



# Security Council

Distr.: General  
7 January 2019

Original: English

---

## United Nations Support Mission in Libya

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2434 \(2018\)](#), covers political, security and economic developments in Libya, provides an overview of the human rights and humanitarian situation in the country and outlines the activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) since the issuance of my previous report on 24 August 2018 ([S/2018/780](#)).

#### II. Political, security and economic-related developments

2. On 27 August, there were clashes in Tripoli between Tripoli-based armed groups and armed groups from the neighbouring cities of Tarhouna and Misrata. The nearly month-long conflict resulted in the destruction of critical infrastructure, the suspension of civil air movement and the loss of at least 120 civilian lives, including women and children. A ceasefire agreement reached under the auspices of UNSMIL on 4 September, supplemented by a consolidation agreement on 9 September, brought a reduction in fighting. On 6 September, the Security Council welcomed UNSMIL mediation efforts and called on all parties to implement and uphold the ceasefire.

3. Since 25 September, the ceasefire has been largely respected and reinforced through a new comprehensive security plan for Tripoli endorsed by the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord. That endorsement was made in concert with several other confidence-building measures, including: (a) the release of some prisoners; (b) the expected handover of vital installations from armed groups to State security providers; and (c) a package of economic reforms. The economic reform measures announced by the Council were aimed at alleviating the dire economic situation of the Libyan people and at reducing the stakes of militias in the shadow economy. On 7 October, the Council re-shuffled the Cabinet, appointing new Ministers for the Interior, Economy, Finance and Youth and Sport.

4. My Special Representative continued to engage with Libyan, regional and international stakeholders to support the implementation of the United Nations action plan. In a briefing to the Security Council on 8 November, he announced the start of preparations and the time frame for a national conference to build momentum towards holding credible and inclusive elections and ending the prolonged transition of Libya.



### **Implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement**

5. Members of the House of Representatives and the High State Council continued their efforts to agree on limited amendments to the Libyan Political Agreement to reform the executive authority. While representatives announced in a joint statement on 31 October that an agreement had been reached on a selection mechanism for a new executive authority, there remained a lack of agreement regarding the implementation of the principles announced in the statement. On 26 November, members of the House adopted two amendments to the 2011 Constitutional Declaration, purporting to adopt an amended version of the Agreement into the Declaration. It remained unclear if the vote met procedural requirements and reflected the necessary consensus between the House of Representatives and the High State Council.

6. On 9 November, the final report was issued on the consultative phase of the national conference process, which took place from April to July 2018. The report included the conclusions of the nationwide public consultations, which would serve as the foundation of the National Conference, to be organized under the auspices of the United Nations in the first weeks of 2019. The conference would provide a platform for the Libyan people to crystallize their vision for the future and generate impetus for the institutions of the Libyan Political Agreement to advance the political process.

### **International and regional engagement**

7. International and regional engagement on Libya continued to play a vital role to support the political process. Overall, international and regional stakeholders remained supportive of the United Nations action plan as the strategy to resolve the Libyan crisis.

8. On 17 October, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union convened its 802nd meeting on the situation in Libya. The African Union expressed its support for United Nations efforts to address the conflict. The African Union emphasized the need for reconciliation and proposed a joint effort with the United Nations in that regard.

9. My Special Representative attended the international meeting on Libya organized by the Government of Italy on 12 and 13 November in Palermo. Participants expressed their support for the implementation of the final elements of the United Nations action plan presented by my Special Representative and committed to providing their assistance for the training of Libyan professional security forces and their support to the economic reform agenda.

### **Situation in the western region**

10. During the reporting period, the situation in the western region was volatile owing to month-long armed clashes between armed groups in Tripoli. The main groups involved in the fighting against the Tripoli armed groups – the Tripoli Revolutionary Brigade and the Central Command/Abu Salim brigade – were Kaniyat/the Seventh Brigade armed group from Tarhouna, allied with armed elements mostly from Misrata forming the “Samoud Brigade”. On 27 August, the clashes escalated into full-scale fighting with the use of heavy weaponry in several areas of the capital, mainly in its southern districts, which have substantial civilian populations. Several key positions held by the Government of National Accord-affiliated Tripoli Revolutionary Brigade were captured by Kaniyat during the early days of the fighting, which the Brigade was able to recapture in mid-September. More than 700 inmates escaped from prisons located in conflict areas. Thousands of

families fled their homes in the capital and sought shelter elsewhere. Mitiga International Airport, the only operational airport in the capital, was targeted and remained closed for weeks.

11. On 4 September, UNSMIL convened concerned parties in the western town of Zawiya and brokered a ceasefire, which resulted in a significant decrease of armed clashes for nearly 10 days. The parties committed themselves to protecting civilians, reopening the airport and initiating dialogue on appropriate security arrangements in the capital. Under a supplementary agreement signed on 9 September, it was agreed that government and State security forces would begin to transfer control of sovereign institutions and critical infrastructure, including the airport, from armed groups to official police and military forces. To that end, a committee on security arrangements in Tripoli, composed of government and security officials, was created with support from UNSMIL. On 25 September, the fighting ceased after a bilateral agreement was reached between the Tripoli armed groups and Kaniyat, calling for an end to the hostilities, the withdrawal of Kaniyat and allied forces from the capital and the reopening of the airport.

12. Outside of the capital, there were continued reports of attacks, clashes, kidnappings and assassinations. On 25 September, in the town of Jafara, 25 km south of Tripoli, unidentified gunmen attacked a local police station, killing three police officers and kidnapping one. On 10 October, a stray bullet hit a United Nations armoured vehicle, part of a convoy travelling from Tripoli to Zuwara International Airport. No one was injured. After the end of hostilities in the capital, score-settling among armed groups in Tripoli resulted in three fatalities and heightened tensions in parts of the capital.

#### **Situation in the eastern region**

13. The security situation in the eastern region remained relatively calm over the reporting period. In the city of Derna, sporadic clashes were reported between forces affiliated with the Libyan National Army and the remnants of the Derna Protection Force. The Army established control over most of the city. On 17 October, unidentified gunmen in Benghazi attempted, unsuccessfully, to assassinate the head of the “Cyrenaica Federal Province”. On 21 October, the Army sent military reinforcement and equipment to its base in Kufra in preparation of a large-scale offensive to combat the Chadian rebel groups in southern Libya.

14. Libyan National Army-affiliated groups reportedly arrested several senior political and military figures allegedly opposed to General Haftar, including the former Mayor of Benghazi, Ahmed Areibi. On 21 October, a number of young people held a demonstration in Benghazi and demanded information about Mr. Areibi’s fate. On 16 October, at a separate event, demonstrators in Benghazi called on the House of Representatives, the Presidency Council and the High State Council to resign. The defunct, parallel “interim Government” decided to replace the Mayors of Benghazi, al Sahel and Tazerbo with steering committees, a move that was met with widespread criticism. The situation in the oil crescent region was stable during the reporting period.

#### **Situation in the southern region**

15. The situation in the south was marked by deteriorating socioeconomic conditions. The September conflict in Tripoli disabled the main power plant that supplies the south with electricity, resulting in a five-day blackout. While the power supply was partially restored, the poor state of services and the rising cost of goods fomented frustration among citizens, resulting in protest movements, including threats to prevent the flow of water and oil to the north. Vandalism and the lack of

maintenance disabled nearly one third of the aquifer pumps that supply 60 per cent of Libya with fresh water. This placed additional pressure on the aging and energy-intensive desalination plants in the north, resulting in longer blackouts nationally.

16. Several security incidents occurred, including a general increase in kidnappings for ransom. On 14 October, south of Um al-Araneb, local security actors attempted to liberate hostages from kidnappers, resulting in approximately a dozen casualties. The Libyan National Army took advantage of the absence of security forces from the Government of National Accord and the increased climate of insecurity to expand its influence in the south. On 6 September, General Haftar appointed the Commander of the Libyan National Army “Saiqa Force” as head of a joint operation room for the South. On 17 October, the Army created a new Murzuq Basin Operations Group, replacing the previous operation room created in 2017 by the main Tebu security actors. The Army continued to carry out sporadic aerial bombing raids on Chadian rebel groups operating on Libyan territory.

### **Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Libya**

17. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continued to be active in the vast desert areas south of its former stronghold of Sirte, extending southwards to the Sabha area. The organization also continued to operate smaller cells out of the coastal areas of central and western Libya. In the midst of the fighting between armed groups in Tripoli, ISIL claimed responsibility for an attack on 10 September against the headquarters of the National Oil Corporation in Tripoli. Four attackers, a National Oil Corporation employee and a security guard were killed and at least six people were injured. The incident was the second ISIL attack in the capital in 2018, following the assault launched on 2 May against the High National Election Commission. On 29 October, ISIL further claimed responsibility for an attack on the al-Fuqaha village in the central Jufra region, which resulted in five deaths and the abduction of at least eight civilians.

18. Islamist extremists, particularly those associated to ISIL, continued to exploit the fragmentation in Libya, its open land borders and the persistent weakness of State institutions. The organization has used remote areas of central and southern Libya for training, recruitment and the preparation of attacks. However, counter-terrorism operations by the Government of National Accord in the west and the Libyan National Army in the east increased pressure on extremist elements, limiting their freedom of movement in the main populated areas. On 8 October, in Derna, the Libyan National Army arrested a former officer of the Egyptian army affiliated with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

### **Economic situation**

19. Following the signing of the ceasefire agreement on 9 September, the Presidency Council announced a set of monetary and fiscal reforms, including the imposition of a foreign currency transaction fee, an increase in the annual allowance for foreign currency from \$500 to \$1,000 and a partial reduction of fuel subsidies. The imposition of the surcharge of 183 per cent on foreign currency transactions effectively raised the value of the Libyan dinar against the United States dollar, contributing to a drop in black market exchange rates. As at 6 November, the parallel market exchange rate stood at LD5.6 to \$1, compared with the official exchange rate of LD1.38, down from a rate of more than LD7 at the start of September.

20. The oil production of Libya reached 1.28 million barrels per day in late-September, the highest level since 2013. According to the National Oil Corporation, oil revenues reached more than \$13 billion in the first half of the year and was projected to increase by an additional 80 per cent by the end of the year. However, oil

production at the south-western Sharara oil field, the country's biggest oil field, continued to be disrupted by civil unrest driven by grievances over insufficient service delivery and violent clashes between armed militias. Early in October, the National Oil Corporation evacuated some of its employees from the Sharara oil facilities owing to security concerns over nearby clashes, reducing oil production to less than 250,000 barrels per day, down from 300,000 barrels per day in September.

21. In response to the request of Prime Minister Serraj on 10 July that the Security Council support a financial review of the internationally recognized Central Bank and the parallel bank in the east, UNSMIL convened the Governor and the Deputy Governor of the Central Bank on 27 August and 7 November. An agreement was reached on the terms of reference for the review. On 7 November, UNSMIL organized the first in a series of planned seminars together with the Royal Institute of International Affairs think tank, bringing together Libyan economic experts, international policymakers and analysts to share analysis on economic and political developments and to discuss international support for economic reforms.

### **III. Constitution-making process**

22. The delay by the House of Representatives to adopt a referendum law continued to hamper the constitution-making process. After numerous sessions were suspended by the House owing to the lack of quorum, a law was reportedly passed on 13 September during an emergency session. On 26 November, the House issued a referendum law. Under the law, Libya would be divided into three constituencies for the purpose of holding a referendum on the constitutional proposal. In order for the proposal to be adopted as the new constitution of Libya, it would need to be approved by a simple majority in each of the three constituencies, in addition to a two-thirds majority of the total national vote. An amendment to the Constitutional Declaration would dissolve the Constitution Drafting Assembly if the draft was rejected, and no further revised draft would be made, as originally enshrined in the Constitutional Declaration. The referendum law was referred to the High National Election Commission on 29 November. There remained a lack of political consensus over the validity of the law and the associated amendments to the Constitutional Declaration.

23. The Constitution Drafting Assembly continued to conduct outreach in support of the constitution-making process. The Mission continued to engage with stakeholders, including the new President of the Assembly, to discuss the constitution-making process in Libya.

## **IV. Other activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya**

### **A. Electoral support**

24. The High National Election Commission continued the rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged during the deadly 2 May 2018 terrorist attack. With the Government emergency funding of LD2 million (\$1.5 million) and support of the international community through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project entitled "Promoting elections for the people of Libya", the Commission was expected to move into its new headquarters by the end of December. This important development could not have been achieved without the support of donors, such as France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union. The re-establishment of a functional headquarters was essential for the conduct of any

electoral process in the future. The UNSMIL-led integrated electoral assistance team, including UNDP, continued its efforts to support preparations for future balloting events, as foreseen by the United Nations action plan. Consultations were undertaken with the Government and the Commission on a draft electoral security framework.

25. The UNSMIL and UNDP joint electoral assistance project provided technical support to the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections, which organized municipal elections in Beni Walid and Derj on 15 September. The two elections were conducted in a largely peaceful manner, notwithstanding minor security incidents. Those elections, including the one held in Zawiya in May, were part of the process to renew the four-year mandates of more than 100 councils between 2018 and 2020. On 10 October, the Presidency Council issued new regulations for municipal elections, which introduced a party block vote system whereby one list with a simple majority would win all seats of the council.

26. The Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections and High National Election Commission both lacked sufficient national funding. The LD66 million budget for the Commission approved in July, and the approved budget for the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections, had yet to be disbursed.

## **B. Human rights, transitional justice and the rule of law**

27. During the reporting period, armed groups across Libya continued to commit violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in a climate of continued impunity. Civilians continued to bear the brunt of the escalation of fighting and violence. UNSMIL documented 71 civilian casualties, including 46 killed and 25 injured. That included 8 boys and 1 girl who were killed, and 1 boy and 1 girl injured as a direct result of hostilities. Three more boys and one girl were killed as an indirect result of hostilities, or other violations or abuses of international humanitarian law. Leading causes of death included gunfire, shelling and explosive remnants of war.

28. Casualties from the fighting in Tripoli in August and September were caused mainly by the reckless use of weapons with wide-area impact in residential areas with little concern for the safety of civilians. Fighting also resulted in damage to civilian infrastructure, including mosques and private homes, and led to the temporary displacement of hundreds of families. Large numbers of families were trapped by the fighting or chose to stay home to prevent looting.

29. Activists, medical professionals and local officials from Derna continued to be detained incommunicado for months in facilities under the control of the Libyan National Army, including the Gernada prison in al-Baida, reportedly without referral to the judicial authorities. Relatives who sought to protest against the denial by prison officials of family visits were threatened with violence and possible arrests. UNSMIL requests to visit prisons under the control of the Army remained unanswered during the reporting period.

### **Unlawful deprivation of liberty, detention and torture**

30. Across the country, arbitrary detention and torture continued to be widespread. Approximately 6,400 individuals were being held in 26 official prisons operated by the Ministry of Justice, of whom an estimated 75 to 80 per cent were in pretrial detention. Thousands of others were being held in facilities nominally under the control of the Ministry of the Interior or the Ministry of Defence, as well as facilities directly run by armed groups. Those held had little opportunity to challenge the legality of their detention or seek redress for violations suffered.

31. In relation to detention facilities, UNSMIL continued to receive credible reports of prolonged and arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, enforced disappearances, poor detention conditions, medical neglect and the denial of visits from families and lawyers by those in charge of prisons and other places of detention.

32. UNSMIL highlighted the need to end arbitrary and prolonged pretrial detention and the importance of ensuring that all prisons operated by the Ministry of Justice were controlled by professional and trained Judicial Police career staff. Regular meetings were held with Ministry of Justice officials to follow up on the screening process and to enhance the Ministry's supervision over official prisons. On 6 November, with support from the Minister for Justice, UNSMIL undertook a visit to the male blocks of Al-Jdeidah prison, which had been closed since 2011 and only reopened late in September. The facility was found to offer acceptable conditions of detention under the supervision of the Public Prosecution and the Judicial Police, although it lacked a proper medical facility. However, a 50-bed hospital was planned, as the prison was to become Tripoli's main facility. Almost half of the detainees – 193 out of 397 – had recently been transferred from Mitiga prison. A few detainees under 18 years of age had been placed together with other young prisoners under 23 years of age and had no access to education.

### **Judicial screening of detainees**

33. On 16 September, the Presidency Council issued decrees No. 1301 and No. 1304 in relation to the screening of detainees. Decree No. 1301 established a committee of three members, representing the Public Prosecution, the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice, to screen the detainees at Mitiga prison within a 10-day time frame. On 17 September, decree No. 1301 was amended by decree No. 1307, which added a representative of the Judicial Police and the Ministry of the Interior to the committee. The deadline for completing the screening was extended by 15 days, with a report to be presented to the Council. Decree No. 1304, issued on 16 September, stipulated that all individuals detained beyond the period established by law were to be released immediately, except those accused of crimes related to terrorism, homicide, armed robbery and drug trafficking. The decree assigned the Minister for Justice the task of implementing its provisions, in coordination with the Minister for the Interior.

34. On 19 September, the Supreme Judicial Council issued decree No. 129 establishing another committee to review the cases of arbitrary detention at Mitiga prison. Under the decree, three public prosecutors were appointed to complete the task of reviewing the legality of detention of individuals held at Mitiga prison and to prepare a report within two weeks. The committee, established by the Acting Prosecutor General, was given a purely judicial mandate and composition.

35. The committees began the review of detainees at Mitiga prison, which was believed to hold more than 3,600 detainees. According to the Investigation Office of the Office of the Prosecutor General, an estimated 800 detainees were screened, of whom around 300 were released and others transferred. UNSMIL was working to encourage the Office of the Prosecutor General to provide regular public updates on the progress of the screening process.

### **Groups in vulnerable situations**

#### *Migrants and refugees*

36. Migrants and refugees continued to be vulnerable to such acts as: deprivation of liberty and arbitrary detention in official and unofficial places of detention; torture, including sexual violence; abduction for ransom; extortion; forced labour; and unlawful killings. The number of detainees increased during the reporting period

owing to more interceptions at sea and the closure of sea routes to migrants, preventing their departure. Perpetrators of the above-mentioned acts included State officials, armed groups, smugglers, traffickers and criminal gangs. To date, an estimated 5,300 refugees and migrants had been detained in Libya, of whom 3,700 were in need of international protection.

37. The United Nations continued to document incidents of adolescent boys between 13 and 15 who had reportedly been forcibly recruited by local armed groups. Incidents of abduction of children had been increasingly reported in Derna, specifically for the purpose of recruitment and use by parties to conflict. Child casualties had also been verified in the southern outskirts of Tripoli as a result of clashes between the Tarhouna-based Kaniyat group and Tripoli-based militias. The United Nations had also documented attacks on schools and hospitals, as well as attacks against medical personnel.

38. The majority of a group of 93 African and Asian migrants rescued in international waters on 8 November by a Panamanian freighter and brought to Al-Khoms and then Misrata were prevented from disembarking by a minority that demanded to be taken to Italy and also kept the crew as hostages. After negotiations involving consular representatives failed, Libyan forces stormed the ship on 19 November. The hostage takers were to be prosecuted.

#### *Women and girls*

39. Women and girls were arbitrarily detained, at times on the basis of their family affiliation or for “moral crimes”, such as engaging in consensual sexual relations outside of marriage. Women were arbitrarily deprived of their liberty, including in facilities without female guards, exposing them to the risk of sexual abuse. A group of approximately 40 women were transferred from Mitiga prison to the female section of Al-Jdeidah prison. Migrant women and girls were particularly vulnerable to rape and other sexual violence and exploitation at the hands of State and non-State actors.

40. It was announced that an investigation would be held into the beating on 23 September of a resident of a “care home” for orphaned women and girls in Benghazi by members of the Criminal Investigations Department. No information was made available on the results of the investigation, or the measures taken to protect residents from further abuse and to ensure that their rights to freedom of movement are respected.

#### *Journalists and activists*

41. UNSMIL continued to receive reports of threats, intimidation and harassment of journalists, as well as updates on older cases of disappearances of Libyan and foreign journalists. Some foreign correspondents and Libyan journalists managed to obtain accreditations in November but the process remained discretionary and cumbersome. Civil society and human rights defenders in Libya also faced a considerable number of challenges, in particular relating to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association.

#### **Transitional justice and national reconciliation**

42. The UNSMIL and UNDP joint project on national reconciliation, funded by the Peacebuilding Fund, entered its final phase with the elaboration of a national reconciliation strategy due to be presented by the end of the year. As one of the steps towards creating that strategy, 20 Libyan legal experts met in Tunis on 15 and 16 October to discuss the current state of legislation and mechanisms in place, as well as ways to relaunch a transitional justice process that had been stalled in recent years. The discussions also addressed the need to establish a fact-finding commission, given



its central role in the transitional justice process. The participating experts agreed on the need to amend current legislation. A two-day capacity-building training course for some 25 representatives of Libyan civil society organizations was held on 8 and 9 October in Tunis to equip them with practical tools for conflict resolution, reconciliation and transitional justice. Two youth forums were held from 26 to 28 September and from 29 to 31 October, involving some 80 Libyan young people, aimed at enhancing communication with local authorities and improving civic participation.

43. On 5 November, UNSMIL attended an expert discussion at the Ministry of Justice on the draft executive regulation to the 2013 Transitional Justice Law. Consensus prevailed among the experts that the Law should be revised. Concern was raised about the definitions of crimes, the omission of sexual and gender-based violence and child recruitment, ambiguity regarding the administrative or quasi-judicial nature of the fact-finding commission and the method of attributing reparations to victims.

#### **Human rights due diligence policy**

44. The United Nations system in Libya continued its efforts towards the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces ([A/67/775-S/2013/110](#), annex). UNSMIL and the United Nations country team continued to provide support for Libyan security forces with a view to mitigating the identified risks of grave violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law or refugee law by non-United Nations security forces that are recipients of United Nations support.

45. During the reporting period, the risk assessment for the UNSMIL-UNDP Policing and Security Joint Programme was completed, including a detailed action plan, and was submitted to the human rights due diligence policy task force. The task force held a meeting on 12 October and endorsed the risk assessment and mitigating measures for the project of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with the Department for Combating Illegal Migration. The first yearly progress report was received from those agencies on the implementation of mitigating measures for their work with the Libyan Coast Guard.

### **C. Security sector**

#### **Support for Libyan plans for interim security arrangements and the unification of security forces**

46. On 16 September, the Presidency Council issued decree No. 1303 on the establishment of the Committee on Security Arrangements in Tripoli, tasking it with planning new security arrangements, including transferring the control of critical infrastructure from armed groups to regular security forces, with the objective of promoting a State monopoly on security and the formation of joint police and army forces to secure the capital. Through extensive participation in the Committee's engagement plan with influential leaders of armed groups, UNSMIL provided support to in-depth security consultations that led to the adoption on 24 October of presidential decree No. 1437, in which the Council approved plans for new security arrangements for Greater Tripoli and mandated the Joint Operations Centre to coordinate with the relevant security actors to reaffirm the various parties' commitment to the consolidation of the ceasefire agreement and agreed-upon security reforms in the capital. The decree also allowed for the creation of a "quality assurance" committee made up of the key signatories to the ceasefire.

47. During the reporting period, UNSMIL continued its engagement with Member States by convening regular meetings of the security sector working group with more than 30 States and international organizations, with a view to supporting the development of a coherent security sector reform strategy in Libya. The meetings highlighted the importance of continued political support for the United Nations-mediated ceasefire agreement in Tripoli and the introduction of new security arrangements, as outlined by my Special Representative in his briefing to the Security Council on 5 September.

#### **Arms and ammunition management**

48. The United Nations Mine Action Service continued to provide technical advice and support to Libyan national and local authorities, as well as mine action partners, on the safe and secure storage of arms and related material. It commenced a project to secure a missile storage facility near Gharyan in preparation for the future disposal of highly toxic liquid fuel propellant at the site. Additional resources were needed for the second phase of the project to dispose of the fuel, which posed a risk to the safety and security of civilians. In August and September, the Mine Action Service continued to provide technical assistance to the United Nations Guard Unit on the proper storage of ammunition, which enhanced the safety of UNSMIL staff and local residents.

### **D. Women's empowerment**

49. On 24 October, the Women Support and Empowerment Unit within the Presidency Council commenced its work in line with article 11 of the Libyan Political Agreement. Some challenges were highlighted to UNSMIL, including the lack of budget and resources, office space, accreditation and a clear reporting line, contrary to article 11, which stipulates that the Unit should fall directly under the Presidency Council. UNSMIL will endeavour to ensure that proper support, capacity development and funding from the Government of National Accord and the international community is provided to enable the Unit to perform its functions.

50. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued to support the protection and empowerment of women and girls through the provision of psychosocial support and livelihood-related skills training in four women's community centres in Tripoli, Benghazi and Sabha.

### **E. Young people, peace and security**

51. During the reporting period, UNFPA, in partnership with the Ministries of Planning and Youth and Sport, initiated a situation analysis and response assessment for young people in Libya. The initiative will analyse the effectiveness of the response to the needs of young people, identify existing youth policies and present recommendations for improving policy and programme activities.

### **F. Coordination and international assistance**

52. The budget and results matrix for the United Nations strategic framework for the period 2019–2020 was finalized. The strategic framework was presented to donors in November, and the signing ceremony with the Government of National Accord was held in December 2018.

## G. Humanitarian, stabilization and development assistance

53. The humanitarian situation in Libya remained fragile. Humanitarian actors continued to face access restrictions in parts of Libya, including the southern region.

54. Insufficient funding for the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan for 2018 remained a constraining factor for the provision of humanitarian assistance, with only 24 per cent of the required \$313 million having been contributed. In 2019, the humanitarian community aims to target 552,000 people out of a total of 822,890, and requests that \$202 million be allocated for the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan. The number of targeted people in need has decreased by 25 per cent compared with 2018 as a result of a more refined data collection and monitoring process. Area humanitarian country teams for Sebha and Benghazi were being established, including an operational presence in Benghazi by the end of 2018.

55. During the reporting period, there were over 669,000 migrants in Libya, including women (12 per cent of identified migrants) and children (9 per cent). In total, 35 per cent of migrants were unaccompanied and 65 per cent accompanied. Between 25 August and 7 November, 2,406 migrants arrived in Italy from Libya, and 137 deaths were recorded. A further 1,339 migrants were returned to Libya by the Libyan Coast Guard. At disembarkation points, UNHCR and IOM provided individuals with medical and humanitarian assistance. IOM helped 3,012 migrants to return home to 32 countries of origin through the voluntary humanitarian return programme. In 2018, UNHCR evacuated 2,476 refugees out of Libya, of whom 618 were evacuated during the reporting period. More than 2,600 refugees were registered by UNHCR in detention centres during the reporting period.

56. Of the 57,486 refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR in Libya, 1,623 were registered during the reporting period. More than 5,300 migrants and refugees (comprising 3,700 refugees) were detained at official facilities. That figure does not include detention centres maintained by armed groups. During its 200 monitoring visits to detention centres during the reporting period, UNHCR provided 1,460 medical consultations and material support to detained migrants and refugees. IOM provided 2,444 medical consultations to detained migrants.

57. In response to the violence in Tripoli in September, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) scaled up its multisectoral emergency response by providing recreational and psychosocial activities for 2,053 children, including internally displaced children from Tawergha. In cooperation with partners, UNICEF rehabilitated the Tarik Al Sika and Ain Zara detention centres and Sidi Esayeh and Sarraj camps to improve the quality of and access to water and sanitation facilities, benefiting 2,895 vulnerable children, men and women (comprising 1,495 females and 1,400 males). To provide coverage and better coordination to protect children against preventable diseases, on 25 October UNICEF signed an agreement with the National Centre for Disease Control to support the social mobilization of the nationwide measles, polio and vitamin A campaign from 8 to 15 December for 2.75 million children across the country.

58. To strengthen the surveillance system for outbreak reporting, the World Health Organization trained 120 surveillance officers, health service providers and health emergency responders from non-governmental organization and the Ministry of Health on cholera preparedness and response measures. It provided first aid and inter-agency health emergency kits to six hospitals in Tripoli, enhancing their readiness and response capacities to cover 540,000 patients. UNFPA supported more than 1,300 women to give birth safely and supplied reproductive health kits to five medical centres, ensuring coverage of reproductive health services for some 180,000 people for three months. It also established a hotline to support victims of gender-

based violence. UNFPA deployed three mobile teams to Ghat, Agwinet and Jufrah in the south to support the provision of emergency obstetric care and lifesaving services on sexual and reproductive health.

59. The World Food Programme (WFP) provided assistance to 84,674 vulnerable people, of whom 51 per cent were women. WFP launched the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service in Libya, improving humanitarian access to parts of the country.

60. The United Nations Mine Action Service continued to coordinate the United Nations humanitarian mine action response to the explosive threat in Libya by providing planning and information exchange platforms for mine action partners, donors and the Libyan Mine Action Centre. Following a joint assessment mission to Benghazi in July with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and WFP, the United Nations Mine Action Service initiated preparations for survey and emergency clearance in several heavily contaminated districts near the city centre to support the safe return of internally displaced persons and to begin early stabilization efforts.

61. On 26 October, UNFPA and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme presented the key findings of their joint Rapid City Profiling and Monitoring System Project and implemented, in close partnership with six conflict-affected municipalities in Libya (Al Kufra, Benghazi, Janzour, Sebha, Sirte and Ubari), the Urban Planning Agency and the Bureau of Statistics and Census. The project provided a multisectoral assessment of the population's needs, with which to inform the stabilization and development efforts of the municipalities. The latest FAO multisector assessment for 2018, including data compiled from 23 July to 5 September, revealed that 22 per cent of nationals were engaged in the agricultural sector. Nationwide, 7.4 per cent of households had abandoned agricultural production since 2014.

62. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime continued its technical assistance activities to familiarize Libyan officials with good practices and the relevant criminal justice policy aspects of counterterrorism in other countries, to enhance their capacity to handle material evidence and to cooperate effectively internationally. Under that initiative, from 8 to 12 October, training on terrorist crime-scene management and post-blast investigations was held at the Istituto Superiore di Tecniche Investigative dell'Arma dei Carabinieri in Velletri, Italy. Furthermore, from 15 to 19 October, a study visit was organized to France on the importance of material evidence and international cooperation in counterterrorism investigations. The participants visited forensic labs of the National Gendarmerie and the French National Police, as well as the General Secretariat of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

63. The Stabilization Facility for Libya continued to provide strategic support to delivered results in all regions of the country, allowing the Government of National Accord to reach out to citizens across the country with quick interventions at the municipality level. The Government of Libya contributed \$5 million to the Facility. As at September, the Facility had undertaken more than 285 projects in Bani Walid, Benghazi, Kikla, Sebha, Sirte, Tripoli and Ubari. In those areas, UNDP continued to work with government partners to restore power grids as well as water and sewage networks; repair primary and secondary schools; rehabilitate universities, hospitals and clinics; enable municipalities to clear garbage from neglected streets; provide vital equipment, including ambulances, to health departments; and assist with other municipal needs related to civil defence, public health and access to justice. From June to September, coordinators in those regions continued to strengthen the municipalities' technical capacities for inclusive planning and coordination of

investment, and for monitoring stabilization activities. The next phase of the Facility, set to be launched in January 2019, will reinforce and strengthen vital contributions at the municipal level.

## **V. Deployment of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and security arrangements**

### **Operational environment and return to Libya**

64. During the reporting period, UNSMIL continued to operate on the basis of the temporary rotational concept. While the presence of United Nations international personnel had reached significant numbers in the months to July 2018 (between 140 and 200), following the eruption of clashes among the militias in Tripoli at the end of August, the United Nations presence was significantly reduced. Since early November, the United Nations presence has returned to the levels *quo ante*.

65. While the engagement of my Special Representative and a small team on the ground with the parties was continuous and pivotal in brokering the cessation of hostilities, which restored calm to the capital, the operational environment remained somewhat less permissive for wider mission engagement.

66. In order to respond to the deteriorated security environment and to the reports of direct threats against United Nations personnel and operations, the mission continued to further improve the security infrastructure at its facilities in Tripoli, intensified exercises for coordination between civilian security components and the United Nations Guard Unit and tightened access to the compound. Those upgrades were needed to respond to the immediate deterioration of the situation and to better prepare the Mission for the return of its personnel to Tripoli in 2019.

67. At the time of writing, the Mission had completed the reassignment of those staff members who would return to Libya in 2019. Around 20 UNSMIL staff, mainly fulfilling support functions, continued to be based in Tunis.

### **Security and safety of staff members and operations**

68. The level of risk for the United Nations personnel and operations in Libya increased following the outbreak of violence in Tripoli at the end of August. The risk of a large-scale confrontation between armed groups was avoided, also thanks to the engagement of my Special Representative, but the threat of terrorism increased. Additional precautionary measures, including the review of critical functions and subsequent reduction of personnel in the country, the suspension of non-essential missions outside the UNSMIL compound and the suspension of external missions to Libya, were implemented expeditiously to mitigate the increased risk. As a temporary measure, country team personnel relocated to the Mission's compound pending implementation of additional security measures at their office and accommodation premises.

## **VI. Observations**

69. I welcome the unity shown by the international community at the meeting held in Palermo, and its support for the implementation of the United Nations action plan through a national conference on Libya, to be held early in 2019, and subsequent preparations for presidential and parliamentary elections. I am also grateful for the commitments to provide tangible support to improve the conditions for elections,

including support to the ongoing economic reform process and security arrangements in the capital.

70. The Government of National Accord has taken positive steps aimed at restoring the rule of law in Tripoli with assistance from the United Nations. I am encouraged by the adoption of the security plan for Greater Tripoli, which confers vital coordination and implementation functions to the Joint Operations Centre. I am thankful to Member States for their contributions and pledged assistance to the Joint Operations Centre and towards strengthening the regular security actors of Libya, through the provision of training, equipment or other means.

71. It is critical that commitments concerning the ceasefire and the new security arrangements be delivered in order to maintain calm in the capital and avoid a renewed escalation of violence. Efforts to restore security in the capital need to be complemented by a holistic security strategy that must address the reforming and unification of the army and the redevelopment of the State security forces across Libya. The violence in Tripoli illustrated the urgent need to restore the State monopoly on the use of force and to build professional, accountable and unified security institutions throughout the country. The conflict also underscored the importance of linking security, political and economic reforms.

72. I welcome measures taken by the Presidency Council to introduce economic reforms for the benefit of the Libyan people and to reduce opportunities in the shadow economy for militias. I encourage the Government of National Accord to build on those reforms with support from international partners, as appropriate. UNSMIL will continue to support the Government of National Accord in the consolidation of economic arrangements, including reform and policy.

73. I welcome the progress made by UNSMIL on the proposal for a review of the internationally recognized Central Bank of Libya and the parallel bank in the east of the country. Efforts to increase the transparency and accountability of the economic and financial institutions of Libya remain paramount as a basis for unity, security and the country's democratic future. I condemn the continued interference by armed actors in the sovereign institutions of Libya and welcome the ongoing efforts of the United Nations, the international community and Member States, in close coordination with relevant Libyan institutions, to identify perpetrators and hold them accountable through criminal proceedings and international sanctions.

74. Reflecting the wish expressed by Libyans, UNSMIL will organize a national conference event early in 2019 in an effort to end the political transition phase and unite the country. I believe the conference will provide a platform and opportunity to form a nationwide consensus to break the deadlock caused by those who, in an effort to maintain the status quo, have suppressed Libyan citizens' rights and interests. Through the conference, I strongly encourage the Libyan political class and the existing institutions to deliver legislation for elections. The United Nations will continue to support the technical preparations to enable elections to take place under appropriate conditions. I reiterate my call to all parties in Libya to uphold their commitments to ensure that such conditions are in place.

75. I welcome the successful conclusion of three democratic municipal council elections in 2018. I note concerns regarding the issuance of new regulations that alter the electoral system for municipal elections and encourage the Government of National Accord to hold inclusive consultations ahead of any implementation. I call on the Government of National Accord to ensure that the High National Electoral Commission and the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections receive adequate budgetary resources to enable them to facilitate credible electoral processes.

76. I welcome the commencement of work by the Women Support and Empowerment Unit under the Presidency Council. This is a landmark development for all Libyan women and demonstrates the commitment of the Government of National Accord to the promotion of gender equality in the country. The advancement of gender equality and women's full and effective participation in political and economic life in Libya is paramount for advancing peace and security. I continue to call on all Libyan actors to implement Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

77. I remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Libya. I commend Member States for their contributions to the Stabilization Facility for Libya and encourage funding for the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan for 2019, which aims at supporting some 823,000 people in need.

78. I also remain concerned about the loss of civilian lives in Libya, including during the violence that engulfed the capital in August and September. I call on all parties to the conflict to fully respect international humanitarian law, including by taking all precautions to protect civilians, to refrain from targeting civilians and civilian infrastructures and to ensure that the wounded and sick, both civilians and those who have participated in hostilities, are cared for, including through medical evacuations. Medical facilities, personnel and equipment must be respected and protected at all times. I urge the Government of National Accord to intensify its efforts to ensure that those responsible for war crimes and other serious violations of international human rights law are brought to justice in proceedings that meet international fair trial standards. I also encourage Libyan authorities to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court, in accordance with Security Council resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#), to help bring about justice and accountability for crimes in Libya under international law.

79. I welcome the review of the legality of detention at Mitiga prison in Tripoli. I encourage those involved in the review process to expand it to all places of detention across Libya and all detainees, regardless of the accusations they face, in order to ensure the immediate release of all those held arbitrarily and without a legal basis. I remain deeply concerned about widespread human rights violations and abuses committed in the context of detention and the prolonged arbitrary detention of thousands of men, women and children without due process. The Government must put in place measures to ensure that all those detained are protected against torture and other ill-treatment and granted their right to due process. All prisons must be under effective Government control and free of any influence or interference by armed groups.

80. I reiterate the commitment of the United Nations to supporting Libyans across the country as mandated by the Security Council. In that regard, I welcome the return of Mission personnel to Tripoli and elsewhere, to complete the return of the United Nations to Libya.

81. I wish to reiterate my sincere appreciation to the Government of Nepal for providing the personnel of the United Nations Guard Unit. I also wish to express my gratitude to my Special Representative for Libya, Ghassan Salamé, and to the staff of the United Nations system in Libya for their dedication and hard work in support of peace and security in Libya.