

Time is running out to agree a basis for elections in Libya

I would like to thank Special Envoy Jan Kubiš, Ambassador Tirumurti and Asma Khalifa for briefing the Council today. I would like to make four points.

First, time is running out to agree a legal and constitutional basis for elections. We are at a critical point. There is a clear demand from the Libyan people to participate in elections and have their voices heard. It is essential that those in authority who represent them reach an agreement on holding elections and that they commit to accepting the results of those elections. We welcome efforts by the House of Representatives to find a solution to this issue and encourage further engagement to allow full agreement on, and preparation for, presidential and political elections on 24 December, as set out in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum roadmap, endorsed by this Council in resolution 2570.

The steps needed have not changed since the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum roadmap was agreed. But the task has become increasingly urgent. The UK will not hesitate to act against those who deliberately attempt to undermine the Libyan political process.

Second, the UK remains committed to championing women's full, equal and meaningful participation in Libya. In that spirit, we welcome Asima Khalifa's important contribution today. As Asima said, women have been disproportionately affected by the conflict in Libya but the elections in December offer an opportunity for the full meaningful participation of women as voters, candidates and decision-makers in the political process.

Third, I'd like to welcome the opening of the coastal road last month and congratulate the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in securing this step toward building trust between east and west. But there is much more to be done. It is essential now, just over a month until the anniversary of the 23 October Ceasefire Agreement, that there is a move from words to action. All foreign forces and mercenaries must withdraw from Libya without delay. We look forward to the initial deployment of the UN ceasefire monitors in support of the Libyan Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism in the coming weeks. The 5+5 Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism supported by UNSMIL has the UK's full support in driving this process forward..

Finally, I'd also like to welcome the independent strategic review of UNSMIL and thank Mr Bathily and his team for all their work. The recommendations of the review must now be implemented so that UNSMIL is best placed to help facilitate the Libyan-led and owned political process and build on the gains achieved by Jan and his team.

Madam President,

Libya is at a critical point. The actions needed to build a stable,

prosperous, and inclusive future for all Libyans are clear and urgent. The next major milestone is also clear presidential and parliamentary elections on the 24th of December. The UK looks forward to working with international partners led by UNSMIL to support Libya over the months ahead.