



Security Council

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Strategic review of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2755 \(2024\)](#), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a strategic review of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) that includes recommendations for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall structure of UNSMIL through prioritization of tasks and resources, in order to facilitate a sustainable political process and ensure an effective mission presence across Libya within existing resources. In line with the request of the Security Council, the Mission's strategic orientation, performance, configuration and security posture were assessed in the course of the review, which was anchored in an analysis of the conflict dynamics in Libya. In addition, the review included an examination of the Mission's achievements since the 2021 independent strategic review of UNSMIL and the challenges that it has faced in implementing its mandate, with a focus on its role in facilitating the intra-Libyan dialogue on political, economic, security, national reconciliation and human rights issues, and in strengthening the ceasefire.

2. The strategic review team found that UNSMIL remains a critical stabilizing presence, although its ability to deliver on its core mandate has been constrained by national fragmentation, internal limitations and a shifting geopolitical environment. In a national context marked by persistent divisions, external interference and the disenchantment of the Libyan people, it is recommended that UNSMIL sharpen its political focus on a single strategic objective, namely, enabling a credible and inclusive political process that restores national legitimacy and institutional coherence, and that the Mission's structure and field presence be aligned with that core mandate.

3. The review was led by an external expert, Daniela Krosiak, supported by representatives from the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Peace Operations, Operational Support and Safety and Security, as well as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Development Coordination Office. Over a period of four months, the external expert conducted more than 130 in-person and virtual meetings with Libyan interlocutors, Member States, regional organizations, UNSMIL and other United Nations entities. She also met with independent experts on Libya, including during a visit to Libya and Tunisia from 12 to 27 June 2025 to engage interlocutors in Tripoli, Benghazi and Tunis.



II. Current context

4. More than 14 years after the 2011 revolution and the fall of the former regime, Libya remains mired in an unstable transition marked by recurring violence, fragmented and divided institutions and the entrenchment of powerful armed groups. Its current governing and legislative institutions have continued to operate well past their mandated terms. The lack of an agreed upon constitution and the failure to hold national elections in December 2021, competing interpretations of political agreements, transitional road maps and provisional legal instruments are being used to entrench positions within the prevailing stalemate.

5. In the aftermath of the failure to hold national elections in December 2021, the political landscape of Libya has been defined by a prolonged stalemate and two distinct centres of power: the Government of National Unity in the west and the Libyan National Army in the east and south. In the west, in the absence of strong institutions, hybrid armed groups often act as de facto providers of security. Competition among these groups over territory, resources, control of illicit activities and institutional influence has fuelled recurring violence that often affects the civilian population. In May 2025, the killing of a major armed group leader triggered some of the deadliest clashes in Tripoli since 2011. With no unity of vision among Libyan political and institutional leaders on a national security architecture and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the various armed groups have limited incentives to pursue alternate paths.

6. In the east, over time, administrative structures that parallel those in the west have consolidated, including a military structure, executive bodies and economic institutions, presenting a challenge to efforts to unify national institutions. In the south, the situation remains characterized by divisions along tribal lines and complex security dynamics, including the presence of foreign fighters and mercenaries and the cross-border movements and activities of criminal networks, including illicit trafficking. Southern Libya, while rich in natural resources, remains politically and economically marginalized. The Amazigh, Tebu and Tuareg communities, which are the country's three recognized non-Arab Indigenous groups, are not adequately represented in State institutions.

7. In this fragmented landscape, many Member States have prioritized national interests over collective diplomacy. They interact simultaneously with both sides of the divide in Libya, contributing to the gradual normalization of the status quo and reducing incentives for dialogue or meaningful political compromise among Libyan actors.

8. Against this complex backdrop, in 2024, local elections were peacefully conducted in 56 municipalities across the country in a rare example of democratic practice. Although only 30 per cent of registered voters were women, the process led to the election of Libya's first woman mayor. Local elections in another 34 municipalities, largely in western Libya, were held in August 2025, but they were not held in 29 other municipalities, mainly in eastern and southern Libya. The newly and recently elected municipal councils currently represent the only democratically legitimate bodies in Libya, but they have limited influence over national governance.

9. A key obstacle to breaking the stalemate lies in the legal framework for elections, which contains contentious provisions, including with respect to the eligibility criteria for presidential candidates and the sequencing and linking of parliamentary and presidential elections. While these issues are technically solvable, they remain politically divisive, because of fears of a winner-takes-all outcome. Without an overarching constitution that addresses fundamental questions of governance, the division of powers and sharing of resources, a zero-sum mindset has

taken root in which actors view any gain made by an adversary as their loss. In the context of this logic, the threat and use of force remain common political tools, while dialogue and compromise are largely dismissed.

10. The status quo has been sustained in large part by the immense oil wealth of Libya, which has helped the country avert institutional collapse even as the integrity and effectiveness of its economic and oversight institutions have been deeply eroded. The Central Bank of Libya, the National Oil Corporation and the Libyan Audit Bureau have all faced leadership disputes and operational disruptions stemming from competition among political and armed actors over control of resources.

11. Libya has not had a unified national budget since 2014. As a result, both the Government of National Unity and eastern authorities have obtained public funds through parallel revenue streams and ad hoc transfers from the Central Bank of Libya. In the first quarter of 2025 alone, the foreign exchange deficit of Libya reached \$4.6 billion, a figure that is close to the foreign exchange shortfall of \$5.2 billion for all of 2024. In April, the Central Bank was compelled to devalue the Libyan dinar, raising concerns that the country's relative macroeconomic stability may be starting to unravel.

12. In the first few years following the revolution, transitional authorities succeeded in dismantling most pre-2011 regime structures, but they were unable to consolidate unified, professional institutions or forge a new social contract between the State and its citizens. Libya continues to lack a coherent governance model that effectively connects central authority to the local level. Municipal councils operate with limited resources and are often unable to deliver essential public services.

13. A youth unemployment rate of nearly 50 per cent makes young people, in particular young men, vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups and criminal networks. In addition, although gender equality is formally enshrined in the law, women continue to face significant structural disadvantages. Women's participation in the labour force remains low; women are often paid less for equal work and have limited access to land and property ownership. Women are also markedly underrepresented in decision-making processes and political life, undermining efforts to achieve inclusive governance and lasting peace.

14. The rule of law is under acute strain. Abuses and violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by the security services, law enforcement agencies and armed groups continue to be systematically documented. Attacks on judges, prosecutors and lawyers, persistent due process violations and actions that weaken judicial independence all point to a serious deterioration of legal safeguards. Justice and accountability remain elusive for many victims of gross human rights violations, including those affected by the atrocities committed in Murzuq (2019) and Tarhunah (2013–2022).

15. The absence of a comprehensive, rights-based and people-centred national reconciliation process has allowed cycles of violence, grievance and impunity to persist. Efforts at reconciliation have been politicized by competing political leaders and have excluded key constituencies, in particular women, young people, non-Arab communities, civil society and victims' representatives. Arbitrary arrests and detentions, including of civil society and political actors, and a shrinking civic space have further undermined the conditions needed for rights-based reconciliation. The use of social media to promote hate speech and extremism exacerbates divisions and poses further risks.

16. The status quo of fragile stability in a divided political and institutional landscape is neither static nor sustainable. Although temporary arrangements among key stakeholders have prevented large-scale hostilities thus far, power struggles over

control of resources and institutions threaten to push the State to collapse. In the absence of a renewed political process, steered by the United Nations and backed by the international community, to restore a credible pathway towards a united and stable Libya governed by legitimate institutions, the de facto division of the State is likely to further solidify, accelerating associated negative trends. In the worst-case scenario, mounting political and economic pressures could escalate into a resumption of large-scale armed conflict.

III. Achievements and challenges to mandate implementation

A. Achievements

17. Since the previous strategic review in 2021, UNSMIL has maintained a visible and active presence in Libya, engaging across a wide range of political, security, human rights and institutional tracks. The Mission's ability to respond to crises, manage conflict flashpoints and support technical processes has contributed to stability and helped prevent a renewal of large-scale violence. However, those efforts have not resulted in decisive progress towards a political resolution of the conflict.

Political and electoral processes

18. Following the failure to hold the presidential and parliamentary elections that were scheduled for December 2021, UNSMIL has sought to address the underlying reasons for the postponement of the elections and revive the political process, amid a deepening stalemate. In the immediate aftermath, UNSMIL supported the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Libya, who led mediation and good offices efforts pending the appointment of a new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of UNSMIL. Between April and June 2022, the Special Adviser facilitated four rounds of talks between the House of Representatives and High Council of State in Cairo and Geneva to develop a viable constitutional framework for elections. Despite progress, an agreement could not be reached at the final stage owing to pressure from Libyan power-holders. This early momentum towards an agreement both revealed the potential of the Mission's mediation and highlighted the difficulty of translating negotiation platforms into sustainable outcomes, especially in view of the lack of political will among the Libyan parties and sufficient constructive influence from Member States.

19. In 2023, the prospect of a renewed UNSMIL political initiative led by the Special Representative prompted the House of Representatives to adopt a constitutional amendment as the basis for holding elections. Following the adoption of that amendment, a joint committee of the House of Representatives and the High Council of State convened in Bouznika, Morocco, to prepare a new set of electoral laws, with technical support from UNSMIL. Those efforts, however, again fell short of being translated into a viable electoral path. Contested provisions and pitfalls within the new electoral framework have prevented progress towards national elections.

20. In response, in January 2025, UNSMIL established an advisory committee of 20 Libyan experts, including seven women, to develop recommendations to address outstanding challenges to the conduct of national elections and propose ways forward for the political process. The committee's work is an important effort towards broadening Libyan ownership and introducing new thinking. The committee completed its work in May. Following consultations with Libyan stakeholders, the wider public and international partners, the Special Representative announced a new political road map in August for holding national elections and achieving the reunification of State institutions.

21. Complementing the Mission's mediation and good offices efforts, an integrated UNSMIL-United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) team remains embedded within the High National Elections Commission in order to provide technical advice and operational support, including assistance with election planning, voter and candidate registration, polling, counting, data management, public outreach and gender inclusion.

22. In addition, UNSMIL has played an important role in facilitating the resolution of disputes over the leadership of key institutions. In August and September 2024, tensions between the Presidential Council and the Government of National Unity, on one side, and the House of Representatives, on the other, triggered a leadership crisis in the Central Bank of Libya that threatened to destabilize the country's economy. UNSMIL facilitated negotiations that led to an agreement on the appointment of a new Governor and Board of Directors of the Central Bank, helping avert economic collapse. In April 2025, UNSMIL facilitated the negotiation of an agreement to harmonize structures between the western and eastern branches of the Libyan Audit Bureau, even as political disputes over the leadership of the Bureau continued. Those interventions demonstrate the Mission's essential contribution to crisis management, including in support of long-term structural reform.

Implementation of the 2020 ceasefire agreement and interim security arrangements

23. UNSMIL has continued to help de-escalate tensions in times of acute crisis. In May 2025, following clashes in Tripoli, the Mission's engagement with the Presidential Council helped establish a truce committee. In 2023 and 2024, UNSMIL helped de-escalate tensions between Libyan National Army forces and Government of National Unity-affiliated forces, in particular in the south. UNSMIL also established an information-sharing mechanism with liaison committees from Chad, the Niger and the Sudan to facilitate the process of withdrawing foreign fighters and mercenaries from Libya. In addition, the Mission is coordinating with an international non-governmental organization on the potential repatriation of Chadian fighters. While those are useful technical contributions, they are marginal compared with the scale of the challenge.

24. Progress on the reunification of security institutions and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration has remained elusive in the prevailing context of political fragmentation and in the absence of a reunification strategy agreed upon by Libyan actors. Against this background, the Mission's efforts have largely been focused on promoting confidence-building measures between security actors and facilitating dialogue initiatives, such as workshops on codes of conduct, protection of civilians and community violence reduction.

25. Since the signing of the 2020 ceasefire agreement, UNSMIL has provided critical support to the Libyan authorities, in particular the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, with regard to maintaining attention on the ceasefire and preserving communication channels. Early achievements include detainee exchanges, the reopening of the coastal road between Misratah and Sirte, which involved the clearance of unexploded ordnance left behind by both eastern and western authorities, the resumption of flights between Tripoli and Benghazi and improved mobility and humanitarian access. Progress has stalled since then, however, with political constraints undermining full implementation of the ceasefire agreement. The inability of UNSMIL to deploy monitors to Sirte, as envisioned in Security Council resolution [2570 \(2021\)](#), highlights the gap between the Mission's mandate and the feasibility of its implementation.

Promotion of human rights, rule of law and transitional justice

26. In a challenging human rights context, UNSMIL, working closely with the relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, has continued to play a key role in monitoring and reporting on human rights abuses and violations. Priority concerns include arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearances, torture and death in custody, violations and abuses of the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, restrictions on civic space and the spread of hate speech and conflict-related sexual violence. The Mission has also supported the development of draft laws on freedom of association, prevention of violence against women and reconciliation and transitional justice. The adoption of those draft laws remains stalled, however, amid the political deadlock.

27. In addition, UNSMIL delivered extensive capacity-building training to more than 240 judicial and correctional actors. The Mission has also actively broadened its outreach to young people and women, including through such dedicated initiatives as “YouEngage” and “Ra’idat”. Multilateral advocacy on arbitrary arrest and detention, improved access to detention centres and the issuance in 2024 of a joint report by UNSMIL and OHCHR on mass graves in Tarhunah are important achievements in a context marked by elusive accountability for gross violations of human rights and erosion of the rule of law.

Joint analysis and strategic communication

28. Joint analysis, situational awareness and internal assessments based on corroborated, multi-source information remain strong assets for mandate implementation, formulation of strategy and timely responses to developments. The Mission’s deep knowledge of key conflict stakeholders, combined with its predictive analyses and risks assessments, have enabled its leadership to plan and act on accurate and real-time insights. For example, during the 2024 municipal elections, mapping of hotspots helped anticipate potential violence and guide conflict resolution strategies. Similarly, during the 2025 clashes in Tripoli, near real-time updates on developments directly supported the Mission’s de-escalation efforts. UNSMIL data collection and reporting mechanisms have also played a key role in tracking progress on women’s protection and inclusion.

29. Robust public communication based on a well-crafted strategy remains essential to the Mission’s work in an environment that is increasingly shaped by misinformation and disinformation, incitement and hate speech, in particular on social media. In the second and third quarters of 2025, UNSMIL strengthened its monitoring and early warning capacities, improved its bilingual online content (Arabic and English) and used thematic campaigns and multimedia outreach tailored to local contexts to amplify the efforts of civil society actors, women leaders and young people.

30. UNSMIL and the United Nations country team coordinate public communication and advocacy efforts across a range of areas. There have been periods, however, when communications were mostly reactive, and there remains scope for the Mission to further integrate its communication efforts with its political and public diplomacy efforts. Progress has been made in that regard in recent months, the most notable examples of which are the outreach efforts that were made in relation the report of the advisory committee of Libyan experts and the development of an updated communications strategy to support political engagement.

Collaboration with the United Nations country team

31. UNSMIL has continued to work closely with the United Nations country team across key operational and strategic areas. The integrated UNSMIL-UNDP electoral support team is an example of good practice in joint programming. With regard to human rights, UNSMIL has worked with members of the country team on such areas as redress for families of missing persons and laws concerning violence against women. In mine action, UNSMIL, through the Mine Action Service, the Libyan Mine Action Centre and the mine action operators of security institutions, has coordinated responses to explosive hazards and conducted related capacity-building. Those efforts highlight both the potential of joint action and the need for a more structured, strategic programming across tracks. Strengthening the analytical and programmatic linkages between UNSMIL and the country team, especially in politically sensitive areas, such as elections, rule of law and transitional justice and economic reform, will be essential to enhancing collective impact.

B. Challenges

32. Since the 2021 strategic review, UNSMIL has faced a complex constellation of challenges that have significantly affected its ability to deliver on its mandate, against a backdrop of persistent political fragmentation, inadequate institutional capacity, regional instability and a shifting international landscape.

A politically divided landscape and institutional paralysis

33. The east-west divide remains the greatest challenge to mandate implementation. The bifurcated governance structure of Libya has hardened since 2022, with parallel authorities more consolidated and less inclined to compromise, reflecting the growing entrenchment of vested interests.

34. The failure to adopt a viable legal and constitutional framework for national elections and agree on governance arrangements have further eroded public confidence and national unity. Rather than advancing transitional governance, the status quo perpetuates the zero-sum dynamic, with elites prioritizing self-preservation over consensus-building. This reality has fundamentally undermined the Mission's efforts to foster a Libyan-led political process and promote institutional reunification.

35. Since the 2021 strategic review, six individuals have either headed UNSMIL or led its political efforts. Over the course of the Mission's deployment since 2011, frequent leadership changes have undermined continuity and disrupted strategic follow-through, weakening trust among stakeholders. Mediators have rarely built upon the partial gains made or the processes developed by their predecessors, leading to disjointed political initiatives and loss of institutional memory.

36. This turnover of leadership has contributed to the absence of a "whole-of-mission" approach. Political, security, economic and human rights workstreams have often operated in isolation, with limited alignment behind a cohesive strategy. Administration of donor funding across various sections of UNSMIL has further contributed to fragmented interventions, reporting and accountability, as resources have been mobilized separately and utilized on the basis of various priorities, rather than in accordance with a central, unifying strategy. This structural disjointedness has diminished the Mission's ability to link short-term efforts and successes to long-term political outcomes.

37. UNSMIL has often adopted a predominantly reactive posture. A significant portion of the Mission's resources has been directed towards crisis management: deescalating tensions, negotiating temporary truces and averting institutional collapse.

Those interventions have played an important role in preserving the country's fragile stability, but they have not opened a clear pathway to a sustainable political resolution. A tendency to engage in activities, such as conducting training, holding workshops and providing technical support, that are not sufficiently linked to strategic outcomes that move the political process forward has overextended the Mission and diluted its political leverage and influence.

Internal constraints and limited presence across Libya

38. The internal structure of UNSMIL has constrained its ability to respond effectively to its environment. The Mission has struggled at times to break down operational silos; there is insufficient collaboration between the political, security, economic and human rights tracks. Coordination has often been ad hoc rather than systematic, resulting in fragmented engagement.

39. The Mission's geographical footprint also remains restricted. Security constraints, permit requirements and considerable financial pressures have confined its operations largely to Tripoli. The Libyan National Army has not permitted UNSMIL ceasefire monitors to deploy in Sirte, and the Mission has a very small presence in Benghazi and only one national staff member in the south. While recent visits to other cities have improved outreach, the Mission's ability to engage meaningfully across the country remains constrained, weakening its credibility.

Fragmented international engagement and external interference

40. While formally unified in their support for the Mission's mandate, many international actors have pursued diverging policies in practice, often reinforcing the country's internal divisions. Competing geopolitical interests and inconsistent engagement through the Berlin process have diluted international leverage and created ambiguity with regard to the role of the United Nations. The political, security and economic working groups of the Berlin process have either ceased functioning or lost direction and influence. Against this background, the meeting of the International Follow-up Committee on Libya of the Berlin process that was held in Berlin on 20 June 2025, the first in four years, marked a potentially important step towards reinvigorating this framework and coordinating international support.

41. The continued presence of foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries and the flow of advanced weaponry into Libya in violation of Security Council resolutions undermine ceasefire implementation and State consolidation.

Disjointed efforts on national reconciliation

42. The Mission's ability to support national reconciliation has been constrained by limited coordination with the African Union, which plays a leading role with regard to this file. While UNSMIL has supported the development of a national legal framework for reconciliation and the African Union has advanced a Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation, the two efforts have not been sufficiently harmonized. Strengthening synergy between those initiatives will be essential to fostering complementarity and generating greater traction going forward.

Integration challenges with the United Nations country team

43. Despite the adoption of a United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in 2023, the integration of UNSMIL and the United Nations country team remains limited. Most UNSMIL sections report to the Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and operate independently of the Deputy Special Representative and Resident Coordinator's development programming. Opportunities for joint action,

such as the response to the 2023 Darnah floods, have not been systematically leveraged. These gaps highlight the need for more institutionalized joint planning and resource-sharing mechanisms.

Resource constraints and human resource challenges

44. The Organization-wide liquidity crisis has introduced new structural pressures for UNSMIL. Budget reductions and staffing cuts have necessitated a difficult reprioritization of resources. Expectations around Mission performance remain high, but they are not matched by the available resources. Critical posts, including Senior Economic Adviser and Senior Gender Adviser, remain vacant because of the ongoing hiring freeze. At the same time, staff with specialized expertise, in particular Arabic language proficiency, have been difficult to recruit, hindering the Mission's ability to adapt and renew its capabilities.

Public perception and legitimacy gaps

45. UNSMIL continues to grapple with a public perception gap. While the Mission retains a measure of credibility among elites, public frustration is growing amid the prolonged political stalemate. Many Libyans question the Mission's effectiveness and impartiality, citing a lack of tangible progress after a 14-year-long presence. UNSMIL has increased its visibility and improved its communication, but its strategic messaging often struggles to compete with disinformation, media manipulation and a misunderstanding of the Mission's mandate. Although new outreach platforms aimed at young people, women and marginalized communities have been introduced, their reach is currently limited and needs to be expanded to mobilize "bottom-up" support for initiatives.

IV. Recommendations

46. The interplay of external pressures, internal limitations and a fragmented operating environment has constrained the ability of UNSMIL to deliver on its mandate. Although UNSMIL has made important contributions across multiple areas, the strategic review process highlighted the need for the Mission's efforts to coalesce into the kind of strategic impact that is needed to shift the political trajectory of Libya. The current mandate is vast, yet UNSMIL is not structured or resourced in a way to implement all its tasks. Without greater focus and coherence, there is a real risk that the Mission will remain tactical and reactive.

47. Effectively supporting the political transition in Libya in the context of increasingly constrained resources requires a recalibration not only of the strategic orientation of UNSMIL, but also its internal structure, staffing, geographical presence and security posture. The proposed adjustments should reinforce the Mission's ability to deliver on its core mandate by enabling UNSMIL to direct its resources more deliberately towards a single overarching strategic priority: to relaunch and facilitate a credible and inclusive Libyan-led political process.

A. Strategic orientation

Focus on the political process and use of good offices

48. The core mandate of UNSMIL remains firmly anchored in supporting a political solution to the Libyan conflict. This central focus should be placed unequivocally at the forefront of all Mission activities. The role of UNSMIL is to create conditions and processes that are conducive to Libyan-led negotiations. Repositioning the Mission

to serve that function clearly, consistently and effectively represents a defining strategic priority.

49. National elections remain an important element, both as a technical process and as a means of restoring the legitimacy and accountability of Libyan institutions. Rather than being seen as an end in themselves, however, elections should be integrated into a wider political settlement that brings Libya out of successive transitional periods and into a stable governance order that is grounded in a permanent constitution. UNSMIL support for a renewed electoral road map should therefore be integrated into broader efforts to reunify institutions and protect their integrity, expand political space and foster national reconciliation in an environment that enables compromise and moves the country beyond zero-sum politics.

50. All Mission workstreams should be streamlined to prioritize the political effort and its intended outcomes. Diplomatic and public engagement is critical. Such engagement should employ the full range of United Nations tools, including public reporting and the existing sanctions architecture, to encourage compromise and discourage spoilers. Doing so requires the tangible and unified support of the Security Council, both in rallying international backing for the Mission's efforts and in exerting sustained pressure on internal and external spoilers.

Convening power of the United Nations

51. UNSMIL should fully leverage the convening power of the United Nations by assuming a leading role in organizing, setting the agenda for and providing secretariat support to the four working groups (political, security, economic and international humanitarian law and human rights) of the Berlin process. Those groups should operate under UNSMIL coordination with clearly defined, time-bound workplans and milestones that feed directly into a coherent political process.

52. Greater inclusivity should guide the Mission's engagement with the members of the Berlin process. To that end, the working groups should adopt a more representative approach that brings together the regional and international actors whose competing positions have eroded international coherence. A politically supported and jointly owned platform could help align external engagement behind the Libyan-led political process.

53. In parallel, efforts should continue to build momentum for institutional reunification and the restoration of effective governance. Existing dialogue platforms should be reinforced and new ones, where necessary, established on a temporary basis to address priority issues, as was the case with the advisory committee of Libyan experts. These mechanisms should be strategically linked to broader political negotiations and anchored within the Berlin process framework, in order to effectively leverage the support of key Member States for the political, security, economic and human rights tracks of the Libyan-led political process.

Economic track

54. The economic track remains critical to the country's political transition and long-term stability. It is recommended that UNSMIL strengthen this dimension of its mandate, with an emphasis on the importance of unifying and ensuring the transparency and preserving the independence of the core economic institutions of Libya, in particular the Central Bank of Libya, the National Oil Corporation and the Libyan Audit Bureau.

55. By enhancing collaboration with international financial institutions, UNSMIL can leverage their technical expertise to augment its economic work without additional budgetary implications. The establishment of a dedicated economic section

within UNSMIL that mirrors the support structures for the other Berlin process working groups and integrates contributions from relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes would ensure continued and effective international support across the economic reform agenda.

Security track and ceasefire

56. Stabilizing the security environment in Libya is a critical precondition for advancing the political process. To that end, the Mission should streamline its engagement on the security track, from ceasefire implementation to confidence-building and reunification of military and security institutions. As part of the streamlining, UNSMIL should combine its ceasefire component and security institutions sections into one coherent structure in support of the political process, harnessing effective support from the security working group of the Berlin process.

57. A recalibrated, politically sensitive approach, in which activities are properly sequenced, is needed. The role of UNSMIL should transition from direct implementation to facilitation, notably of political dialogue between eastern and western Libyan actors. Reinforcing security dialogue forums, such as the Joint Military Commission, and aligning their activities with security track objectives is recommended. The Mission should continue to engage with the Joint Military Commission and other Libyan and international partners in support of the phased withdrawal of foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries from Libya. Efforts in mine action, including improvised explosive device threat mitigation, could be more strategically communicated to underline tangible achievements, thereby reinforcing the Mission's credibility and underpinning political advances.

Human rights and rule of law

58. The Mission's engagement on human rights and rule of law is central to the country's political process. In a context marked by widespread abuses, violations and impunity, alongside long-standing demands for justice and accountability, the Mission's monitoring, reporting and advocacy provide critical political leverage, reinforce public trust and help lay the legal and normative foundations for a sustainable political settlement. Human rights and rule of law concerns should be systematically integrated into the Mission's good offices and mediation work, as well as across other areas, such as ceasefire implementation, security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

59. Protecting political and civic space should remain a priority. Intimidation of civil society, the media and political actors, as well as political detention, arbitrary arrests and impunity for conflict-related sexual violence, undermine the credibility of any electoral process. These issues must be addressed explicitly to ensure that elections are inclusive, competitive and free from coercion. The Mission's field-based monitoring capacity remains an essential tool for deterring human rights violations and informing political engagement. Strengthening the justice institutions of Libya, including their ability to provide oversight of detention facilities, will also be critical to enabling credible elections and reconciliation.

60. The international humanitarian law and human rights working group of the Berlin process should be used more strategically to align international messaging, support legal reform and coordinate efforts across the United Nations system and with key partners.

National reconciliation and transitional justice

61. National reconciliation remains a critical political imperative and precondition for the long-term stability of Libya. While the African Union is leading this effort, UNSMIL has a complementary role to play, supporting the practical implementation of a national reconciliation and transitional justice process and ensuring that it is nationally owned, victim-centred and directly linked to the broader political agenda. Strengthening synergy between the two organizations will be essential in order to foster complementarity and generate greater traction.

62. Within an enhanced Berlin process framework, UNSMIL and the African Union can help ensure that national reconciliation functions as a cross-cutting topic across all four working groups and is promoted through every track of the political process, with the backing of Member States.

Strategic communication

63. Strategic communication is essential to the Mission's ability to steer the political process, build public trust and maintain credibility with national and international actors. UNSMIL should continue refining its communication strategy in order to effectively explain its mandate, constraints and contributions, while managing public expectations.

64. Stronger outreach to underrepresented groups, in particularly young people, women, persons with disabilities and marginalized communities, remains a priority. Messaging must also reflect generational diversity: the political future of Libya depends on the engagement of younger populations, who access and interpret information differently than older generations. Content should be tailored to the targeted group, while reinforcing a shared national vision. Partnerships with trusted local civil society actors and consistent engagement with the media will reinforce those efforts. Strategic communication should be treated not as a support function, but rather as a core component of mandate delivery. Given its importance in shaping political outcomes, modest investments in the Mission's communication capacity are necessary.

B. Operational configuration and realignment of the Mission**Geographical presence**

65. UNSMIL headquarters should remain in Tripoli, but with a rebalanced presence that allows targeted expansions in Benghazi and Sabha, in order to ensure engagement across the country. Having a consistent presence in eastern and southern Libya is essential for the Mission to be perceived as representative and inclusive. UNSMIL should enhance its direct engagement with local authorities, political parties and civil society, including through regular outreach and visits to cities in all three regions. The Fazzan region, in particular, remains insufficiently involved in the political process; this issue must be addressed through both expanded field presence and meaningful consultation with southern stakeholders.

66. Working in Libya, not from Tunis, should remain the norm. Owing to financial and security considerations and the imperative to reprioritize existing resources, some logistical, administrative and other functions that can be conducted outside Libya may be relocated to Tunis or transferred to the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe and the United Nations Global Service Centre in Brindisi. To the extent possible, the Mission's core substantive functions, as well as senior leadership, must remain Libya-based in order to promote integration and relationships with national actors.

Reporting lines, staffing and structures

67. The top-heavy structure of UNSMIL and the comparatively small number of national staff, in particular in substantive sections, affects operational agility, undermines local legitimacy, limits institutional memory and weakens outreach. It is therefore recommended that the Mission develop a nationalization strategy aimed at increasing staff from Libya at all levels, in order to better inform its political orientation with local perspectives.

68. The current reporting lines and coordination mechanisms in the Mission require adjustment and rebalancing in order to arrive at a more cohesive and agile structure. The Chief of Staff and the Chief of Mission Support have a critical role to play in restoring effective coordination, driving cross-sectional alignment and implementing the Special Representative's strategic vision. An additional civilian staffing review could be considered, if necessary, to facilitate nationalization, the reallocation of human resources across geographical locations and the adjustment of reporting lines.

69. The distribution of responsibilities between the two Deputy Special Representative should be revisited. A more strategic division of labour is needed, with the development-oriented portfolios placed under the Deputy Special Representative and Resident Coordinator and the political and security tracks remaining with the Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs. Within this new configuration, the political affairs and electoral assistance sections should remain distinct but mutually reinforcing, even if each section falls under a different Deputy Special Representative.

70. In principle, the integrated mission model remains valuable, in particular for aligning political and programmatic efforts, but it must be accompanied by an effective division of labour, clear coordination structures and joint programming with the United Nations country team, especially with regard to politically relevant workstreams, such as elections, human rights, governance and the economic track. Current cooperation on elections, gender and human rights offers useful examples that can be replicated in other areas, in particular given that the diminishing funding base may lead to a reduced presence of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Libya.

Resource management

71. Expanding the Mission's presence in Benghazi and Sabha will entail substantial expenses, including for accommodation, office space and security, as well as recruitment or relocation costs. UNSMIL should pursue tangible options to offset some of those costs by reallocating existing resources and adjusting its configuration, in line with the recommendations that are set out in the present review. This includes a cost-neutral realignment of civilian staffing between Tripoli, Benghazi and Sabha, focusing on nationalization, vacancy reduction and functional rationalization. Operational efficiency can be enhanced through cost-saving measures, including renegotiating high-cost contracts, such as for the lease of the Oea compound in Tripoli. Mission support should maximize the provision of services from Entebbe and Brindisi for suitable functions, such as aviation safety, procurement, human resources and engineering.

72. The Mission's management of extrabudgetary resources, which is currently fragmented across sections, requires a centralized resource planning mechanism to ensure that all donor-funded activities align with the strategic priorities of UNSMIL. Establishing such a mechanism would enable the Mission to make best use of extrabudgetary resources in support of the political process and to fill needs where the regular budget does not allow.

73. In addition, the Mission should embrace technological innovation to increase its effectiveness and efficiency. UNSMIL could serve as a pilot for the use of artificial intelligence and new technologies by special political missions in such areas as data analysis, predictive security assessments and administrative processes. Strategic use of new technologies can support mandate implementation, enhance responsiveness and demonstrate innovation in the face of financial austerity.

Security posture and risk management

74. The Mission's security architecture must evolve to reflect operational realities and support its core political mandate. While ensuring staff security remains paramount, a more agile and context-sensitive security posture is needed, one that aligns security measures with actual risks, facilitates field engagement and eliminates unnecessary constraints on movement and access. Programme criticality reviews should be institutionalized as a routine planning tool, in order to ensure that security measures are proportionate, mission-enabling and regularly recalibrated to reflect the evolving context in Libya.

75. Security arrangements in Benghazi and Sabha require tailored solutions that reflect their distinct operational challenges and strategic relevance. It is therefore critical to carefully balance risk with Mission presence, engagement and access as a strategic priority.

76. In Tripoli, the deployment of the United Nations Guard Unit has provided stable perimeter security and other capacities, especially in periods of high volatility. With annual costs exceeding \$6.7 million, a reassessment of the Guard Unit is warranted, with a view to streamlining its operations in response to the evolving security context and enhancing operational efficiency. It is recommended that a formal evaluation of the Guard Unit's deployment be conducted by April 2026. The feasibility of reducing the number of observation posts to maximize efficiency and reconfiguring explosive ordnance disposal capacities and medical services currently provided by the Guard Unit could be among the options considered in the context of such an evaluation. Structural adjustments should be guided by the security risk management framework and decisions regarding the Mission's overall configuration.

V. Observations

77. I welcomed the opportunity provided by the Security Council in requesting a strategic review of UNSMIL. Fourteen years after the Mission was established, its relevance remains clear. Since 2021, UNSMIL has engaged in an impressively broad range of activity in the political, security, human rights and institutional domains. Its ability to manage political crises, facilitate electoral processes and contain local violence demonstrates operational competence and continued relevance. Those contributions have mitigated some of the most destabilizing risks while maintaining the fragile status quo.

78. While UNSMIL is valued for its stabilizing role, in particular in moments of crisis, progress on its core mandate, which is to facilitate a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political settlement, remains limited. Political and security dynamics continue to erode the unity of Libya and the integrity of its institutions. The volatile security situation in Tripoli and the build-up of heavy weaponry in populated areas are matters of particular concern and pose an unacceptable risk to civilians. I am also concerned about the obstruction of local elections in several municipalities in eastern and southern Libya, preventing Libyans in those areas from choosing their representatives.

79. Recent developments call for an urgent reversal of course. In August, my Special Representative, Ms. Hanna Tetteh, presented a road map for restoring a realistic pathway to unity, stability, legitimacy and accountable governance through national elections and structured dialogue. It is imperative that Libyan leaders, institutions and other stakeholders engage constructively and in good faith with UNSMIL in the implementation of that road map, putting the national interest first. It is critical that the members of the Security Council and the broader international community align in support of the implementation of the road map, including through a more active and coordinated role of the International Follow-up Committee on Libya of the Berlin process and its working groups.

80. I fully support the recommendations made by the strategic review team to reconfigure UNSMIL in order to ensure an overarching focus on its primary mandated task of supporting a renewed political process, rebalance its presence across Libya and align its activities more closely with national ownership and long-term outcomes. I recommend that the findings and recommendations of the strategic review team, as set out in the present report, be incorporated into the next mandate of UNSMIL.

81. In line with the request from the Security Council and in a global context of significant financial constraints, the present report includes tangible proposals for UNSMIL to reallocate existing resources and introduce efficiencies to operate effectively in pursuit of strategic priorities. Nevertheless, overall implementation, in particular expansion to Benghazi and Sabha, may require additional resources, notably linked to operational considerations and security requirements.

82. I thank Ms. Krosiak and her team for conducting the strategic review and for their findings and recommendations. I also express my appreciation to the Libyan authorities and the leadership and staff of UNSMIL for the support that they extended in relation to the strategic review exercise.
