



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations
Subject : Joint debate - Situation in Libya
**Statement on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission/High
Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**

Mr Dowgielewicz, on behalf of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, delivered the speech set out in [Annex](#).

On behalf of political groups,

Mr Salafranca, EPP, ES noted that a period of six months was not such a long time to put an end to forty years of dictatorship, while conceding that much remained to be done for the security sector, on economic and political transition, and in the fight against impunity for the crimes perpetrated in Libya. He paid tribute to the contributions by France and the UK, to the Libyans for their courage and to the EU action, which he considered had been quick and effective. He also referred to the instrumental role played by the EP in this context. He called for the swift nomination of a head of

delegation in Tripoli in order to coordinate EU action. He also called for the EU to seize this historic opportunity by responding to the Libyans while warning against the risk of Islamic fundamentalism undermining the democratic process under way.

Mrs. Gomes, S&D, PT underlined the importance of ensuring that the old regime's assets are frozen and that the assets detained by Gaddafi are given back to the new authorities and asked the HR to ensure the coordination of EU efforts, including with the UN in Libya in such a way as to avoid some national interests dominating others. She stressed the importance of promoting reconciliation and of disarming the country via support to the security sector and to constitutional reform. She also highlighted the need for the TNC to keep its promises, notably with regard to its policy towards migrant workers who suffered considerably during the conflict and regarding the place of Islam and women's rights in the institutions. She suggested that there were lessons to be learned from past EU politics in the region.

Ms. Ojuland, ALDE, EE, recalled the TNC's promises to build a democratic and liberal Libya and referred to the important role the EU should play in moving towards this objective of democratization and of setting up a liberal economy. She suggested lifting EU sanctions and promoting EU trade with the country, while stressing the importance of ensuring that the strategic sectors of oil and gas were put at the service of the Libyan people. She stated that stability required democratic institutions and that building such institutions required time and patience.

Mr Cohn-Bendit, Greens/EFA, FR referred to the linkages between the situation in Libya, Syria and the Middle East, welcomed in general the action by the EU and its Member States with the EP's support, referred to the challenges ahead with regard to disarmament and democratization in a post-war country with no political parties and too many soldiers, and called for a debate on lessons learnt from past EU policies towards dictators. On Syria, he suggested the EU decide on further sanctions to block any support to the current regime. On the Middle-East, he referred to the HR's diplomatic efforts to alter the Palestinian position ahead of the UNGA and noted that there was no alternative left to Palestinians but to make a request for recognition to the UN given the Israeli refusal to negotiate. He fiercely criticized in particular the current Israeli Foreign Minister Mr Lieberman for the current deadlock.

Mr Tannock, ECR, UK warned against possible attempts by Gaddafi to destabilize Libya, called for support to the TNC in its efforts to form a government, to organize elections and to bring democracy. He criticized the German abstention in the UN and paid tribute to the French and UK initiatives, as well as to the Libyans for the success of their campaign. He welcomed the TNC's constitutional declaration and expressed hope for a modern and liberal Libya.

Mr Portas, GUE/NGL, PT, referred to the Sakharov prize to be symbolically granted to this historic revolutionary process, to the past complicity of the EU with dictatorships, noted that NATO, France and the UK had gone beyond the UN mandate and criticized the recent conclusion of trade contracts in this context. He stressed the need for the TNC to keep its commitments for respect for human and women's rights, democracy and the rule of law. He considered it a priority to take care of migrants who were displaced in Tunisia and Egypt, called for an independent inquiry on crimes committed both by the Gaddafi supporters and by the TNC side as a means to promote reconciliation. He warned against interference in the internal affairs of the country and against double standards.

Mr Provera, EFD, IT called for the EU to support democratic building in Libya, which he considered a difficult undertaking in a country with no past democratic culture, notably via EU programmes on education and culture.

Mr Mølzer, NI, AT considered that EU efforts in Libya should focus on an overall strategy to avoid chaos and to help the people overcome the past. He suggested freeing the frozen Libyan assets to help reconstruction in the country.

In their individual interventions, MEPs largely echoed previous interventions. Several MEPs noted that there was much uncertainty on the way politics would evolve in Libya in the coming months and on its path towards democracy (Panzeri, S&D, IT, Mc Millan Scott, ALDE, UK, Brantner, Greens/EFA, DE, Nevedalova, S&D, SK) and stressed the role should EU play in this challenging transition context (Gualtieri, S&D, IT, Danjean, EPP, FR, Koppa, S&D, EL, Fisas Ayxela, EPP, ES, Busuttil, EPP, MT, Svensson, EPP, SV, Kelly, EPP, IE, Nedelcheva, EPP, BU, Pascu, S&D, RO). Mr Mauro, EPP, IT, supported by Ms De Keyser, S&D, BE, expressed doubts as to the concept of a "soft sharia" to be implemented in Libya and suggested sending a joint EP-EC mission to help the new authorities in preparing a new constitutional framework. Ms De Keyser suggested to have a developing and creative approach to migration and to see migration as an opportunity for Europe.

Commissioner Füle underlined the EU's strong interest in helping Libya in its democratic transition process. He gave an overview of past and future EU assistance which should be based on non interference in Libyan internal affairs, coordination and on an operational approach. He took note of the MEPs concrete proposals which he promised to take into due consideration when designing future assistance programmes.

Mr Dowgielewicz considered that Libya had been a test of EU external policy after Lisbon and that the EU's approach had brought good results. He noted that EU public opinion attached importance to developments in Libya and that the EU as a whole was taking the issue of Libya's transition seriously and would actively support the country in this process. He promised that the issue of human rights, which is at the core of EU values, would be followed closely.

**Statement by Mr Dowgielewicz, on behalf of the HR/VP on the situation in Libya to the
Plenary of the European Parliament on 14 September
(check against delivery)**

Mr President, Honourable members,

As you know the High Representative/Vice-President, Catherine Ashton, can unfortunately not be with you this afternoon to deliver this important statement, as she is travelling in the Middle East in order to prepare the UN General Assembly next week. She has asked me to speak on her behalf and to report back to her as soon as possible.

It is almost seven months since the revolution in Libya began. During this time the world has witnessed the extraordinary courage and determination of the people of Libya. We should take this opportunity to pay tribute to them.

Throughout these months, the EU has stood by the Libyan people and consistently demonstrated its support for their aspirations: democracy, justice and freedom to live their lives without fear.

The EU has focused its efforts in three main areas: 1.) the political and diplomatic arena; 2.) immediate support for those affected by crisis and 3.) support for Libya as it moves into the post-conflict period.

At the beginning of the crisis an Extraordinary European Council was called (11 March) as a result of which the EU was able to articulate clear messages to the regime: the violence should stop immediately and Gaddafi should go. The legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people should be respected.

Since then the EU has adopted a wide range of restrictive measures designed to ensure that money and arms do not reach the regime. Now that Gaddafi has fled Tripoli and many of his followers have disbursed, the focus today is on the progressive lifting of sanctions to allow the new authorities to meet urgent needs on the ground.

The EU has played a key role in the various international initiatives designed to bring about a resolution of the conflict. The High Representative/Vice-President participated in the various meetings of the International Contact Group on Libya and those of the so-called “Cairo Group” of international and regional organisations – established at her initiative. The EU will continue to engage energetically in the Friends of Libya Group established after the Summit in Paris on 1 September.

In the past months we have also witnessed the considerable suffering of the Libyan people as a result of the actions of the regime. We have followed with profound concern the siege of Misrata, the violence in the streets of Tripoli and the flows of refugees from Libya into neighbouring Tunisia and Egypt.

The EU’s response has been substantial, rapid and effective. As a whole the EU has provided more than €152 million in humanitarian assistance since the beginning of the crisis. For its part DG ECHO has deployed teams to Benghazi and to the Tunisian and Egyptian borders and, as from 28 August, to Tripoli too. As a result the EU’s assistance has included help in the evacuation of more than 24,000 third country nationals, including from Misrata and the provision of assistance to those fleeing the conflict. It has also included emergency health assistance, help for the war-wounded, protection of the civilian population, including humanitarian mine actions and the provision of adequate logistics capacity, coordination mechanisms and air transportation to deliver relief aid to the beneficiaries.

As early as May, the High Representative/Vice-President visited Benghazi and opened an EU office there. The EU office has allowed us to maintain direct contact with the National Transitional Council (NTC) as well as to coordinate European assistance on the ground together with those MS present in Benghazi. We also identified, together with the NTC, areas where early support could be provided: strengthening of civil society and the media, capacity building for the new authorities and security sector support. These activities were launched rapidly.

Mr President, Honourable members,

Events in the past few weeks have moved with breath-taking speed. The regime has collapsed and those around Gaddafi have fled. Colonel Gaddafi has been ousted from power but he retains influence to destabilize the country. According to NATO he still represents a threat to civilians. We are following closely the negotiations between NTC and the Gaddafi loyalists in those few pockets of resistance.

Libya is entering a process of transition. The challenges that the interim authorities face are huge: ensuring stability; restoring public services and the public administration; launching a process of democratic transition; support for the economic, initiating a process of transitional justice, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration.

The coming months will be critical. The EU has been planning its support for Libya in the post-conflict phase for sometime. We have been guided in this by a number of principles including Libyan leadership and the need to ensure close coordination through the UN with all international partners.

Likewise in the aftermath of every conflict the Libyan authorities are in need of funds to satisfy the provision of basic services to their population. In order to support them we have already delisted 28 entities subjected to EU autonomous sanctions. We are working, both in Brussels and in New York, to obtain the release of remaining frozen Libyan assets as soon as possible.

We are already in close contact with the National Transitional Council's Stabilisation Team and with the UN through the Secretary General's Special Adviser on Post-Conflict Assistance. We already have staff on the ground in Tripoli and, together with partners, are beginning the process of assessment of needs in critical sectors identified by the National Transitional Council. Good international coordination will be essential to significantly reduce the risk of duplication of efforts as well as overwhelming the Libyan authorities during this important transition stage. I am pleased to say that we have already agreed a provisional division of tasks for the first needs assessments in Libya with our Libyan and international partners.

Finally, Mr President and Honourable Members, I should like to thank the Parliament for its strong support in the past months. The statements made and the resolutions adopted by this house as well as the concrete actions taken by many MEPs have been instrumental in developing Europe's thinking and making our position heard.