



FORUM: Security Council

QUESTION OF: Finding a Long-Term Solution to the Libyan Conflict

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POSITION: President

INTRODUCTION

“The whole Arab world will move quickly for freedom [...] in one year you will have another Arab world.” ¹

- Abdel Rahman Shalgham

This was the hope of revolutionaries fighting against the Gaddafi government in 2011, another world. A democratic Libya with a right to free speech and security. But instead of achieving those things the Libyan Revolution 2011 led to chaos and multiple rebel groups turning against each other. Two governments were established, which both claimed to have complete power over Libya. The conflict was followed by the *First Civil War* in 2011/12 and the *Second Civil War* still enduring today.

Today Libya is in strong need of sovereignty and unity in order to being able to manage wealth, security and public services for the benefit of all its citizens.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Sovereignty

the quality of having a “supreme rank, power or authority” ²

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In August 2009 the Arab Spring arrived in Libya. Thousands of people joined protests against the governance of Muammar Gaddafi, who had been leading the country since 1969. The number of protests increased through the next years leading to an escalation in Benghazi on 15 February 2011. Security forces attacked anti-Gaddafi protesters during a protest demonstration.

¹https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/2011_Libyan_civil_war

²<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/sovereign>

This event led to a UN resolution on “freezing the assets of Gaddafi and his inner circle”³ and shortly afterwards to an intervention of NATO into the conflict. NATO member states bombed Libyan military installations with the aim to protect civilians. Whether the NATO operation, which also destroyed Libyan infrastructure, was necessary, is controversial.

Anti-Gaddafi rebel groups were formed during the *First Civil War* and afterwards. Although those groups all aimed to topple Gaddafi, they differed extremely in their ideologies and beliefs. Various attempts to establish a ceasefire between the Gaddafi government and the rebel groups were unsuccessful.

In September 2011 an alternative government called the *National Transitional Council (NTC)* was established and recognized by the UN as official government of Libya. On 23 October 2011 the *NTC* declares the end of the *First Civil War*. Although the war is officially ended there are still various armed rebel groups continuing to spread violence. In order to control the militias the *National Transitional Council* calls for a registration of them under the Ministry of Defense hoping to integrate armed groups into the Libyan military.

On 8 August 2012 a new legislative authority was elected, which followed the *National Transitional Council*, the *General National Congress*. It was led by the *Muslim Brotherhood*, an organisation often linked to Islamism. After failing a 18-month deadline to pass a constitution, the *General National Congress* was forced to hold elections for a new *House of Representatives (HoR)*. This so called “Tobruk government” took power in 2014.

Although the HoR was declared to be the official government by the UN, the *General National Congress* insists on their sovereignty and continues governing Libya. The *Second Civil War* starts with clashes between the Libyan military supporting the *HoR* and various armed groups taking aid of the *General National Congress*, also called “*National Salvation government*”.

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED

National Transitional Council (2011-2012)

The Libyan government during and after the first civil war (2011/2012), formed by anti-gaddafi activists

General National Congress / “National Salvation Government” (2012-2016/today)

A democratic authority following the National Transitional Council with the aim of adopting a democratic constitution

House of Representatives / Council of Deputies (2014-present)

Was established in August 2014 replacing the *General National Congress*

Government of National Accord (2015-present)

Government led and established by the UN with the aim of unifying the *House of Representatives* and the *General National Congress*

³United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

NATO

The NATO first started interfering in 2011 with bombardements of military installations of the Gaddafi government. It further kept fighting against rebel groups claiming to ensure security of civilians.

UN

The UN is actively involved in finding a solution to the Libyan crisis. With its mission *United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)*, which was initiated in a UN resolution in 2011, it established the *Government of National Accord*. The UNSMIL leads the said government and assisted at the elections ensuring the right to vote especially for women and minorities.

Turkey, Sudan, Qatar

The three countries support the *General National Congress* militarily due to their great bond with the *Muslim Brotherhood* and its conservative ideologies.

Egypt, United Arab Emirates

The Egypt and UAE's military fight in support of the *HoR* along with the Libyan National Army against rebel groups of the *GNC*.

Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood led the General National Congress and has therefore a great bearing on Libyan politics.

RELEVANT UN TREATIES AND EVENTS

- On September 16 in 2011 the *Resolution 2009*⁴ was adopted by the *United Nations Security Council*. It enforces a support mission, the UNSMIL.

ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

In December 2015 the *Government of National Accord* was established with the purpose of building a government with sovereignty. The new Power was declared to be a compromise between the *General National Congress* and the *House of Representatives*. This attempt to unify Libya has not been successful until today.

In 2017 the so called *National Conference* was organized by a Libyan UN body. The consultation meetings were held by local institutions, municipalities, universities, student unions, civil society organizations, community leaders and local security and military figures with the aim of agreeing on "basic principles shared by the Libyan people"⁵

⁴<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2009>

⁵<https://unsmil.unmissions.org/libyan-national-conference>

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The role of all governments should be to distribute resources fairly and that this can best be achieved through a more decentralized system. Participants praised the role played by many municipalities in providing services to citizens during the crisis. Many also criticized the lack of support these local institutions received.

QUESTIONS DELEGATES SHOULD CONSIDER

1. How is your country involved in the conflict
2. What are the most urgent priorities at the national and local levels?
3. What are the necessary conditions for achieving national reconciliation?
4. How should the national reconciliation look like?
5. In which part of the reconciliation process should the *United Nations* interfere?

USEFUL LINKS/SOURCES

1. [UN Homepage](http://www.un.org/en/index.html)

Everything you need to know about the UN, its bodies and its programmes.

<http://www.un.org/en/index.html>

2. [UNSMIL Homepage](#)

Information on the UN mission in Libya including the *National Conference*