



Mr President, Your Excellencies,

This opportunity to address the Security Council is an opportunity any Libyan civil society would appreciate. I want to thank Kazakhstan for inviting me as a representative of Together we Build it Organization to share my civil society perspectives with you today.

Members of the Security Council, the Libya we discuss today is no longer the wealthy country it used to be. Nowadays, women, men, youth, and even elderly, sleep in front of banks with hopes that they can withdraw some cash to secure their daily needs. In hospitals, patients must provide their own medications as hospitals do not even have those essential resources. Just last week I saw the extensive bruises covering a fellow peace activist's face after she was badly beaten by members of an armed group in the streets of Tripoli.

In 2011, the Security Council adopted resolution 1973 which called for the protection of Libyan civilians. Excellencies, the Libya we discuss today is witnessing forms of violence that go far beyond what the Security Council was working to prevent in 2011. For many Libyans at the time, this resolution was a life jacket, a rescue signal that the international community was willing to do everything to protect Libyan civilians.

Our hope turned to despair as many Libyans then quickly felt abandoned by the international community and this council. There was no follow up plan or a strategy to empower the Libyan people beyond the military intervention. Neither was there a plan for recovery from the extreme forms of violence that was introduced to the society.

While volunteering at Tripoli Central Hospital in the war of 2011, it struck me that the first patient I met was not the typical war victim I used to see in the media outlets. He was a civilian who was injured on his way to the grocery store. I still remember the words echoed by his son when his father passed away few days later. "What did my father do to them?" The young boy said in his tears. At that very moment I knew that actions of the international community did not only change a political regime, they changed people's lives dramatically.

However, despite all the disappointments, the extreme violence and lack of resources we endure, Libyans are doing their best to ensure that life goes on.

In Libya, the support from the international community continues to be greatly needed, but this support going forward must be completely and urgently redesigned to empower the Libyan people, including women and youth to play an active role in peace-building. We cannot have a repeat of the 2011 international support which directly affected power structures in Libya.

As such when implementing the UNSMIL action plan on Libya, crucial questions therefore need to be addressed: who receives the international community's support? Who is invited to take part in the negotiations and who is leading mediations? Who is recognized by the action plan as an important player and what security threats the action plan will identify and prioritize?



For example, the threat of open borders in Libya is a matter of people's security and a possible threat of smuggling of arms and weapons, and human trafficking; however, most of the international community efforts only address this as threat of "immigration". Also, for Libyans violent extremism is a threat to personal freedom and human rights, but for the international community it's only addressed as an external threat to the West.

A necessary focus of the UNSMIL action plan must be the role of civil society, and here I want to focus on women and youth. In Libya there are many initiatives on a national and local level that are strengthening peace-building, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

My own organization 'Together We Build it' created a the 1325 Network working in different parts of the country, to provide women and youth with a platform for self-development on fields related to human security, countering and prevention of violence extremism, our interventions as civil society actors have inspired many women and youth to become active in promoting peace in Libya. A new online platform we launched recently called "peace and security from Libyan women perspective" had more than 1000 women participating in less than 3 days, This set a strong example that people at local level are willing to participate in peace -building when they get the opportunity. Their efforts need to be supported by the international community so the outcome of their work can be reflected at the national level. -

Excellences, identifying the right problem is the first step towards the right solution, as such the problem in Libya is not only a matter of conflict, it is a matter of how the parties of the conflict are communicating with each other, part of the solution in Libya would be establishing communication channels not only between the parties directly involved in the conflict but between all actors in Libya; state actors and non-state actors including civil society. These channels need to ensure that all actors have an equal opportunity and space to communicate back the feedback, opinions and feelings to each other.

If UNSMIL's action plan is set to be a common-agenda where international interest and Libyans needs and priorities are met, then the implementation of every aspect of this plan needs to systematically integrate the two UNSC resolutions 1325 and 2250, These two resolutions should serve as the guidelines of the implementation of the action plan, to not only position women and youth to lead mediations in resolving and preventing conflicts, but as well as to address structural long term issues that often neglected to sustain peace in Libya.

As such, stemming from our faith in United Nations and its principles, and based on our belief in peace based on equality, justice, demilitarized security and nonviolent inclusive social transformation, we urge UNSMIL and the Security Council to:

- Ensure full implementation of a recently adopted UNSCR Resolution 2376 (2017), and take gender perspective into account, by ensuring full and effective participation of women in the democratic transition, reconciliation efforts, the security sector and national institutions in the line with UNSCR1325 (2000). Moreover, for this resolution to be implemented specific human and financial resources needs to be allocated.



- Libyan society is composed of 50% women and 60% youth, having been following the Libyan political process, it is clear that people put in charge to bring sustainable peace to our country do not reflect the demographic structure of our country, we want to see more representation and participation of women and youth throughout the political process.
- Ensure the meaningful participation of women and youth in the upcoming National Conference. We want to see women and youth take part in all the meetings-sessions- of the conference those behind open and closed doors.
- Ensure that the law(s) of the upcoming elections would provide women and youth with a fair chance to participate in the elections, through considering a minimum quota for women and another separate minimum quota for youth.
- in addition, as Libyan civil society we want to see the UNSRSG having regular meetings with women and youth, to consult them on all aspects of the UNSMIL action plan.
- Strengthen disarmament work, as disarmament is a key element for preventing further escalation of conflict, and to promote the full and effective participation of women and youth in all discussions on disarmament and arms control.
Violence –free society is a healthy society for all: women, children and men.
- Ensure investigation and monitoring of human rights violations, including SGBV. The safety, dignity and longer-term needs of survivors and their families should be at the heart of such efforts; and grassroots civil society, including local women and youth organizations, should be supported to advocate such approach.

To conclude, I echo the words of Tawfik Bensaud, a young activist who was shot dead in 2014; he said ““working for peace should never stop, only the war must stop”. Excellencies, Mr.Gasan Salme, Tawfic’s dream of prosperity, peace and stability is the dream of all Libyans, and the responsibility to make this dream come true lies on your shoulders.

Thank you very much