



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



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**"We were, we are and we will be on your side
in facing these tremendous challenges"**

**message by President Herman Van Rompuy
to the Paris Conference on Libya**

Les événements en Libye de ce moment renforceront le choix des peuples qui ont déjà décidé de prendre le chemin de la démocratie. Ils encourageront également ceux qui sont encore dans leur bataille pour la liberté et la démocratie. Le "Printemps arabe" fait partie de l'histoire.

The old regime in Libya is (nearly) over. Our objective is now to support a democratic transition and help bringing the new Libya back to the international community. We should make every effort to ensure that the aspirations of the Libyan people are truly met. I welcome the ambitious plans for the new Libya presented by the representatives of the Transitional National Council, Chairman Abdul-Jalil and Prime Minister Jibril.

Let me make two points.

First: Europe, both the EU as such and its Member States, is playing a critical political role as well as military.

- the extraordinary March 11 European Council paved the way for further international diplomatic efforts, leading to the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 a few days later.
- the EU implemented the Resolution quickly and resolutely, including the adoption of tough sanctions, and providing humanitarian assistance;
- the forces of the new Libya were supported militarily by several EU Member States, together with the United States within the framework of NATO.

P R E S S

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- Europe had an important share in strengthening the international standing of the TNC: the European Council made several conclusions in this regard and I myself met with Prime Minister Jibril as early as 11 March;

- Cathy Ashton - who also initiated the Cairo Group - visited Libya and opened the EU office in Benghazi in May and we will soon open the Office in Tripoli.

These five months were long and difficult but the EU never lost patience and it never let our support to diminish.

Second: the main challenges for the future of Libya are reconciliation, political transition, and reconstruction.

Reconciliation and transition must be a Libyan-led process. We all know that the transition would neither be easy nor quick. The international community needs to assist, with the leadership and co-ordination of the UN. As we subscribed to the "responsibility to protect", we should similarly subscribe to the "responsibility to assist" Libya in building itself. We were, we are and we will be on your side in facing these tremendous challenges.

The EU is ready to help this process. Our political commitment enjoys the support of our publics as well. To preserve and strengthen this support the transition should be inclusive, respectful of rule of law and human rights, including those of people of sub-Saharan origin who are living in Libya, and honour commitments made to the International Criminal Court in dealing with Kaddafi.

On reconstruction - I have received your letter Prime Minister Jibril - and I agree that the time has come to let Libya's fortunes return to the Libyan people. Today the EU has lifted the autonomous freeze on the financial assets and economic resources of 28 Libyan entities, which include six Port Authorities, several companies in the oil and gas sectors as well as several banks. And we are ready to immediately implement the UN decisions on unfreezing and lifting sanctions as soon as the United Nations will have decided so.

The EU is ready to extend its help to Libya's reconstruction.

Merci.
