



Jean-Claude JUNCKER
President of the European Commission

Federica MOGHERINI
High Representative and Vice-President
of the European Commission

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Ares (2017) 627211

Dear Honourable Member,

We would like to thank you and the co-signatories for your letter of 3 February 2017 concerning the situation in Libya and the need for a comprehensive EU strategy to address it.

Political stabilisation and improved security are the cornerstones for a durable solution to the current challenges facing Libya and is today more important than ever, as we underlined to Prime Minister Fayez Al Sarraj when we met him in Brussels on 2 February.

From the outset, the EU has supported the Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA). The EU Heads of State or Government at the Malta Informal Summit of 3 February and the EU Foreign Ministers at the Foreign Affairs Council three days later, reaffirmed that the EU remains committed to an inclusive political settlement under the framework of the Libyan Political Agreement and to supporting the Presidency Council as well as the Government of National Accord, as the sole legitimate government authority under the Libyan Political Agreement.

It is important that all actors in Libya avoid actions that can undermine the political transition and engage in a constructive dialogue. We welcome the intention expressed by the Prime Minister Al Sarraj to work to bridge differences with other important actors and to unite all the armed forces under the control of the legitimate civilian authorities in line with the Libyan Political Agreement. This will contribute to preserve the territorial integrity of the country and to step up the fight against terrorism. In this regard, we would like to underline the importance of Libyan ownership and responsibility and the EU's readiness to continue to assist them.

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While better managing migration flows across the Mediterranean and disrupting the business model of smugglers is currently high on the agenda, we agree that the EU shall have a broader approach vis-à-vis Libya and exploit the vast potential for mutual cooperation in many areas, including social and economic. We discussed this at length with the Prime Minister during his visit.

This is also the approach set out in the Joint Communication "Migration on the Central Mediterranean Route – Managing flows, saving lives". While enhancing the capacity of Libyan authorities to manage borders and territorial waters is key, including through training and equipment of the Libyan Coast Guard, the Communication sets out a comprehensive strategy to address different aspects of the migration issue. A particular attention is given to the protection and promotion of human rights of migrants, in particular by working to improve the conditions in reception and detention camps, offering alternatives to detention to persons in vulnerable conditions and ensuring unhindered and secure access to centres for aid workers. Voluntary returns of migrants to their countries of origin and resettlement schemes for refugees are also areas in which we are ready to engage. In this perspective, the EU will work more closely with the UNHCR and the IOM and step up our support. As part of this effort, the EU will also work with the Libyan municipalities to promote alternative livelihoods and support the resilience of local communities hosting migrants, refugees and people in need of protection. Work will also be advanced on the regional dimension in close cooperation with Libya's neighbours. The Joint Communication also contains proposals which build upon the work of the EU's CSDP Operations, notably Operation Sophia, in tackling the smugglers business model and saving lives.

The EU Trust Fund for Africa will be mobilised to provide swift support for migration related projects concerning Libya. To that effect, an additional amount of 200 million euro has been mobilised for the North Africa Window of the EU Trust Fund. This comes on top of humanitarian aid and of the support package – offered from day one to the GNA – of 121 million euro throughout 37 projects across six sectors: civil society; governance; health; youth and education; political process, security and mediation and migration, and protection. Some of these projects, suspended for security reasons in 2014, have resumed with the arrival of the Government of National Accord.

As regards the subject of illegal export of oil, the EU and its Member States have consistently supported and strictly enforced the embargo on parallel sales by actors other than the official National Oil Company (NOC).

The significant reduction in smuggling activity and the recent increase in production should contribute to increase revenues for the Government of National Accord and its capacity to deliver services to the population. In this perspective, it is equally important to address smuggling of refined petrol, including through the abolition of

State subsidies to retail sale that keep prices artificially low compared to neighbouring countries and have a negative impact on the public finances.

Libya is a crucial partner for the EU in many respects. We will continue to engage and work with Prime Minister Al Sarraj and the Government of National Accord and in a common effort to bring about stability, democracy and economic recovery in Libya.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a long horizontal line with a small loop at the end.

Jean-Claude JUNCKER

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'F. Mogherini'.

Federica MOGHERINI