

A vision of a democratic Libya

The interim national council hereby presents its vision for rebuilding the democratic state of Libya. This vision responds to the needs and aspirations of our people, while incorporating the historical changes brought about by the 17 February revolution.

We have learnt from the struggles of our past during the dark days of dictatorship that there is no alternative to building a free and democratic society and ensuring the supremacy of international humanitarian law and human rights declarations. This can only be achieved through dialogue, tolerance, co-operation, national cohesiveness and the active participation of all citizens. As we are familiar with being ruled by the authoritarian dictatorship of one man, the political authority that we seek must represent the free will of the people, without exclusion or suppression of any voice.

The lessons of our past will outline our social contract through the need to respect the interests of all groups and classes that comprise the fabric of our society and not compromise the interests of one at the expense of the other. It is this social contract that must lead us to a civil society that recognises intellectual and political pluralism and allows for the peaceful transfer of power through legal institutions and ballot boxes; in accordance with a national constitution crafted by the people and endorsed in a referendum.

To that end, we will outline our aspirations for a modern, free and united state, following the defeat of the illegal Gaddafi regime. The interim national council will be guided by the following in our continuing march to freedom, through espousing the principles of political democracy. We recognise without reservation our obligation to:

1. Draft a national constitution that clearly defines its nature, essence and purpose and establishes legal, political, civil, legislative, executive and judicial institutions. The constitution will also clarify the rights and obligations of citizens in a transparent manner, thus separating and balancing the three branches of legislative, executive and judicial powers.
2. Form political organisations and civil institutions including the formation of political parties, popular organisations, unions, societies and other civil and peaceful associations.
3. Maintain a constitutional civil and free state by upholding intellectual and political pluralism and the peaceful transfer of power, opening the way for genuine political participation, without discrimination.
4. Guarantee every Libyan citizen, of statutory age, the right to vote in free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections, as well as the right to run for office.
5. Guarantee and respect the freedom of expression through media, peaceful protests, demonstrations and sit-ins and other means of communication, in accordance with the constitution and its laws in a way that protects public security and social peace.

6. A state that draws strength from our strong religious beliefs in peace, truth, justice and equality.

7. Political democracy and the values of social justice, which include:

a. The nation's economy to be used for the benefit of the Libyan people by creating effective economic institutions in order to eradicate poverty and unemployment – working towards a healthy society, a green environment and a prosperous economy.

b. The development of genuine economic partnerships between a strong and productive public sector, a free private sector and a supportive and effective civil society, which overstands corruption and waste.

c. Support the use of science and technology for the betterment of society, through investments in education, research and development, thus enabling the encouragement of an innovative culture and enhancing the spirit of creativity. Focus on emphasising individual rights in a way that guarantees social freedoms that were denied to the Libyan people during the rule of dictatorship. In addition to building efficient public and private institutions and funds for social care, integration and solidarity, the state will guarantee the rights and empowerment of women in all legal, political, economic and cultural spheres.

d. A constitutional civil state which respects the sanctity of religious doctrine and condemns intolerance, extremism and violence that are manufactured by certain political, social or economic interests. The state to which we aspire will denounce violence, terrorism, intolerance and cultural isolation; while respecting human rights, rules and principles of citizenship and the rights of minorities and those most vulnerable. Every individual will enjoy the full rights of citizenship, regardless of colour, gender, ethnicity or social status.

8. Build a democratic Libya whose international and regional relationships will be based upon:

a. The embodiment of democratic values and institutions which respects its neighbours, builds partnerships and recognises the independence and sovereignty of other nations. The state will also seek to enhance regional integration and international co-operation through its participation with members of the international community in achieving international peace and security.

b. A state which will uphold the values of international justice, citizenship, the respect of international humanitarian law and human rights declarations, as well as condemning authoritarian and despotic regimes. The interests and rights of foreign nationals and companies will be protected. Immigration, residency and citizenship will be managed by government institutions, respecting the principles and rights of political asylum and public liberties.

c. A state which will join the international community in rejecting and denouncing racism, discrimination and terrorism while strongly supporting peace, democracy and freedom.