya.

In conclusion, Albania firmly believes that a United Nations-mediated political solution, based on an inclusive dialogue among Libyans with the goal of holding elections, is the right path for a political solution in the country.

**Mr. Kelley** (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Bathily for his briefing and for his ongoing efforts to convene key Libyan stakeholders to galvanize the political process and consolidate support for elections as soon as possible.

It is increasingly clear that achieving a credible elections road map and a peaceful transition requires bringing key actors face to face at the negotiating table. There is a special challenge to form a caretaker Government that has a narrow mandate to oversee elections. We support the Special Representative's invitation to a broad cross-section of Libyan political

leaders to send representatives to preparatory talks aimed at addressing the core issues still standing in the way of elections. We join the Special Representative in urging all Libyan stakeholders who have not yet accepted the invitation to name their representatives to the preparatory talks without further delay.

We share the view of most Libyans that now is the time for political actors to break the continued impasse in pursuit of a unified Government that delivers for the Libyan people. The active leadership and ownership of the Libyan people is clearly required to achieve an inclusive political process. For that reason, we also support the Special Representative's announcement that he would conduct, in parallel, focused consultations with a wider spectrum of Libyan stakeholders so that their proposals would be taken into account by the institutional stakeholders in their negotiations.

Undermining the Special Representative's work runs counter to the clear desire of the Libyan people to choose their own leaders through free and fair elections. Those who continue to delay the process will hold a heavy share of the blame if yet more time passes without the election of a legitimate, unified Government. The United States supports that broad engagement and continues to stand firmly behind Special Representative Bathily's work. We iterate the Council's unanimous call for all Libyan actors to engage constructively and transparently with Special Representative Bathily.

Cooperation among all relevant Libyan authorities on flood-related reconstruction and planning is critical. Whatever modality Libyan leaders adopt, they must approach reconstruction in a coordinated, apolitical manner to ensure that adequate flood relief is delivered to all those impacted by the disaster so that they can rebuild their lives.

We also took note of the Secretary-General's recommendations on the need to provide assistance to migrants and asylum seekers, including with regard to humane detention facilities and access to legal proceedings. We support his strong call for Libyan authorities across the country to reverse the trend towards shrinking civic space and limits on free speech.

Despite the continued political impasse, there has been some progress. We commend the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in clearly laying out the goals to remove foreign forces, fighters and mercenaries from Libya and to advance efforts

towards eventual disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. We also welcome steps towards increased coordination and cooperation aimed at the unification of east-west military structures to help stabilize the south, secure Libya's borders and prevent a spillover of regional turmoil.

A unified international voice in support of all of those efforts on the political, humanitarian, economic and military tracks will be crucial to making concrete progress and building opportunities for the Libyan people.

**Mr. Yamanaka** (Japan): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily for his update, and I welcome Ambassador El-Sonni, Permanent Representative of Libya, who joins us today.

To begin my statement, I would like to welcome the Security Council's unanimous adoption in October of two resolutions regarding Libya, renewing the sanctions regime (resolution 2701 (2023)) and the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (resolution 2702 (2023)). That shows the Council's strong commitment to maintaining Libya's peace and security and supporting its political process towards a democratic transition.

Although the long-awaited national elections, which would pave the way to a democratic transition in Libya, have not yet taken place, this year saw some steps forward in the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process facilitated by the United Nations. As an elected Council member, Japan has been consistently supporting Special Representative Bathily's efforts throughout the past year, while respecting Libya's ownership. With the help of the Special Representative's initiatives, Libyan actors were able to agree on electoral laws, identify politically and technically contentious issues and resolve some of those issues.

The Special Representative's facilitation of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and the Commission's steady efforts have enabled an environment that is safe and conducive to running elections. Progress in the unification of divided State institutions and the establishment of a national financial oversight mechanism are also positive developments. Moreover, the Libyan people clearly showed their solidarity and unity after the devastating flood in the east of the country in September. Yet Libya needs further steps forward to complete its democratic transition, and we call on those currently in power to take that

courageous step. In that regard, Japan welcomes the Special Representative's initiative to bring the five key Libyan actors together, and we encourage them to fully engage with the Special Representative to complete the necessary preparations for the holding of the elections.

I would like to touch upon Libya's humanitarian and human rights situation. We are concerned about the reports of unlawful arrests and detentions. Restrictions on freedom of movement, especially those imposed on women, are worrisome. The inhumane conditions faced by migrants and refugees remain a serious concern. Cross-border human trafficking networks must be dismantled. It is reported that those activities are conducted by both the security apparatus and armed groups. Thus, it is even more critical to establish a unified and legitimate Government through elections, with good governance based on the rule of law, and to unify military and security institutions.

To conclude, I would like to express our strong support for the Libyan people as they seek to establish a government that will protect their lives and dignity.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Mr. Bathily, and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, who spoke in his capacity as representative of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for their briefings.

Against the backdrop of the dual governments in Libya, the prospects for achieving a sustainable settlement are unfortunately not yet in sight. Holding national elections and the resulting creation of unified government institutions with fair representation of all Libyan regions is the only way to overcome the domestic political deadlock. In that regard, it is important to continue working on formalizing the legislative framework for the electoral process between the High State Council and the House of Representatives. Unfortunately, those structures have not reached an agreement, despite the generally successful completion of the work of the joint 6+6 committee in late May 2023.

We hope that the parties will soon be able to reach the necessary agreements. Libyans are tangled in a knot of contradictions, but they themselves must untie that knot. Without domestic political consensus on a legislative framework, any initiatives from

international mediators or foreign States, particularly separate ones, will not work and will only lead to the further fragmentation of society. We believe that significant progress in Libya can only be achieved through the joint efforts of all Libyan stakeholders and influential global and regional players, with the United Nations playing a central role.

We support the efforts of Special Representative Bathily, who is actively seeking solutions to the Libyan political crisis. A fundamental issue in that context is the organization of general presidential and parliamentary elections. We believe that holding them simultaneously would be preferable from the point of view of maintaining stability in the country. We firmly believe, however, that the organization of the electoral process should not be subject to additional conditions, nor should it exclude political figures who enjoy significant support from the population. Inclusiveness is indispensable for the political process to be a success — it should include all of the main Libyan players, including representatives of the former authorities.

There is no time to waste, for the situation on the ground is far from stable. The window of opportunity is closing rapidly. The east of the country is still reeling from the aftermath of the devastating natural disaster that struck in September. Clashes among armed groups occur with alarming regularity. Against that backdrop, the activities of the 5+5 Joint Military Committee are key to deepening the coordination of the parties on the military track and to forming a unified security architecture, including on the issue of putting an end to the foreign military presence. As regards the latter, we advocate a synchronized, balanced, gradual and phased withdrawal of all non-Libyan armed groups and military units without exception. If the potential for political consensus is not realized soon, the country risks repeating the unfortunate scenario of the previous decade.

The most important issue on the Libyan agenda is compliance with the provisions of the territorial arms embargo imposed by the Security Council. We recall once again that that measure, like other sanctions instruments of the Council, is intended primarily to stabilize the situation in the former Jamahiriya. The special inspection regime for the open sea off the coast of Libya, introduced by Security Council resolution 2292 (2016), of which Russia was an initiator, also serves the same purpose.

However, one regional organization, the European Union (EU), has in fact usurped the broad possibilities of a special regime for vessel inspection. At the same time, the activities of EU naval Operation IRINI are far from ideal. We have repeatedly indicated its low level of effectiveness, the selective nature of the inspections and its lack of transparency. Despite our warnings, the situation remains the same. The few instances in which IRINI has confiscated cargo raise many questions, including in the context of the Operation's conclusions about the military nature of the goods and ways to dispose of them. IRINI's command has been very loose in its interpretation of the conditions of the Libyan special inspections regime. Once again, we recall that the relevant Council sanctions resolutions do not provide for the transfer of confiscated cargo to a third party to be used as intended, and the EU leadership's reference to its own internal decisions appears to be an outright slap in the face to the Council's authority.

**Mr. Moretti (Brazil):** I thank Special Representative Bathily for his briefing and for the intensification of his efforts in facilitating the intra-Libyan dialogue following the adoption of resolution 2702 (2023). I thank the representative of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya for his briefing, and I welcome the Libyan delegation to this meeting.

I join others in expressing condolences for those who recently drowned off the coast of Libya — another tragic event on the Mediterranean Sea, unfortunately.

I will make three points on the situation in Libya that Brazil considers worth emphasizing as particularly relevant to the work of the Security Council.

First, the path towards parliamentary and presidential elections in Libya must be Libyan-led and Libyan-owned and pursuant to the existing, nationally agreed framework. We hope institutional stakeholders will engage constructively, in a spirit of compromise, to translate the aspirations of the Libyan people for government unification and legitimacy. We welcome the Special Representative's initiative to convene the representatives of the Presidential Council, the House of Representatives, High State Council, the Government of National Unity and the General Command of the Libyan National Army to discuss the next steps in the electoral process. It is critical that the remaining differences on the implementation of the electoral laws be overcome as soon as possible, based on nationwide consensus,

including the views of the wider spectrum of Libyan stakeholders that the United Nations Support Mission in Libya has been consulting with, including women.

Secondly, the sustainability of any political settlement depends on the respect by all stakeholders of Libya's right to conduct its affairs without foreign interference. The unification of Government institutions, including the military, may well be facilitated by the international community, including United Nations-mediated processes and neighbouring countries, while respecting Libya's sovereignty.

Thirdly, respecting Libyan sovereignty is also extremely relevant regarding ownership and control over its natural resources.

The establishment of mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability of public spending, including in the context of reconstruction efforts in Derna, should protect Libya's wealth from misappropriation and mismanagement, pursuant to Libyan laws, for the benefit of the Libyan people. It should not justify foreign oversight or a transfer of control to entities that might favour interests outside Libya.

Also, the reports of the erosion and confiscation of Libyan assets frozen in foreign banks should be carefully examined and addressed. There must be a technical solution to mitigate the risk of losses as an unintended consequence of the asset freeze.

Authorities in foreign jurisdictions need to seek advice from the Libya Sanctions Committee before taking decisions that can impact the status or the availability of Libyan frozen funds.

I reiterate Brazil's continued support to a lasting settlement of the persisting divisions in Libya, through peaceful dialogue and political means. As we cautioned in 2011, when abstaining in the voting on resolution 1973 (2011) (see S/PV.6498), only an inclusive and meaningful political process can succeed in bringing durable peace and in addressing the demands of the Libyan people for better governance, more political participation, economic opportunities and social justice.

**Mrs. Broadhurst Estival** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Special Representative and the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) for their briefings. I welcome the representative of Libya to this meeting.

I echo the words of my colleagues to express our profound sadness following the shipwreck of a craft killing approximately 60 migrants off the coast of Libya this weekend.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative for his efforts to facilitate dialogue among the Libyan stakeholders. France welcomes the work of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and the Special Representative with all Libyan institutions and all relevant stakeholders, with a view to free, inclusive and transparent presidential and legislative elections throughout Libya.

France is convinced that the key to resolving the crisis in Libya lies in full ownership of the process by the Libyans themselves. That is why France, alongside its partners and the United Nations, continues to encourage dialogue among all stakeholders. That dialogue must lead to the formation of a unified Government capable of leading the country to elections throughout Libya, in accordance with the wishes of the Libyan people themselves.

A never-ending political transition in Libya is untenable. The Derna catastrophe and the lack of coordination in managing the disaster by the Libyan authorities recalls the urgent need for unified governance. The current political vacuum is fuelling interference, which destabilizes the country and the region as a whole.

The holding of elections in Libya cannot wait any longer. The electoral laws, adopted thanks to the work of the 6+6 committee, have been enacted. That is an important step forward. We welcome the efforts made by our regional partners, in particular Egypt but also Morocco, to support dialogue among Libyan institutions. The next step must be to set a timetable to resolve the last outstanding issues and promote an intra-Libyan agreement on a unified transitional executive authority with a clear mandate that can lead Libya to elections. France is ready to facilitate the intra-Libyan dialogue, as it has been doing since 2017.

Libya's sovereignty and unity must be restored. That is essential if we are to achieve lasting stability throughout the region.

France will continue to support efforts to reunite the Libyan National Army, under the aegis of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and the two Chiefs of Staff. We also welcome the role of the Presidential Council,



which is working to ensure the country's stability and unity.

France also continues to support Libyan efforts to achieve the withdrawal of all foreign forces, mercenaries and foreign combatants. That is an essential condition for the emergence of a free, stable, sovereign and united Libya.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Mr. Bathily, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya, and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya, for their briefings. We welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya to today's meeting.

Like many colleagues, I am saddened by the recent tragic events involving refugees and immigrants in the waters of Libya. It should be noted that some European countries which have long been deflecting responsibility for protecting refugees, without any concern for serious human rights violations, cannot evade blame for the recurrence of such tragedies. That incident once again reminded us that the situation in Libya and its neighbouring countries has been volatile for quite some time, which makes it an important breeding ground for the issues of refugees and immigrants. Thus, we need to have a greater sense of urgency in resolving the Libyan issues.

In the light of the Secretary-General's report (S/2023/967), I wish to make the following observations.

Recently, parties in Libya have engaged in dialogue on an electoral road map and have reached consensus on many issues. Those are hard-won results. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily recently invited the main parties to conduct dialogues on outstanding issues. China would like to see the Libyan parties build on the results of the dialogues to dispel differences, so as to make further progress in the political process.

The prolongation of the Libyan issue and the continuing stalemate in the political process warrant our deep reflection. External interference and imposed solutions will not bring peace and stability. The only viable path is to respect Libya's sovereignty and ownership and to help the Libyan parties to explore a path of development in line with their own national conditions. China supports a constructive role for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, as it

continues to promote dialogue and consultation to address the legitimate concerns of all parties.

The outbreak of armed conflict in Tripoli, Gharyan, Benghazi and many other places, together with the fragile security situation in Libya, remain causes for concern. China calls on all parties to abide by the ceasefire agreement and implement the outcome of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and safeguard the hard-won peace. External forces and mercenaries should withdraw from Libya as soon as possible in a stable and orderly manner.

Recently, security incidents along the Libyan-Chadian border occur from time to time, and conflicts in the Sudan have impacted the situation in Libya. The Security Council should support stronger cooperation among regional countries in response to security challenges and maintain common security. China notes that, with the resumption of oil production in Libya, its economy is gradually stabilizing and growing with expected growth this year reaching 14 per cent, which deserves full recognition.

At the same time, flooding in Libya has brought about a severe humanitarian crisis. The task of post-disaster reconstruction in many areas is arduous. China welcomes the efforts made by the Libyan authorities and all parties and calls on the international community to increase humanitarian assistance to Libya.

The Libyan authorities have repeatedly expressed concerns about the freezing of their assets abroad. The Security Council should attach great importance to the issue and take positive steps to address Libya's legitimate concerns.

**Mr. Abushahab** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya for his valuable briefing and important efforts in supporting Libya. I also thank Mr. Osamu Yamanaka for his comprehensive briefing and welcome the participation of Ambassador Taher El-Sonni in today's meeting. I would also like to extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of the persons who drowned on Saturday, including women and children, in the tragic incident that took place off the coast of Libya.

Thirteen years ago, Libya experienced a critical juncture, when the brotherly Libyan people faced significant hurdles due to insecurity and instability,

dire humanitarian conditions and the emergence of serious economic challenges. Yet, in more recent years, Libyans have been able to make significant progress towards reaching a peaceful settlement, one that will help the country to transition into a new stage of peace, development and prosperity.

Still, many obstacles remain to be addressed, particularly those pertaining to divisions, which continue to undermine the gains achieved thus far in the political process. We stress that the interest of the Libyan people must be put above all considerations.

As we are well into the last month of the membership of the United Arab Emirates in the Security Council, I would like to emphasize a number of important matters related to the situation in Libya.

First, the political process must remain the primary and only option for establishing security and stability in Libya. That means committing to dialogue to resolve differences among the parties. We hope that Libya will hold its parliamentary and presidential elections, in accordance with agreed laws, to conclude the national transition stages according to a path that is agreed by all. We affirm our support for the efforts of the 6+6 joint committee to draft electoral laws. We hope that all parties will reach practical, tangible and consensus-based solutions in that regard. We look forward to the United Nations and the Special Representative continuing their indispensable mediation efforts for building bridges between the Libyan parties and helping them to reach a comprehensive and just political settlement that is Libyan-led and -owned.

Secondly, the future of Libya and its people depends on de-escalation and refraining from the use of force to restore security in the country. In that context, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2023/967) confirming that the ceasefire has not been violated during the period covered by the report. We stress that it is important for the 5+5 Joint Military Commission to continue its efforts to establish a permanent ceasefire and unify the military and security institutions. In that regard, we hope to see tangible steps on the ground.

The simultaneous, phased and gradual withdrawal of all foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries from Libya is essential to establishing security and stability in Libya, and to preserving its unity, independence and territorial integrity. Confronting terrorism in Libya and addressing its root causes must

continue, so that terrorist groups no longer pose a threat, especially in the south of the country.

Thirdly, three months after the catastrophic floods that struck Libya, and despite the continued recovery and reconstruction efforts, the affected cities and regions still need support and more basic services for their residents, especially in the city of Derna, where thousands of residents have been displaced. In that regard, we stress the need for the international community to continue supporting affected areas, in addition to continuing efforts to establish a national mechanism that assists the country in managing and addressing disasters.

Finally, achieving progress on the security, political and humanitarian tracks in Libya must be carried out in parallel with focusing on the economic and development path as essential to long-term stability in the country. It is therefore critical to provide education and work opportunities for young people and enable Libyan women to play an active role in building and developing their society. It is also key to ensure the preservation and fair distribution of Libyan wealth in line with Libya's interests and to the benefit of its people. That includes preserving frozen Libyan assets, which must remain valuable assets for future generations. We reiterate our previous calls to ensure that the oil and financial sectors are free from political polarization and to preserve their unity and integrity.

In conclusion, we stress the need to complete the national reconciliation process, which must be comprehensive and inclusive and not exclude anyone. The United Arab Emirates will continue to support all efforts focused on achieving security and stability in Libya and the Arab region, which must urgently end its complex crises. That issue is more urgent today than ever before, as the Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip is fuelling further regional tensions. Therefore, we must exert all efforts to preserve the progress made by the States of the region for peaceful solutions, including in Libya.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Ecuador.

I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily and the representative of Japan for their briefings. I welcome the presence of the representative of Libya in the Chamber.

We join others in extending our condolences and expressing our solidarity with respect to the recent shipwreck on the high seas off the coast of Libya.

This is the last time the Security Council will meet in 2023 to discuss the situation in Libya. Regrettably, another year has passed in which the Libyan people's aspirations for a return to democracy and for a unified Government remain unfulfilled. While the recent progress on the political track is encouraging, Ecuador urges Libya's political institutions and all parties to resolve their differences through a United Nations-facilitated dialogue in order to create the right conditions for the holding of free, transparent and inclusive presidential and parliamentary elections as soon as possible.

Ecuador hopes that all political processes in Libya will ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women and include young people and civil society. Respect for civic space and the right of individuals to exercise freedom of expression are fundamental to Libya's democratic transition. Indeed, the recent tragedy in Derna has highlighted the urgent need for unified political decision-making at the national level. We agree with the Secretary-General that that catastrophe should serve as a wake-up call to all Libyan stakeholders to come together and reach an agreement to pave the way for an electoral process that will provide the country with unified legitimate institutions and a peaceful future. It is important for the reconstruction and compensation efforts in storm-affected communities to be carried out in a coordinated and transparent manner through a unified national platform that also prioritizes psychosocial and mental-health support for survivors.

On the security front, it is important that efforts continue to be made to build trust between military and security leaders in support of the political process and to create a security environment conducive to the holding of elections.

We encourage the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to continue to support the efforts of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in the implementation of the 2020 ceasefire agreement, and we welcome the discussions aimed at agreeing on a code of conduct for security actors to ensure respect for human rights during the electoral process.

Furthermore, the Council should continue to look carefully at the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum

seekers in Libya. We hope that the Libyan authorities, with the support of the international community, will work to ensure the protection of those groups. I would like to conclude by reaffirming my country's support for the efforts of Special Representative Bathily and encouraging him to continue to use his good offices to reach a viable political solution. I urge all Libyan parties and the international community to fully support the Special Representative and UNSMIL in the implementation of their mandates.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Libya.

**Mr. El-Sonni** (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, for assuming the presidency of the Security Council during this month, and I wish you every success. We would also like to thank Mr. Bathily for his briefing and the representative of Japan for his briefing on behalf of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. I would take this opportunity to convey my gratitude to the five non-permanent members whose mandate will end this month, namely, the United Arab Emirates, Ghana, Gabon, Brazil and Albania.

My briefing will be short because, as is clear to all, no effective progress has been achieved pertaining to the political process. The presidential and parliamentary elections are unfortunately two years overdue and are still pending. Those elections were the aspiration of the whole Libyan people in order to break the vicious circle, restore legitimacy and put an end to the current division.

In that regard, we would like to stress that only a Libyan-led and -owned political process, without dictates or foreign interference, will achieve stability in the country and State control over the territory of Libya. That is why we call upon the Council to support all genuine national efforts that seek an inclusive solution. Notwithstanding the challenges, we still hope that we can forge a solution, especially given the recent relative stability and solidarity we saw when Libyans from all over the country overcame their political divisions and stood in unison and solidarity to support and help the cities and regions that were flooded due to the hurricane that ravaged the eastern part of the country in September. That was a call to all disagreeing parties for unison and a way out of the current crisis, out of respect and appreciation for thousands of lives

that were lost due to that disaster, unprecedented in the contemporary history of Libya.

In that connection, we thank Mr. Bathily and support his recent efforts and proposals to find a way out of the current political crisis and to find some form of dialogue that brings together all five key Libyan parties in order to address the challenges that impede the political process and the general elections.

We also stress the importance of achieving common ground for the success of that dialogue. All parties should positively engage in the preparatory meetings, without any preconditions, so as to prioritize the best interests of Libya. The main goal of the dialogue is to address controversial issues and reach consensus among all to create an environment conducive to holding presidential and parliamentary elections as soon as possible and within a set time frame. Those elections must be transparent, fair and acceptable to all so as to put an end to the divisions and all fragile transitional stages. That will meet the aspirations of the Libyan people, who are tired of this vicious circle and the ongoing situation, in order to avoid the mistakes of the past and not succumb to any external dictates.

Sunday, 10 December, was Human Rights Day. Today we heard a number of members who expressed their interest in everything related to human rights in Libya, especially with regard to the migration dossier. We have repeatedly stressed that this dossier cannot be addressed by Libya alone. It is an international comprehensive issue that should be addressed by the countries of origin, transit and destination.

In the meantime, Libya is committed to protecting human rights and making accountable all perpetrators of violations, no matter how long it takes and despite all the challenges. The Libyan people and the majority of peoples of the world, especially in our region, are tired of double standards, which were clearly unveiled after the unfortunate events and the brutal aggression launched by the Israeli entity against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the occupied territories for more than 70 days. It is shameful for the countries lecturing

us on the principles of human rights and international humanitarian law to continue that approach, especially when comparing the same events and positions of those countries with regard to other international issues. The results of voting on various humanitarian resolutions related to the crisis in Gaza and the undecided positions of certain countries, whether in the Security Council or in the General Assembly, unveiled the falsehood of the slogans touted by those countries to protect human rights, while they continue to adopt double standards. That will be remembered in the annals of history.

We would like to reiterate that the Government and the people of Libya, through the Group of Arab States at the United Nations, which we chaired last month, will spare no effort to put an end to that aggression against the Palestinian people, and reach an immediate ceasefire. After this meeting, we will closely follow up on the Council's position regarding a new draft resolution proposed by the United Arab Emirates on delivering urgent humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and opening safe corridors.

In that regard, we call upon the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility, adopt the draft resolution and implement it immediately. The Council must not get involved in any new political filibustering because killings and destruction are still going on, as victims have reached nearly 20,000 martyrs, thousands under the rubble and hundreds of thousands affected and displaced. Libya therefore assures the Palestinian people that we are with them and will never stop supporting their just cause. Their legitimate rights must be restored as there will be no genuine peace without the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital. There will be no peace without justice.

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

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

*The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.*