

# UN poised to scale up support for Libya's post-conflict transition, Security Council told

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17 January 2018 –

The United Nations is implementing its Action Plan for Libya to create the necessary conditions for the completion of the North African country's post-conflict transition, the head of UN mission there said Wednesday.

"The United Nations is poised to increase its presence in Libya," Ghassan Salamé, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya ([UNSMIL](#)), told the Security Council [via video link](#), noting that more staff will be working in the capital, Tripoli, and they will visit more communities across the nation.

"It is only by truly understanding the country that we can succeed in the implementation of the Action Plan for Libya and help its citizens put an end to a too long transition," he added.

Following six months of armed conflict in Libya in 2011, the UN established UNSMIL, a political mission, to support the country's transitional authorities in their post-conflict efforts.

Mr. Salamé said that the second anniversary of the [Libyan Political Agreement](#), on 17 December 2017 passed peacefully due in no small part to the unity of the Security Council, which, in its recent [Presidential Statement](#) declared that the international community stands behind the Agreement and will not accept attempts to undermine it.

However, the specter of violence remains present; clashes occurred recently between forces affiliated with two rival communities in the area at the eastern vicinity of Tripoli. Tension has also heightened around the city of Derna.

The efforts of UNSMIL have been pivotal to the relative quiet Libya has enjoyed over the last months. These extremely time-consuming conflict prevention efforts must continue if hope in the political process is to be maintained, he stressed.

"Libya needs a competent and efficient government," he said, "One which can deliver the public services the people desperately need. One that is able to unify the institutions of the country. One which can provide order and justice. One that will preside over the elections that will end the transition."

Mr. Salamé said that the Mission's work focused on supporting efforts to adopt a new constitution, achieve national reconciliation and hold elections.

"The transition cannot definitively end until Libya stands upon a true constitution," he said, noting that the draft constitution is undergoing judicial review.

The fabric of Libyan society is frayed, and requires meaningful reconciliation if it is to be mended. The UN has successfully facilitated numerous dialogues between representatives of local communities formerly in conflict while seeking to include the major players and groups previously marginalized in the political process.

The UN has been able to provide extensive technical support for voter registration, with six hundred thousand Libyans newly registered to vote in just over six weeks. The number of people on the electoral register now exceeds two million, and continues to rise.

#### *Humanitarian crisis*

The political crisis in Libya has been accompanied by an equal humanitarian crisis. The UN will launch a humanitarian response plan next week.

A matter of great humanitarian concern is the dire situation many migrants in Libya continue to face. In just the last weeks of 2017, thousands of migrants have been voluntarily returned for humanitarian purposes from Libya to their countries of origin, but thousands more migrants remain arbitrarily detained in centres, many of them in inhumane conditions.

Individual predatory agendas continue to dominate at the expense of the collective good, he said.

"Conflict over resources is indeed at the heart of the Libyan crisis," he said, pledging that the Mission will not spare any effort to advocate that national wealth be directed toward the provision of public services rather than to special interests.

Mr. Salamé said that UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, who visited Libya from 9 to 12 January, urged Libyan interlocutors to truly commit to working together and implement the Action Plan to create the necessary conditions to end the transitional period.

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**[World cannot stand idle as millions in DR Congo 'suffer in silence,' says UN](#)**

## [agency](#)

17 January 2018 – The dramatic deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic over the past year has been further complicated by recent floods and health crises, the United Nations migration agency said Wednesday, appealing for urgent funding to ensure continued assistance and protection for millions in need.

“The humanitarian [situation in the DRC is at breaking point](#) as is our capacity to respond due to extremely limited funding,” said Jean-Philippe Chauzy, said the head of operations for the UN International Organization for Migration in the country.

“The stories that Congolese, who have been forced from their homes, are telling us are bone-chilling. They have been through so much already – torture, rape and murder of their loved ones – we cannot stand idly by as they suffer in silence,” he added.

Speaking exclusively to *UN News*, Mr. Chauzy said: “If we don’t get that level of funding then, there are people who will die. I have to be clear with this. People will die.”

He said that the severe malnutrition rates in the Kasai have increased by 750 per cent largely because the people in the region have been displaced so often, three planting seasons have been missed.

“[So] if you don’t provide that kind of food assistance now – to kind of bridge that gap – people who have been living off foraging in the forest, they will suffer, and the most vulnerable will die first. Children will die first. And that’s a fact,” he warned.

Across the country, some 4.3 million remain displaced, of them 1.7 were forced from their homes last year. In 2018, over 13 million are feared to be in need of humanitarian assistance throughout the country. Children, young men, women and ethnic minorities are among the hardest hit, and nutrition, food-security and protection greatest needs.

Particularly worrying is that an estimated 4.7 million women and girls could be exposed to gender-based violence in crisis stricken areas.

However, in face of such daunting challenges, [IOM’s](#) response appeal is severely underfunded. Since the release of its appeal, only \$3.5 million was received in 2017 and only 47 per cent of the overall inter-agency [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (for 2017) was funded.

“Funding levels are at their lowest for many years, with DRC seeming to have ‘fallen off the map’ for many donors, at a time when we are facing vastly increased humanitarian needs,” added Mr. Chauzy, hoping that the same does not continue through 2018.

The UN agency has [appealed](#) for \$75 million to urgently meet the growing needs

of displaced Congolese and the communities hosting them in the eastern and south-central provinces of North and South Kivu, Tanganyika and the Kasai.

Its interventions in 2018 will focus on camp coordination management; displacement tracking; shelter and non-food items (NFIs); water, sanitation and hygiene; health; and protection.

According to IOM, a revised inter-agency Humanitarian Response Plan is to be released Thursday, 18 January.

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## [Somalia: UN, partners seek \\$1.6 billion to protect millions of lives from drought](#)

17 January 2018 – While Somalia, with the international community’s help, averted famine last year, long-term solutions for drought, conflict and displacement must still be found, the United Nations office in the country said Wednesday, launching the 2018 humanitarian response plan, which calls for \$1.6 billion to protect the lives of 5.4 million people.

“I am proud that we averted a possible famine last year. Lasting solutions [...], however, out of our reach, and much more must be done to eliminate the [looming threat of famine](#) in this country,” said the Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Peter de Clercq, in the Somali capital, Mogadishu.

With that in mind, he called for tackling humanitarian needs while simultaneously looking at longer-term solutions. “If we do not continue to save lives and in parallel build resilience, then we have only delayed a famine, not prevented one,” warned Mr. de Clercq.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)), the plan prioritizes immediate relief operations in areas with significant numbers of people living in crisis and emergency situations, and now includes a strategy to address protection gaps for those most vulnerable, such as the internally displaced, women and children.

In 2017, displacement reached unprecedented levels, with food security needs nearly doubling the five-year average. The number of Somalis on the brink of famine has grown tenfold since this time last year. An estimated 1.2 million children are projected to be malnourished in 2018, 232,000 of whom will face life-threatening severe acute malnutrition.

To mitigate future crises, humanitarians are working with development partners and Somali authorities to address the underlying causes of recurring crises, including food insecurity and mass displacement.

“With important progress made on the political and governance fronts, Somalia is on a positive trajectory, despite ongoing crises. The country has more effective institutions than it has for decades,” said Mr. de Clercq.

However, he noted that these gains are reversible and must be protected. “With continued international support, we can break the cycle of recurrent crises that undermine the peacebuilding and State-building process in Somalia,” he concluded.

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## [Intensified fighting across Syria having ‘devastating’ impact on civilians, warn UN agencies](#)

17 January 2018 – Intensification in hostilities across Syria is having a “devastating” impact on civilians, United Nations agencies in the war-ravaged country has said, warning that the fighting is also severely limiting life-saving humanitarian operations.

“In the last few weeks, increasing indiscriminate bombing, shelling and fighting forced tens of thousands of people to be uprooted,” said the UN agencies in a [statement](#) Wednesday.

“Accessing camps and other makeshift sites where internally displaced people are in dire need of aid is also urgently required. All affected civilians, wherever they are, must be protected, provided with assistance and accorded safe freedom of movement,” they added.

The violence has severely affected almost all life-saving and economic sectors and medical and healthcare facilities throughout the country are operating at a fraction of the pre-crisis level.

At the same time, the little resources that internally displaced persons and affected communities had have been exhausted, noted the UN agencies, calling on all parties “both inside and outside the country” to prevent further violence and enable humanitarian organizations to assist people in need.

“Agreement by all parties and their allies is needed to facilitate the immediate and safe delivery of UN and Syrian Arab Red Crescent humanitarian convoys to people in need across Syria including those in besieged and hard-to-reach areas,” they underscored.

Of particular urgency is facilitating medical evacuation of critically ill people especially in eastern Ghouta, Foah and Kefraya, as well as other locations, read the statement.

The UN in Syria reminds all parties of their obligation under international humanitarian and human rights law to protect civilians, said the agencies, calling also for unrestricted humanitarian access to enable aid workers reach people in need with care, food and medical support.

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## Resolve differences peacefully, Security Council to DR Congo political actors

16 January 2018 – Voicing serious concern over the continued political impasse and violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the United Nations Security Council has called upon all political actors to exercise maximum restraint and to address their differences peacefully.

In a [statement](#) issued to the press on Tuesday, Council members reiterated that effective, swift and timely implementation of the 31 December 2016 Agreement and the recently adopted electoral timeline, are essential for a peaceful and credible electoral process, a democratic transition of power, and the peace and stability of the DRC, as well as in supporting the legitimacy of the transitional institutions.

In that context, the Council underscored the need “to do everything possible to ensure that the elections on 23 December 2018 are organized with the requisite conditions of transparency, credibility and inclusivity, including the full and equal participation of women at all stages, as well as the importance of youth engagement.”

Further in the statement, the Council underscored the need for the Government to swiftly and fully investigate the killing of the two members of the [Group of Experts](#) and bring those responsible to justice.

Experts Michael Sharp (United States) and Zaida Catalan (Sweden) were [abducted](#) in the DRC on 12 March. Their remains were recovered by peacekeepers from the UN Mission in the country (known by its French acronym, MONUSCO) on 27 March outside the city of Kananga in the Kasai-Central province.

Also in the statement, the members of the Security Council expressed concerns over the humanitarian situation in the DRC and noting that it had reached “catastrophic levels” in some parts of the country, called on UN Member States to scale up funding to urgently respond to the pressing humanitarian needs in the country.

The statement by the 15-member Council follows a briefing it heard by Jean-Pierre Lacroix, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, last Tuesday on the political, human rights, security and humanitarian

situation in the country.