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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 [2486 \(2019\)](#), covers political, security-related 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 26 August 2019 ([S/2019/682](#)).

II. Political, security-related and economic developments

2. The hostilities triggered by the offensive to seize Tripoli on 4 April 2019 by forces under the Libyan National Army Commander, General Khalifa Haftar, have escalated and widened geographically. There have been clashes between forces loyal to the Government of National Accord and General Haftar's Libyan National Army in Gharyan and Tarhunah and around Sirte and Jufrah. Divisions caused by the conflict have arisen in other locations, including in Murzuq, in southern Libya.

3. The use of air power and precision technology, including precision-guided artillery, has become a dominant feature of an otherwise low-intensity conflict. There are indications that drone infrastructure and operations were facilitated by external actors operating within Libya. Multiple incidents of precision air strikes conducted by unknown aircraft have occurred, in apparent violation of the United Nations arms embargo. In addition, there have been persistent reports of the growing involvement of foreign mercenaries providing both sides with enhanced combat capabilities.

4. Since the outbreak of the conflict, on 4 April, the country has suffered continued civilian fatalities, with 284 persons killed and 363 injured. More than 140,000 persons have been forced to flee their homes. My Special Representative for Libya has continued to engage with a wide range of national, regional and international actors to reach an agreement on the cessation of hostilities and resume intra-Libyan political talks under the auspices of the United Nations. In its resolution [2486 \(2019\)](#) of 12 September 2019, the Security Council extended the Mission's mandate and requested the Mission to support a possible ceasefire.

5. On 31 October, the Minister of Education resigned in disagreement with a decision to divide the Ministry into two separate ministries, for general and higher education. Days earlier, the Ministry had cancelled salary payments to more than



150,000 persons on its payroll for lacking the requisite paperwork and ordered administrative investigations of some 800 staff members. The Libyan Audit Bureau suspended the decision, citing technical reasons.

6. On 27 November, the Government of National Accord and Turkey concluded two memorandums of understanding on delimitation of the maritime jurisdiction areas in the Mediterranean and on security cooperation. In a letter dated 26 December 2019 from the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations, an explanatory note was provided on the memorandum of understanding on delimitation of the maritime jurisdiction areas. On 2 January 2020, the parliament of Turkey approved a motion authorizing the Government of Turkey, for a period of one year, to deploy Turkish military forces to Libya, if so requested by the Government of National Accord. The Government of National Accord has reportedly requested the deployment of troops from the Government of Turkey.

7. The memorandum of understanding between the Governments of Libya and Turkey on delimitation of the maritime jurisdiction areas in the Mediterranean was objected to by Cyprus, Egypt and Greece in letters dated 5 December, 16 December and 9 December, respectively. On 31 December, the League of Arab States (LAS) passed a resolution in which it stressed its rejection of external interference and the need to prevent such interference, which contributes to facilitating the transfer of foreign extremist fighters and terrorists to Libya. On 4 January, a group of members of the House of Representatives based in Tobruk declared the memorandums of understanding illegal, while another group of members of the House of Representatives based in Tripoli had previously endorsed them.

8. On 12 December, General Haftar announced a “zero hour” ground and aerial offensive aimed at capturing Tripoli, which prompted a general mobilization of forces supportive of the Government of National Accord. The offensive and mobilization resulted in intensified clashes between the Libyan National Army and the Government of National Accord and an escalation in air activity, but did not lead to significant territorial gains by either side in the Tripoli area. However, on 6 January 2020, Libyan National Army forces took control of Sirte, including its airbase and seaport, from forces of the Government of National Accord.

9. On 8 January 2020, the Presidents of the Russian Federation and Turkey issued a joint statement ([S/2020/31](#), annex) calling upon all parties in Libya to stop hostilities as of 00.00 hours on 12 January, declare a sustainable ceasefire and immediately come together around a negotiating table. They expressed support for the Berlin Process and stressed the need to involve Libyan parties and neighbouring countries. Separately, the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army agreed conditionally to the ceasefire on 11 January, while both claimed that violations had been committed after the ceasefire entered into force. On 13 January, the Prime Minister, Faiez Serraj, participated in talks in Moscow with General Haftar to formalize the cessation of hostilities under the auspices of the Russian Federation and Turkey. While Mr. Serraj reportedly signed a draft joint ceasefire agreement, General Haftar has not signed it.

Implementation of the three-step initiative and the political process

10. To support the Berlin Summit, on 19 January, which constitutes the second step of the three-step initiative presented to the Security Council on 29 July, my Special Representative intensified engagement with international stakeholders. Following my Special Representative’s meeting with the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, on 15 August, Germany hosted five preparatory meetings in Berlin to galvanize the support of members of the international community involved in Libya to create the

conditions necessary for an intra-Libyan dialogue capable of ending the violence and resuming the political process.

11. The preparatory meetings, which were held at the senior official level, brought together Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, as well as the African Union, the European Union, LAS and the United Nations. The draft communiqué of the Berlin Summit is organized according to six baskets: cessation of hostilities and permanent ceasefire, implementation of the arms embargo, security sector reform, return to the political process, economic reform and upholding international humanitarian and human rights law. At the third preparatory meeting, UNSMIL was tasked with making the baskets operational and raising the awareness of Libyan constituencies of the substance of the discussions and the planned outcomes of the Berlin Process in the lead-up to the intra-Libyan dialogue, which constitutes step three of the three-step initiative. At the fourth meeting, participants discussed the UNSMIL operational plan to implement the elements in the draft communiqué.

12. My Special Representative regularly met Mr. Serraj, General Haftar and other key Libyan stakeholders as part of his outreach efforts, with a view to encouraging an end to the conflict, the reunification or continued integrity of national institutions and a return to the political process. He held a series of meetings with large groups of members of the House of Representatives in Tunis and Tripoli to support the reunification of the House, after western members of the body began to hold independent meetings in the capital.

13. In his statement to the General Assembly on 25 September, Mr. Serraj requested a United Nations fact-finding mission and the International Criminal Court to hold to account those responsible for war crimes. On 29 September, the Government of National Accord issued a statement in which it reiterated that the Libyan Political Agreement, the United Nations Action Plan for Libya and the National Conference should form the basis of a political solution to the conflict. The Government requested the return of all forces affiliated with General Haftar to their home bases as a condition for any ceasefire agreement.

14. Mr. Serraj held a series of consultations with Libyan stakeholders, including military commanders of the western, central and Tripoli regions, members of the Presidency Council, business leaders, mayors, tribal elders and representatives of women and young people. The consultations were aimed at unifying the political position of those constituencies.

15. The Government of Egypt hosted meetings in Cairo on 18 and 19 October and on 1 November for a group of members of the House of Representatives in support of the reunification of the legislative body. In the concluding statement, the central role of the House in the resumption of the political process was stressed and the need to achieve national consensus and a shared national vision of elections was underscored.

16. During the Mission's engagement with the High Council of State, members stressed the need to resume the political process on the basis of the Libyan Political Agreement and to end the transitional period with a referendum on the constitution. The President of the High Council proposed a framework to end the conflict and relaunch the political process. Advisers to General Haftar also met representatives of the international community to propose potential means of and conditions for ending the conflict.

International and regional engagement

17. In a declaration issued at the summit of the Heads of State of the Group of Seven, held in Biarritz, France, on 26 August, the Group expressed support for a truce leading to a long-term ceasefire and called for an international conference to bring together all relevant stakeholders, thereby preparing the ground for the meetings that were subsequently held in Berlin. My Special Representative intensified his regional and international outreach to garner support for the Berlin Process, including through visits to Algeria, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the United States.

18. UNSMIL continued to provide the members of the Libya Quartet with weekly updates on the developments on the ground and United Nations activities. In a communiqué of the LAS ministerial meeting of 10 September, external interference was condemned, and an end to the conflict and a return to dialogue were called for. LAS also called for the implementation of the Skhirat agreement and expressed support for the role of the United Nations in mediating the conflict. On 27 September, in the communiqué of the ministerial meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, deep concern was expressed about the prevailing situation and the importance of the involvement of the African Union in the search for a lasting political solution to the crisis in Libya was reiterated.

19. The African Union-European Union-United Nations task force to address the migrant situation in Libya met on 25 September to discuss next steps, priorities and possibilities for further joint work. It also discussed how to consolidate cooperation with the Libyan authorities to scale up assisted voluntary returns and evacuations and create alternatives to detention. Members reiterated the need to redouble efforts aimed at supporting returning migrants more comprehensively to reintegrate them into their communities of origin.

20. On 26 September, France and Italy co-chaired a ministerial meeting on the margins of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, with the participation of the ministers for foreign affairs and senior officials of Member States and regional organizations participating in the Berlin Process. In a statement, the Co-Chairs emphasized the need for an immediate ceasefire, the implementation of the Security Council arms embargo and a return to a political process. On 27 October, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany visited Libya, during which he briefed Mr. Serraj and other Libyan stakeholders on the Berlin Process.

21. On 4 October, I transmitted a letter to the President of the Security Council from the Chairperson of the African Union (S/2019/794), conveying the communiqué adopted at the 883rd meeting of the Peace and Security Council, held on 27 September, including a proposal to strengthen United Nations-African Union cooperation in Libya through the designation of a joint United Nations-African Union special envoy. On 11 October, I transmitted a letter from LAS (S/2019/813) regarding its proposal for a formal joint LAS-United Nations mechanism or arrangement on Libya.

Situation in the western region

22. During the majority of the reporting period, most of the ground fighting continued in southern Tripoli and surrounding areas of the western region, such as Aziziyah, Gharyan and Suq al-Khamis. According to information provided by UNSMIL, since the onset of the conflict, General Haftar's Libyan National Army and affiliated forces have conducted some 850 precision air strikes by drones and another 170 by fighter-bomber, among them some 60 precision air strikes by foreign fighter aircraft. Meanwhile, the Government of National Accord and affiliated forces have

conducted some 250 air strikes. Libyan National Army aircraft have repeatedly bombed areas in Tripoli, including Farnaj, Janzur, Sawani and Tajoura', as well as the town of Zawiyah, striking military, government and public installations. On 4 January, aircraft affiliated with the Libyan National Army carried out an air strike on a military training institution in Tripoli, killing 30 young cadets. Following the start of the announced ceasefire, on 12 January, the situation in Tripoli remained largely calm. Limited clashes erupted in southern Tripoli, with the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army sending limited reinforcements to their respective positions. In the Sirte area, the situation remained calm.

23. In Tripoli, Mitiga International Airport, the primary airport for western Libya, as well as for the United Nations, foreign missions and international organizations, was repeatedly targeted, including by Libyan National Army aircraft and ground forces. On 1 September, four projectiles landed inside the airport, damaging a Libyan Airlines aircraft and that of a domestic airline arriving at the terminal and resulting in a number of injuries, including to crew members, and the indefinite closure of the airport to civilian flights on 6 September.

24. UNSMIL has worked with the parties to facilitate the reopening of Mitiga International Airport and continues to use it for United Nations flights intermittently and when the security situation allows. On 23 November, the Libyan National Army announced restricted airspace in western Libya, covering a large area south of Tripoli and much of the city, except for a narrow strip of the capital along the coast. The airport and the UNSMIL Oea compound were outside the restricted airspace. The announcement came two days after an Italian and a United States uncrewed aerial vehicle were reported lost over Tripoli. The Libyan National Army publicly acknowledged responsibility for the downing of the United States drone.

25. The dangers and direct consequences of foreign interference are increasingly evident. To increase the number of fighters, there has been growing involvement of mercenaries. The presence of such professional fighters has been linked to an escalation in violence.

26. Hostilities have gradually moved into densely populated neighbourhoods, resulting in a commensurate increase in the number of civilian casualties. UNSMIL reported that, on 6 October, a Libyan National Army aircraft dropped four unguided bombs on an equestrian club 350 metres from the United Nations compound in Tripoli. The Mission collected evidence in order to inform the Panel of Experts on Libya and other relevant entities. Six civilians, five of whom were children, were injured by the strike, and shrapnel landed inside the United Nations compound. UNSMIL reported a number of other incidents. On 14 October, three children were killed as a result of the bombing of a residential building in the Farnaj area of Tripoli by a Libyan National Army air asset. On 23 October, a Libyan National Army aircraft bombed the Aziziyah and Ramlah neighbourhoods, hitting three houses and killing three civilians and injuring four. On 31 October, a Libyan National Army aircraft conducted air strikes in Tripoli, next to the offices of the Ministry of the Interior. On 18 November, aircraft supporting the Libyan National Army conducted air strikes close to a factory in Tajoura', killing seven persons, among them five foreign workers. On 2 December, a Libyan National Army aircraft carried out an air strike in the Sawani area, in southern Tripoli, killing three children. On 27 December, a Libyan National Army aircraft carried out air strikes in Zawiyah that killed two civilians.

27. Peaceful protests and demonstrations were held in Tripoli during the reporting period. On 21 and 28 October, some 100 civilians demonstrated in front of the office of the Prime Minister over employment and salary issues. Demonstrations by some 70 persons were staged in Martyrs' Square on 27 September and 14 October, with participants denouncing General Haftar and the offensive to seize the capital. Some

25 demonstrators gathered in front of the Mission's Oea compound on 20 and 31 October, raising anti-Haftar banners.

28. Armed groups in Tripoli continue to threaten individuals who impede their access to resources. After the killing of leaders from the Kaniyat/Seventh Brigade in Tarhouna, the group conducted extensive attacks against those who had been suspected of being sympathetic to the Government of National Accord. Between 26 August and 1 September, the attacks left 39 persons, including civilians, dead and dozens more injured. Elsewhere in western Libya, there was a series of abductions for political and criminal motives. A member of the High Council of State was abducted in southern Tripoli by the Libyan National Army and subsequently released. In the Qarabulli region, a number of Libyans were arrested while travelling between areas controlled by various groups. According to reports, some were killed.

Situation in the eastern region

29. Eastern Libya has experienced a deterioration in law and order, including numerous cases of crimes and intimidation, reportedly by elements affiliated with the Libyan National Army, mostly in Benghazi. Benghazi has become a hub for illicit economic activities, including the sale of drugs and arms. During the reporting period, the police arrested several individuals involved in drug dealing and trafficking in arms.

30. Several incidents were recorded during the reporting period, including the abduction and later release of the Head of the Administrative Control Authority in eastern Libya, the kidnapping of the former Head of the Bar Association of Benghazi, the killing of a Jamhouryah Bank employee in Benghazi and the abduction of the general manager of the National Commercial Bank. On 12 October, security forces uncovered a mass grave in the Hawwari district of Benghazi.

31. Women in eastern Libya have been the targets of abductions and attacks. On 29 September, the Head of the Health Services Affairs Department was abducted from her home in Darnah by an armed group. Also during the reporting period, two Sudanese women were abducted, tortured and murdered by an armed group in Benghazi, and a 70-year-old Libyan woman was abducted from her home in Benghazi after being accused of practising witchcraft. On 24 October, armed men raided the house of the President of Criminal Chamber No. 7 in Benghazi.

Situation in the southern region

32. Tensions between the Ahali and Tebu communities in the city of Murzuq escalated to unprecedented levels on 4 August, after drones supporting the Libyan National Army struck a gathering of Tebu, killing more than 40 persons. After a meeting between Tebu and representatives of the Libyan National Army in Abu Dhabi in mid-September, Tebu-controlled armed groups took control of the city, which had been controlled by the Ahali and other groups aligned with the Libyan National Army since March.

33. My Special Representative met representatives of both communities and is working to de-escalate the situation and create conditions for the return of the displaced individuals.

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Libya

34. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continued to pose a threat to security and stability. Following the death of the ISIL leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, on 26 October, the appointed Emir of ISIL in Libya, Abdul Qadr al-Najdi, pledged alliance to the new ISIL leader, Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurayshi.

35. In October, suspected ISIL members were reportedly arrested by Libyan National Army forces in Sabha and by forces affiliated with the Government of National Accord in Sirte, evidence of continuing efforts by the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army to target the organization. There is concern that security in southern Libya may deteriorate further, allowing ISIL and other violent extremist groups to expand their activities.

36. In a series of statements released between 20 and 30 September, the United States Africa Command announced that 43 ISIL elements had been killed in four air strikes in southern Libya in September. According to the Command, the air strikes were carried out in coordination with the Government of National Accord.

Economic situation

37. During the reporting period, the Libyan dinar strengthened against the United States dollar, which increased its purchasing power with regard to basic commodities, such as food. The progressively decreasing foreign currency exchange tax imposed by the Presidency Council in September 2018 has encouraged deposits and undercut the black market. The revenue windfall from the tax, which was expected to exceed 20 billion Libyan dinars in 2019, continued to keep in surplus the general budget overseen by the Government of National Accord. While most of the revenue accrued from the tax is included in the general budget, and although the Central Bank of Libya has recently begun publishing regular budgetary reports, there is still a lack of transparency regarding the individuals who are able to obtain access to the taxed rate, as opposed to the official rate. In southern Libya, cash flow remains a challenge owing to the inability to deliver cash on the part of the official western branch of the Central Bank and the parallel non-recognized Central Bank branch in eastern Libya.

38. Since April, growth in gross domestic product has been cut by two thirds owing to the conflict, and debt has increased dramatically. While debt directly managed by the Central Bank of Libya decreased to 56 billion Libyan dinars, that of the parallel non-recognized Central Bank branch in eastern Libya increased to 43 billion Libyan dinars, resulting in an overall gross domestic product-to-debt ratio of 150 per cent.

39. On 12 September, the unrecognized “interim government” attempted to replace the head and board of the Libyan fuel distribution company, Brega Petroleum Marketing Company. The attempt to break up the national institution and take over offices essential to the functioning of the National Oil Corporation nearly forced a declaration of force majeure.

40. On 16 October, the Minister of Economy abolished the Libyan fuel subsidy regime, which continued to cost the country billions of dollars while encouraging overconsumption and fuel smuggling. On 27 November, there was violence, leading to some casualties, at the Fil oil field, which threatened the safety of National Oil Corporation staff and led to the temporary shutdown of its production. UNSMIL issued an urgent statement in which it warned of the need to protect civilian staff and the national oil infrastructure.

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

A. Electoral support and the constitutional process

41. The UNSMIL-led integrated electoral assistance team, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), continued its efforts to support and advise the High National Election Commission and the Central Committee for Municipal

Council Elections, focusing on voter registration, legislation and the construction of a new Election Commission compound. During the reporting period, no elections were conducted by the municipal elections committees in the east and west. The unrecognized “interim government” appointed steering committees in a number of municipalities, including those that held elections in 2019. Meanwhile, discussions held by the Constitutional Drafting Assembly, the House of Representatives and the High Council of State continued on the constitutional framework necessary to hold eventual elections.

42. The funds allocated in the annual budget of the Government of National Accord have not been fully disbursed to the High National Election Commission and the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections, threatening the ability of those institutions to continue their daily operations.

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

43. Gross violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law, including summary executions, enforced disappearances and torture, continued to be committed throughout Libya with total impunity. Since the outbreak of conflict, on 4 April, attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure have continued unabated. At least 50 attacks on health-care facilities, health-care workers and ambulances were registered during the period. On 25 October, UNSMIL issued a statement in which it strongly condemned attacks on all civilian targets and denied accusations of receiving or sharing coordinates of field hospitals and clinics with any party to the conflict.

44. During the Human Rights Council interactive dialogue on Libya, held on 25 September, discussions included the establishment of an investigative mechanism under the Council, such as a commission of inquiry.

45. Social media continued to be used to incite hatred and violence, including the frequent posting of images of possible war crimes. UNSMIL continued its efforts to curb incitement and hateful rhetoric in the Libyan media. Two two-day workshops, held on 9 September in Tripoli and on 2 November in Cairo, brought together journalists, editors and social media activists, human rights instructors and representatives of social media platforms with a view to ultimately drawing up a media code of conduct.

46. On 6 October, the newly elected Supreme Judicial Council held its first formal meeting in Tripoli and issued annual judicial rotations, a combination of promotions and transfers. The election and the Council’s assumption of office, which brought together eight judicial zones throughout Libya, were a demonstration of support for a unified judiciary, notwithstanding the continuing political divisions.

Unlawful deprivation of liberty, detention and torture

47. During the reporting period, some 8,500 individuals, of whom an estimated 60 per cent were in pretrial detention, were held in 28 official prisons under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. In total, 280 women, including 180 non-Libyans, and 109 children were held in prisons and/or in judicial police custody. Thousands of others were held in facilities nominally under the control of the Ministry of the Interior or the Ministry of Defence, as well as facilities directly operated by armed groups. Those detained had little opportunity to challenge the legality of their detention or seek redress for violations suffered.

48. The spread of diseases, in particular infectious and communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis, scabies, HIV and hepatitis, among inmates has increased dramatically. UNSMIL engaged with the Ministry of Justice to support improved

medical care for prisoners. Most prisons have no ambulances, and prison clinics suffer from shortages of medicine and equipment.

49. In August, the Ministry of Justice issued a decree to reopen a prison in Ayn Zarah, Tripoli, and established a new prison in Millitah, in western Libya, to address overcrowding in prisons in Tripoli. In September, the eastern authorities announced the opening of a new prison, in Darnah. UNSMIL reiterated the need to end arbitrary and prolonged pretrial detention and continued to engage with the Office of the Attorney General on the process of screening prisoners.

Groups in vulnerable situations

Migrants and refugees

50. Some 3,200 refugees and migrants are currently held in detention centres run by the Department for Combating Illegal Migration, under the Ministry of the Interior, and controlled by armed groups. Among them, an estimated 2,000 are exposed, or in close proximity, to the fighting in and around Tripoli.

51. Migrants and refugees continued to be subjected systematically to arbitrary detention and torture in official and unofficial places of detention. Sexual violence, abduction for ransom, extortion, forced labour and unlawful killings are also widespread. Perpetrators of violations include government officials, members of armed groups, smugglers, traffickers and members of criminal gangs. Only one official detention centre, the Tariq al-Sikkah centre, employed female guards.

52. There are serious concerns regarding the transfer of migrants intercepted at sea by the Libyan Coast Guard to official and unofficial detention centres, including the Tajoura' Detention Centre, which remained open notwithstanding the announcement by the Government of National Accord on 1 August that it would be closed. On 2 November, a memorandum of understanding between Italy and the Government of National Accord – covering development cooperation; countering illegal migration, trafficking and smuggling; and reinforcing security between Italy and Libya – was renewed.

Journalists and civil society activists

53. On 9 October, two journalists were shot and injured on Azizah Street, in Tripoli, while en route to report on fighting at the front line. On 27 August, a camera operator was arrested by Government of National Accord security forces and taken to Mitiga prison in Tripoli, where he was detained without charge until his release on 9 September. On 30 October, OHCHR, in collaboration with UNSMIL, trained 25 civil society representatives in Tunis in engaging with the universal periodic review process of the Human Rights Council.

Women and girls

54. During the reporting period, there was no information regarding the fate of Siham Sergewa, an elected member of the House of Representatives who had been abducted from her home in Benghazi on 17 July. UNSMIL continued to call for her immediate release and, more broadly, continued to condemn violence against women in politics and other human rights violations against women and girls.

55. Women throughout Libya are held in prison facilities that do not employ female guards, thereby exposing them to increased risks of sexual harassment and violence. In western Libya, the Jadidah Women's Prison, in Tripoli, is the only correctional facility with female guards.

Reconciliation and transitional justice

56. The Mission's reconciliation project, implemented together with UNDP, continued activities to enable grass-roots level reconciliation efforts. On 9 October, the last in a series of regional meetings aimed at creating a network of local mediators was held. There were 32 participants, including 12 women, from eastern Libya. In the next phase, specialized training in enhancing conflict analysis, conflict resolution and mediation skills will be offered to various constituencies throughout Libya.

57. To address the unresolved issue of the displaced residents of Tawurgha, Mr. Serraj met the Head of the Tawurgha local council and the Mayor of Misratah on 21 October. He pledged to facilitate the release of reparations due within the framework of the Misratah-Tawurgha reconciliation agreement. On 15 December, the Tripoli Appeals Court acquitted all of the defendants in the Abu Salim prison case relating to the massacre of 1,200 persons in 1996, including the former Director of Military Intelligence, Abdullah al-Senussi. The acquittals include five defendants who died while on trial, whereas other defendants were acquitted on the basis of the statute of limitations, as contained in the Penal Code. The case is subject to further appeal by the State, which would be an important step in enabling the highest court in Libya to emphasize the inapplicability, under international law, of statutes of limitations to gross human rights violations.

Human rights due diligence policy

58. 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), with a view to mitigating the identified risks of grave violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law or refugee law.

C. Security sector

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

59. UNSMIL continued to provide support for security sector reform throughout Libya, including the provision of advice on governance and technical support to the police, border management, aviation and airport security, the empowerment of women, the rule of law and justice.

60. The integrated team of UNSMIL and UNDP worked on developing the second phase of the Policing and Security Joint Programme. From 21 to 28 October, the Global Focal Point on Rule of Law and Libyan officials from the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice reviewed the current challenges and opportunities for United Nations support for the rule of law and the security sector to contribute to an overall joint strategy for future engagement. Consultations were held with civil society groups to identify rule of law priorities, including strengthening oversight mechanisms, supporting a functioning judiciary and supporting a gender-responsive security sector.

Arms and ammunition management

61. Explosive hazard contamination in the greater Tripoli area increased exponentially, with the authorities continuing to receive hundreds of reports of unexploded ordnance from communities affected by the conflict. Access to affected areas by clearance teams remained severely limited by the volatile security situation and capacity constraints.

62. The Mine Action Service continued to assist the Libyan authorities in addressing the proliferation of arms and ammunition and contamination from explosive hazards. The Service supported national capacity development for the mitigation of the threat from improvised explosive devices by providing training in device scene incident management to a second group, comprising 16 Libyan forensic police officers, in October. The training included a focus on gender mainstreaming to increase national capacity and help to identify the gender impact of improvised explosive devices.

63. The Mine Action Service project in Benghazi, to conduct emergency clearance and map explosive hazards, has removed 40 items of unexploded ordnance and completed non-technical surveys of 24 sites. The surveys will inform future clearance operations and support the protection of civilians and stabilization.

Advancing a ceasefire

64. UNSMIL continues to scope out modalities for supporting a ceasefire, primarily in Tripoli and subsequently nationwide. Planning is progressing for the complementary security sector reforms, the mobilization of State security and interim security arrangements, the redeployment of heavy weapons and increased cooperation on counter-terrorism. In the context of the Berlin Process, planning continues for a military dialogue between the Government of National Accord and General Haftar's forces that would address those issues as part of a sustainable cessation of hostilities agreement.

D. Empowerment of women

65. One year after its establishment, the Women's Empowerment and Support Unit of the Presidency Council continued to lack financial support from the Government. The Unit held consultative meetings with members of civil society organizations, women's groups, government officials and ministers. The Unit recently endorsed the report on the comprehensive national review of the progress made towards the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. However, the Unit has yet to produce any policies or decrees related to gender equality, as envisaged in its mandate.

66. Between 27 August and 11 November, 200 women benefited from training sessions aimed at developing income-generating skills, organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). On 29 August, my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs briefed the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, noting the disproportionate effect of the continuing hostilities on Libyan women and girls. Furthermore, she reiterated the commitment of the United Nations to ensuring inclusion and the full participation of Libyan women in all political and mediation efforts and assured participants that additional efforts were under way to ensure that Libyan women were fully prepared to leverage their influence on the conflict dynamics and play an active part in mediation and reconciliation efforts.

67. With the support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), members of municipal councils strategized in September on ways to link women peacebuilders at the community level with initiatives at the policy level. On 11 and 12 November, a delegation of Libyan women participated in a global conference on gender perspectives and confidence-building for inclusive peace, with the assistance of UN-Women, at which they reiterated the importance of the meaningful participation of women.

E. Young people, peace and security

68. In October, a Peacebuilding Fund joint project on building peace within and with young women and men in Sirte was launched by UNFPA, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The 18-month project is aimed at supporting young people and adolescents in Sirte to become active agents of change in the Libyan context and at providing them with psychosocial support, training in leadership and conflict resolution and opportunities to participate in the decision-making process.

F. Coordination of international assistance

69. From 15 to 21 September, 25 staff members from seven national and international organizations providing services to address gender-based violence in Libya were trained by UNFPA and UNICEF in the Primero Gender-based Violence Information Management System+ to provide life-saving care and support to survivors of such violence in that country. The introduction of the information management system for service providers is aimed at increasing safety, ethics and quality in the provision of services and documentation related to the management of cases of gender-based violence while allowing service providers to gather and analyse data on incidents of such violence systematically.

70. On 29 October and 8 November, youth working group meetings were held to foster cooperation and review a mapping tool for programmes for young people, with the presence of the United Nations (the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office) and Democracy Reporting International.

71. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, under the leadership of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, undertook consultations with the Libyan authorities, civil society and the humanitarian community to prepare the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan for 2020. The enhanced approach for 2020 includes a more holistic and intersectoral analysis of needs, strengthened prioritization, measurable and attainable strategic objectives and improved monitoring. The consultative process produced more focused response parameters that will be pursued by the humanitarian country team in coordination with Libyan counterparts and local humanitarian responders.

G. Humanitarian, stabilization and development assistance

72. During the reporting period, the hostilities in and around the capital gradually moved into densely populated neighbourhoods, triggering further displacement and increased humanitarian needs. Internally displaced families who remain close to areas of conflict, host communities providing them with shelter and migrants and refugees held in government-run detention centres remain at significant risk. More than 231,000 civilians remain in immediate front-line areas, with an additional 380,000 persons living in areas directly affected by conflict.

73. In conflict-affected areas, people faced increased challenges to gaining access to basic essential goods and public services and being able to earn a livelihood. In response to the crisis in Tripoli, and in support of local efforts, humanitarian actors have provided some 226,000 persons with needed assistance.

74. In the southern city of Murzuq, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, food and non-food items were delivered to areas of displacement, including for some 600

displaced families (approximately 1,500 persons), by humanitarian partners in coordination with local committees.

75. From 1 January to 30 November, UNSMIL and OHCHR documented 647 civilian casualties (284 killed and 363 injured), including 486 men, 26 women and 67 children, compared with 188 civilian casualties in 2018. Air strikes were the leading cause of such casualties, accounting for 394 casualties (182 killed and 212 injured), followed by ground fighting, improvised explosive devices and targeted and deliberate killings. UNSMIL and OHCHR documented the highest number of civilian casualties in the western part of the country, followed by the eastern and southern areas. The actual number of casualties may be higher. More than 301,000 persons were displaced throughout Libya, while more than 444,000 previously displaced persons had returned to their place of origin within the country.

76. Of the 552,000 persons targeted by humanitarian partners for assistance under the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan for 2019, almost 400,000 had received some form of assistance as at the end of November. However, as at 13 November, funding remained low, even as needs continued to increase, with only 50 per cent of the \$202 million requested under the Plan received.

77. In November, it was estimated that there were more than 636,000 migrants and refugees in Libya, with women accounting for 13 per cent and children 8 per cent. Between 27 August and 4 November, the Libyan Coast Guard returned 2,437 migrants and refugees to the country. At disembarkation points, IOM provided medical and humanitarian assistance. IOM supported the voluntary return of 2,065 migrants to 26 countries of origin through its humanitarian return programme. UNSMIL human rights personnel were not granted access to disembarkation points to assess the human rights concerns of those individuals.

78. There are currently some 46,000 refugees and asylum seekers registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. During the reporting period, the Office supported the evacuation or resettlement of 1,297 refugees from Libya, and 1,465 refugees transited through the gathering and departure facility in Tripoli, which was established in December 2018 to serve as a transit centre for refugees. However, as at 5 November, more than 1,200 persons were sheltering in the facility following the recent arrival of an estimated 450 persons released from a detention centre. Spontaneous arrivals compromised the facility's original function as a transit centre for evacuations. While humanitarian actors continued to provide medical and humanitarian assistance, the Government of National Accord has a responsibility, as the main duty bearer, to provide alternatives to detention, such as release into urban areas, or to open centres that allow freedom of movement, shelter, assistance and protection from harm.

79. A health sector assessment conducted in October revealed a sharp increase during the reporting period in unmet health needs, for women and girls in particular. More than 24 per cent of health facilities were closed owing to conflict, electricity cuts or structural damage, and services were interrupted in many others.

80. Since the outbreak of the conflict, at least 44 schools were completely damaged and 193 partially damaged. A total of 221 schools, including 124 public schools, were non-functional, and 28 were being used as shelters for internally displaced persons.

81. In September, more than 600 schoolchildren took part in nutrition summer camps throughout Tripoli, organized by WFP, along with the Ministry of Education and private partners. WFP reached 126,000 persons throughout Libya through regular and emergency food distribution, school-feeding programmes and food-for-training resilience initiatives.

82. UNDP continued its stabilization and recovery activities. As at October, \$31 million had been invested in more than 40 municipalities to help to restore essential public services for more than 70 per cent of their population. In Tawurgha, UNDP initiated efforts to support the provision of health care, energy and education services to some 1,500 returnees. In September and October, it also rehabilitated three schools in Bani Walid and one in Sirte and completed maintenance and repairs at Benghazi University. In addition, it made progress in repairing the water and sewage grid in Sabha and began work on a health centre in Ghat, in south-western Libya.

83. Informal settlements are growing rapidly in Libya owing to the absence of the rule of law and poor governance, which has resulted in environmental degradation, a lack of basic services and legal problems that can cause social unrest and instability. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme supported the Urban Planning Agency in mapping informal settlements and provided technical capacity-building and support to address land and property rights disputes.

84. Between 27 August and 11 November, UNFPA specialized teams provided maternal and newborn health services in Tripoli and support to displaced families in shelters in Tripoli and Tajoura'. UNFPA local partners in Benghazi reached 552 women and girls displaced from Murzuq and local residents through awareness-raising sessions on domestic violence and the prevention of gender-based violence. In Sabha, UNFPA local partners continued to provide psychosocial support in individual cases of gender-based violence and conducted recreational activities for internally displaced persons from Murzuq.

85. UN-Women and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs made additional efforts to ensure that humanitarian assistance better served women and girls in Libya, including by conducting a training-of-trainers session on gender-related issues for 18 humanitarian practitioners from 2 to 6 September. Also in September, in response to the needs of conflict-affected families displaced in Sabha from Murzuq, IOM, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP activated their rapid response mechanism to provide basic essential items, including for displaced women and girls. In November, UNFPA provided emergency reproductive health kits to Suq al-Khams Hospital in Khums. Such commodities will enhance the provision of services related to sexual and reproductive health and rights for an estimated 500 women and girls.

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

86. The United Nations maintained a limited international civilian staff presence of some 100 persons in Tripoli on a rotational basis, while the remainder of the international staff worked from the Tunis office. While the United Nations Guard Unit protected the UNSMIL compound, the staff presence was under continuous review and adjusted, taking into account security conditions and on the basis of the expertise required in Libya at any given time, in particular in engaging in political efforts and addressing the growing humanitarian requirements. National staff living in areas affected by the violent conflict worked from home or were advised to move to safer areas. All international staff in Tripoli continued to be accommodated at the Oea compound.

87. Following the attack in Benghazi on 10 August, which left three United Nations staff members dead and two others injured, a board of inquiry was convened and is continuing to meet in order to ascertain the circumstances of the incident. UNSMIL kept the Benghazi hub operational, but reduced its permanent international staff presence. Ground movements were conducted following case-by-case assessment.

Security arrangements were adjusted continuously, depending on developments on the ground.

V. Observations and recommendations

88. Since the outbreak of hostilities, in April 2019, Libya endured a downward spiral of conflict. During the reporting period, external interference further increased, in particular in terms of war materiel and the reported arrival of additional foreign fighters and mercenaries into the country.

89. I continue to be particularly concerned about the impact of the shelling on civilians and of air strikes on residential areas and the repeated incidents seemingly targeting medical workers and medical facilities. I remind all parties of the strict prohibition of indiscriminate attacks under international humanitarian law and urge all parties to avoid aerial bombardment or shelling of residential areas. I also recall the obligation of all parties to ensure respect for and the protection of medical personnel and hospitals and other medical facilities. I stress that attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure violate international humanitarian law and may constitute war crimes. Those who commit such crimes must be held accountable.

90. I welcome the steps taken towards a ceasefire under the auspices of the Presidents of the Russian Federation and Turkey. I urge all warring parties to expeditiously consolidate the unconditional cessation of hostilities developed under those auspices and to engage constructively towards that end, including within the Berlin Process.

91. I also welcome the upcoming Berlin Summit and its aim of unifying the international community in support of ending the conflict and enabling a return to the political process and creating the conditions necessary for an intra-Libyan dialogue. Any foreign support to the warring parties will only deepen the ongoing conflict and further complicate efforts to reach a clear international commitment to a peaceful resolution of the underlying crisis. I urge all Member States and regional organizations to strongly support the Berlin Summit. I extend my gratitude to the Government of Germany for its sustained efforts to make the Process a success.

92. It is essential for the international community to act with unity to end the conflict and advance a peaceful resolution of the crisis. I welcome the work done in the context of the Berlin Process to advance a communiqué containing six baskets of elements necessary to end the conflict and address its root causes. I encourage Member States to support the work carried out by UNSMIL to make the baskets operational, including detailed work that has been done to support a ceasefire, and the proposal for a follow-up committee to the Berlin Summit. I welcome the proposal for immediate talks between military representatives and encourage the proposal to be implemented as soon as possible. I emphasize again the fundamental importance of the need to demonstrate international unity to act collectively to improve the situation on the ground and to support the intra-Libyan dialogue, the last step of my Special Representative's three-step initiative.

93. To prevent a further escalation of violence and to enable a cessation of hostilities to go into effect, it is essential that there be strict adherence to the arms embargo, in accordance with Security Council resolution [2473 \(2019\)](#). I note with concern the persistence of violations of the embargo, as catalogued by the Panel of Experts. 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 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.

94. Efforts to divide the operation and management of the National Oil Corporation, and attacks against oil infrastructure, threaten oil revenue and consequently the interests of all Libyans. I was encouraged by the joint statement of 22 September by France, Germany, Italy, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States expressing support for the Corporation as an important international message rejecting persistent attempts to divide that sovereign institution that is vital to the country's stability. In that regard, I welcome the continued efforts to reunify the country's institutions, as well as additional economic reforms.

95. As a result of the conflict, democratic processes have stalled. I am concerned that the unrecognized "interim government" in eastern Libya is increasing the uncertainty caused by the conflict by planning to conduct parallel municipal elections or impose appointed "municipal steering committees", including in areas in which elected councils are already in place. Such measures must cease immediately, or they will inevitably exacerbate local conflict and fragment the local governance structure. Libya should have only one national institution for the conduct of council elections. I call upon the Government of National Accord to ensure that the High National Election Commission and the Central Committee for Municipal Council Elections receive adequate and timely budgetary resources to enable them to facilitate credible electoral processes, when circumstances allow.

96. I welcome the work of UNSMIL with Libyan representatives and civil society. Such efforts, including to combat the proliferation of hate speech, are important to build trust in the continuing process and address underlying drivers of the crisis.

97. I am deeply concerned by reports of the abduction and intimidation of women and reiterate my call for information pertaining to the fate of the abducted lawmaker, Siham Sergewa. I continue to call upon all Libyan actors to implement Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). Women and young people have a critical role to play in dialogue and peacebuilding efforts, and I reiterate the imperative of their inclusion in the political process.

98. I continue to be gravely concerned by the situation of migrants and refugees in Libya, including those being held in detention centres. 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 not considered to be a safe port of disembarkation for refugees and migrants, and I urge Member States to revisit policies that support the return of refugees and migrants.

99. I urge Member States to support the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan in order to enable humanitarian partners to respond to the immediate and growing needs of the people affected by the conflict.

100. I am deeply concerned that armed groups throughout Libya, including those affiliated with the State, hold thousands of men, women and children in prolonged arbitrary and unlawful detention and subject them to torture and other human rights violations and abuses. I call for those detained arbitrarily or otherwise unlawfully deprived of their liberty to be released immediately and unconditionally and for all those lawfully deprived of their liberty to be transferred to official detention facilities and to be treated in accordance with applicable international law and standards. It is utterly reprehensible that victims have little or no recourse to judicial protection or to remedy or reparations, while members of armed groups enjoy total impunity. It is imperative to investigate alleged systematic violations in Libya of international

human rights law and international humanitarian law and to hold accountable the perpetrators of those violations.

101. I express my appreciation to my Special Representative for Libya, Ghassan Salamé, and to all United Nations personnel working in support of peace, security and humanitarian assistance in Libya. I also wish to reiterate my sincere appreciation to the Government of Nepal for providing the vital personnel of the United Nations Guard Unit.
