

# The U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability

## 10-Year Strategic Plan for Libya

The United States is committed to helping Libyans in their ongoing struggle for a more peaceful, stable, unified future. Since the fall of the Qadhafi regime in 2011, Libya has faced division and violent conflict. A nationwide ceasefire agreement in October 2020 paused the fighting, creating space for the UN-facilitated Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) to select a new unified interim government and produce a political roadmap to hold national elections. While that roadmap has since stalled and militia tensions around Tripoli increased, U.S. and international partners are actively engaged in diplomacy to help Libya take concrete steps toward a unified government, inclusive and democratic governance, and political stability. External actors, including Russia, continue to exploit the unstable situation in Libya, posing a threat to NATO's southern flank and further destabilizing the Sahel region. Southern Libya is of particular focus as malign actors take advantage of fragile local governance systems to seek safe havens for terrorist and illicit activities.

In April 2022, President Biden announced the United States would prioritize engagements and partnerships with Libya under the [U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability \(SPCPS\)](#). While Libya was originally selected with the hope to capitalize on the nationwide ceasefire and LPDF-led political roadmap, the SPCPS still provides a useful impetus for reorienting and channeling U.S. support to buttress ongoing diplomatic efforts and incentivize Libya's progress toward a democratically elected, unified government. The U.S. government (USG) is using the SPCPS focus on

Libya to convene local stakeholders, the USG interagency, and international partners to develop concrete steps to create conditions for Libya's long-term peace and stability – building upon identified resiliencies and promising initiatives. Furthermore, this plan supports an integrated, cross-regional approach to USG prevention efforts across the Sahel, Maghreb, and Coastal West Africa by fostering a more stable, peaceful, and prosperous Libya.

The U.S. Libya External Office (LEO) and interagency partners developed this strategic framework and plan through rigorous analysis and extensive consultation with a range of bilateral and multilateral counterparts, who will serve as important partners in its implementation. These discussions identified areas of common interest and possible collaboration, such as with the African Union (AU) on national reconciliation and the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) on demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR). The team further engaged more than thirty-five civil society organizations, who provided valuable and practical feedback on areas for sub-national partnership amid Libya's ongoing transition. Continued, iterative multi-stakeholder engagement is central to this plan.

The plan orients U.S. efforts toward the ultimate U.S. long-term political goal that Libya is “governed by a democratically elected, unified, representative, and internationally recognized authority that is able to ensure human rights, deliver public services, promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, secure its border, and partner with the United States and international community on shared priorities.” However, the plan acknowledges the need for an incremental, tailored, and scalable approach given the current national-level political uncertainties and practical limitations for U.S. engagement and assistance within Libya. In the near-term the plan focuses on a “grass-roots,” localized approach to support citizen-responsive

democratic local governance and nascent but promising locally led reconciliation initiatives. Southern Libya is the focal point of initial sequenced efforts which incrementally build toward progress in all three major regions of Libya and ultimately through the critical sub-regions of the Sahel and Coastal West Africa.

The plan will focus over time on creating the necessary conditions to hold democratic elections over the longer-term (e.g., citizen engagement, consensus-building, constitutional reform, violence mitigation, and reconciliation efforts) and addressing political roadblocks that have obstructed credible elections to date. The plan will promote inclusion, seeking to increase the participation and representation of women, youth, and other groups traditionally marginalized and underrepresented in Libya's polity. Fostering more inclusive political and economic processes in Libya will help build the resilience needed for longer-term peace and stability.

This plan's tailored and scalable approach will be applied across four overarching objectives that will guide diplomatic, development, and security engagement:

- **Objective 1:** Libya advances its transition to a unified, democratically-elected, stable political system that has broad participation by, and acceptance from, Libyan society, and can effectively and equitably deliver targeted public services and protect the human rights of all Libyans.
- **Objective 2:** Libya better integrates the historically marginalized South into national structures, leading to broader unification and securing the Southern border.
- **Objective 3:** Libya progresses towards a civilian-controlled, unified military and security apparatus with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force that is capable of maintaining stability and contributing to regional security goals.

- **Objective 4:** Libya's economic and business environment fosters sustainable and equitable economic growth, mitigates corruption, and enables better management of revenue.

The United States will marshal and align diplomacy, foreign assistance, and other tools to advance these four objectives in a sequenced fashion. The U.S. government will work to increase engagement with and support for sub-national, local municipal, and civil society actors, especially in Southern Libya at the start, who are advancing reconciliation, community-based dialogues, and inclusive service delivery. This support will inclusive new efforts to boost economic opportunity and financial inclusion for marginalized groups. At the same time, the U.S. government will continue to marshal support, including through the UN-led political process, for a political solution among Libya's leaders that can pave the way for broader reconciliation and eventual elections.

Partnerships with reform-minded actors and institutions are key to realizing the vision outlined in this plan and scaling-up U.S. efforts over time. The United States will continue to pursue high-level diplomacy to encourage political processes that can create openings for expanded engagement and assistance across these objectives. Inherent in the strategic approach are strong learning and feedback loops that will engage Libyan perspectives throughout implementation, leverage local capacity, strengthen coordination mechanisms with local actors for strategic planning and evaluation, and support local buy-in and oversight. The U.S. government will invest in working groups with local partners, as well as other international donors, to facilitate ongoing dialogue and coordination.

In line with the SPCPS and based on lessons learned from the Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR) and other processes, the United States is committed to promoting integration and innovation in advancing this plan in several ways:

- **Explicit focus on addressing drivers of conflict and instability.** The plan explicitly focuses on identified drivers of conflict and instability and proposes specific early focus areas to confront those drivers – namely: engagement in southern Libya; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of armed actors; and national reconciliation.
- **Incorporation of local stakeholders throughout implementation.** Building upon the consultations used to inform this plan, the U.S. government will seek to engage local actors more systematically throughout implementation to foster ownership of and buy-in for objectives.
- **Integrated interagency planning and implementation approach.** The plan reflects a whole-of-government approach to planning and implementation, with substantial input from across the diplomatic, development, and defense (“3Ds”) sectors.
- **Strategic monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) approach.** The plan provides a common framework to monitor progress toward advancing the strategic objectives through jointly owned metrics and milestones, enabling the U.S. government to pursue iterative and adaptive implementation, better anchor efforts in local communities, and make strategic adjustments based on evidence.

- **Commitment to strategic communications.** Recognizing that the SPCPS and implementation of the 10-year plan can serve as an important convening mechanism for local and international stakeholders, the plan includes a robust strategic communications approach.

The plan explicitly acknowledges and seeks to address many assumptions and risks inherent to the plan which, unmitigated, could hinder achievement of the objectives. This includes the overall political and security situation and U.S. ability to gain greater access into Libya to engage in diplomatic and development efforts. The plan outlines a series of mitigation measures to address identified risks, including if the situation remains fluid. It recognizes the importance of a flexible implementation approach to enable adjustment of USG efforts toward our objectives as needed. Continuing engagement and consultation with Congress will be essential to create conditions for success, including support of the President's Budget necessary for implementing this plan.