

Building a more peaceful, stable future for the Libyan people

Thank you Madam President,

I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ms Saudi for briefing the Council today. I also thank Ambassador Tirumurti for his update. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General's Special Adviser Stephanie Williams for her tireless work and extensive outreach across Libya. As we've heard today, and as set out in the Secretary-General's report, Libya is at a critical juncture and the delay to elections planned for last December was disappointing. We must maintain momentum. In that regard, I would like to make three points today.

First, I reaffirm the UK's full support for the UN-facilitated, Libyan led and owned political process. Successful free, fair and inclusive elections will continue to be a crucial step in this process. The Libyan people have made clear their aspirations to have a say in who governs them.

However, if we are to move forward and avoid continued delays and uncertainty it is vital that the challenges that prevented elections from going ahead in December are addressed. And I listened carefully to Ms Saudi's remarks on the importance of accountability.

It is important that we all continue to support UNSMIL's work to bring together the political, security and economic tracks in support of Libya's stability, sovereignty, and national unity. This is why we have proposed a draft resolution to renew UNSMIL's mandate.

Second, we continue to call for the full, equal and meaningful inclusion of women and youth in the peace and wider political process. We note that approximately 1 million of the 2.8 million registered voters are female. However, of the 98 individuals who registered to stand in the Presidential Elections planned for last December, just two were women. A process that represents only half the population is not a sustainable or inclusive one. Women must be able to participate as both candidates and voters without fear of reprisals or intimidation. I am grateful to those women who put themselves forward to represent their communities despite these challenges.

Finally, it is more important than ever that international actors withdraw all foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya without further delay. We recommend the Joint Military Commission's Action Plan as an important initial step but it is now incumbent on all to support its implementation. We encourage further progress on a plan to monitor and verify the presence and withdrawal of all foreign forces and mercenaries.

As ever, the UK stands ready to work with Libya and our international partners to build a more peaceful, stable future for the Libyan people.