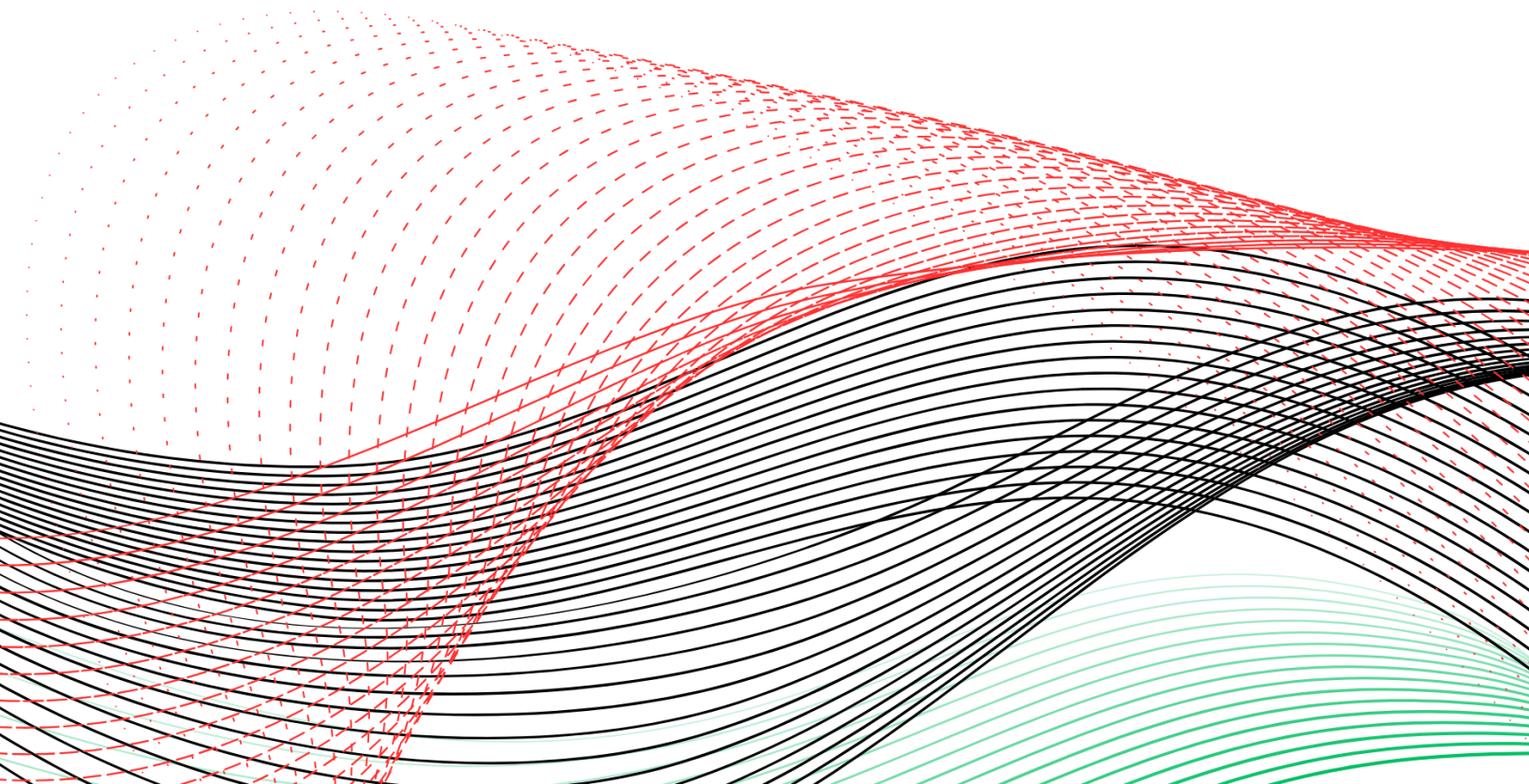


الحوار
المُهيكل



Background Briefing: *Structured Dialogue Governance Track*



The purpose of the Structured Dialogue is to develop a set of (1) concrete recommendations on immediate policy and governance issues to prepare a conducive environment for elections, and (2) policy and legislative proposals to address long-term conflict drivers with a view to formulating a unified national vision that will shape the path to sustained stability. The Governance Track has agreed to tackle the following sets of issues:

Political consensus needed prior to holding elections

The integrity of the electoral process is ensured through, among others, an independent, adequately financed, and credible election management body; a politically viable and technically implementable constitutional and legal framework for elections; a trusted dispute resolution mechanism; an enabling security environment; and an agreed-upon code of conduct, including measures to ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups. It also requires safeguards to protect voters from intimidation, coercion, or violence, ensuring that all citizens—particularly women, persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups—can participate freely and safely.

Guiding questions:

- What is the bottleneck hindering progress?
- How can the bottleneck be addressed? What safeguards need to be in place to ensure implementation?
- What additional measures are needed to ensure women’s full and meaningful participation and representation in the electoral process and any future decision-making bodies?
- What role can the Libyan public play in ensuring implementation of the UNSMIL-facilitated roadmap?

Integrity of the electoral process and its international support

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Guiding questions:

- What are key elements and principles that need to be shared among the key political and security actors to preserve the integrity of the electoral process?
- What safeguards can be put in place to prevent electoral violence, intimidation and defamation campaigns?
- What are the mechanisms and incentives needed to ensure that election results will be respected by all?
- What role can Libyan communities play to support the successful holding of elections?
- What role can the international community play to support the successful holding of elections?
- In addition to the political pact, what other issues need to be addressed or achieved to create an enabling environment for the holding of elections?

Elections government: mandate, tasks and exit mechanism

The Governance track of the SD looks into the mandate of an elections government and ensure that its mandate, timeline, and exit mechanisms are put in place in advance. The formation of a new unified government is a highly contentious issue and must be the outcome of Libyan-Libyan negotiations, if the provisions are to be kept in the electoral laws. However, there are certain principles, safeguards, milestones, and timelines (including exit mechanisms) that can be introduced to guide the conduct of a new, unified government to ensure that it will take the country to elections. The Advisory Committee also made some recommendations to this effect in its [report](#) issued in May 2025.

Guiding questions:

- *What is the core mandate of an electoral government? What are the related tasks?*
- *How can this government be inclusive and ensure equitable representation of marginalised groups, including women, cultural and linguistic components, youth and persons with disabilities?*
- *What guarantees need to be in place to ensure that government does not become the sole focus of a political track replacing the emphasis on elections?*
- *What mechanisms should be in place or utilized in case a government does not fulfil its mandate or exceeds its term?*
- *Are there other viable options that can help take the country to elections?*

Libya's Political System

Since 2011, Libya has operated without a specific definition of what is the state's political system. In practice, Libya operates on a model of parliamentary system. The existing electoral laws stipulate a presidential system; however, the Libyan Political Agreement has put in place a system based on the House of Representatives and the High Council of State. The executive is divided between a presidency and a Prime Minister that is in charge of the day-to-day affair of running the state. The presidency is currently a collegial body that nominally exercises the role of commander in chief, but which acts based on consensus. Formally, the Constitutional Declaration was amended to create a presidential system, but that amendment has not been implemented given the failure to organize a presidential election. Over the past decade, negotiators have consistently agreed that a strong presidential system should be reestablished but have failed to organize an election that would operationalize those agreements. On the contrary, power has remained fragmented in the country.

Guiding questions:

- Considering the experience of Libya since 2011, what is the most adequate system of governance that can be accepted by the various actors?
- Why has it not been possible to organize presidential elections for the past decade despite apparent consensus between the political class in favour of a presidential system? Will it be possible to overcome these obstacles in the coming period? If so, what is needed to be done to overcome these obstacles?
- What guarantees and compromises need to be in place to allow for a stable system of governance to emerge and continue in Libya?
- What is the best approach to ensure regular and peaceful transfer of power going forward?

State structure and local governance

Libya has shifted from a federal system in 1951, to a more centralized structure in 1963, to the highly centralized rule under the period of former President Gaddafi. Since 2011, demands for both administrative and financial decentralization has grown, driven by calls for a more equitable distribution of resources and greater public participation in decision-making. The framework for decentralization is currently defined by law no. 59 of 2012. However, the law has arguably never been applied in full and there are attempts at amending it. There are some political calls for a federal-style system with empowered regional governments, while others prefer a model where local authorities have more authorities. Studies and consultations show that although people want stronger local

governance, there is no shared vision for how powers should be divided, how many provinces should exist, or how regional boundaries should be drawn without triggering tribal or regional disputes. Various political processes since 2011—from the Constitutional Draft Assembly and the Libyan Political Agreement to the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum—have tried to outline structures for decentralization, but none have settled the debate.

Guiding questions:

- Considering the diversity of Libyan society, how can an equitable distribution of powers and resources be agreed upon in a way that might reduce/resolve conflicts and enhance social peace, national belonging, and citizenship?
- How to implement decentralization in ways that strengthen national unity while promoting inclusive governance at the local level?
- How to establish a local governance system in which there is a balance between local autonomy and intergovernmental coordination and coherence?
- What is the criteria and process for determining administrative boundaries that are not purely political but also considers practical issues (e.g. administrative capacity/financial resources) to avoid creating dysfunctional provinces/regions?
- How to mitigate the risks associated with post-conflict decentralization if this is the path Libyans choose?
- How can you ensure any decision-making process with regards to state structure of local governance is inclusive of women, cultural components, persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups?
- What are the top three priorities you would suggest local government address in your community?