



Security Council briefing on UNSMIL, 20 August 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you President, and I also thank Deputy Special Representative Koury and the Chair of the 1970 Sanctions Committee for their briefings. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Libya to this meeting.

Malta notes the continued political paralysis in Libya. A Libyan-led, and Libyan-owned political process remains the only avenue through which we can see Libya prosper.

The mediation role of the United Nations in any political process is crucial. We underline our continued support to UNSMIL and welcome the mission's continued engagement with the main domestic actors and regional stakeholders. We augur that such action will provide fertile ground to overcome the political impasse.



We note the initiatives – both by domestic actors and regional neighbours – seeking to address this impasse. Whilst we welcome any well-intentioned measure seeking to support the political process, it is fundamental that any proposal is inclusive, driven by good-faith, and complimentary to the UN’s role and efforts.

On this note, we look forward to the appointment of a new SRSG of UNSMIL to work towards addressing the current situation in Libya.

President

The continued political intransigence continues to negatively affect Libya’s security and socio-economic situation.

In the past weeks we have witnessed mobilization of forces in various parts of Libya, including inside and around Tripoli, and armed clashes in Tajoura, which reportedly led to civilian casualties.



All parties must comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law. This includes the obligation to protect civilians, including in the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. We condemn the loss of any innocent civilian life. All actors need to exercise restraint and avoid provocative military actions.

These developments reflect a complex security situation which urgently requires a unified military and security apparatus. The continued presence of foreign fighters, foreign forces, and mercenaries and the proliferation of weapons under the control of various State and non-State actors are additional destabilising factors.

Measures seeking to fully implement the Libyan arms embargo, including Operation IRINI, require our full support.

Full compliance with the broader 1970 sanctions framework remains equally essential. We believe that the assets freeze is meant to exist for the benefit of Libya and its people, and that Libyan funds held abroad must continue to be safeguarded and declared for eventual repatriation.



From the regional perspective, we stress that Libya's territory should not be utilised for competition amongst actors. Such approaches only move us further away from progress.

President

Women's participation shapes a country's future. The restrictions on women's political engagement and the limited representation of women in national structures is deeply regrettable, and incompatible with Libya's political roadmap. Women's rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment reflect universal values.

Malta supports the need for affirmative actions to ensure the full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation of women in political processes, including as voters, candidates, observers, and elected officials.



Guided by equality and inclusiveness, we condemn the reprisals, discrimination and attacks against elected women in politics, including hate speech and sexualised harassment, both online and in person.

From the socio-economic perspective, we call for the lifting of any restrictions against women's freedom of movement and right to work. We also underline the need to provide a safe working environment for women human rights defenders and civil society organizations.

We are concerned that economic policy and decision-making continues to be politicised. A technical and practical approach to public spending, socioeconomic development and reconstruction, grounded in equity, transparency and accountability, is needed to stabilise Libya and its economy.



I conclude by reiterating the right of the Libya people to choose their own leadership, also through ensuring and safeguarding the central role of Libyan women in this process of determining the future of their country. This is the only way to realise the population's aspirations for peace, stability, prosperity, and democracy.

I thank you.