

# STATEMENT: LCW DOCUMENTS ARMED ATTACKS THAT THREATEN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN LIBYA

Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) has been following with grave concern the violations that have prevented the distribution of voter cards in at least seven (7) municipalities in eastern and southern Libya, including Sirte, Sabha, Benghazi, Tobruk, Suluq, Al-Abyar, and Qasr Al-Jadi. These acts were carried out by armed actors affiliated with the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF), and the Libyan Government accredited by the House of Representatives (HoR), during the period from 28 June to 6 July 2025.

LCW has documented attacks by armed individuals in civilian and military dress, on voter card distribution centres in Sirte and Sabha on 28 June. Staff members were threatened, distribution was forcibly halted, and election materials were seized without any legal basis or official justification. Similar violations were later repeated in the municipalities of Benghazi, Suluq, Al-Abyar, Tobruk, and Qasr Al-Jadi. As of the date of this statement, the High National Elections Commission (HNEC) has not issued any official clarification regarding these incidents.

On 28 June, the HNEC announced the start of voter card distribution as part of preparations for municipal council elections scheduled for mid-August, covering more than 50 municipalities. This stage is an essential part of the electoral process; its disruption threatens to derail or even cancel the elections, thereby undermining citizens' trust in the entire process.

## One election observer told LCW:

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We were deeply disappointed by the arbitrary measures that undermined the electoral process, which had been a glimmer of hope for democracy and decentralisation. It is impossible to describe the sadness on voters' faces when we informed them, we could not deliver their voter cards.

LCW holds the authorities in eastern Libya, including the General Command of the LAAF and the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR, fully legally responsible for the repeated attacks aimed at disrupting voter card distribution and obstructing the electoral process. The frequency of these violations and their occurrence across multiple geographical areas under the control of the eastern authorities within a short timeframe point to a systematic pattern

intended to undermine the right to political participation, the electoral process, and the independence of the HNEC.

LCW affirms that these violations constitute a flagrant breach of Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which guarantees citizens the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, including the right to vote and to stand in periodic, free and fair elections. These acts also undermine the principles of democratic governance and the rule of law as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Furthermore, these violations contravene the provisions of Libyan Law No. 8 of 2013 on establishing the High National Elections Commission, which stipulates the Commission's independence and prohibits any entity from interfering in its affairs or obstructing its duties in any form.

**Based on the continuing pattern of obstruction documented by LCW, and in affirmation of the need to protect the right to political participation and ensure electoral integrity:**

- LCW calls on the Libyan Attorney General to open an immediate, independent and transparent investigation into all cases of disruption of the electoral process and attacks on voter card distribution centres, and to hold all those responsible to account to prevent recurrence.
- LCW urges the HNEC to issue an official clarification on the incidents and the pressures faced by its staff and offices, in order to ensure transparency and strengthen public confidence in the electoral process.
- LCW appeals to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to pressure the authorities in eastern Libya to halt interventions obstructing the municipal council elections, to deploy independent international observers to monitor the elections, and to provide technical support to the HNEC to ensure that the elections are conducted in accordance with international standards, within a free, fair, and secure electoral environment.
- LCW calls on the authorities in both eastern and western Libya to refrain from interfering in the work of the HNEC, to respect its independence, and to guarantee the safety of its staff and premises against any threats or directives.