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United Nations Support Mission in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2434 \(2018\)](#), covers political, security and economic developments in Libya, provides an overview of the human rights and humanitarian situation and outlines the activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) since the issuance of my previous report on 7 January 2019 ([S/2019/19](#)).

II. Political, security and economic-related developments

2. On 4 April, forces of the Libyan National Army under the command of General Khalifa Haftar launched an offensive to seize control of Tripoli, triggering a mobilization of armed forces operating under the command of the Government of National Accord to defend against the attack. The offensive brought the political process to a halt. The attack took place days before the planned United Nations-facilitated National Conference was to have been held, from 14 to 16 April. Since the outbreak of fighting around Tripoli, my Special Representative has been engaging with a wide range of national, regional and international actors to reach an agreement on the cessation of hostilities and resume political talks.

3. The fighting, which has been concentrated mainly in and around southern Tripoli, has resulted in at least 395 civilian casualties, including 106 fatalities, and has damaged critical civilian infrastructure. The conflict has aggravated humanitarian needs and forced displacement while hindering access to food, health care and other basic services.

Implementation of the United Nations action plan and the political process

4. The objectives of the National Conference were to reach agreement between participants on a national charter in which unifying principles were defined, with a view to bringing together the Libyan constituencies, and to adopt a road map aimed at concluding the transitional period through parliamentary and presidential elections, which would include recommendations on ways to address the constitutional proposal.

5. On 9 April, my Special Representative announced the postponement of the National Conference as a result of the conflict, mostly to the south of Tripoli, and the



difficulty of holding political talks in such an uncertain climate. He reiterated his commitment to the convening of the Conference as soon as possible, once conditions enabling it to be held are re-established. To maintain the momentum in the political process, UNSMIL has twice hosted track-two diplomatic events with invitees to the National Conference in Hammamet, Tunisia, to hear their views on how to end the violence and to address the root causes of the conflict through a return to the political process. Women were strongly represented at the events.

6. The conflict around Tripoli has further polarized an already fragmented political landscape. On 13 April, a group of 30 members of the House of Representatives met in Benghazi in support of General Haftar's offensive on Tripoli. Following a first meeting on 5 May, a group of about 40 members of the House who support the Government of National Accord and some electees to the House who had not yet been sworn in started to meet regularly in Tripoli, establishing four committees to operationalize their activities. A smaller group of members of the house who support the Libyan National Army holds sessions in Tobruq, but lacks a legal quorum to take decisions. On 13 May, that group met in Tobruq and voted, without a quorum, to criminalize the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Libya, further adding to the polarization within the House. On 17 June, the group of members meeting in Tripoli voted to abolish the position of General Commander of the Libyan Army, which General Haftar has held since 2015. On 13 July, a large group of members met in Cairo to discuss the prospect of re-unifying the House of Representatives.

7. Support for an end to violence and a return to the political process remained strong and widespread among the Libyan population. Anti-war demonstrations have been organized regularly since April, including, notably, in Tripoli, Misratah, Benghazi and Zawiyah. On 22 May, a delegation of tribal elders from the eastern region met Prime Minister Faiez al-Serraj and representatives of the international community in Tunis to discuss the possibility of a ceasefire. Since the eruption of the conflict, both sides have been engaged in efforts to garner international support.

8. Attempts to stop the violence and resume the political process following the eruption of fighting in April have so far been unsuccessful. On 16 June, Prime Minister Serraj announced a political initiative entailing the formation of a Libyan forum to agree on a political road map, decide the constitutional basis for presidential and parliamentary elections to be held before the end of 2019 and appoint a legislative committee to draft proposals for elections. The Prime Minister requested the Security Council and the international community to support the implementation of the forum's decisions, including those regarding decentralization measures. General Haftar subsequently stated that the control of the Libyan National Army over Tripoli was a precondition for the formation of a national unity government, the holding of elections and the drafting of a new constitution.

9. On 4 April, the High Council of State re-elected Khaled al-Meshri as its President. Following the offensive on Tripoli, the President reaffirmed the support of the Council for the Government of National Accord and stated that there could be no military solution to the Libyan crisis.

Regional and international engagement

10. Prior to the fighting in April, efforts to support the political process for concluding the transitional period had been progressing positively, with continued regional and international work in support of a political agreement between Libyan stakeholders. On 27 February, my Special Representative facilitated a meeting between the Prime Minister and General Haftar in the United Arab Emirates, at which both reiterated their commitment to the holding of elections in the second half of 2019 and reached an understanding on several issues, including the principle of civilian

oversight of the armed forces during the final transitional period, the formation of a Government of national unity and the unification of key institutions.

11. On 12 and 13 March, my Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Smaïl Chergui, undertook a joint visit to Tripoli and Benghazi to demonstrate united support for the political process. On 30 March, on the margins of the 30th summit of the League of Arab States in Tunis, I participated in a meeting of the Quartet on Libya, consisting of the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and the League of Arab States. The representatives of the three regional organizations reiterated their support for the United Nations action plan for Libya. On 2 and 3 April, UNSMIL supported a visit of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, to Libya, the first such visit since the 2011 revolution, and from 3 to 5 April, I visited Libya to show my support for the political process at a critical phase for the country. During my meetings with the Prime Minister in Tripoli, the President of the House of Representatives, Agila Saleh Essa Gwaider, in Tobruq, and General Haftar in Benghazi, I reiterated that only a political process could resolve the crisis in Libya.

12. Since the beginning of the offensive on Tripoli launched by the Libyan National Army, the international community has struggled to come to an agreement on a unified position on Libya. On 4 April, France, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America issued a joint communiqué urging all parties to de-escalate the fighting. On 9 April, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union issued a statement calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities and reaffirming that there was no military solution to the Libyan crisis. On 11 April, the European Union issued a statement warning against the risk of escalation for Libya and the wider region.

13. On 23 April, the African Union troika of the Presidents of Egypt, Rwanda and South Africa met in Cairo to discuss the situation in Libya under the auspices of the Chairman of the African Union, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. The troika advocated a more active role for the African Union in addressing the crisis in Libya and called upon all parties to recommit to the political process. On 12 June, the foreign ministers of Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia called for a ceasefire in Libya and reiterated that a political solution is the only way to end the conflict.

14. My Special Representative intensified his engagement with regional and international stakeholders to enlist support for a political solution to the Libyan conflict. On 13 May, the European Union called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and urged all parties to recommit to the United Nations-facilitated political dialogue for a comprehensive political solution to the crisis. On 28 June, representatives of Egypt, France, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States welcomed the proposal of my Special Representative for de-escalation and the resumption of the political process. Briefing the Security Council on 29 July, my Special Representative proposed a three-step initiative to end the conflict that involved: (a) establishment of a truce between the parties; (b) convening of an international meeting in preparation for a Libyan meeting; and (c) convening of a Libyan meeting.

Situation in the western region

15. The security situation in the western region deteriorated seriously during the reporting period. Prior to the start of the offensive on the capital, there had been a build-up of Libyan National Army forces in several areas in the region, with corresponding reactions from other forces. On 10 March, Libyan National Army forces moved towards Abu Hadi, around 25 km south of Sirte. They reportedly

withdrew to Jufrah shortly after the Sirte Protection Force declared a state of emergency and joined the existing forces in Sirte.

16. On 3 April, General Haftar moved his forces from Jufrah towards the capital. Following the entry of the Libyan National Army into Gharyan, forces affiliated with the Government of National Accord withdrew to the north of the city. The Prime Minister declared a state of emergency and a general mobilization in western Libya. On 4 April, the central military zone force in Misratah announced the deployment of units to defend both Tripoli and Sirte.

17. Since June, the conflict in southern Tripoli has undergone a dangerous escalation, with intensified air strikes by aircraft and armed unmanned aerial vehicles and the increasing use of heavy weaponry alongside ground attacks.

18. On 26 June, forces affiliated with the Government of National Accord regained control of Gharyan, where the Libyan National Army had established an operations room. Forces operating under the Government of National Accord captured large amounts of advanced weapons, vehicles and ammunition, including some supplied in apparent violation of the arms embargo. There were allegations of the summary execution of 41 injured Libyan National Army-affiliated fighters and some civilians by forces of the Government of National Accord at the hospital in Gharyan. On 26 July, the geographical scope of the conflict was broadened when Government of National Accord aircraft targeted a Libyan National Army base in the Jufrah region. On 27 July, Libyan National Army forces launched air strikes on the Government of National Accord airbase in Misratah.

19. On 7 May, two individuals at a detention centre in Tajura were injured during an air strike. On 2 July, during air strikes, 53 migrants held in the same detention centre were killed and 130 others were injured, including women and children. On 3 July, a United Nations team visited the site to document the incident and provide humanitarian assistance. I issued a statement condemning the attack and calling for an independent investigation.

20. There have been unconfirmed reports that mercenaries have been active on the battlefield in and around Tripoli. On 7 May, an aircraft affiliated with the Government of National Accord, reportedly operated by a pilot with foreign citizenship, was shot down and detained by Libyan National forces. The pilot was repatriated on 25 June.

21. There was a reduction in violence during the period of the Eid al-Adha truce. However, violations were reported to the Mission on 11 and 12 August in the Salahaddin and Wadi Rabia areas, and in southern Tripoli, around Tripoli International Airport. The truce was not observed in the southern town of Murzuq. Moreover, overflights by unmanned reconnaissance aircraft over the city of Misrata continued during the day.

Situation in the southern region

22. In February 2019, Libyan National Army forces, supported by local armed groups, asserted their presence in south-western Libya, including in key towns and at the Sharara and Fil oilfields. These developments exacerbated local tensions and led to a deteriorating security situation in the region.

23. Libyan National Army forces entered Sabhah on 15 January following negotiations with local actors proceeding towards Murzuq; the forces and affiliates met with resistance from local Tebu groups. During clashes on 22 February, approximately 50 people were reportedly killed and 200 houses damaged. Since March, there have been intermittent clashes in the southern region, and in early June, 15 people were reported killed in clashes in Murzuq. Attempts by Libyan National

Army forces to create parallel local authorities further increased tensions between local Ahali and Tebu communities.

24. The defunct, parallel “interim government” based in eastern Libya instructed authorities in Sabhah not to participate in municipal elections organized by the Government of National Accord. This may have contributed to a low turnout at those elections on 27 April and to the non-recognition of the results by the incumbent municipal council. The elections were subsequently declared void by the court of appeal.

Situation in the eastern region

25. The situation in the eastern region remained relatively calm, although there were reports of kidnappings, forced disappearances and assassinations. In Darnah, the Libyan National Army gained control of the remaining part of the old city on 12 February, following intense fighting between Army forces and remnants of the Darnah Protection Force. Over 100 bodies have reportedly been recovered in the area, including those of women and children.

26. On 15 March, security forces arrested two Libyan National Army elements suspected of involvement in the assassination of a police officer in Benghazi. On 16 March, armed individuals attempted to assassinate the head of the local anti-corruption unit. In Suluq, south of Benghazi, the head of the oil workers union, who had reportedly been abducted near his home by an armed group in late April, was released on 30 May.

27. On 10 August, there was a car bomb explosion in Benghazi, which resulted in five fatalities, including three United Nations staff members, and additional civilian injuries, including two United Nations staff members. No one has claimed responsibility for the incident and investigations are under way by the United Nations.

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Libya

28. Following the offensive of the Libyan National Army against Tripoli in early April, there was a significant increase in the number of attacks by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in southern Libya. During the reporting period, ISIL claimed responsibility for attacks near the southern villages of Fuqaha', on 8 April and 3 June, and Ghudwa, on 25 March and 9 May. ISIL also claimed attacks on a Libyan National Army military camp in Sabhah on 4 May and on a military checkpoint in Zillah on 18 May. From 12 to 15 June, clashes were reported between ISIL and local units of the Libyan National Army in the Haruj desert area, east of Sabhah.

29. At least 22 people were killed by ISIL in the south during attacks or in clashes between local units and ISIL cells. In eastern Libya, ISIL claimed responsibility for a car bomb attack on 2 June against Libyan National Army forces in Darnah, which reportedly injured 11 people.

30. It is estimated that ISIL has between 500 and 700 fighters in Libya, including Libyan and foreign nationals. Both Libyan National Army forces in the south and forces affiliated with the Government of National Accord in the west have continued to disrupt ISIL cells and arrest suspected affiliated individuals. On 7 July, ISIL released a video showing armed elements, allegedly led by the ISIL commander in Libya, Mahmoud al-Barassi, renewing allegiance to the group and vowing revenge against the Libyan National Army.

Economic situation

31. During the reporting period, oil production continued largely uninterrupted, at approximately 1.2 million barrels per day. The Central Bank of Libya continued to apply the economic measures approved in September 2018 that allowed greater access to foreign exchange at the price of 3.9 Libyan dinars to one United States dollar. This allowed the currency to remain relatively stable at 4.4 Libyan dinars to one United States dollar. It also cushioned liquidity stress and provided the Government with over 1 billion Libyan dinars in revenue per month. Absent the prospects for a direct currency devaluation, however, disadvantages of the foreign exchange fee have begun to appear, including compact stress for eastern banks.

32. Despite the increased budget revenue and increased oil prices, Libya was expected to have a budget deficit of up to \$10 billion in 2019, owing in part to the diversion of resources to sustain the conflict. Additional revenue created by the foreign exchange fee added an additional 15 billion Libyan dinars in projected spending to the 2019 budget. The budget of 56 billion Libyan dinars included two supplementary budgets for debt relief and additional development spending. It did not include the supplementary budget utilized by the parallel, defunct “interim government”, which ranged from 7 to 9 billion Libyan dinars and was largely financed through unrecognized debt and the printing of a parallel dinar, including 3 billion Libyan dinars printed during the reporting period.

33. Time-intensive administrative and procurement processes and low tariff collection rates by service providers have resulted in the erosion of vital civilian infrastructure. Loss of capacity in the delivery of water, electricity and other services has been exacerbated by the ongoing conflict, which has damaged a number of vital installations, including the headquarters of the Great Man-Made River. There were likely to be significant shortages of electricity and drinking water during the summer, which would further exacerbate the humanitarian situation.

34. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2434 \(2018\)](#), UNSMIL continued to collaborate with the leadership of the Central Bank of Libya and its parallel branch in eastern Libya on the selection of a firm to conduct a comprehensive audit review to promote transparency and create the conditions for the eventual unification of Libyan financial institutions.

III. Constitution-making process

35. In January, consultations between the House of Representatives and the High National Elections Commission in Tobruq resulted in amendments to the referendum law originally issued by the House on 26 November 2018. On 5 February, the Commission received a revised referendum law that, according to the Commission, included all of the amendments that it had proposed. Despite the non-disbursement of requested funds by the Government of National Accord, the Commission made technical preparations for a referendum process, as stipulated in the amended law. Nevertheless, a lack of political consensus persisted on the validity of the referendum law and the associated amendments to the Constitutional Declaration.

36. The Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court remained closed and therefore unable to rule on the mounting number of appeals filed at the court.

IV. Other activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

A. Electoral support

37. In February, the High National Elections Commission relocated to new headquarters in Tripoli, built after the attack on its old offices by ISIL in May 2018. The building of the new headquarters was made possible by emergency funding of the Government of National Accord and the support of the international community through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project entitled “Promoting Elections for the People of Libya”.

38. On 7 January, the Presidency Council amended the October 2018 regulation on municipal elections. The Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections prepared and conducted elections in 22 municipalities in the western and southern regions in March and April, although one was cancelled and is now awaiting final judgment following an appeal. The elections were held in a largely peaceful atmosphere, albeit with modest voter turnout and low participation by women and young people. All newly elected councils were sworn in and began serving their new mandate, except in Sabhah, where election results were challenged and ultimately annulled by a court ruling.

39. At the present time, both the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections and the High National Elections Commission lack sufficient funding. The annual budget of the Government of National Accord allocated insufficient resources to the Commission, threatening its ability to continue its daily operations.

B. Human rights, transitional justice and the rule of law

40. Civilians, including children, continued to bear the brunt of the escalation of fighting and violence. From 1 January to 31 March, UNSMIL documented 110 civilian casualties, comprising 28 killed and 82 injured. Leading causes of such casualties included shelling, gunfire and explosive remnants of war. Fighting in Tripoli in mid-January and in Darnah and Murzuq in April resulted in a number of civilian casualties, mainly as a result of the reckless use of weapons in residential areas. In March, there were unconfirmed reports of a mass grave in Murzuq, containing 17 unidentified bodies that were found with bound hands and feet and visible signs of gunshots. On 17 March, 13 dead bodies were found on the roadside between Ghudwa and Murzuq, with their hands tied behind their backs and their faces covered by plastic masks.

41. As of 29 July, 111 civilians had been killed and 289 injured in the fighting in and around Tripoli that began on 4 April. An estimated 120,000 people were internally displaced during the period, with many more adversely affected. Unofficial figures indicated that a much higher number of people had been displaced but not formally registered. Approximately 5,000 migrants and refugees were arbitrarily detained in detention centres in Tripoli. There were continued reports of the systematic looting of property by combatants in areas where the population had been displaced by the fighting.

42. There are allegations that all parties have been involved in conduct which could amount to serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law during the fighting. Indiscriminate explosive attacks on residential areas, including Abu Salim, Ghrarat, Suq al-Jum’ah and Hadbah, resulting in civilian casualties and damage to civilian property early in the fighting, have since been

replaced by targeted air strikes, with unexploded ordnance continuing to put civilians at risk. Health-care workers and facilities have been targeted, with 19 ambulances and four health facilities struck, six health-care workers killed and 12 others injured. Attacks on water supplies that affected the Tripoli and Misratah regions constitute conduct which could amount to war crimes. There were also allegations regarding the use of child soldiers and the forced conscription of migrants in detention, in particular for logistical tasks. Social media have been increasingly used to incite hatred and violence, and images of people committing war crimes have frequently been posted online. There has been an increase in cases of the arbitrary arrest and detention, abduction, and enforced disappearance of officials, activists and journalists since the outbreak of the fighting in Tripoli. In April, UNSMIL documented the arbitrary detention or kidnapping of seven officials in eastern and western Libya.

Unlawful deprivation of liberty, detention and torture

43. During the reporting period, an estimated 8,813 individuals were held in 28 official prisons under the authority of the Ministry of Justice, of whom an estimated 60 per cent were in pre-trial detention. In total, 278 women were detained, including 184 non-Libyans, and 109 juveniles and children were also being held in prisons in judicial police custody. Others were detained in facilities nominally under the control of the Ministry of the Interior or the Ministry of Defence, as well as in facilities directly operated by armed groups. Those held had little opportunity to challenge the legality of their detention or to seek redress for violations suffered.

44. In relation to detention facilities under the control of the Ministry of the Interior, UNSMIL continued to receive credible reports of prolonged and arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, poor detention conditions, medical neglect, and the denial of visits from families and lawyers by those in charge of prisons and other places of deprivation of liberty. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime expanded tripartite cooperation with Algeria and Libya to support the prison reform efforts of the Ministry of Justice and the judicial police.

45. UNSMIL continued to highlight the need to end arbitrary and prolonged pre-trial detention and the importance of ensuring that all prisons operated by the Ministry of Justice would be under the control of professional and trained judicial police career staff only. Regular meetings were held with Ministry of Justice officials to follow up on the screening process and enhance the Ministry's supervision of official prisons.

46. In Darnah, serious human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law have reportedly been perpetrated by affiliates of the Libyan National Army, including summary executions of both combatant and civilian detainees. Moreover, the Libyan National Army affiliates reportedly launched a broad intimidation campaign inside the city, targeting the families and perceived associates of members of the Darnah Protection Force. Arbitrary arrests and the forced displacement of civilians continued to be reported.

47. UNSMIL has continued to receive reports of the prolonged detention of, and denial of family visits to, civilians held in the Granada detention centre in eastern Libya since May 2018. Those concerned have included medical professionals, civil society activists and religious figures.

48. UNSMIL continued to face difficulties in obtaining permission to visit prisons under the control of the Ministry of Justice and the judicial police, particularly in the east. In a meeting with UNSMIL in early July regarding visits to Kuwayfiyah prison, east of Benghazi, and the Gernada prison in Bayda', General Abdul Razek al-Naduri, the chief of staff of the Libyan National Army, instructed the military prosecutor in Benghazi to facilitate visits according to formal procedures.

Judicial screening of detainees

49. UNSMIL followed up on the judicial screening of detainees after the issuance, in September 2018, of decrees 1301 and 1304 by the Presidency Council, which established a committee to screen detainees at Mitiga prison and conditions for the release of certain detainees held beyond a period set down in law, respectively, and decree 129 of the Supreme Judicial Council, which established another committee to review the cases of arbitrary detention in Mitiga prison. The committees commenced the review of detainees at the prison, which was believed to hold more than 3,600 detained persons. According to the Investigations Office of the Office of the Prosecutor General, an estimated 800 detainees have been screened, with around 300 detainees released and others transferred. UNSMIL continued to encourage the Office of the Prosecutor General to regularly provide public updates on progress in the screening process. That Office reported, in February 2019, that the committee had concluded its work and that a final report would be submitted to the Government.

Groups in vulnerable situations

Migrants and refugees

50. There are 4,900 refugees and migrants currently held in detention centres run by a government agency. Of that number, an estimated 3,500 are exposed to, or in close proximity to, the fighting in and around Tripoli. An additional unknown number of persons are reportedly held in other informal detention facilities in insecure situations.

51. Migrants and refugees continued to be vulnerable to: loss of liberty and arbitrary detention in official and unofficial places of detention; torture, including sexual violence; abduction for ransom; extortion; forced labour; and unlawful killings. Migrants continued to be detained in overcrowded, inhuman and degrading conditions, with insufficient food, water and medical care and very poor sanitation. Perpetrators of violations included State officials, members of armed groups, smugglers, traffickers and members of criminal gangs. The number of detainees rose as a result of an increase in interceptions at sea and the closure of sea routes to migrants, preventing their departure. On 25 July, up to 150 migrants reportedly died at sea after their vessel capsized.

52. There were ongoing incidents of violence and the use of deadly force against migrants in detention, including after protests by migrants against detention conditions. UNSMIL monitored reports of deadly incidents in official detention centres at Tariq al-Sikkah, Qasr Bin Ghashir, Zawiyah and Sabhah. On 29 July, given the apparent absence of measures to address the conditions, my Special Representative called for the closing of all detention centres.

53. Serious concerns continue with regard to the transfer of migrants rescued or intercepted at sea by the Libyan Coast Guard to unofficial detention centres in Khums. Hundreds of rescued migrants who were reported to have been sent to detention centres were later listed as missing, and it is believed that they may have been trafficked or sold to smugglers, while others disappeared on their way to nearby Suq al-Khamis. On 7 June, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called upon the Government of National Accord to immediately launch an independent investigation to locate the missing people.

54. With a view to strengthening the capacity of the criminal justice system in Libya to combat trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has provided targeted training workshops and support for the development of anti-human trafficking legislation.

Journalists and civil society activists

55. Journalists and other media professionals continued to be subjected to intimidation and arbitrary detention. Since the beginning of 2019, UNSMIL has reviewed one case of unlawful killing and more than 10 cases of the arbitrary arrest and detention of journalists. Two journalists were imprisoned in the east of the country. UNSMIL also reviewed three cases of intimidation and threats, including of female journalists. The journalists were reportedly targeted on the basis of either their media work or other factors, including their tribal affiliation. Numerous human rights defenders and activists fled the country as a result of threats received either on social media or in text messages.

56. UNSMIL documented restrictions imposed by the Foreign Media Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which seriously affected the work of journalists in Tripoli. Threats, including death threats, were made against numerous civil society activists because of their human rights activities. At least three activists have sought sanctuary abroad.

Women and girls

57. On 17 July, Siham Sergewa, an elected member of the House of Representatives, was abducted from her home in Benghazi by an armed group amid continued concerns about attempts to silence women and exclude them from political institutions.

58. Migrant women and girls continued to be particularly vulnerable to rape and other forms of sexual violence. UNSMIL continued to collect accounts from migrant women and girls who had been victims of sexual abuse by smugglers, traffickers, members of armed groups and officials during their journeys through Libya and in migrant detention centres. Libyan and foreign women in prisons continued to be at risk of being sexually abused by prison guards.

Non-governmental organizations

59. On 7 March, the Presidency Council issued new regulations concerning civil society organizations, pursuant to Decree No. 286. The regulations contained improvements over previous regulations on such organizations in Libya, including the introduction of a simplified registration system for domestic civil society organizations and faster processing and approvals by default in the absence of a government decision. For foreign organizations, however, the regulations incorporated burdensome registration and notification requirements, including the provision that all documents must be inspected by the Civil Society Commission, which could cancel the registration and work permission of an organization on seven broad grounds. Those provisions appeared to be inconsistent with the country's international human rights law obligations regarding freedom of association.

Reconciliation and transitional justice

60. Activities initiated in 2017 under the UNSMIL national reconciliation project continued. A draft reconciliation strategy elaborated in the fourth quarter of 2018 was reviewed with a view to presenting best practices and recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of future reconciliation efforts in Libya. Projects to provide support for local dialogues between communities with grievances in southern Libya to underpin United Nations system-wide stabilization efforts were assessed. Training, peer-learning and capacity-building activities were also initiated to support the establishment and training of a national network of local mediators to actively engage in future dialogue and reconciliation efforts throughout Libya. On 24 and 25 June, 45 mediators from southern Libya, including three women, came together in

Tunis to share best mediation practices and identify candidates for future training on conflict resolution and mediation. The meeting also provided an opportunity to update conflict analysis and the mapping of local and regional dynamics.

Corruption

61. On 7 February, the Investigations Office of the Office of the Prosecutor General issued arrest warrants for the owners of 103 fuel stations across Libya who were accused of involvement in smuggling and the illegal disposal of fuel. In addition, the Investigations Office ordered the confiscation of 115 fuel stations to prevent them from supplying fuel and derivative products. The National Oil Corporation welcomed those actions, stating that the Libyan State had been deprived of more than \$750 million annually as a result of corruption of the activities and that more than 1,200 fuel stations had failed to comply with technical conditions and general planning controls.

Human rights due diligence policy

62. The United Nations system in Libya continued its efforts to implement the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces (see [A/67/775-S/2013/110](#), annex). UNSMIL and the United Nations country team continued to provide advice and support to Libyan security forces, with a view to mitigating the identified risks of grave violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law or refugee law by non-United Nations security forces that have been recipients of United Nations support.

C. Security sector

Support for Libyan planning for interim security arrangements and the unification of security forces

63. On 17 January, UNSMIL facilitated a capacity-building conference with the participation of the Ministry of the Interior, a delegation of the heads of all Tripoli police directorates and representatives of the international community in Libya. At the meeting, participants highlighted the need for a road map to unify and empower State security institutions, with the support of the international community, including through the development of a strategy for reorganizing, restructuring and equipping the Ministry of the Interior to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

64. During the reporting period, UNSMIL continued to provide support for security sector reform throughout Libya, both directly and through collaboration with Member States and international organizations, including the provision of advice on: governance and technical support to the police; border management; aviation and airport security; women's empowerment in the security sector; the rule of law; and justice.

Arms and ammunition management

65. The United Nations Mine Action Service continued to assist Libyan authorities in addressing the uncontrolled proliferation of arms and ammunition and contamination from explosive hazards. Construction to secure a missile fuel storage facility near Gharyan, in preparation for the future disposal of highly toxic liquid fuel propellant, neared completion during the reporting period, although additional resources are needed for the second phase of the project. In Misratah, the Mine Action Service completed the second phase of a project to clear and destroy hundreds of tons of explosive remnants of war. To mitigate the threat from improvised explosive devices, the Mine Action Service provided training to 16 Libyan forensic police officers on

device scene incident management. With support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the training included a focus on gender mainstreaming to increase national capacity and help to identify the gender impact of the use of improvised explosive devices. In June, the Mine Action Service commenced a project to begin the mapping and emergency clearance of explosive hazards in Benghazi.

66. Explosive hazard contamination in the greater Tripoli area has increased considerably since the onset of conflict in April. Authorities received hundreds of reports about unexploded ordnance from communities in direct proximity to areas of heavy fighting. In the second quarter of 2019, most humanitarian mine action operations were suspended in areas affected by the hostilities. The removal of the items was severely limited by the unstable security situation and capacity constraints.

67. During the reporting period, the Mine Action Service completed a six-month project to clear explosive hazards in Tawurgha and provided explosive hazard risk education for internally displaced persons in preparation for their anticipated return to the city. In March, the Mine Action Service hosted a workshop on victim assistance in Tripoli in collaboration with the Libyan Mine Action Centre and with the participation of national and international stakeholders.

D. Women's empowerment

68. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued to support the protection and empowerment of women and girls through the provision of psychosocial support and life skills training in four women's community centres in Benghazi, Tripoli, Misratah and Sabhah, reaching a total of 943 women and girls. UNFPA held several discussions with the Ministry of Social Affairs concerning the roll-out in Libya of the essential services package for women and girls subject to gender-based violence as well as the review of laws affecting gender equality and protection against gender-based violence.

69. UN-Women supported the participation of the Women's Support and Empowerment Unit of the Presidency Council in the sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in March 2019. In June, UN-Women and partners convened Libyan women for a workshop on gender equality and violent extremism, at which participants elaborated advocacy priorities for the increased involvement of women in decision-making about preventing and countering violent extremism in Libya. From 8 to 10 July 2019, UN-Women gathered 36 Libyan women from civil society and academia for a conference on mobilizing women for peacebuilding in Libya. Participants identified common priorities as part of a strategy to enhance the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making in the country. An initiative to establish a joint network for Libyan women was presented to the international community.

E. Young people, peace and security

70. On 2 May, UNFPA facilitated a virtual meeting between six young Libyan activists leading the "Fasting for peace" movement and representatives of Member States and United Nations agencies. The movement, supported by the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, was sustained by approximately 350 young Libyans fasting every Thursday to promote peace and requesting at least one 24-hour humanitarian truce every week.

F. Coordination of international assistance

71. On 24 March, the Joint Technical Coordination Committee was convened for the first time in 2019 with participants from UNSMIL and national and international partners. They reviewed the work of the technical working group covering migration, access to services, governance, economic recovery, human rights and the rule of law for 2018 and examined planning for 2019, while also emphasizing the need for national leadership and ownership.

G. Humanitarian, stabilization and development assistance

72. Since the outbreak of fighting on 4 April, some 104,875 individuals have fled their homes, half of whom were believed to be children. While the rate of displacement has decreased since the beginning of the crisis, armed conflict continued to drive families from their homes. Local authorities established 47 collective shelters, housing some 4,000 people. More than 100,000 civilians remained in immediate frontline areas, with over 400,000 more in areas directly affected by clashes.

73. The armed conflict in and around Tripoli has compounded the vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs resulting from eight years of instability and insecurity. In 2019, before the April conflict, 823,000 persons were estimated to be in need, with 552,000 targeted for humanitarian assistance. Moreover, up to 500,000 children could be affected by the increased conflict in western Libya. In response to the Tripoli crisis and in support of local efforts, humanitarian actors have provided approximately 75,000 conflict-affected people, including refugees and migrants, with needed assistance, where access was allowed; some 28,000 people have received medical help through humanitarian partners; more than 18,000 have received water, sanitation and hygiene services; 21,000 people have received food parcels; and 7,000 people have benefited from protection services.

74. In April 2019, humanitarian actors launched the Tripoli Flash Appeal, requesting \$10.2 million to assist around 100,000 highly vulnerable people affected by the conflict. In addition, the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan for 2019 was being revised to incorporate continued responses to meet the needs resulting from the armed conflict. However, funding remained low even as needs continued to increase, with only 10 per cent of the funds called for under the Tripoli Flash Appeal and less than 29 per cent of the \$202 million requested under the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan received.

75. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) established a rapid response mechanism to assist 25,405 conflict-affected people in western Libya. UNICEF provided support in various forms, including health supplies to 155,000 people, food supplies to 17,790 people and water, sanitation and hygiene supplies to 15,800 people. UNFPA distributed dignity kits and baby kits to 3,572 displaced women and girls, including for the care of newborn children, in and around Tripoli. Through local partners, it also deployed psychosocial workers to provide first aid psychosocial support and counselling to 3,241 internally displaced persons in the same area.

76. In early June, flooding displaced more than 5,000 people and affected more than 20,000 people in Ghat. Humanitarian partners, including UNICEF and WFP, provided food and core relief items in conjunction with local actors, and efforts were made to ensure the availability of safe drinking water. WFP regularly provided food assistance to vulnerable populations in Ghat.

77. Conditions in detention centres remained characterized by severe overcrowding and insufficient access to health care, food, clean water and sanitation facilities. An estimated 4,900 refugees and migrants were held in detention centres, of which 3,500 individuals were exposed to, or in close proximity to, the fighting. On 24 and 25 April, UNSMIL and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs facilitated a humanitarian corridor allowing UNHCR and IOM to evacuate all 655 refugees and migrants from a detention centre at the centre of armed clashes, following an incident in which an armed group stormed the facility, injuring at least 12 people.

78. There are currently 53,410 refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR, including 5,550 individuals registered to date in 2019. The vast majority of refugees and asylum-seekers faced the risk of detention and arbitrary arrest. So far in 2019, 4,023 refugees and migrants have disembarked in Libya. UNHCR and partners have provided more than 13,400 medical consultations and distributed more than 8,850 non-food items to refugees who disembarked in Libya or were being held in detention centres or living in urban areas.

79. During the reporting period, UNHCR supported the evacuation or resettlement of 1,297 refugees out of Libya and 1,465 refugees transited through the gathering and departure facility in Tripoli. In addition to implementing 12 quick-impact projects, UNHCR supplied more than 8,855 internally displaced persons and returnees with shelter kits and another 11,500 internally displaced persons with non-food items.

80. As of July, it was estimated that there were at least 641,398 migrants in Libya, of whom 13 per cent were women and 9 per cent were children. IOM continued to provide individuals with assistance at disembarkation points, including medical and protection screening and humanitarian assistance. During the reporting period, IOM provided assistance to 4,936 persons in voluntarily returning to 41 different countries of origin.

81. Overall, IOM provided direct assistance distributions for 26 detention centres and 12 migrant urban areas or disembarkation points, reaching a total of 14,341 migrants. So far in 2019, IOM has reached 20,900 internally displaced persons across 33 internally displaced person and returnee communities, including in Benghazi, Kufrah, Qatrun and Sabhah.

82. As part of the efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, UNFPA continued to support vulnerable women and girls through psychosocial support and life skills training sessions in four women's community centres in Benghazi, Tripoli, and Sabhah. UNFPA and UNICEF also conducted inter-agency training-of-trainers sessions in case management on gender-based violence.

83. In partnership with the Tripoli Health Services Department and the Tripoli Crisis Management Team, UNFPA rehabilitated and equipped the Waryamah maternity ward in eastern Tripoli. It also supplied medical equipment, emergency reproductive health kits and human resources for reproductive health services in Tajura' and Suq al Jum'ah.

84. With local partners, UNICEF provided specialized support to 2,034 children (1,082 girls and 952 boys) who were survivors of violence, including gender-based violence, and trained 369 child protection social actors and staff in Benghazi, Sabhah and Tripoli. Also with a local partner, UNICEF continued to support 120 adolescents who had been released from armed groups in 2017.

85. An emergency response to the conflict in Tripoli has been implemented by UNICEF, in partnership with local government counterparts, in addition to national and international non-governmental organizations. UNICEF has provided life-saving hygiene kits, psychosocial support to conflict-affected children, life-saving maternal and child health supplies to health facilities, and catch-up classes to school-aged children whose schooling was interrupted by the crisis.

86. Health sector actors and the World Health Organization (WHO) took milestone steps, including the development of a three-year strategy, capacity-building for health professionals, the creation of a minimum health service package and the formulation of emergency response and contingency plans. Two subnational health sectors operational in Benghazi and Sabhah were established to cover the eastern and southern regions, respectively. UNFPA and UNICEF, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, WHO and IOM, provided support to health-care facilities for the delivery of maternal, reproductive and obstetric care for women and infants in municipalities across Libya.

87. WFP provided food assistance to 118,000 people in need and, as part of a school project that started in June, food snacks to 2,200 school children in southern Libya. WFP also provided training for feeding focal points in 59 schools and support to the Ministry of Education to develop a national school feeding strategy.

88. On 3 January, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) signed an agreement with the Libyan Urban Planning Agency in Tunis to mobilize technical support and expertise at the global and regional levels for institutional support, capacity-building and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. As part of the “Stronger for Libya” project of the Stabilization Facility for Libya, UNDP supported the renovation of schools in Tajura’ and Sirte and transferred one sewage suction truck and seven submersible water pumps to Bani Walid.

V. Deployment of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and security arrangements

Operational environment and return to Libya

89. In January, UNSMIL relocated its headquarters from Tunis back to Tripoli, and its international staff members with positions at headquarters were reassigned to the Libyan capital. A small office with 23 international staff was retained in Tunis. The United Nations hub in Benghazi became fully operational.

90. Owing to the deterioration of the security environment in the western region of the country following the offensive on Tripoli on 4 April, the United Nations designated official decided, in consultation with the Senior Management Team, to temporarily lower the international civilian staff footprint in Tripoli to a level of 70. Considering the necessity for continuous political efforts, as well as the growing humanitarian needs, and on the basis of ongoing security assessments and analysis of the fighting between the two sides as well as the threat level against the United Nations, the number of United Nations international personnel was constantly adjusted in Tripoli, while a temporary rotational presence was established in Benghazi. All international staff in Tripoli were accommodated at the main United Nations compound, and at times a reduced number of staff were deployed in other locations in the city in support of national staff at the UNSMIL Oea village compound in Janzur. Ground movements were based on case-by-case assessments. UNSMIL, in close coordination with relevant actors in the United Nations security management system, has continued to evaluate and revise security arrangements, based on developments on the ground.

91. From 17 to 30 March, UNSMIL carried out the rotation of the 230-strong United Nations Guard Unit from Nepal. A chartered aircraft transported the troops in two groups between Kathmandu and Tunis. Incoming and outgoing personnel were transported on United Nations aircraft between Tunis and Tripoli, with sufficient guard strength to ensure that compound security was maintained at all times.

VI. Observations and recommendations

92. The descent of Libya into political uncertainty and armed hostilities during the reporting period is deeply alarming. I am particularly concerned about the impact on civilians of the shelling of residential areas and about the reports of targeted attacks and the destruction of vital infrastructure. I am also concerned by repeated incidents affecting humanitarian personnel and facilities, in particular health-care workers and facilities that are at risk of being hit by air strikes and shelling.

93. Those who commit crimes under international humanitarian law must be held accountable. I remind all parties that indiscriminate attacks are strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law. I urge all parties to stop using explosive weapons, including by aerial bombardment or shelling, in populated areas because of their likely indiscriminate effects. I remind all parties of their obligations to spare civilians as well as medical personnel and assets.

94. I reiterate that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Libya, and I urge the warring parties to cease all hostilities and return to a process of political dialogue. I welcome the initiative of Prime Minister Serraj to resume the political process, and I encourage all efforts that will lead to a resumption of dialogue, which can reunify all State institutions and pave the way for durable security and stability as part of a democratic process.

95. I welcome the commitment of both parties to a humanitarian truce on the occasion of Eid al-Adha and the following reduction of violence in the Tripoli area. The United Nations, through my Special Representative, continues to stand ready to use its good offices to transform what was accomplished during the period of the truce, which should be accompanied by confidence-building measures between the parties, into a ceasefire. In this regard, I encourage all parties to respond positively in good faith to the three-step proposal of my Special Representative, including the international and national meetings. I reiterate further my serious concern that, unless action is taken in the near term, it is highly likely that the current conflict will escalate into full civil war.

96. I condemned in the strongest terms the car bomb attack in Benghazi on 10 August in my statement of the same date and extended my deepest condolences to the bereaved families. I also called on the Libyan authorities to spare no effort in identifying and swiftly bringing to justice the perpetrators of the attack, which was echoed in the press statement issued by the Security Council on 11 August 2019.

97. I welcome the continued support of Member States for the efforts of UNSMIL to host track-two dialogue meetings through the political dialogue project and to promote grassroots reconciliation initiatives through the project on national reconciliation. I strongly encourage the continuation of such efforts and I recognize the commitment and courage of Libyans in coming forward to participate in such meetings under the difficult and uncertain conditions in the country. Those efforts underpin the continued determination of the United Nations to facilitate an end to the violence and return to the political process to see unified institutions and the future of the country decided through elections held under an agreed constitutional framework.

98. A political solution to the Libyan conflict requires the full and united support of the international community. I am concerned by the presence of foreign fighters and mercenaries being employed by parties to the conflict in Libya as well as by the influx of weapons to the country. I remind Member States of their obligations not to sell or supply arms to Libya, and I call upon them to implement all measures related to the arms embargo, in accordance with Security Council resolution [2473 \(2019\)](#). The full

implementation of the arms embargo is paramount for the protection of civilians and the restoration of security and stability in Libya and the region.

99. It is imperative that the rule of law be restored throughout Libya, with a State monopoly on the use of force through a holistic security strategy that entails the building of professional, accountable and unified security institutions. The proliferation of arms, fuelling the conflict, and the continued interference by armed groups in the country's sovereign institutions is of particular concern.

100. The humanitarian situation resulting from the conflict in Libya and the increasing inability of the State to meet the basic needs of the population are increasing the hardship borne by the Libyan people. Another serious concern is the situation of migrants in Libya, especially those being held in detention centres, who are facing grave conditions of mistreatment and little to no access to basic amenities.

101. Refugees and migrants in Libya should be released and provided with safe shelter until their asylum claims can be processed or they can be provided with safe repatriation assistance for reunification with their families. Libya is in no way a safe port of disembarkation for refugees and migrants and I urge States to revisit policies that support the return of refugees and migrants to Libyan shores. It is imperative to investigate the alleged systematic violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law with respect to the treatment of migrants and refugees, including children, in detention, and to hold accountable the perpetrators of those violations in order to avoid impunity.

102. To date, less than 20 per cent of the appeal for \$202 million under the 2019 Libya Humanitarian Response Plan has been funded. If no additional funding is received, humanitarian partners will not be able to respond to the immediate humanitarian needs of the people who have recently been affected by the clashes in Tripoli and reach people in need throughout Libya.

103. I welcome the successful conclusion of the 21 democratic municipal council elections held in March and April 2019 to renew the expired municipal council mandates. I note major concerns regarding: the decision by the parallel, defunct "interim government" to establish a parallel electoral authority to conduct municipal elections in eastern Libya; continuous threats to hinder municipal elections processes; and the active appointment of parallel mayors. Libya should have only one national institution for the conduct of council elections. I call upon the Government to ensure that the High National Elections Commission and the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections receive adequate and timely budgetary resources to enable them to cover their running costs and facilitate credible electoral processes.

104. UNSMIL has been operating in Libya under difficult security circumstances following the conflict in and around Tripoli. The Mission has re-established its presence in the east through measures that include the reopening of a political office in Benghazi. I reiterate my commitment, security conditions permitting, to continue to consolidate the permanent presence of the United Nations in Libya while reviewing security risk assessments and arrangements, in order to intensify engagement with national interlocutors. In that regard, I recommend a 12-month extension of the UNSMIL mandate.

105. I reiterate my sincere appreciation to the Government of Nepal for providing the personnel of the United Nations Guard Unit. I also wish to express my gratitude to my Special Representative for Libya, Ghassan Salamé, and to the staff of the United Nations system in Libya for their dedication and hard work in support of peace and security in Libya.