* Mr President,
* Thank you for organising this meeting and for inviting us to it. Thank you also for your presentation, and the emphasis on the need to work for consensus.
* At this point, and given the fragile situation, the first priority for the European Union remains to support those who are working to avoid any escalation that can lead to conflict. But beyond that, we would like to contribute to move forward towards a sustainable solution to the current stalemate. And this can only come through elections.
* We fully appreciate the role that the Presidency Council has been playing to safeguard the unity and the stability of Libya. It has shown a constructive, impartial and pragmatic approach, fully in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Roadmap and the Libyan Political Agreement. We strongly support your calls for dialogue to exit the current crisis, and have been conveying the same messages in our contacts with all actors. We are happy that all parties agree that dialogue is the only way out, because if anyone would initiate violence, they would lose the support of the international community and, more relevantly, of the Libyan people. It would be unforgiveable.
* Beyond the immediate solution to the current crisis, Libyans have demonstrated that they are ready to work towards a forward-looking and durable political system. The present status quo is unsustainable. It is not only detrimental to all political actors, but it is also eroding public confidence in most Libyan institutions. And it is especially damaging and painful for ordinary Libyans, who suffer from the lack of agreement of their leaders.
* To move forward with the political transition, Libyans need to work together on a shared vision for the future they want. Almost 3 million Libyans registered in the hope they would be able to vote to choose their leaders: their aspirations to cast their ballot must be heard.
* UNSMIL’s proposal to form a joint committee from the House of Representatives and the High Council of State to find a constitutional basis for elections seems the best way forward, and we are happy that the Presidential Council is ready to work along these lines. It is important to focus our efforts in supporting this initiative and avoiding the fragmentation of our efforts.
* All these constructive efforts confirm that the continuity of the Presidency Council is a central piece of the architecture of the Libyan political system, a guarantee of balance and dialogue, and a necessary component for peace and stability in Libya. Your role in the area of security, including to preserve the ceasefire, has been very positive, and national reconciliation will be an indispensable part of the future. We are ready to continue working with you in both areas.
* To preserve stability in this process, we also must make sure that the economy works as a driver for peace; oil production and export must be separated from political disagreements, in order to make sure that this vital income is preserved for the benefit of all Libyans. As co-Chairs of the Economic Working Group, we are concerned by attempts to undermine the neutral and apolitical nature of the NOC.
* As the European Union, we are ready to support those who are seeking a way out of the current impasse and building consensus to establish a viable constitutional framework to hold credible, inclusive and transparent elections. And it is important to underline that the path forward can only come through consensus, through a shared understanding on the future of the country. This takes vision, courage and the ability to compromise, and it is the only way to turn the page on conflict and give Libyans the opportunity to define together the country they want for their children.
* Mr President, thank you for your leadership and for your openness to work with us.