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United Nations Support Mission in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to Security Council resolutions [2510 \(2020\)](#), [2542 \(2020\)](#), [2570 \(2021\)](#), [2647 \(2022\)](#), [2656 \(2022\)](#) and [2702 \(2023\)](#), covers political, security and economic developments in Libya. It provides an overview of the human rights and humanitarian situation in the country and the activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) since the issuance of the previous report ([S/2023/589](#)), dated 8 August 2023.

II. Political and security-related developments

2. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of UNSMIL, Abdoulaye Bathily, intensified his efforts to convene the main Libyan stakeholders under UNSMIL auspices to overcome outstanding political differences and facilitate a climate conducive to the holding of inclusive presidential and legislative elections.

3. On 6 August, the High State Council elected Mohammed Takala as its new President. Mr. Takala replaced Khaled Mishri, who had held the position since 2018.

4. On 27 August, the Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity, Abdulhamid Al Dabiba, suspended Najla El Mangoush from her position as Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The decision was taken following reports of a meeting during the previous week between Ms. El Mangoush and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, Eli Cohen, in Rome, which drew widespread criticism throughout Libya. Prime Minister Al Dabiba, who temporarily assumed the function of Minister for Foreign Affairs, ordered an investigation of the situation by a committee led by the Minister of Justice.

5. On 10 and 11 September, Storm Daniel hit eastern Libya, including the city of Darnah, causing massive flooding and destruction to communities and infrastructure. Darnah suffered extensive damage, including as result of the collapse of two dams, leading to the destruction of entire neighbourhoods and vital infrastructure. At the time of publication, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the number of deaths at 4,255, with an additional 8,540 people still missing and upwards of 43,000 displaced.



6. Hours after the disaster, 23 international search and rescue teams were deployed from 12 countries to support operations led by Libya. During their visit to Darnah on 16 September, the Special Representative and the Deputy Special Representative, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator conducted an initial assessment of the damage, met with the affected population and conveyed to them the solidarity and condolences of the United Nations. The Special Representative commended municipal leaders and Libyans across the country for the show of unity and solidarity in the face of the disaster and called on Libyan political leaders to follow their example. In a remarkable show of solidarity, armed groups from the western part of the country deployed elements and equipment to the eastern region in support of emergency efforts.

7. In response to widespread calls from affected populations for those responsible to be held accountable, the government designated by the House of Representatives suspended the mayor of Darnah on 14 September. Separately, the Tripoli-based Attorney-General, Siddiq Al Sour, announced on 15 September an investigation to determine the causes of the disaster. On 18 September, following public demonstrations demanding accountability, during which protesters set the house of the mayor of Darnah on fire, the Ministry for Local Government of the government designated by the House of Representatives issued resolution No. 60 (2023), dissolving the municipal council of Darnah and referring its members for investigation. On 25 September, the Attorney-General issued orders for the arrest of the suspended mayor of Darnah, along with several current and former local officials, including from the water and dam authorities, for alleged abuse of power and misuse of public funds. Subsequently, the mayor of Darnah was reportedly arrested by the Benghazi-based General Directorate of Criminal Investigation.

8. In a statement issued on 2 October, the Special Representative expressed concern about parallel initiatives by Libyan actors and institutions in the east and the west vying for control over the management of reconstruction funds for Darnah and other flood-affected areas. In his statement, the Special Representative further noted that those unilateral initiatives were deepening existing divisions and impeding reconstruction efforts. He called on all relevant national and local authorities and on the international partners of Libya to facilitate an agreement on a unified Libyan national platform to direct recovery and reconstruction efforts in a transparent and accountable manner, on the basis of an objective assessment of the damage, needs and requirements on the ground.

9. The overall security situation in Libya remained fragile. Armed clashes were reported in densely populated areas of Tripoli, Benghazi and the western city of Gharyan, exposing the continued fragmentation of security actors and the absence of command and control. The south-west of Libya saw an escalation of hostilities between the Chadian National Army and Chadian opposition armed groups operating along the border. In parallel, the Libyan National Army reportedly carried out air strikes against Chadian opposition groups operating from southern Libya.

A. Implementation of the intra-Libyan dialogue tracks

10. On the political track, UNSMIL, together with the High National Elections Commission, continued to support the work of the “6+6” committee established by the House of Representatives and the High State Council to finalize the electoral laws. The Special Representative encouraged the committee to address the shortcomings in the draft electoral laws that it had finalized in Bouznika, Morocco, on 6 June on the basis of the feedback provided by UNSMIL and the Commission. The Special Representative also engaged with the President of the High State Council to secure

his institution's commitment to resolving the ongoing political deadlock and concluding the work of the committee.

11. On 2 October, the House of Representatives adopted the revised electoral laws resubmitted by the "6+6" committee on 27 September. On 4 October, the High State Council rejected the laws approved by the House of Representatives, instead approving the committee's previous version as finalized in Bouznika, Morocco, in June. The Council also withdrew its members from the committee. Reportedly, the Council contested the changes made to the laws by the committee, such as provisions made for allowing the participation of military officers in the electoral process.

12. On 5 October, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Aguila Saleh, issued the adopted laws as Law No. 27 (2023) and Law No. 28 (2023) and tasked the High National Elections Commission with their implementation. On the same day, the President of the High State Council sent separate letters to the Special Representative, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Chair of the Commission, declaring that the adoption of the revised electoral laws represented a violation of constitutional amendment No. 13. He called on the Commission to refrain from implementing the electoral laws issued by the House of Representatives.

13. On 6 October, UNSMIL issued a statement confirming receipt of an official memorandum from the office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives that included the approved electoral laws. In its statement, UNSMIL emphasized respect for national ownership of political solutions but noted that such solutions should be consensual and implementable to ensure a smooth electoral process.

14. On 9 October, the High National Elections Commission confirmed receipt of Law No. 27 (2023) and Law No. 28 (2023), affirmed its technical preparedness to begin the electoral process and called for a wider political commitment to ensure the successful completion of the electoral process. On 10 October, the Special Representative met with the Chair of the Commission, who informed him that the Commission would not begin implementing the electoral process until the issue of forming a new government prior to elections, as envisaged by the adopted electoral laws, was resolved. The electoral laws were published in the Official Gazette on 1 November.

15. While the adopted electoral laws addressed several technical shortcomings, previously highlighted by the High National Elections Commission and UNSMIL, most of the politically contentious issues remained unresolved. These include the mandatory second round of presidential elections; linking parliamentary elections to the success of presidential elections; the issue of a unified government to lead the country to elections; and the need for the full inclusion of Libyans, including women and all cultural components.

16. The Special Representative continued to actively engage with key stakeholders in order to convene the main political leaders to resolve outstanding contentious issues pertaining to the implementation of the electoral process through a political settlement. Following broad consultations and intensive shuttle diplomacy between key institutional stakeholders, on 23 November, the Special Representative announced that he had extended invitations to the Presidential Council, the House of Representatives, the High State Council, the Government of National Unity and the General Command of the Libyan National Army to attend a meeting in the coming period to reach a settlement on the politically contested issues. To that end, the Special Representative requested the institutional stakeholders to designate representatives to participate in a preparatory meeting. To achieve an inclusive political process, the Special Representative announced that he would, in parallel, conduct focused consultations with a wider spectrum of Libyan stakeholders, including political parties, military and security actors, elders and notables, cultural and linguistic components, academics, youth, women and members of civil society, so that their

proposals would be taken into account by the institutional stakeholders in their negotiations.

17. During a visit to Zawiyah on 8 August, the Special Representative met with political and military leaders and representatives from civil society, including women and youth. Discussions centred on the need to restore security in the city and the importance of fostering dialogue for a political agreement. On 4 September, the Special Representative met with General Khalifa Haftar in Benghazi and discussed the importance of establishing unified, legitimate and accountable Libyan institutions, including a unified Libyan army. On 7 September, the Special Representative held talks with the acting Minister of Interior, Imad Trabulsi, emphasizing the importance of the Ministry engaging with security actors to reduce the risk of conflict, enhance the protection of civilians and foster a conducive environment for peaceful elections.

18. On the economic track, UNSMIL welcomed the announcement, on 20 August, by the Governor of the Central Bank of Libya, Saddek Elkaber, and the Deputy Governor in the east, Maree Moftah al-Baraasi, of the reunification of the Bank. The Bank subsequently formed committees to address key technical aspects of the reunification, such as the integration of settlement systems and bank deposits between the bank's eastern and western branches.

19. The High Financial Committee, established by Presidential Decree No. 18 on 6 July to ensure transparent public spending and fair resource allocation, convened meetings on 20 August in Misratah, 3 September in Sabha and 16 October in Tripoli. During a total of six meetings, the members of the Committee, nominated by nine institutions representing the country's three regions, consensually agreed on by-laws and a special budget of 18 billion Libyan dinars (\$3.7 billion) for projects of the National Oil Corporation in 2023. The Committee also finalized the review of salary and operational spending decisions for 2023. However, on 1 September, the Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Libya resigned from the Committee, expressing the view that its establishment was in violation of Libyan legislation and the terms of the 2015 Libyan Political Agreement.

20. On the security track, UNSMIL continued to support the efforts of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission and the implementation of the 2020 ceasefire agreement. On 3 September, the Special Representative met with the Commission in Tripoli and discussed the need to agree on and adhere to a code of conduct for security actors to ensure their respect for human rights during the electoral process.

21. From 7 to 9 November, UNSMIL organized a workshop in Tunis for the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, in the presence of the Special Representative and the co-chairs of the security working group (France, Italy, Türkiye, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the African Union). Participants addressed progress achieved to date on the security track, as well as challenges faced in the implementation of the ceasefire agreement of 23 October 2020, including as regards the withdrawal of foreign fighters, foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya.

B. International Follow-up Committee on Libya of the Berlin process

22. The International Follow-up Committee on Libya of the Berlin process and its working groups continued to serve as the overall framework for international support for the intra-Libyan dialogue tracks.

23. On 28 September, following the humanitarian disaster caused by the floods in eastern Libya, the co-chairs of the working group on international humanitarian law and human rights – Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Switzerland and the United

Nations – issued a statement calling for unity of purpose and moral leadership that put the human rights and dignity of the people first. They stressed that a civilian-led humanitarian response was vital to protect and assist affected people in devastated areas in a rights-based, transparent and effective way.

24. On 9 October, the co-chairs of the economic working group (Egypt, United States of America, European Union and United Nations) discussed the role of the international community in supporting a unified Libyan approach to reconstruction efforts in Darnah and other affected areas, and the role of existing Libyan entities in ensuring transparency and accountability in those efforts.

25. On 30 November, the co-chairs of the working group on international humanitarian law and human rights convened the co-chairs of the other working groups to discuss the integration of human rights in all tracks of the Berlin process, as a follow-up to the high-level plenary session of the working group on international humanitarian law and human rights held in Tripoli on 22 May.

C. International and regional engagement

26. The Special Representative continued his engagement with regional and international actors to mobilize support for Libyan-led and Libyan-owned solutions to the political stalemate. On 18 September, he remotely briefed representatives from Algeria, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Morocco, Qatar, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States during informal consultations on the margins of the General Assembly. On 21 and 23 August, he met with representatives of China and the Russian Federation, among other Member States, in New York on the margins of his briefing to the Security Council. These discussions focused on ways to promote the political consensus needed for successful Libyan elections. The Special Representative also continued to engage with the diplomatic community in Libya, including during a meeting on 19 September on the political dialogue project jointly developed by UNSMIL and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

27. On 28 September, the Special Representative met with the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, and several ambassadors or permanent representatives to the European Union in Brussels. Discussions reflected a broad agreement on the need for transparent and accountable management of reconstruction funds in Libya. In October, the Special Representative met with officials in Qatar, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates to solicit their support in encouraging Libyan leaders to reach a solution to the protracted political impasse.

D. Situation in the western region

28. On 14 and 15 August, armed clashes erupted between the Deterrent Agency for Combating Organized Crime and Terrorism and the 444th Brigade in several densely populated districts in Tripoli, resulting in at least 55 people being killed and more than 100 injured, including civilians. The clashes were triggered by the arrest of the Brigade's commander, Mahmoud Hamza, by the Agency at Mitiga airport, amid heightened tensions between the two groups involving individual rivalry and over territorial control and financial resources. A truce was jointly brokered by local elders of the Suq al-Jum'ah district, the place of origin of the leaders of both groups; Prime Minister Al Dabiba; the Presidential Council; the Chief of General Staff of the Libyan Army, Mohammed al-Haddad; and leaders of other Tripoli-based armed groups.

29. On 29 October, clashes erupted between local armed groups in Gharyan, located 100 km south of Tripoli, reportedly triggered by the attempt of Adel D'aab, a former local military leader who had left the city during the 2019 conflict, to return to Gharyan. On the same day, Prime Minister Al Dabiba, in his capacity as Minister of Defence, established a joint operations room, composed of the 111th Brigade, the General Security Agency and the 444th Brigade, among others, tasked with securing Gharyan, as well as "all western and south-western areas." Forces affiliated with the Government of National Unity subsequently took control of Gharyan and reportedly deployed to locations south and south-west of the city.

30. The security situation along the western coastal road stabilized during the reporting period. Following aerial operations by the Government of National Unity in Zawiyah in May and June 2023, the Office of the Attorney-General, in coordination with the commander of the west coast military zone, proceeded with the implementation of legal and security measures against drug-trafficking and fuel-smuggling networks.

E. Situation in the eastern region

31. In the aftermath of Storm Daniel, several western armed groups deployed troops and equipment to the eastern region in support of crisis response operations. On 16 September, the Chief of General Staff of the Libyan Army reportedly deployed units under the Chief of Staff of the Naval Forces, Coast Guard and Port Security Services to assist in search and rescue efforts off the coast of the eastern region. For more than 10 days, units of the western armed forces and the Libyan National Army worked together to aid the flood-affected population.

32. On 6 October, an attempt by the Libyan National Army to arrest the former Minister of Defence of the Government of National Accord, Mahdi al-Barghathi, upon his return to Benghazi resulted in heavy clashes between the Libyan National Army and armed groups affiliated with al-Barghathi. The fighting, which occurred in densely populated areas of Benghazi, caused an unverified number of civilian casualties and fatalities, material damage, and a five-day shutdown of phone lines and a seven-day interruption of Internet service. Dozens of people remain unaccounted for; their fate, and that of the former Minister, are still unknown. The Libyan National Army reportedly handed over at least three bodies to the families, including that of a son of the former Minister, which reportedly bore signs of torture.

F. Situation in the southern region

33. In August, violent clashes between the Chadian National Army and Chadian opposition armed groups operating along the border between Libya and Chad erupted in south-western Libya. On 16 and 18 August, the Chadian Air Force launched drone strikes on positions of the Conseil de commandement militaire pour le salut de la République and the Front pour l'alternance et la concorde au Tchad at the border. Following the air strikes, the Front pour l'alternance et la concorde au Tchad confirmed 16 fatalities while the Conseil de commandement militaire pour le salut de la République announced the deaths of its President, Rashid Mohammad Taher Saleh, and his adviser, Younis Muhammad Souqa. The escalation followed an attack on positions of the Chadian forces in northern Chad on 12 August, for which responsibility was claimed by the Conseil de commandement militaire pour le salut de la République.

34. On 21 August, the spokesperson of the Libyan National Army announced that General Khalifa Haftar had instructed the Southern Operations Force to launch the

“south-west security plan”, designed “to protect the Libyan borders with neighbouring countries, especially those that are witnessing conflicts and security crises”. On 25 August, the Libyan National Army indicated that it had carried out air strikes along the border with Chad, targeting the locations of Chadian opposition armed groups near border-crossing points and some southern towns, including Qatrun. Since then, the Libyan National Army has maintained a heightened presence along the south-western borders with Chad and the Niger.

G. Violent extremist organizations

35. No significant activities by violent extremist organizations were reported; however, the porosity of the borders of Libya continued to make the country vulnerable to criminal networks and violent extremist organizations seeking a safe haven. Concerns remained that the Sudan crisis and instability in the Lake Chad basin and the Sahel might further enable such operations.

H. Economic situation

36. Libya maintained steady oil production of approximately 1.2 million barrels per day, despite a brief closure of exporting ports following Storm Daniel. The country’s energy grid has stabilized significantly over the course of the year due to international technical support, but still relies entirely on fossil fuels. The World Bank projects 2023 growth to rebound by 14.1 per cent, as strong hydrocarbon production spurs industrial activity and an increase in government wages stimulates services. In the short and medium term, the stabilization of oil production and high oil prices are expected to boost growth. The economy is expected to grow at a steady pace of 4.7 per cent in 2024 and 4.8 per cent in 2025.

37. The extensive damage to infrastructure in the east as a result of Storm Daniel disrupted the supply of essential goods and services, leading to increased food prices. The loss of arable land and water resources may significantly affect the socioeconomic well-being of the local population, including migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees.

38. On 12 September, the Government of National Unity announced that it would allocate 2 billion Libyan dinars (\$410 million) to the Benghazi and Darnah Reconstruction Fund to respond to the disaster. On 14 September, the House of Representatives passed Law No. 25, providing for an emergency budget of 10 billion Libyan dinars (\$2.4 billion), to be managed by the High Committee for Emergencies and Rapid Response, nominally headed by the Prime Minister designated by the House of Representatives, Oussama Hamad. On 19 September, the President of the High State Council formally contested the adoption of an emergency budget by the House of Representatives, citing procedural and substantive issues.

39. Earlier, on 5 September, the House of Representatives passed a law providing for a national budget of 89 billion Libyan dinars (\$18 billion) for 2023, submitted by the government designated by the House of Representatives. In a statement, the House of Representatives criticized expenditures approved by the High Financial Committee as violations of the State’s financial laws and the principle of separation of powers.

III. Other activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

A. Electoral support

40. UNSMIL and UNDP continued to provide technical support to the High National Elections Commission to organize national and local elections. UNSMIL also provided technical advice to the “6+6” committee, which addressed several shortcomings identified in earlier drafts of the electoral laws issued by the House of Representatives on 5 October.

41. Revisions to the draft laws included a change in the sequencing of elections, with Senate elections due to take place with the first round of the presidential election, while the elections for the House of Representatives would be held together with the second round of the presidential ballot. However, the parliamentary law maintained an allocation of only six seats for women in the Senate, representing 6.6 per cent of total seats (90), far below the 20 per cent envisaged for the parliamentary elections in article 30 of amendment No. 13 to the Constitutional Declaration. Of note, military personnel can apply to be candidates, provided that they have resigned from their military positions. Candidates with dual nationality are allowed to run in the first round of presidential elections but are required to give up their foreign nationality to enter the second round.

42. Regarding local elections, the Central Committee for Local Elections in Tripoli ceased contractual agreements with staff members in August, following the issuance of Law No. 20 (2023) on 10 July, which entrusted the High National Elections Commission with the implementation of municipal council elections. The eastern Central Committee for Local Elections continued to administer some municipal council elections based on article 1 of Law No. 20 (2023), which stipulates that implementation in municipalities should continue where candidate registration had already begun.

43. The floods in Darnah severely affected the local premises of the High National Elections Commission. The Commission provided temporary prefabricated offices and considered, in cooperation with the United Nations, resupplying the Darnah office with furniture and equipment.

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

44. Authorities and security actors continued to carry out unlawful arrests and detentions. On 20 August, forces affiliated with the Libyan National Army surrounded Sirte and the nearby town of Qasr Abu Hadi ahead of celebrations of the so-called 1 September 1969 “revolution”. Between 20 August and 7 September, forces affiliated with the Libyan National Army arbitrarily detained about 50 men and carried out partial demolitions of houses and forced evictions of Gaddafi loyalists in Sirte. On 1 October, two members of political parties and two members of a research institute were arrested and detained in Benghazi by the Internal Security Agency, allegedly for criticizing the Libyan National Army in the aftermath of Storm Daniel. These arrests highlight a continued trend of what could amount to denials of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

45. Following the armed clashes in Tripoli on 14 and 15 August between the Deterrent Agency for Combating Organized Crime and Terrorism and the 444th Brigade, the Emergency Medicine and Support Centre reported 55 fatalities, including 1 civilian, and 146 injured people, including 11 civilians. Civilian infrastructure and entities, including an ambulance, were hit by indiscriminate fire by the rival armed groups. UNSMIL verified two extrajudicial killings by the 444th Brigade.

46. On 7 October, a rocket-propelled grenade was launched by unknown perpetrators on the Tanush television channel in Tripoli. While no casualties were recorded, the channel's building was damaged. The attack highlights the precarious situation of journalists and media workers in Libya.

1. Rule of law

47. UNSMIL continued to assist in strengthening the capacities of Libyan rule of law institutions. From 15 to 17 September, UNSMIL and the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance convened a meeting on reform of the Libyan military justice system, which was attended by senior officials of the military justice systems of Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Also, on 16 and 17 October, UNSMIL, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the Attorney-General, organized a seminar in Tripoli on the use of modern technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public prosecution.

2. Unlawful deprivation of liberty, detention and torture

48. During a visit to the Judaydah women's detention centre in Tripoli on 13 August, UNSMIL encountered female detainees who reported having been subjected to torture and ill treatment, sexual violence, solitary confinement and separation from their children, and denied due process and fair trials as a result of their alleged association with ISIL (Da'esh). On 20 August, UNSMIL transmitted a letter to the Minister of Justice requesting the Ministry to address the situation of those detainees.

49. According to official statistics of the Ministry of Justice released on 17 October, 18,029 individuals were detained in 31 official prisons under the authority of the Ministry. These statistics do not include those detained in Mitiga prison in Tripoli and Gernada prison in Benghazi, or those held in migrant detention centres under the authority of the Ministry of Interior or in unofficial places of detention under the control of armed groups.

50. From 12 to 14 September, UNSMIL conducted a workshop in Tripoli on addressing human rights violations in the context of deprivation of liberty. Representatives from the Offices of the Attorney-General and the Military Prosecutor, the Judicial Police, the Bar Association and the Ministries of Interior, Defence and Justice, as well as prison directors, legal experts and civil society actors, agreed on the need to establish a joint mechanism to address and prevent human rights violations in detention.

3. Migrants and refugees

51. The humanitarian and human rights situation, including as regards the protection of migrants and refugees, remained of serious concern. On 6 September, the Minister of Interior announced plans to install an electronic surveillance system at the border with Tunisia to address the continued expulsion, pushback and movement of migrants at the border between the two countries. The Minister also highlighted ongoing coordination efforts with the Government of Tunisia in border areas.

52. Expulsions of migrants and asylum-seekers from Tunisia to Libya continued throughout the reporting period, as did expulsions and/or deportations from Libya to neighbouring countries, mainly Egypt and the Sudan. Since June 2023, a total of 5,610 migrants and refugees have been intercepted by Libyan border guards, customs officials and the Directorate for Combating Illegal Migration at the border with Tunisia. A total 29 deaths have been reported, while over 80 individuals have been reported as missing. As at 30 November, 352 migrants and refugees of 16 different nationalities coming from Tunisia were confined at Al Assa detention centre

(323 men, 21 women and 8 children) on the Libyan side of the border, with people regularly transferred to detention centres managed by the Directorate in Tripoli, as well as to unofficial detention centres to which neither UNSMIL nor humanitarian partners have access. United Nations agencies continued to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to people in Al Assa and other detention centres in Tripoli, including emergency medical, food and protection assistance.

53. Migrants were among the most vulnerable groups affected by Storm Daniel. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 500 migrant workers had been reported missing as at 30 November, and 429 others were confirmed to have lost their lives due to the floods. Out of 44,862 people displaced by Storm Daniel, 1,715 are migrants.

54. Libya continued to be both a destination and a transit country for migrants and asylum-seekers heading to Europe. According to IOM, the number of migrants in Libya stood at 704,369 in November. The number of migrants and asylum-seekers attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea from Libya continued to grow. As at 25 November, 15,057 individuals, including women and children, had been intercepted and returned to Libya since the start of the year. An additional 939 people were reported dead and 1,248 missing at sea between 1 January and 25 November. Migrants and refugees who disembarked at Libyan ports to which United Nations humanitarian agencies have access received basic emergency relief items, as well as health-care services and protection. Many of those intercepted were subsequently transferred to official detention centres, to which the United Nations has limited access, and others to unofficial detention centres, to which the United Nations and humanitarian actors have no access.

4. Groups in vulnerable situations

55. UNSMIL continued to follow reports of forced evictions and illegal demolitions in Benghazi. In a statement issued on 4 September, experts of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council called on the Libyan National Army to cease the forcible eviction of residents and the demolition of homes in the centre of Benghazi, and to end reprisals against those protesting the evictions. According to the statement, more than 20,000 residents of Benghazi had been evicted since March 2023.

56. On 11 September, UNSMIL facilitated a consultation in Tripoli with internally displaced persons from Benghazi on issues related to housing, land and property rights and the linkages between forced displacement and property violations. The outcomes of the consultation, along with those from focus group discussions in Benghazi on 12 November, were presented in Tripoli on 25 November, in the presence of legal experts, internally displaced persons and representatives from the Real Estate Registration Authority and the State Property Authority.

57. On 17 September, the Tariq bin Ziyad Brigade affiliated with the Libyan National Army dismantled a site in Benghazi for internally displaced persons from Tawurghah, which had sheltered 700 families. The site had been evacuated on 12 September due to the risk of floods. Upon returning to the site, inhabitants were given 24 hours to leave, after which the site was to be demolished.

5. Transitional justice and rights-based reconciliation

58. UNSMIL continued to assist Libyan authorities in establishing a nationally owned and led human rights-centred action plan for the implementation of recommendations of the Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya. On 4 and 5 October, UNSMIL conducted a workshop on the formulation of the action plan, attended by representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the High Judicial Institute, the National Human Rights Drafting Committee and the International Humanitarian Law Committee.

C. Security sector

1. Support for Libyan planning for interim security arrangements and the unification of security forces

59. UNSMIL continued to advance discussions on the pre-disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process with representatives of the Government of National Unity and the international community, including within the framework of the technical-level working group on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The working group met on 18 August and 11 November in Tunis; discussions focused on transitional weapons and ammunition management, as well as the importance of engaging community leaders in conflict prevention and the demilitarization of residential areas. In addition, UNSMIL assisted the Ministry of Defence in formulating a code of conduct for the military apparatus that was designed to prevent recurring clashes and minimize civilian casualties.

60. On 8 and 9 August, UNSMIL, in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the human rights office of the Ministry of Defence, hosted a workshop in Tunis on the protection of children in armed conflict. Participants, including representatives from the House of Representatives, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, and the Office of the Military Prosecutor, together with Libyan and international ceasefire monitors and Libyan legal and military experts, drafted a proposal for amendments to the existing law on the criminalization of the recruitment of children into armed forces and proposed related amendments to existing Libyan laws, in line with international standards.

2. Arms and ammunition management

61. On 8 August and 26 September, the Mine Action Service of UNSMIL and the Libyan Mine Action Centre co-chaired the monthly meeting of implementing partners, with the participation of donors and non-governmental organizations. On 17 and 25 September, the Service and the Centre conducted joint quality assurance visits to mine action operations in Ayn Zarah and the airport road areas in Tripoli.

62. On 10 and 12 August, the Criminal Investigation Department under the Ministry of Interior of the government designated by the House of Representatives suspended the operations of several mine action partners in Benghazi and Sirte and confiscated their assets. UNSMIL has been engaging with relevant authorities to advocate for lifting the suspension of these life-saving activities.

63. From 22 August to 14 September, the Mine Action Service of UNSMIL and the Libyan Mine Action Centre developed an emergency mine action response plan to address explosive ordnance contamination in the six areas of Tripoli affected by the armed clashes on 14 and 15 August. Five explosive ordnance disposal teams cleared more than 180 explosive remnants of war. From 23 to 28 September, the Service and the Centre jointly assessed contaminated areas in Darnah in response to the risk that floods in north-eastern cities might have disturbed and exposed explosive ordnance, posing a risk to civilians, humanitarian workers and national authorities. In addition to the suspension of the operations of mine action partners in the east, local authorities had not granted technical teams access to Darnah for clearance and risk education activities at the time of reporting.

3. Implementation of the ceasefire agreement

64. No ceasefire violations were recorded. UNSMIL continued to support the establishment of an effective Libyan ceasefire monitoring mechanism able to coordinate, monitor and assess progress on the withdrawal of foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries. UNSMIL also assisted efforts to implement the provisions

of the ceasefire agreement, de-escalate tensions and build mutual trust among relevant Libyan actors. UNSMIL ceasefire monitors continued to support the Libyan liaison committee in its collaboration with counterparts from Chad, the Niger and the Sudan. However, the situation in the Niger and the Sudan, with ongoing tensions between the Libyan National Army and Chadian armed groups along the border between Libya and Chad, continued to hinder progress in the implementation of the action plan for the withdrawal of foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries, and in the functioning of the liaison committees.

D. Empowerment of women

65. On 3 September and 1 October, the High National Elections Commission, supported by the United Nations, conducted a five-day training of trainers on gender, electoral awareness and leadership, with over 50 female participants from the three regions of Libya.

66. On 12 September, UNSMIL, together with UNDP, UNICEF and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), launched a year-long leadership training programme for young women. The programme is aimed at strengthening the leadership, decision-making and communication skills of 30 young women from across Libya and enhancing their knowledge on elections, gender equality, media, human rights, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

67. From 10 to 12 October, UNDP organized a two-day training programme to equip 30 public lawyers, 19 of whom were women, with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to promote effective governance in Libya. The lawyers simulated real case scenarios on implementing legislation and promoting good governance practices, also taking into consideration the specific roles of women and youth in local governance and municipal elections, at the national and local levels. The UNDP trainers highlighted the lawyers' essential role in safeguarding democratic processes at the local level. The training included sessions on the important role of women and youth in promoting fair and representative governance at the local level.

E. Youth and peace and security

68. On 12 August, to mark International Youth Day in Libya, 10 youth representatives joined the United Nations in Libya to discuss the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and how to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in Libya. Participants recommended creating a national youth strategy, establishing a structured youth network, addressing human rights violations and ensuring access to rights and services for people with disabilities.

69. On 4 September, the United Nations Population Fund organized a three-day workshop on national youth policies with a joint technical team from the National Council for Economic and Social Development, the Ministry of Youth and the National Youth Council. The workshop was facilitated by an expert who has helped countries across the Middle East and North Africa region develop their youth policies, and was attended by 11 participants.

F. Coordination of international assistance

70. The United Nations scaled up its humanitarian and emergency response to support people affected by Storm Daniel. The United Nations country team activated its rapid response mechanism and operationalized the humanitarian response

coordination structure for United Nations and other humanitarian actors on the ground. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs deployed a disaster assessment and coordination team to eastern Libya within 24 hours after the disaster to support the humanitarian response, as well as a surge team to strengthen its presence and coordination efforts with local partners. As at 30 September, the humanitarian response was fully operationalized, with coordination mechanisms functioning in Benghazi and Bayda'. The United Nations in Libya also continued to implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period 2023–2025 as the overarching strategy supporting transition from humanitarian to development and peacebuilding actions to advance the Sustainable Development Goals in Libya.

G. Humanitarian, peacebuilding and development support

71. Based on several inter-agency visits to the areas affected by Storm Daniel, including four missions by the Deputy Special Representative, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, humanitarian needs were assessed as localized and confined to Darnah and several nearby locations in eastern Libya. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that 250,000 people have been affected, including 44,862 who have been displaced by the floods. As at 17 October, the Libya flash appeal (\$71.4 million), which is aimed at supporting identified priorities in health; water, sanitation and hygiene; mental health and psychosocial support; and non-food items and education, was funded at 43 per cent. At the time of reporting, humanitarian assistance, provided through over 25 national and international humanitarian actors, had reached over 156,000 people. A hotline and emergency mobile teams were set up to provide psychological support and counselling to affected families.

72. National and international actors have initiated dialogues on reconstruction. Building upon its partnership with the Benghazi-Darnah Reconstruction Fund, under its ongoing local peacebuilding and resilience programme, UNDP deployed a surge team to support the Fund, including with regard to the identification of priorities following the floods, such as the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure and emergency livelihood opportunities. The European Union, the United Nations and the World Bank are finalizing a rapid damage and needs assessment to support disaster recovery and reconstruction efforts.

73. Building on its collaboration with the Ministry of Planning to support the Benghazi and Darnah Reconstruction Fund and the Murzuq Fund, on 26 October, UNDP developed a new partnership with the Sirte Construction Fund, a fund led by Libya, to rebuild and rehabilitate areas affected by conflict. UNDP will support the Fund in planning and implementing its mandate with transparency and accountability, focusing on rehabilitating war-damaged areas and buildings, improving public service delivery and promoting reconciliation.

IV. Deployment of the Mission and security arrangements

74. The United Nations maintained an average presence of around 183 international staff members in Libya and 10 international staff members in Tunisia. UNSMIL international staff in Tripoli continued to be accommodated at the Oea compound, protected by the United Nations Guard Unit, with a troop strength of 234, which also provides for a level 1 plus hospital, a coronavirus disease (COVID-19) care team and four canines. In Benghazi, staff continued to operate from the United Nations hub. Discussions continued on establishing safe and secure office premises in Sirte and

Sabha to enable the deployment of UNSMIL ceasefire monitors to Sirte and enhance United Nations programmes in the central and southern regions of the country.

75. The security situation remained complex, with a high threat level. In this operating context, the United Nations in Libya maintained a robust security presence in Tripoli and continued its engagement with Libyan security actors and international partners. In the aftermath of Storm Daniel, UNSMIL activated the crisis management team and deployed additional security staff to Benghazi to provide information, analysis and threat assessments on the situation in the east. Its close protection unit supported the missions of United Nations agencies to Darnah and Bayda’.

V. Implementation of the recommendations of the 2021 independent strategic review

76. UNSMIL continued its efforts to implement the recommendations outlined in the independent strategic review by intensifying efforts to promote coherence among the four dialogue tracks, namely, political, economic, security, and human rights and humanitarian concerns. The Mission is employing all efforts to increase efficiency using existing resources. In the context of the humanitarian emergency in eastern Libya, UNSMIL prioritized crisis response and management and the increase of its security footprint and other enabling capacities in Benghazi to support the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

77. The Mission advanced initiatives aimed at enhancing integration through the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. UNSMIL and the United Nations country team continue to coordinate the implementation of the Framework’s joint workplan for 2023.

VI. Observations and recommendations

78. The Darnah disaster is unprecedented in the recorded history of Libya, with a massive loss of life, livelihoods and infrastructure. Beyond the human cost, it revealed severe governance deficits, as well as the lack of an effective national mechanism for disaster management and prevention. As the country faces increasing challenges due to the increasing impact of climate change, the Darnah tragedy illustrates the urgent need for unified political decision-making at the national level. This catastrophe should serve as a wake-up call to all stakeholders in Libya to come together and reach agreement on a binding political settlement that paves the way for a peaceful electoral process – the only way to provide the country with unified legitimate institutions and a future of peace.

79. The outpouring of unity, solidarity and support shown by Libyans from all corners of the country at the onset of the humanitarian crisis generated hope for united action on the reconstruction of Darnah and its surrounding areas. I call on the political leaders and institutions of Libya to establish a unified national platform to coordinate reconstruction efforts, effectively integrating representatives of affected communities and their voices and perspectives. Transparency and accountability in the allocation and utilization of reconstruction funds are needed to rebuild the trust of the Libyan people in their leaders.

80. I note the adoption of the electoral laws by the House of Representatives. My Special Representative announced in a statement his invitation to key institutional stakeholders to attend a meeting to reach a political agreement on the remaining contentious issues pertaining to the implementation of the electoral process. I call on these stakeholders to engage in this initiative in good faith and in a spirit of

compromise to break the political deadlock, paving the way for inclusive, credible and transparent elections.

81. I welcome the announcement of the unification of the Central Bank of Libya and the initial steps taken by the Bank towards harmonizing its banking procedures and executive management. I strongly encourage the Bank to pursue this positive trajectory and fully implement the recommendations of the United Nations-facilitated international audit of the Bank, issued in July 2021, including the reactivation of its Board of Directors.

82. The recurrence of armed clashes in densely populated areas of Tripoli, Benghazi and Gharyan is highly worrying. These incidents are a stark reminder of the fragility of the political and security landscape and underline the urgency of resolving the political stalemate and leading the country to elections. They also underscore the fragmentation of the security apparatus, which could undermine ongoing efforts to cultivate a secure environment conducive to elections. Moreover, developments in the Niger and the Sudan, as well as hostilities at the border between Libya and Chad, have raised concern about the potential destabilizing effects on Libya.

83. I remain deeply concerned about widespread violations of international law, including human rights law, in Libya and the lack of accountability for perpetrators. Arbitrary arrests and detentions across the country, as well as the erosion of civic space, highlight an alarming infringement of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and undermine an enabling environment for elections. I am further concerned about the increasing militarization of law enforcement operations across the country and stress that those operations should be conducted by trained and equipped civilian law enforcement agencies.

84. Widespread deportations and collective expulsions of migrants and asylum-seekers, in inhumane conditions, must end. I encourage Tunisian and Libyan counterparts to work together to provide the required international protection and assistance to migrants and asylum-seekers. I urge Libyan authorities to find alternatives to detention for migrants and asylum-seekers, and to ensure humane treatment of all those detained, with the longer-term goal of decriminalization, humane treatment and access to legal proceedings. The continued expulsion of migrants and asylum-seekers from Libya to neighbouring countries is prohibited under international law and must cease. I reiterate that Libya is not a safe port of disembarkation and that any refugees and migrants intercepted along the central Mediterranean route should be assigned a safe port of disembarkation, in accordance with the law of the sea, international maritime law, international human rights law and refugee law.

85. Resolving the crisis in Libya necessitates active leadership and ownership by the Libyan people. The United Nations will sustain its commitment to engage with Libyan stakeholders, facilitating constructive dialogue and fostering a sustainable path towards lasting peace and stability. Central to this process is the continuing support of regional and other organizations, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States and the European Union, alongside concerned Member States, to the United Nations and its mediation efforts. This collaboration is pivotal in ensuring a unified and coordinated approach to assisting the Libyan people. It is of utmost importance for the international community to speak in unison, including within the Security Council, to demonstrate unequivocal support for the democratic aspirations of the Libyan people for sustainable peace and development.

86. I thank my Special Representative, the staff of UNSMIL and the United Nations country team for their dedicated efforts and support to the Libyan people. I reiterate my gratitude to the United Nations Guard Unit in Libya, generously provided by the Government of Nepal.