

From: Seiden, Maya <MSeiden@bgrdc.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 3:15 PM

To: Seiden, Maya <MSeiden@bgrdc.com>

Subject: Message from Fathi Bashagha Regarding Libyan Elections

Good afternoon,

As you may know, BGR Group represents Fathi Bashagha, former Libyan Interior Minister and current presidential candidate. Minister Bashagha asked us to share the below message with you. In it, he notes that a public message from your boss in support of Libya's elections and their democratic aspirations would be a powerful signal to actors in the region and a strong message of support and hope for the Libyan people.

Minister Bashagha would welcome the opportunity to speak with you and your staff at any point if that would be helpful.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Best,

Maya

Note: BGR Government Affairs, LLC has filed registration statements under the Foreign Agents Registration Act with regard to its representation and dissemination of information on behalf of Fathi Bashagha. Additional information is on file with the Foreign Agents Registration Unit of the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.

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Dear Members of the Senate Foreign Relations and House Foreign Affairs Committees,

I hope you enjoyed a healthy and happy holiday season. It has been an eventful time in my country, as you know well. I wanted to take a moment to write to you about Libya and its future. Libya's future is democratic. Of this, there can be no doubt. We know the path forward will not be simple or straightforward – but it is a path from which we cannot deviate.

It is essential that the delay in the Presidential elections be put in the proper context – and that context be communicated by Libyans and the international community. This delay is necessary because it will allow for more participation, particularly of younger voters. It will also provide the time needed to ensure adequate steps can be taken to protect the integrity of these critical proceedings.

I am proud of the fact that the international community stands behind the right of Libyans to express their will to choose their leaders through the ballot box. This desire was confirmed by the receipt of nearly 2.5 million electoral cards from Libyan voters and their readiness to conduct both presidential and parliamentary elections. This broad support makes clear that there is a strong desire amongst the Libyan people to end division in all forms and manifestations in our country. There is a strong desire to unify institutions and, as a result, the Libyan people.

There have clearly been efforts by those in power to undermine these elections and the opportunity they present for the Libyan people. We cannot let them. There have been worrying indicators that have threatened the integrity of these proceedings. With this extra time, it is imperative that international organizations, like the United Nations, the African Union, the EU, and the League of Arab States, and all relevant regional and local organizations intensify their efforts to support the electoral process. These crucial organizations must activate the role of election monitoring teams to ensure the integrity and impartiality of the elections.

At the same time, the High National Elections Commission must maintain an approach of neutrality and commitment to transparency in its work to support the electoral process. The Commission must redouble its efforts to hold elections in appropriate conditions and on specific and achievable dates. Any

systemic smear campaigns being conducted against the Commission and their work must be loudly condemned. In this we are fully aligned with Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism Ted Deutch (D-FL), who recently called on all parties involved to “remain committed to advancing these objectives and ensuring that presidential and parliamentary elections are conducted as soon as practicable.”

It is critical that relevant parties and local actors work together toward the success of these elections and to immediately begin coordinating efforts to ensure the presidential and parliamentary contests can be held in concert. The appropriate environment must be facilitated to ensure the elections can occur and the integrity of the results are not questioned.

This delay must be seized as an opportunity to fortify the electoral process. All eligible candidates for the presidential elections must be allowed to participate in upcoming meetings in support of the holding of the presidential and parliamentary elections. Considering the delay, the current National Unity Government must end its mandate, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions as well as written pledges signed by its leaders. Failure to do so will further undermine the credibility of this government and those who serve in it. Their efforts to delay and hold onto their own power must not be rewarded.

Any conflict of interest between the government’s role in facilitating the electoral process and the president’s candidacy for the election must also be called out and eliminated. The use of an official office to take advantage of government resources cannot be tolerated. This has resulted in unequal opportunities and the generation of political propaganda funded by the government. Candidates who still fill official positions with the government must be forced to either drop their candidacy or resign their positions. This conflict of interest and abuse of power cannot be allowed to continue. Finally, it is critical that all candidates pledge to accept the results of the election and not seek to undermine them – regardless of the outcome.

The Libyan people will not tolerate delays that do not ultimately serve the democratic process. However, if the right steps are taken to bolster the process and encourage even more participation, then any delay will serve the ultimate goal of building a better future for Libya. As Chairman Deutch has said, “the Libyan people overwhelmingly want to choose their next government and they have a right to do so in an environment free from violence and intimidation, and with a clearly defined legal framework.”

I ask for your help in ensuring that the international community reinforces these messages and protects the Libyan people from interference in our political process. As you may know, I am in regular communication with Ambassador Norland and his team. I know a public message from you in support of Libya's elections and our democratic aspirations would be a powerful signal to actors in the region and would be a strong message of support and hope for the Libyan people.

Best,

Fathi Bashagha