

**Statement of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya  
Martin Kobler to the Security Council**

**“Peace in Unity”**

**11 December 2015**

Madam President,

Distinguished Members of the Council

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to address today the Council so soon following my appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya.

There have been important developments with respect to the Libyan political dialogue process since my predecessor last briefed this Council on November 5th.

Since assuming my duties about three weeks ago, I have endeavoured to ensure seamless transition from my predecessor and continuity in the Libyan political dialogue process.

I am fortunate to have met in such a short period a wide array of political leaders, civil society representatives, tribal elders, as well as women and youth leaders. I also met the respective leaderships of the House of Representatives in Tobruk and the General National Congress in Tripoli.

I also had the opportunity to hold extensive consultations with countries in the region and beyond. I travelled to Algeria, where I had the privilege of meeting all of Libya’s neighbouring countries, as well as to Egypt, France, Italy, Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

I am grateful for the warm welcome I have received from all, inside Libya and outside, for their invaluable insights to the complexities of the Libyan political and security landscape.

In all these countries, there is a growing sense of alarm at the prospect of a spillover of the terrorist threat from Libya into neighbouring countries.

Today, along with the Libyan dialogue participants, I met with the President of Tunisia who also expressed his deep concern regarding the risk of Daesh rapidly consolidating its influence within Libya and the danger it poses to Tunisia and the wider region.

I have no illusion about the difficult realities that confront us in Libya. The two institutions at the centre of the political conflict in Libya are beginning to show dangerous signs of internal fragmentation.

The military conflict, particularly in Benghazi, continues to exact a heavy toll on the civilian population, adding further to existing humanitarian situation.

Across the country, 2.4 million people are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance, of whom 435,000 are estimated to be internally displaced, in addition to several hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants. Basic items of daily use and the necessary medication have become scarce in many hospitals.

In the south, criminality and lawlessness have reached endemic levels.

Extremist and terrorist groups continue to expand their spheres of influence.

Falling oil revenues and rapidly depleting financial resources are accelerating Libya's economic decline.

But in the face of all this, Libyans are overwhelmingly united on one key point. Libya can and should no longer wait for peace to come.

Madam President, Members of the Council

In the face of the continued inability of the House of Representatives and the General National Congress to move forward with the formal endorsement of the outcomes of the Libyan political dialogue, I convened a new round of the Libyan political dialogue to discuss the way forward.

The two days deliberations in Tunis, which concluded earlier today, culminated in the agreement on a number of key points.

First: a political settlement should be on the basis of the Libyan Political Agreement negotiated within the framework of the UNSMIL-facilitated political dialogue.

Second: notwithstanding the legitimate concerns by some of the parties, vis-à-vis elements of the Agreement, there would be no reopening of the text.

Third: an agreement on the need to move forward with the immediate endorsement and signature of the Libyan Political Agreement. The participants of the political dialogue – some 40 courageous men and women who take considerable risks to put the interest of Libya above personal interest – decided to publicly announce 16th of December as a target date for the signature.

Fourth: a unanimous call on all political and security actors to create a conducive environment to enable a future Government of National Accord to assume its responsibilities in the Libyan capital without threat or intimidation. All underlined the need for collective agreement on the necessary security arrangements to facilitate this.

In this regard, I wish to take this opportunity to call directly on the leadership of the General National Congress to allow my colleagues and myself to land with our airplane in Tripoli and other cities in Libya to freely interact with whomever we deem necessary. We can only fulfil our mandate if we have free access to all security actors, particularly in Tripoli.

Critically, the participants in the political dialogue highlighted the urgency, the time factor. Libya is in a race against time, its very social fabric, national unity, and territorial integrity is

directly endangered by the forces of extremism and terrorism, the likes of Daesh, which are actively consolidating and seeking to extend their influence beyond areas under their immediate control. Many dialogue participants referred to the imminent danger of Daesh expansion.

Madam President, Members of the Council

In thinking over their options, the plight of Libya's civilian population featured prominently in the deliberations of the Libyan dialogue participants today.

Yesterday, the world marked International Human Rights Day. But for many in Libya, yesterday marked yet another day of chaos, fear and hardship.

Libya's civilian population, including children, bear the brunt of gross human rights violations. Many civilians continue to be victims of arbitrary killings and violent attacks.

Much of Benghazi, the cradle of the 17 February Revolution, is today a wasteland. Hundreds of thousands of its inhabitants have had to flee their homes. The city's infrastructure and vital facilities lie in ruin.

Madam President, Members of the Council

The last two days of deliberations, which in part were attended by Tunis-based ambassadors and Libya envoys from Egypt, Italy and the United States who travelled to Tunis, revealed that the Libyans expect this Council's support and the support of the wider international community. This support is indispensable to help them to forge peace through unity.

In this regard, the forthcoming High Level Ministerial Conference in Rome hosted by Italy and the United States will provide an opportunity for the international community to speak with a strong and united voice in support of the Libyan Political Agreement.

And it is with the Rome Conference in mind that I also wish to convey on behalf of the Libyan dialogue participants the following four key points.

First: that this Council unequivocally supports the outcomes of the Libyan political dialogue and the Libyan Political Agreement. This would send a clear message to all those whose narrow agendas continue to stand in the way of peace.

Second: every effort must be made to ensure that technical support to the future Libyan Government of National Accord is visible, tangible and sustainable in order to ensure that it can deliver quickly.

Third: concerted efforts will need to be exerted to address the humanitarian situation and the terrible plight endured by the civilian population.

Fourth: I cannot overstate the threat posed by Daesh. Mobilising international support to assist Libyan authorities to take decisive measures to combat, contain and eliminate this imminent danger is a must.

Madam President, Members of the Council

The Libyans have a unique opportunity before them. The time has come to make peace. It is unlikely that there will be other opportunities without inflicting further suffering and hardship on the Libyan people.

I wish to take this opportunity to assure all Libyans that the door will always remain open for those who wish to join on the road to peace. Once the agreement is signed, we will immediately assist in broadening the basis of support for the new Government which should ultimately be based in Tripoli. Through engagement with the militias, political parties, tribal

elders, and civil society, we will advocate for the acceptance of the Libyan Political Agreement.

I appeal to the sense of patriotism and statesmanship of Libya's leaders to give consideration to Libya's higher national interests and the long-term welfare of the Libyan people.

Their support to the Libyan Political Agreement will be the first step on Libya's road to peace, security and prosperity.

Thank you.