

News from the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament

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Libya: EU response to democratic transition needs must be rapid and pragmatic

"The situation in Tripoli is calm but the needs are enormous and the EU must lose no time in responding to such needs", reports S&D MEP Ana Gomes from Tripoli.

The EP rapporteur for Libya Ana Gomes (S&D, Portugal) arrived on 18 of September for a 5-day visit to the country.

"When I landed in Tripoli, I found a city with very few buildings destroyed (demonstrating the remarkable surgical nature of NATO strikes), bustling traffic, open shops and supplied markets, with basic services running (including primary schools), showing remarkable Libyan resilience and organisational capacity".

A pragmatic and swift EU response is needed, defends Ana Gomes. *"Speed will be essential as the security and governance needs are tremendous. EU and Member States should step up technical assistance in the assigned areas under UN coordination, as agreed with the NTC at the Paris Conference: securing borders, strengthening civil society and media and communications".*

As an interim government is to be formed soon, Ana Gomes underlines that *"the EU must support the democratic forces. The ongoing constitutional debate will be crucial to determine if the interpretation of sharia as the source of law will ensure protection of human rights, namely women rights. We must help the democratic forces and civil society organising themselves and promoting the participation of women in public and political life, at all levels".*

Besides disarmament, social reinsertion of combatants and the reform of the security sector, transitional justice will be a key issue in the upcoming months, including addressing the situation of thousands of sub-Saharan migrants detained as prisoners of war. *"Human rights education and a national reconciliation process will be crucial for the long-term stabilisation of the country", declared Gomes.*