



## [United Nations Announces That Libya Talks Have Made Progress Towards a New Transitional Government](#)

Earlier this week, Acting United Nations (UN) Libya envoy Stephanie Williams announced that the advisory committee of representatives for the country set up by the UN has proposed a way forward for choosing a transitional government. The entity would be tasked with leading Libya in the period until planned national elections, which have been scheduled for later this year in December 2021. Around two months ago, the United Nations invited a group of 75 Libyans to begin political dialogue following the October ceasefire between the country's warring parties, the internationally-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) and the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar. The LNA had previously been engaged in a 14-month siege on the capital city of Tripoli, which was finally quelled by the GNA last summer in June 2020. The recent breakthrough in negotiations this past week was made by a smaller segment drawn from the 75-person committee, and thus the next step in the process will be for all members of the group to vote in the coming days regarding the agreed-upon mechanism.

In her comments unveiling the latest development, Williams expressed the agreement represented the “best possible compromise” on the issue and that it could result in the eventual selection of the desired transitional government in mere weeks. At the outset of this current round of Libya talks back in November of last year, the United Nations and the Libyan participants prioritized negotiations regarding the set-up of a transitional force which could provide a bridge to national elections in late December. The specific date of December 24th was chosen for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections due to it being Libyan Independence Day, a symbolic and significant date for the country's citizens. Ultimately, peacemaking officials believe that the ongoing discussions being carried out offer the best opportunity to end the conflict since the halt in fighting several months ago.

The news of progress in the Libya talks comes in the midst of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urging for the departure of all foreign fighters from the country by the end of the week, as laid out in the October 2020 ceasefire agreement signed by the warring parties. Guterres also emphasized the importance of supporting the implementation of the ceasefire, particularly when it comes to the array of outside actors who have backed either the GNA or the LNA. This includes countries like Turkey, one of the main allies of the GNA, and the regimes in the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and Egypt – three of the major patrons of the LNA. In order to help oversee the situation, UN officials had previously recommended earlier this month that international monitors be deployed to Libya to observe the execution of the October ceasefire agreement from a base in the strategic city of Sirte.

For their part, regional organizations such as the Arab League and the African Union have also joined the UN in calling for the removal of foreign fighters by the soon-to-be deadline, pledging support for the ceasefire monitoring efforts, and ensuring a successful round of elections later this year in December.