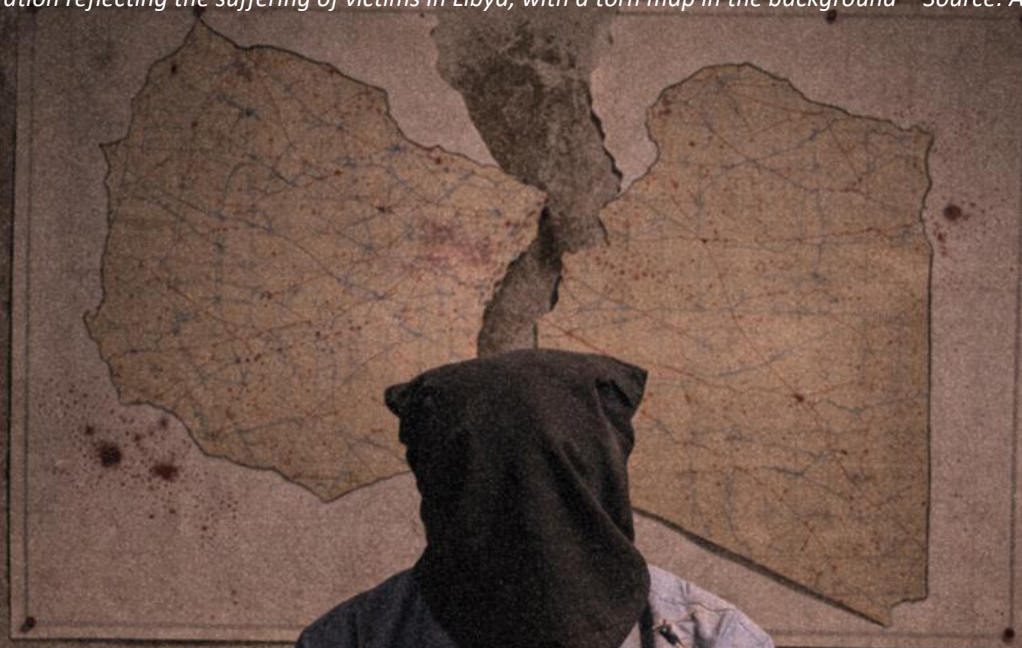


Annual Report 2025

# LIBYA: DIVISION ENTRENCHES VIOLATIONS AND UNDERMINES ACCOUNTABILITY

*Symbolic illustration reflecting the suffering of victims in Libya, with a torn map in the background – Source: AI-generated*



**LICW**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) extends its sincere gratitude to all victims, survivors, and witnesses who shared their testimonies and experiences with us throughout 2025, despite the risks they face. Their courage and trust in us constitute the cornerstone of this report and contribute directly to documenting the truth and amplifying the voices of affected communities.

LCW expresses its deep appreciation to its field team, who continued to work with dedication in an extremely dangerous environment and with limited resources, upholding international professional standards and the ethics of research and documentation.

LCW also recognises the efforts of its team in the preparation, review, editing, and layout of this report, and in ensuring the accuracy and objectivity of the information and the integrity and consistency of the analysis with international human rights standards.

LCW thanks its partners within local networks, Libyan and international organisations, and independent experts, who contributed to filling information gaps and strengthening the contextual analysis.

LCW further expresses its gratitude to the donors whose support made this report possible and enabled the organisation to continue monitoring and documenting grave human rights violations in Libya throughout 2025, foremost among them the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the European Endowment for Democracy (EED). The content of this report represents LCW's position alone and does not necessarily reflect the views of any donor.

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**Donate, Be A  
Voice for the  
Victims!**

# ABOUT LCW

Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) is a Libyan non-governmental organisation founded in 2019, registered in the United Kingdom, and led by survivors of grave human rights violations. LCW works to advance accountability and the rule of law in Libya through a survivor- and victim-centred approach, grounded primarily in its specialist expertise in monitoring and documentation, the core pillar upon which all other areas of its work are built, including research and advocacy, victim and survivor support, and capacity building.

LCW's work is organised around four integrated principal pillars. The first and foremost is the monitoring and documentation of human rights violations and international crimes. In this regard, LCW relies on a team of field researchers and local networks of trusted sources across Libya's various regions, operating in accordance with LCW's established documentation methodology, which upholds professional and international standards in the collection of information, the conduct of interviews, and the verification and analysis of evidence in a manner that is sensitive to the Libyan context and enhances the utility of findings for advocacy and accountability efforts. Through this work, LCW has accumulated practical and contextual expertise in understanding patterns of violations, the parties involved, and the political, security, military, and social circumstances surrounding them.

Building on this foundation, LCW's second pillar focuses on awareness-raising, research, and advocacy, through which LCW deploys its documentation, evidence, and analysis to prepare reports and human rights materials and to develop targeted advocacy interventions directed at national and international bodies engaged in human rights and accountability. This encompasses engagement with United Nations mechanisms, the ICC, and relevant international bodies, as well as participation in local and international human rights coalitions and networks, amplifying the impact of documented evidence, advancing the pursuit of justice, and challenging patterns of impunity from a perspective that is both context-sensitive and victim-centred.

LCW further works in the area of victim and survivor support through referrals to protection pathways and to medical, psychological, legal, and social services, thereby enabling victims and survivors to access appropriate forms of support in accordance with their needs and circumstances. This work is grounded in a victim- and survivor-centred approach that places their safety, dignity, and rights at the heart of all interventions, and links professional documentation to a practical response to harm, ensuring that the collection of information is never divorced from the ethical considerations owed to the individuals and communities affected.

LCW also contributes to capacity building by providing technical and advisory support to actors within Libyan civil society, as well as to international organisations and bodies working on Libya. In this context, LCW delivers training and contextual consultations, and contributes

to the development of capacity-building interventions, tools, and methodologies that are sensitive to the Libyan context, cognisant of its complexities, and responsive to the requirements of a victim-centred approach thereby strengthening the effectiveness of relevant actors and their ability to design responses that are more professional and consistent with the realities of violations in Libya.

Through the interconnection of these pillars, LCW deploys its documentation outputs and evidence to analyse patterns of violations and their contexts, develop awareness-raising and advocacy efforts, guide referrals and support pathways for victims and survivors, and design capacity-building interventions for Libyan and international actors engaged in Libyan affairs. In this way, monitoring and documentation remain the core of LCW's work, from which all other areas of intervention emanate within a survivor-led, victim- and survivor-centred approach, in fulfilment of its guiding principle: **FROM SURVIVORS, ALONGSIDE VICTIMS, FOR ACCOUNTABILITY.**

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## I. ACRONYMS

<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>DCIM</b>	Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration
<b>GDSO</b>	General Directorate for Security Operations
<b>GNU</b>	Government of National Unity
<b>HoR</b>	House of Representatives
<b>HRD</b>	Human Rights Defender
<b>IHRL</b>	International Human Rights Law
<b>ICL</b>	International Criminal Law
<b>IHL</b>	International Humanitarian Law
<b>ICC</b>	International Criminal Court
<b>ISA</b>	Internal Security Agency
<b>JOF</b>	Joint Operations Force
<b>LAAF</b>	Libyan Arab Armed Forces
<b>LPC</b>	Libyan Presidential Council
<b>LGBTQIA+</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual persons, with the plus sign recognising other diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and sex characteristics.
<b>OTP</b>	Office of the Prosecutor
<b>PSSPA</b>	Public Security and Security Positions Apparatus
<b>RADA</b>	Al Radaa for Countering Terrorism and Organised Crimes
<b>SSA</b>	Stability Support Apparatus
<b>TBZ</b>	Tariq Ben Ziyad Brigade

## II. METHODOLOGY

1. This report draws on the monitoring, observation, and documentation operations conducted by Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) throughout 2025. These operations encompassed ninety-three (93) documentation files prepared by nine (9) researchers within LCW's field team, in addition to a total of six hundred seventeen (617) victims whose violations were documented in LCW's database. The report was further supported by testimonies and verified information gathered through LCW's local monitoring networks, comprising eyewitnesses, community leaders, lawyers, medical professionals, civil society activists, human rights defenders (HRDs) operating on the ground, and local civil society organisations (CSOs). The violations presented in this report reflect only those the LCW field team was able to access and verify during the reporting period, and do not represent the full scope of violations committed.
2. The report addresses the thematic scope of LCW's work primarily during the year, which focuses on grave human rights violations and international crimes committed against civilians. These include arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment, extrajudicial killing, unlawful killing, and civilian casualties resulting from military operations, as well as violations targeting civil society, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and vulnerable and marginalised religious, ethnic, and cultural groups, in addition to migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The report also covers other serious violations falling within its thematic scope, including forced labour, enslavement, trafficking in persons, sexual violence, practices that may amount to persecution, and the denial of fair trial guarantees.
3. The report covers field research conducted by LCW's team across twenty-nine (29) major cities in eastern, southern, and western Libya, including isolated and hard-to-reach areas. In addition, violations were documented in one (1) location outside Libya, for which Libyan authorities bear responsibility. The geographic division into eastern, southern, and western Libya is based on the distribution of spheres of influence, with the aim of facilitating the analysis of patterns and the attribution of responsibility. The report focuses on both individual and state responsibility through analysis of twenty-eight (28) armed groups and security apparatuses affiliated with or loyal to the relevant authorities. These include groups and apparatuses operating under the Government of National Unity (GNU) and the Libyan Presidential Council (LPC) in western Libya, as well as those affiliated with the Libyan Government accredited by the House of Representatives (HoR) and the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF), whose geographic influence extends across eastern and southern Libya.
4. In characterising and drawing conclusions regarding the gravity, patterns, systematic nature, and scale of violations and the responsibilities arising therefrom, the report applies LCW's methodology for the analysis and classification of violations. With regard to responsibility, the report identifies multiple forms of direct and indirect responsibility, both state and individual, in relation to these violations and crimes. This encompasses state responsibility for acts committed by its organs or by entities acting on its behalf, as well as responsibility for

direction, control, assistance, and support, and failure in the duty to prevent, protect, investigate, and ensure accountability. The report further addresses individual responsibility for the direct commission of crimes and participation in their commission, alongside command, supervisory, and facilitative responsibility, and responsibility for failure to prevent.

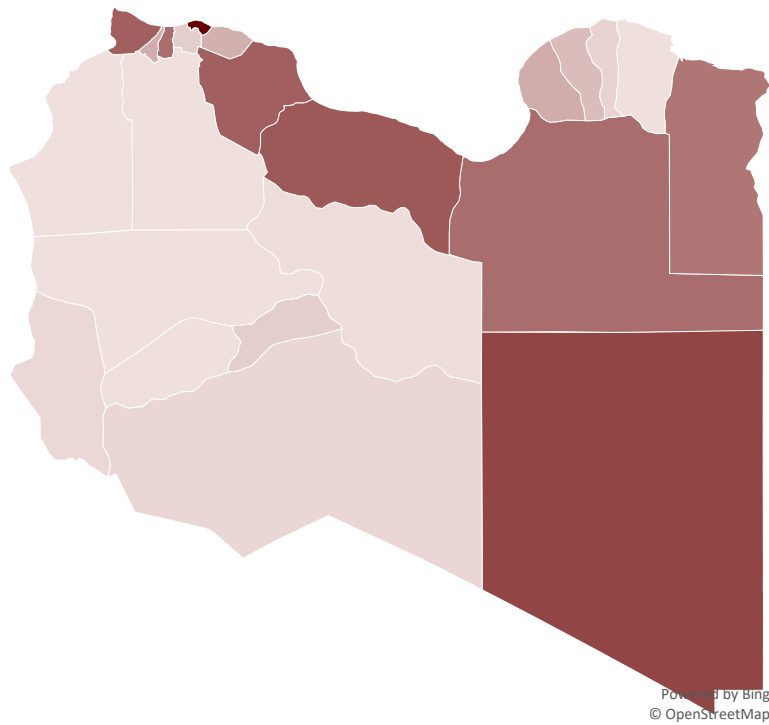
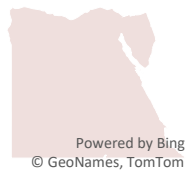
5. The report additionally sets out findings grounded in LCW's field team's systematic monitoring of national investigation and accountability efforts, with a view to evaluating their scope and effectiveness. This forms the basis for analysing the extent to which the relevant authorities have pursued structural reform and addressed the prevailing culture of impunity. The analytical objective of this strand is to arrive at substantive conclusions regarding the willingness and capacity of the national justice system to ensure accountability for victims, which constitute the cornerstone of LCW's final recommendations addressed to both domestic and international stakeholders.
6. In characterising the gravity, patterns, systematic nature, and scale of the documented violations, the report draws on a cumulative analysis of LCW's database findings. LCW's 2021 Annual Report is identified as the baseline against which these elements are measured, with due regard to the shifting contexts in Libya over the intervening years. LCW's 2024 Annual Report<sup>1</sup> Indicators serve as the baseline for assessing year-on-year developments, with additional indicators developed to strengthen the quality of the analysis and findings.
7. The legal framework underpinning the report's analysis and conclusions comprises International Human Rights Law (IHRL), International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and International Criminal Law (ICL). At a further level, the report draws on additional rules of international law to establish responsibility, including those derived from the international law of the sea, as well as customary rules and other international standards. The report also has limited recourse to provisions of Libyan national legislation that are consistent with international law, including provisions of the Constitutional Declaration and other domestic legislation.
8. The existence of confirmed facts, information, or sufficient corroborating evidence, gathered in accordance with LCW's documentation methodology, constitutes the principal basis for the analyses and conclusions set out in this report, and is grounded primarily in monitoring, documentation, and field research operations. The names of certain individuals potentially bearing responsibility have been disclosed on the basis of testimonies provided by victims, survivors, and witnesses, and through the analysis of violations in accordance with international law. LCW nonetheless affirms that the disclosure of such names does not constitute a finding of legal culpability and underscores that responsibility for investigating

<sup>1</sup> [Annual Report 2024 – Libya: Accountability is The Solution; Violations Continue Amid Impunity](#). Libya Crimes Watch (LCW). 8 April 2025.

and pursuing accountability in respect of these allegations falls within the jurisdiction of the competent judicial authorities.

9. With regard to LCW's documentation methodology, LCW employs a triangulation approach in the collection of information and the construction of documentation files, so as to ensure the reliability of its findings. Primary sources comprised direct interviews with victims, survivors, eyewitnesses, and their families, as well as engagement with a growing network of local contacts, including lawyers, activists, and journalists. The report further corroborates its findings through official documents, including court records, medical reports, and official registers, as well as through the analysis of digital evidence, comprising photographs, video footage, and audio recordings, and through the use of open-source intelligence, thereby ensuring the construction of a reliable and comprehensive database of documented violations. All information collected is subject to a multi-level verification process and rigorous legal analysis to ensure its quality and the proper legal characterisation of incidents.
10. In adherence to the principles of its established documentation methodology, all data was managed in accordance with the principles of “do no harm”, confidentiality and privacy, and informed and ongoing consent, with intersectional and gender perspectives integrated throughout. This information is held in a secure database administered under a strict policy ensuring minimum necessary access rights. LCW is further committed to redacting or anonymising identifying data in cases where disclosure could pose a risk to the safety of victims, witnesses, or field team members, with pseudonyms used in accordance with the principles of its documentation methodology, which is aligned with international standards.
11. In the course of its field operations, LCW's team encountered numerous challenges, including heightened security risks, difficulties in accessing certain areas and detention facilities, and community-level restrictions limiting the ability of women and more vulnerable groups to engage with reporting mechanisms. Additional constraints included restrictions on access to official information, as well as growing reluctance among victims, witnesses, and their families to report incidents or engage with human rights organisations, owing to fears of reprisal and a lack of confidence that any measures would be taken to advance investigation and accountability in respect of the violations they had suffered. To address these challenges, LCW adopted context-sensitive documentation techniques and tools that do not expose victims or field team members to risk, including expanding its local networks, employing secure communication tools adapted to access constraints, and ensuring strict adherence to its documentation methodology and internal guidance on digital and physical security.
12. This report was produced over a period of fifteen (15) months, with sixteen (16) members of LCW's team contributing to the research, documentation, drafting, review, editorial support, translation, and layout. Preparation commenced with daily monitoring by LCW's field team of the human rights situation in Libya, encompassing fact-finding, open-source investigations, field engagement and outreach, and interviews with multiple sources to document violations, collect testimonies from victims, survivors, and eyewitnesses, gather supporting evidence,

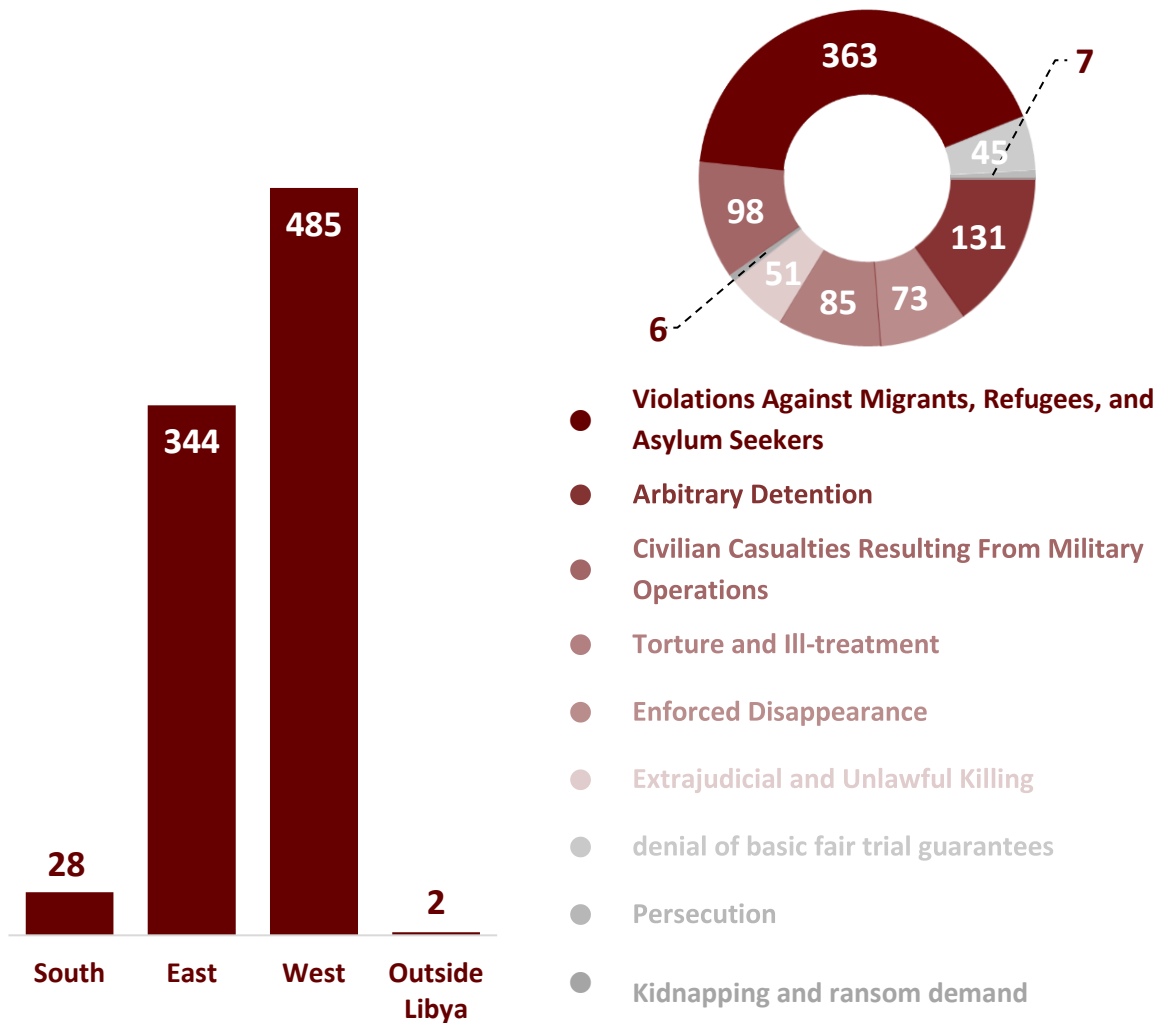
and construct documentation files. This was followed by an information archiving and data analysis phase, during which LCW specialists reviewed the data and findings, conducted interviews and desk research, and developed the report's structure and initial drafts in accordance with LCW's internal annual report guide. The team proceeded to analyse violations and formulate conclusions based on LCW's methodology for the analysis and classification of violations. Upon completion of all stages, the report underwent linguistic review, translation, and formatting before being formally approved and published.



# Figure 1

## Serious Human Rights Violations in Libya During 2025

\*Source: LCW Database



### III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

13. This report documents a portion<sup>2</sup> of the grave human rights violations committed between 1 January and 31 December 2025, as monitored and documented by LCW's field team in areas of eastern and southern Libya under the control of the LAAF, affiliated armed groups, and the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR, as well as in areas of western Libya under the control of the GNU, the LPC, and the armed groups and security apparatuses affiliated with or operating in support of them.
14. The report provides an analytical dimension to the violations monitored and documented during the year, assessed against international law through indicators measuring the gravity, patterns, systematic nature, and scale of violations. It identifies levels of responsibility attributable to rival authorities in eastern and western Libya, as well as potential individual responsibility. It sets out conclusions regarding grave violations, some of which may constitute international crimes. The report further situates these indicators within the context of ongoing political, security, and military divisions, and the continued conflict between eastern and western authorities, sustained by powerful armed groups and security apparatuses. It examines how this context has compounded the impact of violations, undermined the protection of civilians, and obstructed investigation and accountability, thereby entrenching a climate of impunity and weakening guarantees of non-recurrence, against a backdrop of a deficient national judiciary that lacks both the capacity and the will to conduct independent investigations, and of inadequate meaningful cooperation with international justice mechanisms.
15. The report uses the indicators from the 2024 Annual Report as a baseline against which to measure human rights developments in the country. During that year, LCW's field team monitored five hundred and eighty-nine (589) grave violations,<sup>3</sup> some amounting to international crimes, affecting four hundred and ninety-nine (499) civilians. In 2025, the field team monitored a deeply troubling increase in grave violations: LCW's database documented eight hundred fifty-nine (859) violations affecting six hundred seventeen (617) civilians<sup>4</sup> across the country and beyond, some of which may constitute international crimes. These violations occurred across at least twenty-nine (29) major areas spanning eastern, southern, and western Libya.

<sup>2</sup> *The violations presented in this report reflect those that the LCW field team was able to access and verify during the reporting period and do not necessarily represent the full extent or total number of violations committed.*

<sup>3</sup> [Annual Report 2024 – Libya: Accountability is the Solution; Violations Continue Amid Impunity](#). LCW. 8 April 2025.

<sup>4</sup> In most cases, victims were subjected to multiple violations.

16. Western Libya recorded the most significant escalation in grave violations during 2025, where the LCW field team monitored four hundred and eighty-five (485) violations, while in Eastern and Southern Libya monitored three hundred and seventy-two (372) violations in the eastern and southern region. In a notable incident, LCW documented two (2) violations against a civilian in Alexandria, Egypt, in which authorities in eastern Libya were involved. These violations encompassed arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, ill-treatment, and unlawful killing, including extrajudicial killing, as well as forced labour, trafficking in persons, sexual violence, and the denial of fair trial guarantees. Some of these violations were committed in a context that may amount to the crime of persecution. In addition to these incidents, the cases monitored and documented during the year included casualties resulting from military operations, comprising civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure caused by landmines, explosive remnants of war, and unexploded ordnance, as well as armed clashes and explosions at ammunition storage sites and military training activities conducted in residential areas.
17. A total of fifty-three (53) children, and fourteen (14) women were among the victims of these violations, as well as journalists and media workers, lawyers, HRDs, humanitarian and relief workers, vulnerable ethnic, cultural, and religious groups, religious and community leaders, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and persons who had previously been subjected to grave violations and were targeted again during the year.
18. In western Libya, the most prominent grounds for targeting individuals included activity on social media platforms and criticism of the authorities, anti-corruption activism, the targeting of protesters and those who criticise the authorities and their policies, targeting based on participation in public life and electoral engagement, human rights defence, and journalistic activity, as well as targeting on the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation, and religious belief, in addition to the targeting of lawyers and members of judicial bodies. With regard to extrajudicial and unlawful killings, documented cases arose from a range of circumstances, including the deaths of migrants along smuggling and trafficking routes, killings resulting from direct gunfire, and indiscriminate fire in the context of military operations. Attacks on civilian areas and explosions caused by landmines, explosive remnants of war, and unexploded ordnance constituted the principal causes of civilian casualties, alongside incidents involving the explosion of ammunition and military equipment stored in civilian areas.
19. In eastern and southern Libya, the grounds for targeting individuals largely mirrored those documented in the west, encompassing the targeting of civilians perceived as loyal to the western authorities, targeting based on participation in public life and electoral engagement, human rights defence, journalistic activity, and social media activity, as well as anti-corruption activism, the targeting of peaceful demonstrations, and the targeting of those who criticise the authorities and their policies. Eastern and southern Libya were further distinguished by violations committed in the context of the attempted seizure of civilians' private property and

with regard to extrajudicial and unlawful killings, deaths resulting from medical negligence and torture in detention constituted the most prominent causes, in addition to direct gunfire in public and private settings, and the deaths of migrants along smuggling and trafficking routes.

20. Throughout 2025, impunity remained an entrenched pattern across eastern, southern, and western Libya alike. Victims and their families reported limited and ineffective measures at both the investigation and accountability levels in relation to documented violations. In some instances, prosecutors declined to take investigative steps despite complaints having been submitted, whilst others refused to receive complaints altogether, citing concerns amongst members of judicial bodies regarding reprisals. With respect to the investigation and accountability efforts announced by the authorities, victims and witnesses reported that these efforts were confined to lower-ranking individuals rather than to pursuing senior commanders to ensure non-recurrence. In other investigations, findings had not yet been made public as of the date of this report. Throughout the year, perpetrators continued to evade accountability despite arrest warrants issued against them at both the domestic and international levels. This failure in investigation and accountability efforts occurs against the backdrop of the continued refusal by authorities in eastern, southern, and western Libya to cooperate meaningfully with the International Criminal Court (ICC) by facilitating its investigations, executing its arrest warrants, and refraining from obstructing or refusing the surrender of those sought by the Court.
21. In light of its analysis of LCW's database for 2025, the report concludes that grave violations occurred during the year, some of which, by virtue of their systematic nature and scale, may amount to the level of international crimes. The authorities in eastern, southern, and western Libya bear responsibility for these violations, having been committed by security apparatuses and armed groups under their command, entities vested with governmental authority, and actors operating under their direction or control, as well as having occurred within a pattern of failure to prevent violations, protect victims, investigate incidents, prosecute perpetrators, and ensure accountability. About international crimes specifically, the report identifies reasonable grounds indicating the potential individual criminal responsibility of **Saddam Haftar, Khalifa Haftar, Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh, and Abdel Salam al-Zoubi**, in their respective command capacities, for ordering the commission of the documented crimes, or for their commission through other persons or entities.
22. In conclusion, the report addresses specific recommendations to the authorities in eastern and western Libya to take concrete steps to bring an end to ongoing grave violations and international crimes, in particular, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, extrajudicial killing, and violations committed against migrants, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and vulnerable and marginalised religious and ethnic groups. The report further underscores the necessity of respecting and protecting fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, thought, conscience, and religion, and the



imperative of ensuring accountability for all those responsible for such violations. The report calls upon international bodies, foremost among them the ICC, to continue investigating crimes committed in Libya and to ensure that perpetrators are not permitted to evade justice. It further urges concerned states to cease any direct or indirect support to parties implicated in violations, and to work towards the establishment of an independent international investigative mechanism to strengthen accountability and advance justice.

## IV. CONTEXT

23. The general situation in Libya throughout 2025 reflected the continuation of political, security, and military divisions, characterised by institutional fragility and the absence of genuine political will to build unified institutions capable of upholding the rule of law. The internationally recognised Government of National Unity (GNU) maintained its presence in western Libya amid growing political and public pressure, and a diminishing capacity to exercise control over the armed groups and security apparatuses affiliated with it. In parallel, the Libyan Government accredited by the (HoR) and the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF) continued to consolidate and expand their influence across the east and south, whilst relying on the reallocation of loyalties and superficial restructuring in lieu of substantive steps towards unifying the military institution.
24. This division was directly linked to the fragmentation of the security and military landscape and its instrumentalisation as a tool of competition over influence and resources.<sup>5</sup> The interests of political, security, and military leaderships converged on managing the division rather than resolving it, through the exploitation of alliances with and among armed groups and security apparatuses to ensure their continued hold on power, mobilise against rivals, and redistribute influence and control. This included the conferral of positions and the extension of a veneer of legitimacy to the roles of armed groups, security apparatuses, and commanders implicated in grave human rights violations, thereby entrenching a parallel system of power within state institutions, undermining prospects for accountability, and impeding reform of the security and military sectors.
25. Notwithstanding the establishment of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in 2020<sup>6</sup> with the aim of unifying the military institution and integrating armed groups within state structures, integration arrangements remained largely formal within the structures of the rival authorities. These formations were not subjected to unified command or independent institutional oversight, and their nominal subordination to the state existed on paper only.<sup>7</sup> They continued to be treated as instruments to be funded and supported under the pretext of maintaining security or countering threats. This approach effectively transformed law enforcement institutions into tools of political, economic, security, and military influence.
26. In western Libya, tensions persisted among the security apparatuses and armed groups affiliated with the Libyan Presidential Council (LPC) and the GNU, manifesting in conflicts over spheres of influence, headquarters, positions, revenue streams, and sources of funding.

<sup>5</sup> [Coercion, Predation, and State Formation in Libya and Iraq](#). Friedrich Ebert Foundation. March 2025, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> [Libyan Joint Military Commission \(5+5\) Holds Its First Meeting Inside Libya](#). United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), 21 October 2020.

<sup>7</sup> [Tense Times in Tripoli](#). International Crisis Group. 8 September 2025.

Tripoli witnessed sustained security tensions and a growing number of protests calling for political change, alongside government resignations. The continued exercise of executive authority without completing appointments to sovereign ministries further compounded the fragility of the decision-making architecture and weakened the capacity to develop a coherent security policy.

27. During the year, clashes erupted following the assassination of Abdel Ghani al-Kikli ("Gheniwa"),<sup>8</sup> Head of the Stability Support Apparatus (SSA) affiliated with LPC, between the Al Radaa for Countering Terrorism and Organised Crimes ("RADA"), affiliated with the LPC, and the 444 Brigade, affiliated with the GNU, along with other armed groups loyal to it.<sup>9</sup> The clashes were followed by a realignment of the balance of power within the capital. In the same context, Misrata witnessed its most significant tensions in years, with clashes erupting between the Joint Operations Force (JOF) and the 24th Infantry Battalion, both affiliated with the GNU,<sup>10</sup> subsequently resulting in shifts in the distribution of influence and positions across western Libya.<sup>11</sup>
28. Along the western coast, security and military operations were conducted by armed groups affiliated with the Ministries of Defence and Interior under the GNU, targeting networks implicated in human trafficking and drug smuggling. Despite announcements regarding the apprehension of wanted individuals and their referral to the Office of the Libyan Attorney General,<sup>12</sup> The impact of these operations remained limited. The networks reorganised rapidly and signalled their readiness to shift political allegiances to other parties if the conflict should continue targeting. This swift reorganisation reflects the absence of a sustainable security policy and a reliance on ad hoc arrangements that neither address the criminal economy nor provide effective protection for civilians.
29. In eastern and southern Libya, the LAAF continued to consolidate its grip and expand control over maritime and border domains, alongside an internal restructuring of formations designed to manage loyalties and contain internal disagreements. This was accompanied by indicators of a widening smuggling economy, including fuel smuggling, the organisation of human trafficking routes, and the facilitation of irregular migration towards Europe, benefiting from control over desert corridors and border crossings. Increased focus was also placed on consolidating control in areas proximate to the borders with Niger, Chad, and

<sup>8</sup> [The escalating conflict in Tripoli reveals the reality of false stability and international neglect in Libya.](#) Chatham House, 16 May 2025.

<sup>9</sup> [Libya's capital engulfed by fresh fighting.](#) International Crisis Group, 14 May 2025.

<sup>10</sup> [Dbeibeh under pressure after civilians injured in violent clashes between militias in Misrata.](#) Libya Security Monitor, 23 October 2025.

<sup>11</sup> [The escalating conflict in Tripoli reveals the reality of false stability and international neglect in Libya.](#) Chatham House, 16 May 2025.

<sup>12</sup> [Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.](#) United Nations, 11 April 2025, p. 6.

Sudan, which exacerbated local tensions and was linked to incidents of violence in the vicinity of the tri-border area with Niger.<sup>13</sup>

30. In a further entrenchment of impunity, promotions and appointments of commanders linked to grave violations continued throughout the year. Prominent among these were decisions by the Libyan HoR conferring senior appointments in the armed forces, including designating **Saddam Khalifa Haftar** as Deputy Commander-in-Chief and **Khaled Khalifa Haftar** as Chief of Staff.<sup>14</sup> The reinforcement of the role and capabilities of security apparatuses affiliated with the Libyan Government, accredited by the HoR, also continued, serving as a mechanism to deflect responsibility for violations rather than address their root causes or ensure the accountability of perpetrators.
31. The entrenchment of armed group commanders within significant elements of state structures reflects a trajectory that confers legitimacy upon their conduct rather than dismantling their formations or holding them to account. This constrains the capacity of the authorities to investigate grave violations and international crimes, as judicial and prosecutorial institutions rely on fragmented and discredited armed groups and security apparatuses for protection and law enforcement. These entities also exercise control over a number of official detention facilities, extending their sphere of influence beyond the reach of any effective oversight.<sup>15</sup>
32. In the same context, 2025 further confirmed that the political and security division does not merely produce an institutional vacuum but provides practical protection for perpetrators of violations and curtails the capacity of the judiciary to investigate and prosecute. In the West, the judiciary remained vulnerable to pressure from armed apparatuses and formations. In the east, the detention and prosecution system continued to operate outside independent judicial oversight. Nominal integration and the promotion of commanders implicated in violations served to consolidate rather than dismantle their influence, thereby further weakening the rule of law.
33. This context was affirmed by the Libyan Attorney General, al-Siddiq al-Sur, whose statements indicated that prisons ("rehabilitation and reform institutions") are under the control of "militias," and that law enforcement agencies, including investigative and intelligence bodies, are ineffective, incapable, and fearful of, or complicit in, the influence of parties responsible for violations. He further provided indicators suggesting that sentences against more than

<sup>13</sup> [Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya](#). United Nations, 8 August 2025, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> [Haftar appoints Saddam as Deputy Commander of the Libyan National Army \(LNA\)](#). Libya Security Monitor. 10 August 2025.

<sup>15</sup> [World Report 2026: Libya: Events of 2025](#). Human Rights Watch. 2026.

[Libya's Crisis in 2025: Fragmentation, Foreign Influence, and Prospects for Stability](#). African Security Analysis. 2 January 2026.

fifty-six thousand convicted persons have not been enforced,<sup>16</sup> Whilst the influence of certain parties within state structures continues to consolidate. Notwithstanding the challenges to national investigation and accountability, meaningful cooperation with the ICC has continued to be obstructed, including the execution of arrest warrants and the surrender of wanted individuals. It is further noted that the principle of complementarity has been invoked to facilitate the evasion of accountability by those sought by the Court, given the limited capacity of the Libyan judiciary to enforce the law and meet fair trial standards, even in cases where accused persons are under the de facto control of domestic security or military entities.<sup>17</sup>

34. Indicators of the weakness of national judicial proceedings are also evident in cases involving individuals sought by the ICC and the continued failure to surrender them to the Court. These include the continued absence of national-level prosecutions in the cases of **Mohamed Al Salheen** and **Abdelbari Al Shaqaqi**, despite their arrest since 2024 in connection with crimes committed in the city of Tarhuna,<sup>18</sup> as well as the continued failure to disclose developments in the case of **Osama Elmasry Njeem**, notwithstanding the announcement of his arrest<sup>19</sup> several months after his return from Italy, and despite the ICC arrest warrant issued against him on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Additionally, other individuals

<sup>16</sup> [Attorney General: Correctional and Rehabilitation Institutions Are Largely Under the Control of Militias](#). The Libya Observer. 24 April 2025.

<sup>17</sup> [Injustice by Design: The Need for Comprehensive Justice Reform in Libya](#). Human Rights Watch. 2 June 2025.

<sup>18</sup> [Libya: "We Die Every Day a Thousand Times" - Impunity for Crimes Against Humanity in Tarhuna](#). Amnesty International. 26 November 2024. p. 56.

<sup>19</sup> [The Situation in Libya: ICC Arrest Warrant Issued Against Osama Elmasry Njeem for Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes](#). International Criminal Court. 22 January 2025.

In January 2025, Italian authorities arrested Njeem pursuant to an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Following pressure exerted by Libyan authorities for his release and return to Libya, Italy agreed to release him and allowed his return, which the Court considered a failure by Italy to comply with its obligations under the Rome Statute.

Subsequently, the ICC published documents revealing pressure exerted by the Libyan Attorney General, Al-Siddiq Al-Sur, alongside the Libyan Embassy in Rome and the Government of National Unity (GNU), on Italian authorities to secure his release. Libyan authorities claimed that domestic investigations were ongoing regarding crimes attributed to him.

Later, in November 2025, despite the Libyan Attorney General's announcement of his arrest pending investigation, Libyan authorities continued to withhold updates from the Court and failed to comply with their obligation to surrender him. Civil society organisations have also identified indications that he remains at liberty despite claims of his detention.

[Libya/Italy: Arrest of Osama Njeem an Opportunity to End the Cycle of Impunity for Abuses by Libyan Militias](#). Amnesty International. 21 January 2025.

[Submission of the Third Record of "Request to the Italian Republic to Provide Submissions on Its Failure to Surrender Osama Elmasry Njeem Following His Arrest."](#) International Criminal Court. 7 May 2025.

[Thirtieth Report of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to the United Nations Security Council Pursuant to Resolution 1970 \(2011\)](#). International Criminal Court. 25 November 2025. p. 23.

[Libya, Italy and the International Criminal Court: A Long History of Dispute](#). JusticeInfo. 12 January 2026.

subject to arrest warrants, including **Saif Sneidel**<sup>20</sup> and members of the al-Kaniyat group ("Kani Militia"), continue to move freely in eastern Libya and abroad.<sup>21</sup> In the same context, the ICC Prosecutor highlighted challenges impeding the operationalisation of the complementarity principle, including the absence of clear lines of communication with the relevant Libyan authorities, difficulties in information-sharing, particularly in the Tarhuna case, and the fact that certain crimes and groups remain outside the scope of accountability by the competent national authorities.<sup>22</sup>

35. Whilst the GNU declared its acceptance of the Court's jurisdiction in May 2025,<sup>23</sup> an acceptance that does not negate the pre-existing obligation on Libyan authorities to cooperate, established pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1970 (2011)<sup>24</sup> This acceptance remained formal in nature and was not translated into meaningful cooperation with the Court.<sup>25</sup> In response, the Libyan HoR issued a statement in May declaring the GNU illegitimate, asserting that the Libyan judiciary was "capable and willing" to prosecute perpetrators, and characterising the Government's steps as undermining reconciliation efforts. A court in Benghazi further issued an order suspending implementation of the GNU's declaration accepting the ICC's jurisdiction over Libya.<sup>26</sup> Notwithstanding these developments, the ICC Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) announced the extension of its investigations in Libya until mid-2026. In July 2025, **Khaled El Hishri ("AL-BOOTI")** was arrested in Germany pursuant to an ICC arrest warrant and subsequently surrendered to the Court, where he is currently held in pre-trial detention in The Hague,<sup>27</sup> facing charges of war

<sup>20</sup> [The Situation in Libya: Pre-Trial Chamber of the International Criminal Court Unseals Arrest Warrant for Mr Saif Suleiman Sneidel](#). International Criminal Court. 8 August 2025.

[Libya, Italy and the International Criminal Court: A Long History of Dispute](#). JusticeInfo. 12 January 2026.

<sup>21</sup> [Stability Through Accountability: Why Libya Needs an International Human Rights Mechanism](#). International Commission of Jurists; Lawyers for Justice in Libya. March 2025. pp. 6–7

[Seeking Justice for Tarhuna Victims: An Ongoing Struggle for Accountability](#). United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). 21 July 2025.

<sup>22</sup> [Twenty-Ninth Report of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to the United Nations Security Council Pursuant to Resolution 1970 \(2011\)](#). International Criminal Court. p. 21.

<sup>23</sup> [Libya Accepts the Jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court over Alleged Crimes Committed from 2011 to the End of 2027](#). International Criminal Court. 15 May 2025.

<sup>24</sup> [Statement to the United Nations Security Council on the Situation in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1970 \(2011\)](#). International Criminal Court. 4 May 2011.

<sup>25</sup> [Thirtieth Report of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to the United Nations Security Council Pursuant to Resolution 1970 \(2011\)](#). International Criminal Court. 25 November 2025. pp. 11, 23.

<sup>26</sup> [Statement of the Committee on Justice and National Reconciliation on the Remarks of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court before the United Nations Security Council](#). Libyan House of Representatives. 15 May 2025.

[South Benghazi Court of First Instance Issues an Order to Suspend Acceptance of the International Criminal Court's Jurisdiction in Libya](#). Al-Wasat Platform (AR). 28 July 2025.

<sup>27</sup> [The Situation in Libya: Surrender of Khaled Mohamed Ali El Hishri to the International Criminal Court](#). ICC. 1 December 2025.

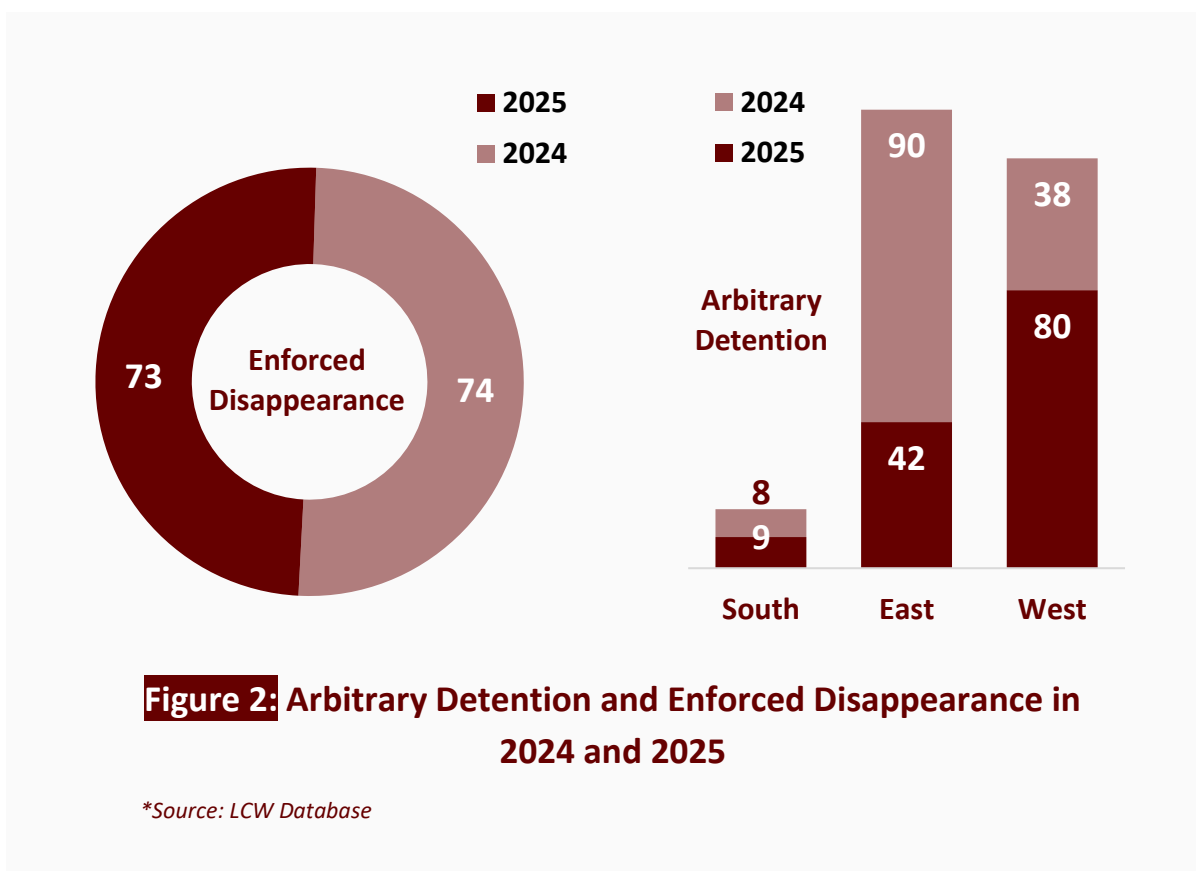
crimes and crimes against humanity committed at the principal rehabilitation and reform facility in Tripoli ("Mitiga Prison").<sup>28</sup>

36. In light of the above, the context prevailing throughout 2025 demonstrates that the violations documented in this report occur within an environment in which political divisions intersect with security and military fragmentation, and with the incapacity and unwillingness of the national judiciary to fulfil its functions, resulting in state institutions becoming arenas of competing influence rather than instruments of protection and law enforcement. The continued entrenchment of armed formation commanders within state structures reflects the consolidation of impunity and the erosion of judicial guarantees and undermines the capacity of the rival authorities to investigate grave violations or ensure their non-recurrence.

<sup>28</sup> [Arrest Warrant for Mr Khaled Mohamed Ali El Hishri](#). International Criminal Court. 10 July 2025.

## V. ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

37. Arbitrary detention continued across various areas of Libya throughout 2025 at a rate broadly comparable to documented cases in the preceding year, 2024. During this year, Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) documented one hundred and thirty-one (131) cases of arbitrary detention of civilians, among them three women and eleven children.
38. Documentation files reveal recurring and consistent patterns of violations to which detainees were subjected during detention. Among those detained, seventy-three (73) were subjected to periods of enforced disappearance, rendering them vulnerable to grave violations beyond the reach of any legal oversight. In this context, the field team documented eighty-five (85) detainees subjected to practices amounting to torture or ill-treatment, alongside forty-five (45) cases involving the denial of basic fair trial guarantees, and seven (7) cases of arbitrary detention that may amount to persecution. The most devastating consequence of these violations was the documented deaths of six (6) detainees as a result of torture or deliberate medical negligence during detention.



39. Targeting encompassed a broad range of civilians, including protesters, bloggers, government employees, migrants, religious and community leaders, human rights activists and defenders, journalists, lawyers, and political activists, as well as persons belonging to vulnerable ethnic, cultural, and gender groups. The targeting of activists' relatives as a means of indirect pressure became an increasingly entrenched practice. The grounds for targeting were varied, encompassing the pursuit of individuals on account of opinions expressed on social media, the exposure of suspected corruption, participation in electoral processes, and work within civil society organisations, as well as targeting on the basis of racial, religious, or sexual orientation discrimination, reflecting the severity of the restrictions imposed on public space.
40. Documentation files held in LCW's database reveal that throughout 2025, security apparatuses, armed groups, and certain prosecution offices in both eastern and western Libya continued to invoke repressive and broadly drafted legislation to justify arbitrary detention and prolonged periods of detention. This included the application of provisions of the Penal Code relating to "insulting state symbols" and "undermining the dignity of the state," alongside provisions from other legislation framed as terrorism-related charges, morality offences, and charges connected to social media activity, as well as other provisions employed to criminalise the expression of opinion, civil society engagement, or journalistic work. Documented cases indicate that such legal provisions are employed predominantly as a formal pretext to confer a veneer of legitimacy upon detention, thereby entrenching the use of law as an instrument of repression rather than a guarantee of protection.

## Western Libya

41. LCW's field team documented eighty (80) cases of arbitrary detention in western Libya, including thirty-four (34) cases of enforced disappearance, among them three women and six minors. These cases occurred in the cities of Misrata, Zliten, Tarhuna, Tripoli, Warshafana, Zawiya, Sorman, and al-Jamil. The arrests were carried out by armed groups and security apparatuses, including the SSA, the Libyan Intelligence Service, and RADA, affiliated with the LPC, as well as other entities affiliated with the GNU, comprising the Internal Security Agency (ISA), the 444th Infantry Brigade, the 55th, 103rd, and 166th Battalions, the JOF, the Counter-Terrorism Force, Military Intelligence, the Tripoli and Misrata Security Directorates, the Petroleum Facilities Guard, and Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM).
42. Targeting in western Libya was employed as an instrument of suppression against protests and peaceful assemblies, and to pursue individuals who express opinions critical of the authorities through social media, journalistic activity, or in the public sphere, as well as those engaged in the practice of law. Targeting also encompassed migrants, LGBTQIA+ individuals, vulnerable religious groups, civil society activists, and government employees, officials, and electoral candidates, in contexts linked to competition over political and economic influence.
43. LCW's field team further documented the arrest of community figures in the context of targeting individuals perceived as supporters of the eastern authorities or of the former

regime and Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. Detention was also used as a means of pressure against relatives of bloggers or dissidents based outside Libya. In other incidents, arrests were linked to extortion, retaliation, or ransom demands arising from personal disputes with individuals associated with or affiliated to armed groups and security apparatuses.

44. **In testimony provided by Mahmoud, a survivor in western Libya, he recounted how filing a complaint against an official implicated in drug trafficking led to his arrest, torture, and the extortion of his family. He stated:**



My ordeal began when I filed a complaint against an official implicated in drug trafficking. From that moment, threats followed me relentlessly until I was eventually arrested by a security agency over which that official held influence. On the way, five vehicles suddenly surrounded me, and I was taken to a security headquarters in the city. There I was subjected to hours of harrowing torture, I was forced to drink large quantities of water mixed with pepper, and I was beaten until I lost consciousness. Afterwards, they contacted my family, demanded a large sum of money, and compelled them to pay it in exchange for my release. Despite my release, the pursuit did not stop there. To this day, I continue to receive threats from the same party, and I was dismissed from my job as a result of the pressure they exerted against me. I feel surrounded on all sides, simply because I decided not to stay silent.

45. Arrests were carried out through recurring patterns encompassing detention on streets and in public spaces, raids on private residences, arrests at places of work, and the detention of relatives, with repeated instances of arrest immediately following participation in peaceful demonstrations. Detainees were held across fifteen official and unofficial prisons and detention centres in western Libya, the most notable of which, in the city of Tripoli, included detention facilities at the headquarters of the ISA, Military Intelligence, and sites affiliated with the SSA. Documentation indicates that at least 10 of these facilities operate without judicial or legal oversight.
46. LCW's field team documented the death of one detainee in custody, and the subjection of others to torture and ill-treatment, sexual violence, and forced labour. The team further documented the deliberate denial of medical care to detainees and the prevention of communication with their families. Detainees were denied basic fair trial guarantees, including prolonged detention without referral to the prosecution, denial of access to legal counsel, coercion under threat to sign investigation records containing fabricated confessions, the extraction of confessions under torture, and detention without legal basis. These practices indicate the use of procedural formalities as a veneer of legality rather than a guarantee of rights protection.

47. Detainees were further subjected to financial extortion within detention facilities, with sums demanded in exchange for "improved" detention conditions or in the context of detention for ransom purposes. In three documented cases, the field team documented the use of detainees against one another, with certain individuals assigned supervisory and security tasks in exchange for privileges. In addition, the absence of effective administrative documentation of detention persisted in at least thirteen of the prisons and detention centres covered by the documentation.
48. LCW's field team documented the confiscation of detainees' personal property and the intimidation and threatening of their families. The team also monitored the continued complicity of certain local police stations and prosecution offices, as manifested in disregard for complaints submitted by victims and their families, refusal to receive complaints, and the extension of detention periods without legal basis. And with detention ending with the release of detainees without legal proceedings, or merely upon referral to the prosecution, which relied on retrospective arrest warrants and the manipulation of legal procedures. Threats and restrictions persisted following release, and no mechanisms for compensation or redress were available.

## **Eastern and Southern Libya**

49. LCW's field team documented fifty (50) cases of arbitrary detention in eastern and southern Libya during 2025, including thirty-seven (37) cases of enforced disappearance. These cases occurred in the cities of al-Marj, Sirte, Benghazi, Ubari, and Kufra. They were carried out by security apparatuses affiliated with the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR, including the ISA, the General Directorate for Security Operations (GDSO), and the Benghazi Security Directorate, as well as apparatuses and armed groups affiliated with the LAAF, among them the Tariq ben Ziyad Brigade (TBZ), the 166th Brigade, the Sabil al-Salam Battalion, the 101st Battalion, and the Military Police and Prisons Administration. The field team further reported that the ISA was the most prominent executive actor in most cases, reflecting the centralised nature of targeting and the breadth of its capacity and influence across its branches.
50. Targeting was linked to the pursuit of multiple categories of individuals on political, social, and religious grounds, and did not differ markedly from those targeted in areas under the control of the GNU in western Libya. Those targeted included candidates in municipal elections, lawyers, bloggers, participants in peaceful demonstrations, supporters of the former regime and Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, community and religious leaders, vulnerable religious groups, political activists, as well as minors and persons belonging to vulnerable ethnic and cultural groups. The field team also documented the continued targeting of members of Sufi orders within a broader context of restrictions on freedom of religion and belief, as well as the targeting of individuals perceived as supporters of the Western authorities.

51. **In testimony provided by Ali, he recounted how the targeting of his family extended to him following the arbitrary detention of his father, after he was transferred between several security headquarters and prisons until he arrived at Qarnada Prison Complex, where he was reunited with his father. He stated:**

“

Months after my father's arrest, they raided our home again and took me. They entered armed, with no regard for the sanctity of the home, and terrorised the children who were inside. They took me first to their headquarters in the city, then I was moved between several security headquarters and prisons, from one place to another, without knowing why I was being detained or where I would be transferred next. Until I eventually ended up in Qarnada Prison, and there I found my father. When I saw him, he told me of the severe torture he had been subjected to during his detention. It was an extremely painful moment, because I was not only living with fear for myself, I was also witnessing what had happened to my father and what our entire family had been reduced to.

52. Arbitrary arrests were carried out through patterns similar to those documented in western Libya, encompassing detention on streets and in public spaces, raids on private residences, security summonses that resulted in detention, and arrests at places of work. The field team documented cases in which individuals not holding Libyan nationality were detained in political and security contexts, including the targeting of the "Sumoud Convoy."<sup>29</sup> It also documented the use of detention as an instrument of economic pressure, including cases linked to coercing victims into relinquishing their property. The field team further documented a case of transnational pursuit and detention targeting an activist outside Libya in a neighbouring state.
53. Victims were held across nine official and unofficial prisons and detention facilities in eastern and southern Libya, including facilities operating without effective judicial or legal oversight. The most notable among these were an unofficial detention facility at the ISA headquarters in Benghazi, the Qarnada<sup>30</sup> Prison Complex in the city of Shahat, and Al-Kweifiya<sup>31</sup> Prison in

<sup>29</sup> [Report: Human Rights Violations in Libya during the Month of June 2025](#). Libya Crimes Watch. 5 July 2025

<sup>30</sup> Located in the Qarnada area, south of the city of Shahat, the complex comprises principally three prisons: a civilian prison under the oversight of the Judicial Police affiliated with the Ministry of Justice; a military prison under the oversight of the Military Police and Prisons Administration affiliated with the LAAF; and the TBZ Brigade Prison, an unofficial facility under the oversight of the TBZ Brigade, affiliated with the LAAF.

<sup>31</sup> Located in the al-Kweifiya area of the city of Benghazi, the complex comprises several administratively interconnected prisons, including a civilian prison under the oversight of the Judicial Police affiliated with the

Benghazi. The field team documented the absence of administrative registration procedures in eight of the prisons covered by the documentation, as well as the continuation of detention without a clear legal process. It further documented the detention of civilians in military prisons, the transfer of detainees between the headquarters of security apparatuses and armed groups, and the subsequent transfer of some to a principal detention facility in Benghazi, far from their cities of origin, in order to keep them removed from community and tribal pressure.

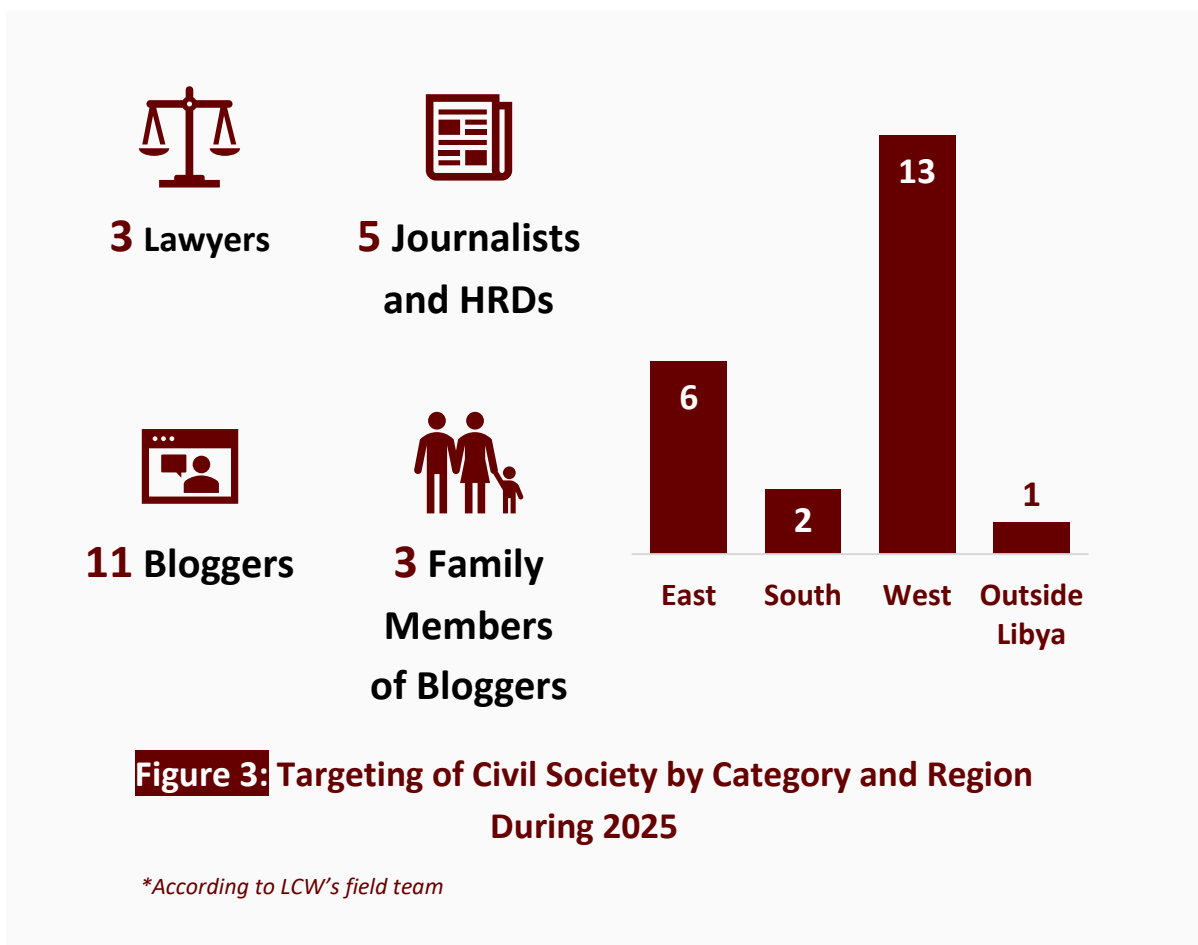
54. The field team documented the subjection of detainees to torture and ill-treatment, as well as the denial of basic fair trial guarantees, including the denial of communication with family members or access to legal counsel, the coercion of detainees into signing undertakings to refrain from any political or civil activity, and the coercion of detainees, under threat and without being permitted to read the contents, into signing investigation records containing fabricated charges. The trial of civilians before military courts and their continued detention in military prisons were also documented.
55. LCW's field team further documented the deaths of detainees in custody in circumstances indicating a probable link to torture or the deliberate denial of medical care, pointing to the use of detention as an environment conducive to grave violations that may result in death. With regard to mechanisms for the release of individuals arbitrarily detained in eastern and southern Libya, detention concluded with release without legal proceedings, or with mere referral to the prosecution, based on retrospective arrest warrants and the manipulation of legal procedures. Some victims were prevented from resuming their professional activities, and security restrictions upon them persisted.

## **Attacks Against Civil Society**

56. Throughout 2025, campaigns targeting activists and patterns of attacks against civil society continued across cities in eastern, western, and southern Libya. LCW's field team documented the arbitrary detention of twenty-two (22) civil society workers and three family members, including one child. Those targeted included journalists, workers and collaborators with non-governmental organisations, HRDs, lawyers, and bloggers active from both inside and outside Libya, as well as members of their families. Eight of those detained were subjected to periods of enforced disappearance and various forms of torture and ill-treatment, in addition to being denied basic fair trial guarantees.

Ministry of Justice; a military prison under the oversight of the Military Police and Prisons Administration affiliated with the LAAF; and a prison known as "al-Imara," situated in close proximity to the main site of the complex, under the oversight of the LAAF and a security agency affiliated with the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR.

57. These arrests occurred in the context of attacks carried out in eastern and western Libya, in the cities of Sirte, Tripoli, Misrata, Sabha, and Benghazi, as well as in the case of one activist in Alexandria, Egypt. The arrests were carried out by security apparatuses, most notably the ISA, affiliated with the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR, and the SSA, the General Intelligence Service, and Al Radaa for Countering Terrorism and Organised Crimes (“RADA”), affiliated with the LPC, alongside the ISA and the Counter-Terrorism Force affiliated with the GNU.



58. In western Libya, the ISA, affiliated with the LPC, conducted a campaign targeting international organisations working in support of migrants, following which seven organisations were forced to close their offices in Tripoli and Misrata. At least ten of their local staff members were summoned for prolonged interrogation, and the organisations were subjected to authority-led incitement and smear campaigns on social media, in which they were accused of "seeking to resettle foreigners in the country" and "threatening national

*security and demographic composition," alongside accusations of homosexuality, atheism, and espionage, deployed as instruments of stigmatisation.<sup>32</sup>*

59. LCW's field team also documented repeated attacks targeting voices critical of the authorities' policies and practices, activists who refused to comply with unlawful orders to seize property or cease their activities, individuals engaged in exposing financial corruption, and HRDs, including those operating from outside Libya. This targeting was characterised by the use of arbitrary detention, threats, and security surveillance, alongside prolonged arbitrary summonses, the confiscation of mobile phones and personal equipment, and the imposition of movement or travel restrictions in certain cases, as well as smear campaigns of a moral and religious character, and an assault on the premises of the **LAM media outlet**. In Tripoli.
60. **In testimony provided by a member of Mahmoud's family, detained on account of his civil society activism, his sister spoke of the family's enduring suffering amid months of silence regarding his fate, and the complete absence of any official information concerning his place of detention or legal status, despite the family's efforts to locate him. She stated:**

“

My brother has been unreachable for months, since he was taken from our family home. We have heard nothing from him since. We were told he may have been transferred to Benghazi, so my mother and father travelled there, but we received no answer from the security agencies, only that they did not have him. We do not know what charges have been brought against him, or whether he is alive or dead. After all this time, his fate remains unknown. All we ask is to know where he is. If he is accused of something, let the family be informed of the charge, and let his case be referred to the courts. The days pass with great difficulty in his absence. Mahmoud called for dialogue among Libyans, for peace, and for an end to conflict. Is this his reward?

61. The invocation of repressive legislation continued throughout the year as part of a systematic policy pursued by the authorities in both eastern and western Libya for approximately four years. This included the Law on Associations (No. 19/2001)<sup>33</sup>, the Law on Combating Cybercrimes (No. 05/2022),<sup>34</sup> the Press and Publications Law (No. 76/1972),<sup>35</sup> the

<sup>32</sup> [Report: Human Rights Violations in Libya during the Month of March 2025](#). Libya Crimes Watch. 5 April 2025. [Joint Statement: Libya — Stop the Crackdown on NGOs Supporting Migrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers](#). LCW. 17 April 2025.

<sup>33</sup> [Law No. 19 of 2001 on the Reorganisation of Civil Associations](#). Enacted by the General People's Congress, 28 December 2001.

<sup>34</sup> [Law No. 19 of 2001 on the Reorganisation of Civil Associations](#). Enacted by the General People's Congress, 28 December 2001.

<sup>35</sup> [Law No. 76 of 1972 on Press and Publications](#). Enacted by the Revolutionary Command Council. 24 July 1972.

Telecommunications Law (No. 22/2010),<sup>36</sup> and the Anti-Terrorism Law (No. 03/2014),<sup>37</sup> alongside provisions from other legislation relating to financial restrictions and articles of the Penal Code. This was frequently accompanied by the levelling of broad, pre-formulated charges, among them the promotion of homosexuality, atheism, and espionage on behalf of foreign entities, deployed both as instruments of social stigmatisation and as legal cover to justify targeting and render it publicly acceptable.

62. These attacks contributed to a growing climate of widespread self-censorship among activists and civil society workers, manifested in particular in heightened reluctance to engage in public expression and in the avoidance of documenting or disseminating information relating to human rights violations or corruption. Arrests, smear campaigns, and summonses further led to the suspension or cessation of activities by both local and international organisations, whether through forced closures or out of fear of targeting and attendant restrictions. LCW's field team also documented the flight of activists abroad and the compulsion of others to cease or significantly curtail their activities, thereby weakening civil society's role and reducing victims' capacity to access support and protection mechanisms.
63. LCW's database, accumulated over previous years, indicates that these practices against civil society cannot be regarded as isolated incidents. Rather, they constitute systematic practices aimed at restricting civic space, undermining independent monitoring and documentation of violations in which the authorities in eastern and western Libya are implicated, and reducing the capacity of victims and survivors to access international accountability mechanisms, as well as support and protection.

## Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups

64. Throughout 2025, the targeting of vulnerable and marginalised groups continued across eastern and western Libya. LCW's field team documented the arbitrary detention of seven (7) civilians on grounds related to their LGBTQIA+ identity or belief-related backgrounds, among them one activist, in the cities of Tripoli and Zliten. The field team further documented that three of those detained were subjected to periods of enforced disappearance lasting in some cases six months. All arrests were carried out by the ISA and the General Intelligence Service, both of which are affiliated with the LPC.
65. Detainees were transferred to the ISA headquarters in Tripoli and the General Intelligence Service in Zliten, where they were subjected to torture and ill-treatment, before some were subsequently transferred to other prisons, most notably the principal Ain Zara Rehabilitation and Reform Facility ("al-Ruwaiymi Prison") and the principal Tajoura Rehabilitation and

<sup>36</sup> [Law No. 22 of 2010 on Telecommunications. Enacted by the General People's Congress](#), 28 January 2010.

<sup>37</sup> [Law No. 3 of 2014 on Combating Terrorism. Enacted by the Libyan House of Representatives](#), 19 September 2014.

Reform Facility ("al-Daman Prison"), following referral to the prosecution. The field team documented the rape of one detainee by guards during detention, in addition to the subjection of four detainees to anal examinations at state-affiliated medical facilities.

66. **In his testimony, Issam described the arbitrary detention, torture, and ill-treatment he was subjected to on the basis of accusations relating to his beliefs and alleged association with organisations supporting the LGBTQIA+ community. He also referenced a prior incident in which he was kidnapped, sexually assaulted, and threatened with death. He stated:**

“

They came in suddenly, beat us, and took our phones, our money, and everything we had. Then they took each of us separately to an unknown location. Afterwards, I realised I was inside the intelligence service. They put me in a very small cell, alone, and prevented me from communicating with anyone. I did not know why I was there, or what they might do to me. During the interrogation, they blindfolded me and beat me and began levelling accusations against me because of my beliefs and because of what they claimed was a connection to organisations supporting the LGBTQIA+ community. They then forced me to sign statements without telling me what was written in them. This was not the first time I had been through something before, when I was kidnapped, raped, and threatened with death. Even after my release, what happened continued to haunt me, as though I had never truly left.

67. Prosecutorial proceedings in certain documented cases contributed to the entrenchment of impunity, through referrals and extensions of detention without legal basis and the disregard for allegations of torture against detainees. One detainee further reported ill-treatment at the hands of a prosecutor, indicating complicity or serious dereliction in ensuring the investigation of violations committed in places of detention, particularly those targeting LGBTQIA+ individuals. These violations have had long-term psychological consequences for the victims, compelling some to flee Libya or cease all activity, reflecting the enduring impact of targeting on individuals' safety, lives, and ability to achieve stability.
68. These cases are a continuation of the recurring practices of the western Libyan authorities in targeting LGBTQIA+ individuals and vulnerable and marginalised religious groups, including the non-religious and Christians, within a context that deploys the discourse of "protecting morality" and invokes "national security" to garner public support, and that serves hardline religious currents with significant influence in the country, particularly Salafist movements. The documented cases reflect the use of targeting as a policy to appease these currents and bolster the legitimacy of security apparatuses by attacking specific groups and transforming them into objects of mobilisation and incitement. In the same context, the field team monitored the conviction of more than seven detainees on charges of conversion to Christianity and proselytising, with sentences of varying lengths, one of which reached seven years. Other trials on charges related to homosexuality and "misuse of internet networks"

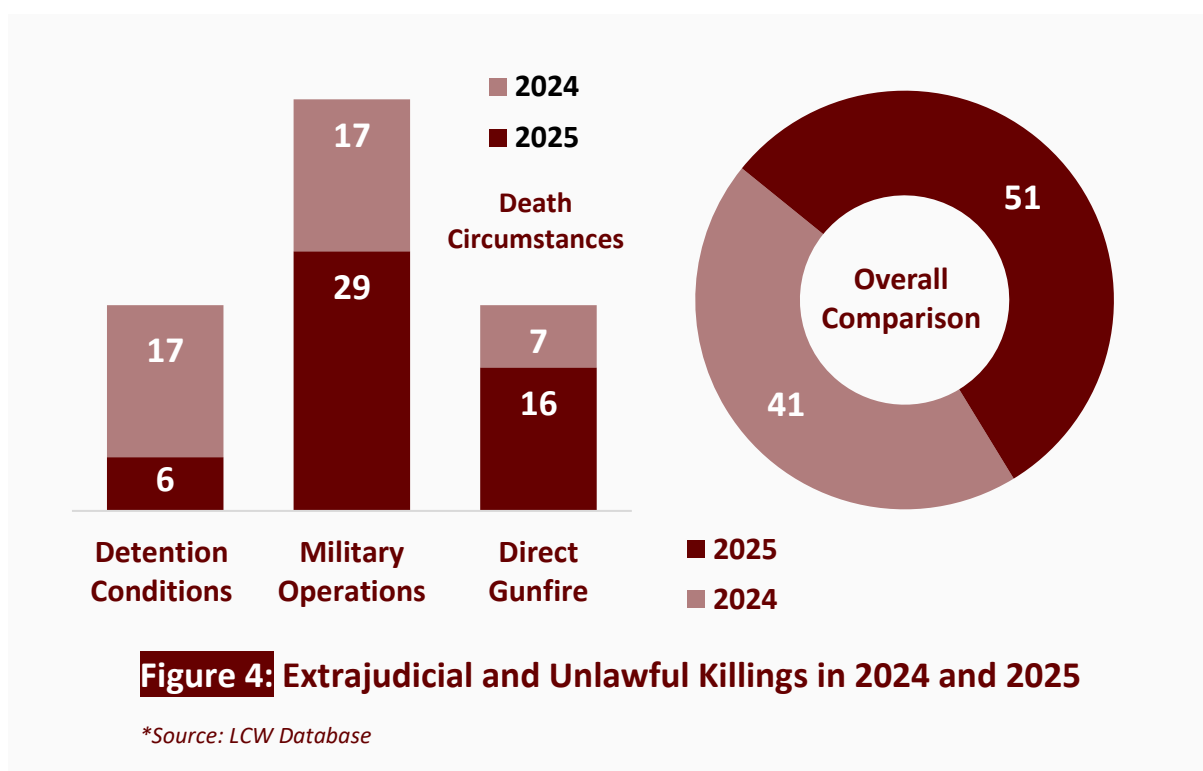
under the Law on Combating Cybercrimes (No. 05/2022) remained ongoing. These prosecutions reflect the growing risk of continued targeting of vulnerable groups and the deepening of their legal criminalisation.

69. In the context of accountability regarding incidents of arbitrary detention during 2025, LCW's field team continued to follow up with the absence of any effective investigations or genuine accountability in respect of violations within prisons and detention facilities, which persisted. Despite announcements by the Libyan Attorney General, the Libyan HoR and the LPC regarding the formation of committees to monitor the conditions of detainees, victims with whom LCW was in contact from within prisons, most notably the principal Mitiga Rehabilitation and Reform Facility ("Mitiga Prison") in Tripoli, al-Kweifiya Military Prison in Benghazi, and Qarnada Military Prison in Shahat, reported that committee visits were confined to specific areas within the prisons, were preceded by minor improvements to detention conditions, and that detainees refrained from speaking to the committees for fear of reprisal. Victims further reported that complaints raised with committee members during their visits received no response, notwithstanding the grave violations they contained.
70. In addition, the findings and outcomes of these committees' work have not been made public and remain unclear. Testimonies from victims and information obtained by LCW indicate that **Osama Njeem**, who is sought by the ICC, remains actively involved in the administration of Mitiga Prison and exercises practical influence within it, despite the Attorney General's announcement of his arrest and pre-trial detention pending investigation.<sup>38</sup> Whilst dozens of detainees were released from Mitiga Prison in Tripoli, relatives of victims reported that these releases were selective, and the arbitrary detention of dozens of others continued to be refused. These factors reflect that the formation of committees amounted to no more than a formal investigative and accountability exercise, ultimately failing to achieve the outcomes for which they were established.

<sup>38</sup> [Human Rights Watch Letter to Libyan General Prosecutor Al-Siddiq Al-Sur Regarding the Arrest of Osama Elmasry Njeem](#). Human Rights Watch. 10 February 2026.

## VI. EXTRAJUDICIAL AND UNLAWFUL KILLING

71. 2025 witnessed an escalation in extrajudicial and unlawful killings, with LCW documenting fifty-one (51) cases involving nine children and six women. The cases comprised twenty-nine deaths resulting from military operations and twenty-two (22) killings occurring during detention or in public spaces and private properties.



72. Documentation files indicate that the cases are linked to a range of circumstances, including killing during detention as a result of torture or the deliberate denial of medical care, and killing motivated by personal targeting, the seizure of property, or the excessive use of force. Documented testimonies further reflect the ongoing obstruction of medical and forensic documentation procedures, as well as limited investigative and accountability efforts.

### Eastern and Southern Libya

73. During 2025, LCW's field team documented nine (9) cases of unlawful and extrajudicial killing in eastern and southern Libya, the victims of whom were civilians, including two Tebu civilians, two members of Sufi orders, and one migrant. These violations occurred in the cities of Benghazi, Shahat, Kufra, Ubari, and Tobruk. The cases form part of a recurring pattern of deaths in custody resulting from torture or medical negligence, as well as assassinations and deaths resulting from the excessive use of force, the victims of which were civilians targeted

on various grounds, most notably their refusal to relinquish their property and their membership of vulnerable religious groups.

### ***Killing In Custody***

74. LCW's field team documented five (5) deaths in custody of arbitrarily detained persons in eastern and southern Libya, including Detained Members of Sufi Orders<sup>39</sup>, occurring under inhumane conditions of detention. These violations were linked to armed groups and security apparatuses, including the Military Police and Prisons Administration affiliated with the LAAF, and the GDSO, the Judicial Police, and the Public Morality Protection Agency affiliated with the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR. The violations occurred in detention facilities comprising the Qarnada Prison Complex in Shahat, al-Kweifiya Prison in Benghazi, the headquarters of the Public Morality Protection Agency in Benghazi, and the Ubari Rehabilitation and Reform Facility ("Ubari Prison").

These deaths occurred against the backdrop of the continued prevalence of inhumane conditions of detention within detention facilities in eastern and southern Libya throughout the year, encompassing severe overcrowding, malnutrition, inadequate ventilation, absence of sanitation, and deprivation of clean water, healthcare, medication, and necessary treatment, including in cases of chronic and critical illness. LCW's field team further documented incommunicado detention, denial of access to family members or legal counsel, delays in or refusal to transfer detainees to receive medical treatment, and the infliction of lethal forms of torture, all of which contributed to the deterioration of detainees' health and exposed their lives to grave risk.

<sup>39</sup> The deaths among followers of Sufi orders came after widespread arbitrary arrest campaigns increased in 2024 and targeted over thirty (30) civilians in eastern and southern Libya, most of whom remain in detention, most of whom remain in detention under torture inhuman detention conditions. They were held in several official and unofficial detention facilities overseen by authorities in eastern Libya. These campaigns were carried out by armed groups affiliated with the LAAF, and by security agencies affiliated with the Libyan government endorsed by the HoR. The campaigns followed the issuance by the Libyan HoR of Law (06/2024) on combating sorcery, witchcraft, soothsaying, and related practices, which was adopted under pressure from the Madkhali Salafi current in the country.

[Annual Report 2024 - Libya: Accountability Is the Solution - Violations Continue amid Impunity.](#) LCW. 8 April 2025.

[Report: Human Rights Violations in Libya During February 2025.](#) LCW. 5 March 2025.

[Law No. 6 of 2024 on the Criminalization of Sorcery, Witchcraft, Soothsaying, and Related Practices.](#) Adopted by the Libyan HoR. 15 May 2024.

75. In her testimony, Sanaa, the sister of Intissar, **who is detained in a prison in eastern Libya,** expressed her fear that her sister may meet the same fate as other detainees who have died in custody, given the continued denial of medical care and the prevention of family and legal access to her. She stated:



We do not understand why my sister is still detained despite being interrogated without any evidence being found against her. She has a heart condition, and for a year now, she has had no documentation confirming her detention and cannot even obtain her medication. We have been prevented from communicating with her or visiting her, and we were told that even a lawyer cannot reach her. We are afraid for her, afraid that she will meet the same fate as others inside the prison. Every time we hear of a detainee dying there, we are seized with panic. They have wronged her and exhausted the entire family. We no longer taste life. Ramadan passed, and Eid al-Fitr passed, and we felt neither. I want my sister to be saved before it is too late.

76. LCW's database indicates that the deaths resulted from a recurring pattern of grave violations during detention, most notably the deliberate denial of medical care, alongside the subjection of detainees to various forms of torture. During the year, LCW's field team recorded the discovery of torture marks on the bodies of at least two victims, including stab wounds, burns, and bruising, which may indicate that they were killed under torture. The field team further documented the continued obstruction of forensic procedures in eastern Libya, manifested in the confiscation of reports or the denial of family access to them, the prevention of examination of bodies or the imposition of arbitrary conditions for their release, as well as the absence of official notification of death in one case.

#### ***Killing Resulting from Direct Gunfire***

77. LCW's field team documented four (4) cases of direct and intentional killing in public spaces or within private property, the victims of whom were civilians targeted for the purpose of seizing their private property, the targeting of migrants, or the excessive use of force in the course of security operations. These cases occurred in the cities of Benghazi, Kufra, and Tobruk. The documented cases indicate that this violence reflects the abuse of authority and the expansion of armed groups and security apparatuses beyond the bounds of the law.
78. In Benghazi, LCW's field team documented the killing of a civilian by armed members of the 20/20 Battalion, affiliated with the TBZ Brigade of the LAAF, during an attempt to seize land he owned. In Tobruk, an Egyptian migrant was subjected to a fatal assault by the Military Police and Prisons Administration of the LAAF during raids in the city. The field team further documented the killing of a Tebu civilian whilst being pursued on a public street in Kufra, south-eastern Libya, by armed members affiliated with the Kufra Security Directorate of the Libyan Government, accredited by the HoR.

## Western Libya

79. During 2025, the field team monitored forty-two (42) cases of unlawful and extrajudicial killing, the victims of whom were civilians, including bloggers, migrants, children, and a woman, in the cities of Tripoli, Zawiya, and Misrata. The documented cases encompassed assassinations in public spaces and deaths linked to military operations, in addition to deaths occurring within detention facilities.

### *Killing in Public Spaces*

80. LCW's field team documented ten (10) cases of killing resulting from direct gunfire by armed individuals affiliated with security apparatuses, most notably the SSA affiliated with the LPC, or by armed individuals whose documentation files indicate were affiliated with armed groups and security apparatuses loyal to the authorities in western Libya, in addition to killings linked to human trafficking networks. The grounds for targeting included political liquidation, personal disputes, and circumstances that remain unknown at the time of writing. Among the most notable cases during the year was the killing of content creator **Al-Khansa Al-Mujahid** in the Janzour area of Tripoli, shot inside her vehicle by unidentified armed men.<sup>40</sup> Despite the announcement by the western Libyan authorities of the opening of an investigation into her killing, its findings have not been made public. Witnesses further reported that the investigation has not resulted in the identification or prosecution of those responsible for her killing, notwithstanding information circulated on social media platforms.

### *Deaths Resulting from Military Operations*

81. LCW documented twenty-nine (29) deaths resulting from armed clashes or landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (EWR). These deaths occurred during confrontations involving the 103rd Battalion, the 444th Brigade, the JOF, the 111th Brigade, the General Security Agency affiliated with the GNU, and the SSA affiliated with the LPC. LCW's database further indicates that some killings resulted from indiscriminate fire and the use of heavy weapons in civilian areas.
82. With regard to landmines and EWR, documentation files indicate that some date back to the Tripoli War (2019–2020), with indicators suggesting their placement by groups affiliated with or supporting the LAAF, against a backdrop of inadequate demining and clearance of EWR by the western Libyan authorities, and the continued refusal of the LAAF to hand over landmine maps.
83. In the context of accountability for extrajudicial and unlawful killings during 2025, and notwithstanding repeated announcements by the Libyan Attorney General and the security

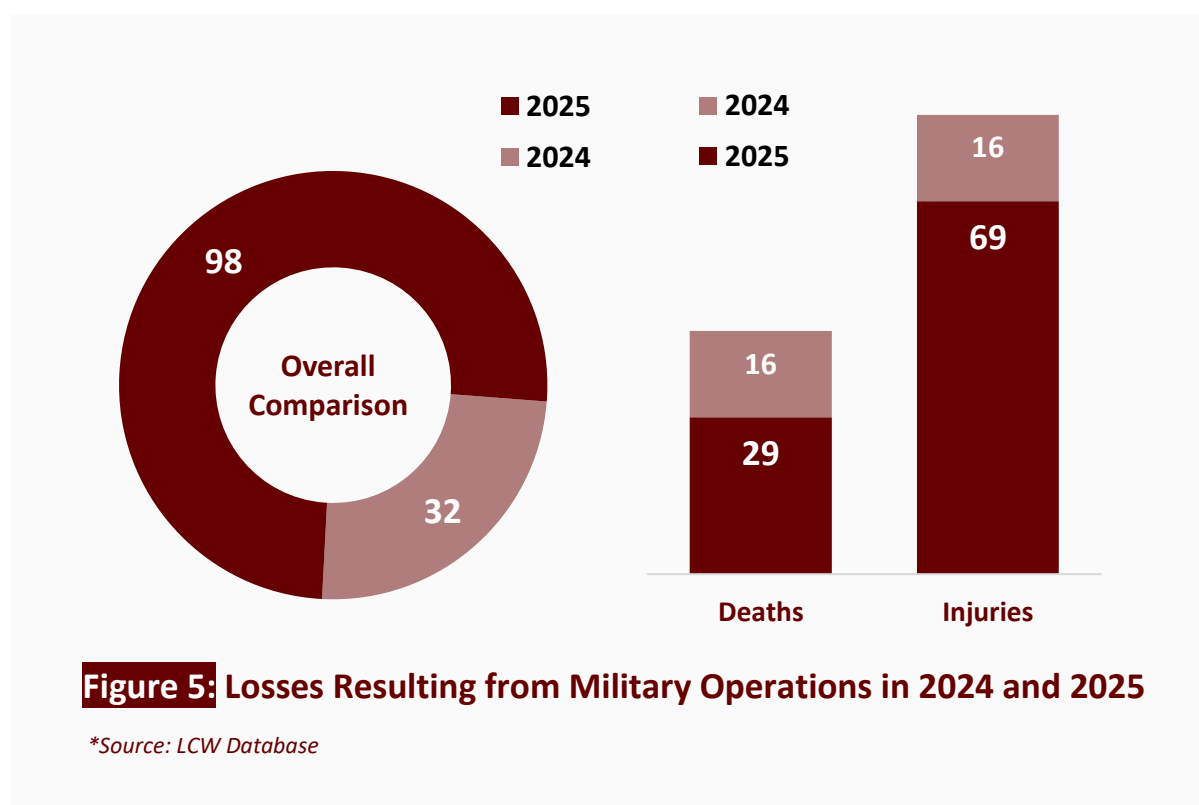
<sup>40</sup> [Killing of a Content Creator in Tripoli](#). Libya Crimes Watch (LCW). 22 November 2025.

and military authorities in eastern, southern, and western Libya regarding the opening of investigations into extrajudicial and unlawful killings, LCW's field team received testimonies from witnesses and victims' relatives indicating that these proceedings did not result in genuine accountability. According to witness testimony, investigations focused solely on pursuing individuals at lower command levels, whilst senior officials and commanders continued to evade accountability, resulting in the absence of any guarantees of non-recurrence.

84. Victims' relatives and witnesses reported to LCW's field team that they were subjected to intimidation and harassment whilst attempting to pursue complaints or demand investigations. They further reported receiving direct threats and pressure to withdraw their complaints or accept out-of-court settlements in place of accountability, which deterred other affected individuals from reporting incidents or cooperating with prosecution offices. Victims' relatives also reported the existence of deliberate obstacles aimed at concealing violations, including the expediting of burials, the restriction of autopsy procedures, and the denial of access to forensic reports. They further indicated a lack of transparency and that they were prevented from regularly following up on their case files. Witnesses affirmed that pursuing direct perpetrators alone, whilst disregarding commanders, senior officials, and those wielding influence, perpetuates the risk of recurrence of these violations.

## VII. CIVILIAN CASUALTIES RESULTING FROM MILITARY OPERATIONS

85. Civilian casualties and injuries resulting from military operations escalated in a troubling manner throughout 2025 at a rate broadly comparable to the preceding year, 2024. LCW's field team documented ninety-eight (98) cases of civilian deaths and injuries during the year, comprising twenty-nine deaths and sixty-nine injuries, among them twenty children and eight women. The casualties resulted from indiscriminate fire during armed clashes that erupted across extensive residential areas in western Libya, in addition to casualties caused by the explosion of landmines, ERW, and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), as well as those resulting from military training activities conducted in residential areas.



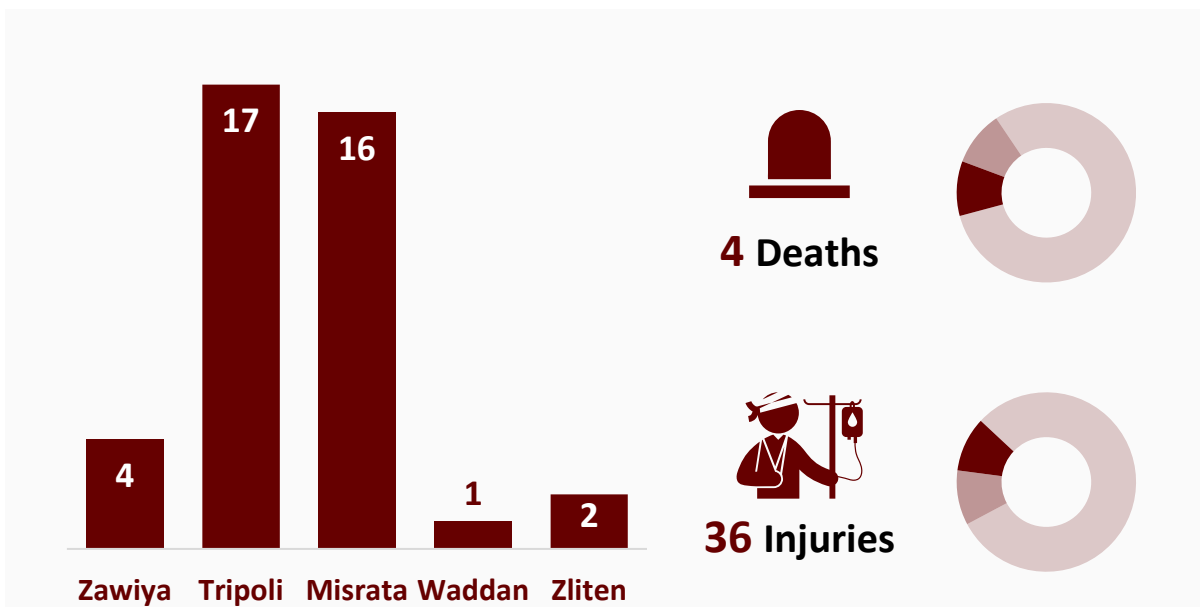
86. The cases documented during the year demonstrate that civilian casualties were not confined to the immediate context of armed clashes, but continue to extend to residual risks associated with landmines, ERW, and UXO in populated areas, particularly in southern Tripoli. The field team additionally documented incidents linked to the storage or presence of ammunition within residential areas in the city of Misrata.

87. Documented cases indicate that children were among the most exposed categories of the population to these risks. This reflects the inadequacy of protective measures, the weakness of warning, fencing, demining, and ERW clearance systems, and the continued spill over of

violence into civilian space, undermining the right to life and physical integrity and deepening the sense of insecurity among local populations.

**Landmines, Explosive Remnants of War, and Unexploded Ordnance, and Indiscriminate Shelling**

88. During 2025, LCW’s field team documented the continued casualties caused by landmines, explosive remnants of war, unexploded ordnance, and indiscriminate shelling outside the context of armed clashes. It documented the injury of thirty-six (36) civilians and the death of four (4) others as a result of explosions caused by landmines, explosive remnants of war, unexploded ordnance, and indiscriminate shelling in residential areas, including thirteen children. These incidents were recorded in the cities of Tripoli, Al-Zawiya, Misrata, Waddan, and Zliten.



**Figure 6: Losses Resulting from ERW by City and Victim Status in 2025**

*\*Source: LCW Database*

89. Documentation files indicate that the cases were linked in particular to areas of former armed conflict, where landmine risks persisted following the cessation of hostilities, resulting in casualties over preceding years, especially among children. LCW’s database, accumulated over the past five years, indicates that in addition to the responsibility of units affiliated with the LAAF for the laying of landmines and explosive booby traps during the Tripoli War between 2019 and 2020, there are indicators pointing to the involvement of foreign security

and military companies that participated in combat alongside those forces in such operations, most notably the Wagner Group.<sup>41</sup>

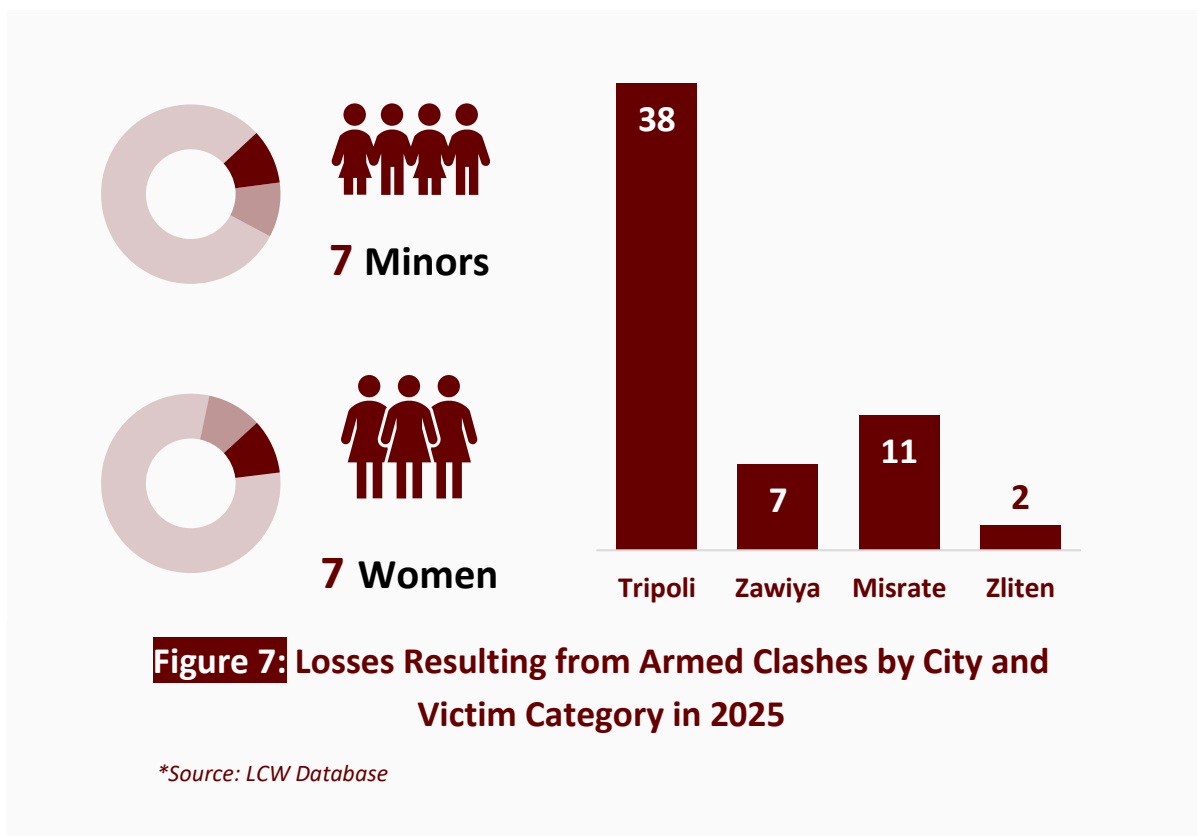
90. In the same context, LCW's field team documented injuries resulting from the explosion of an ammunition storage facility belonging to armed groups affiliated with the GNU, located within a residential area in Misrata,<sup>42</sup> reflecting a further risk posed by the storage or management of ammunition within civilian areas without adequate safety standards or effective oversight. Notwithstanding the subsequent evacuation and decommissioning of the facility, the findings of investigations have not been published, and responsibility has not been determined, whilst other ammunition storage facilities continue to operate in residential areas, indicating a risk of recurrence.
91. Victims reported sustaining injuries whilst passing through residential neighbourhoods or within their homes, whilst others reported being present at locations formerly used for military purposes, or in areas where no clear warnings had been left regarding landmine and ERW contamination. This leads to inadequate protective measures and insufficient efforts to protect civilian areas from the effects of explosive weapons. Children were among those most exposed to injury, with three children killed and two others sustaining injuries ranging from minor to severe.
92. The continued occurrence of these cases reflects the persistent weakness or absence of protective measures adopted by the western Libyan authorities, the continued presence of UXO amid residential areas and agricultural land, and the LAAF's continued refusal to hand over landmine maps to ensure area clearance. Analysis of documented cases further indicates that some incidents were linked to former sites or headquarters of armed groups that had been vacated or had changed hands, without clear safety procedures, increasing the risk of recurring casualties and leaving civilians exposed to an invisible and enduring threat.

## Armed Clashes

93. During 2025, LCW's field team documented the killing of twenty-five (25) civilians and the injury of thirty-three (33) others, including seven minors and seven women, as a result of indiscriminate fire and projectiles during armed clashes that took place within or in close proximity to residential areas in the cities of Tripoli, Zawiya, Misrata, and Zliten. The field team further documented damage to civilian objects, including healthcare facilities, prisons, government premises, and residential homes. Documentation files indicate that children were the most exposed category among the casualties.

<sup>41</sup> [Libya: Russian Wagner Group Planting Landmines Near Tripoli](#). Human Rights Watch. 31 May 2022.

<sup>42</sup> [Human Rights Violations in Libya during the Month of August 2025](#). Libya Crimes Watch. 5 September 2025.



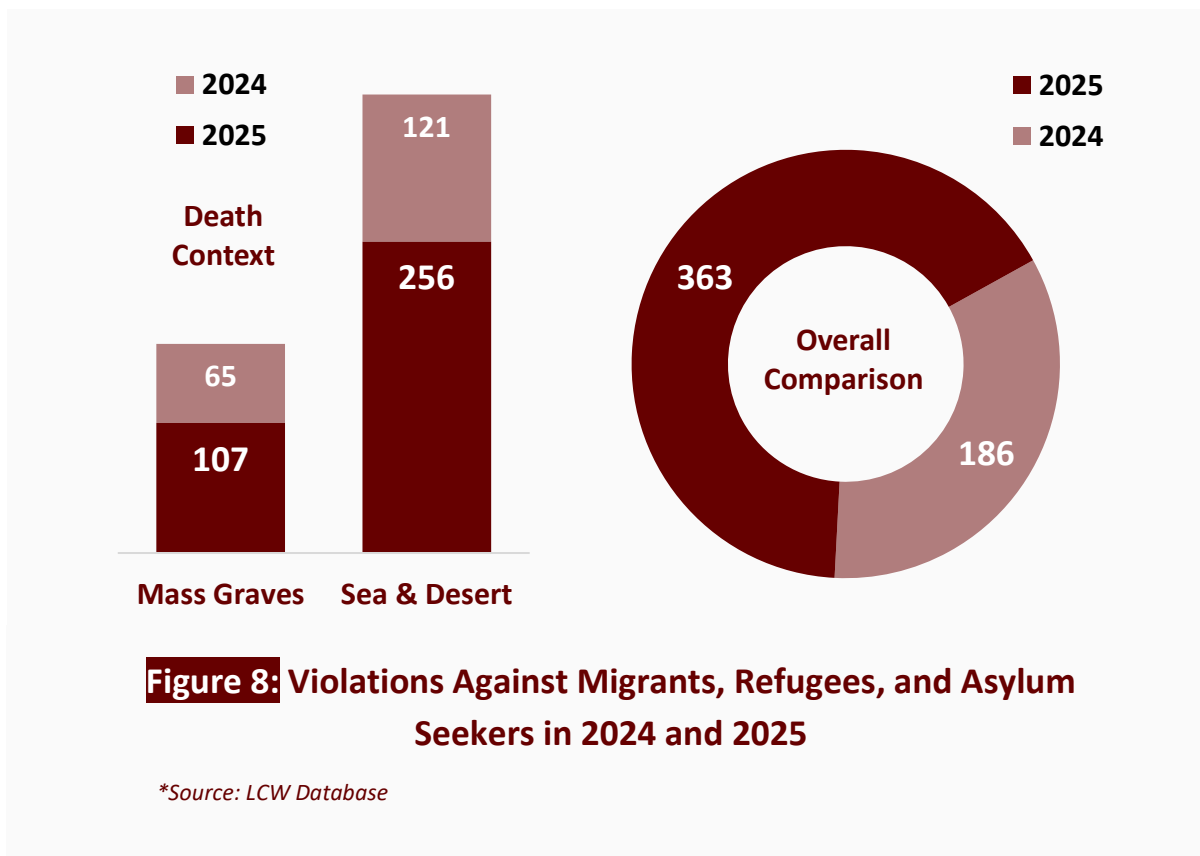
94. Documentation files pertaining to victims of armed clashes indicate the involvement of armed groups and security and military apparatuses affiliated with the Ministries of Defence and Interior under the GNU, among them the Public Security and Security Positions Apparatus (PSSPA) the 444th Brigade, the 24th Battalion, the 103rd Battalion ("al-Sal'a Battalion"), and the JOF, alongside apparatuses affiliated with the LPC, most notably the SSA and RADA. According to documentation files, these clashes were linked to disputes over political positions and state institutions, economic influence, and control within cities and over land and air entry points.
95. Documentation files indicate that casualties were linked both to the intensity of the confrontations and to the manner in which they were conducted within residential areas, including the use of heavy weapons in civilian areas and the absence of effective precautionary measures such as early warning, the designation of safe corridors, and the securing of areas where necessary. The absence or inadequacy of precautionary measures renders civilian casualties a recurring consequence whenever clashes erupt in residential areas in western Libya.
96. The documented cases reflect a failure to uphold the duty to respect and protect civilians and civilian objects, and to take the necessary precautions to shield them from the effects of military operations and minimise harm to the greatest extent possible. This failure is compounded when clashes occur in densely populated areas or near sensitive facilities, such as hospitals. LCW's field team documented a range of consequences arising from these

casualties, most notably permanent disabilities and acute psychological harm, the displacement of civilians from their homes, the temporary disruption of healthcare facilities and educational institutions, the loss of livelihoods, and environmental contamination resulting from the dispersal of ERW.

97. In the context of accountability for casualties resulting from military operations during 2025, and notwithstanding announcements by the Libyan Attorney General regarding the opening of investigations into certain cases of casualties resulting from military operations, in particular those linked to the clashes that followed the assassination of Abdel Ghani al-Kikli "(Gheniwa)", former head of the SSA affiliated with the LPC, witnesses reported encountering obstacles and failures in the response of law enforcement agencies and prosecution offices to such complaints. These included delays in investigations, the non-enforcement of arrest warrants, a lack of transparency regarding investigations and accountability efforts, and the non-disclosure of findings. The absence of accountability for the senior leadership of the armed groups and security apparatuses responsible for these casualties likewise persists. These factors reflect that the announced investigation and accountability efforts in respect of civilian casualties resulting from military operations remain purely formal in nature and ultimately fail to produce outcomes capable of curbing the recurrence of violations or addressing the prevailing culture of impunity.

## VIII. MIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

98. 2025 witnessed a deeply troubling escalation in grave violations and international crimes committed against migrants compared to the preceding year, 2024, particularly those perpetrated at sea and along smuggling and trafficking routes, as well as those committed within detention facilities. In the context of smuggling and trafficking, mass graves containing the remains of migrants were discovered, with LCW's field team recording the recovery of one hundred and seven (107) bodies therefrom. Two hundred and fifty-six (256) migrants died along smuggling routes across the desert and at sea as a result of the inhumane conditions of transportation. In the context of detention facilities, the field team documented twenty-eight (28) testimonies from migrants, among them four children. These figures point to systematic and widespread practices of grave violations to which migrants are subjected within prisons, detention centres, and human warehousing facilities, as well as along smuggling corridors in eastern, southern, and western Libya.



### Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons

99. Cases documented by LCW's field team demonstrate that smuggling and trafficking in persons in Libya are not confined to individual or isolated activities, but constitute a structured system with a clear chain of command and geographic reach, operating through interconnected and

organised networks extending across southern, eastern, and western Libya. These networks rely on an integrated chain of roles encompassing transportation, detention, exploitation, and ransom extortion, and operate within areas where they benefit from tribal, security, and military protection that enables their continuation and expansion.

100. Testimonies from witnesses and LCW's local monitoring networks indicate the involvement of armed groups and security apparatuses in this system, including individuals and groups affiliated with the LAAF in eastern and southern Libya, most notably the 20/20 Battalion of the TBZ, and the Ministries of Defence and Interior under the GNU western Libya, most notably the Border Guard and the 444th Brigade, whether through direct protection, the facilitation of passage, the administration of official and unofficial detention facilities, or the extraction of financial proceeds. It is noted that this involvement does not always take an overt or direct form but, in many cases, is conducted through intermediary networks.
101. These networks operate along established routes and exhibit consistent patterns of violations. Deaths at sea and in the desert, mass graves, and human warehousing facilities are not discrete phenomena, but rather direct consequences of a system predicated on the systematic exploitation of migrants, the absence of protection mechanisms, and a lack of accountability.

### ***Deaths at Sea and in the Desert***

102. During 2025, LCW's field team documented the deaths of two hundred and fifty-six (256) migrants at sea and in the desert. At sea, deaths occurred in cities that serve as principal smuggling and trafficking routes, including Zuwara, Tobruk, Sorman, al-Khums, Zawiya, Tripoli, Sabratha, and al-Bayda. Deaths recurred as a result of the use of unseaworthy vessels and severe overcrowding, rendering drowning a foreseeable outcome given the pursuit by smuggling and trafficking networks of transporting the maximum number of individuals at minimum cost for financial gain. In the desert, causes of death were linked to harsh transportation conditions, deprivation of water and food, exposure to extreme heat, and the complete absence of safety measures.
103. In the same context, the field team recorded the continued absence of any effective procedures for identifying recovered bodies, thereby denying victims' families the ability to determine the fate of their relatives. LCW's database, accumulated over previous years, further demonstrates that migration routes across Libya are well-established and recurrent in eastern, southern, and western Libya, and that the continuation of activity along these routes and the deaths occurring therein indicates the inadequacy of any effective measures to protect migrants, whether in rescue operations or in the dismantling of networks in a manner that would prevent their continued operation.

### ***Mass Graves Along Migration Routes***

104. During 2025, LCW's field team documented the discovery of six mass graves in eastern Libya, located near human warehousing facilities across the areas of Kufra, al-Wahat, and Ajdabiya. According to LCW's field team and local networks, one hundred and seven (107) bodies of migrants were recovered from these graves, among them women and children. Some bodies bore signs of gunshot wounds to the head, in addition to marks of torture and restraint, indicating that a proportion of the deaths resulted from deliberate killing rather than incidental circumstances alone.
105. At the same locations, five hundred and sixty-five (565) migrants were found detained for periods of up to two years, in deteriorating health conditions, among them women and infant children. Some were transferred to medical facilities, whilst others were taken to official detention centres where they likewise faced inhumane conditions of detention. This interconnection demonstrates that mass graves cannot be separated from the detention and trafficking system, but represent the final outcome of a chain of violations beginning with detention and exploitation and culminating in death and concealment.
106. LCW's database, accumulated over previous years, further reveals recurring instances of mass grave discoveries in geographically interconnected areas of eastern Libya and along established smuggling and trafficking routes. The nature of the cases indicates that deaths ranged from deliberate killing to death resulting from harsh conditions of detention, encompassing torture, ill-treatment, and the denial of medical care
107. Notwithstanding repeated announcements by the security and military authorities in eastern Libya, as well as the Libyan Attorney General, regarding the opening of investigations into these incidents, neither LCW's field team nor its local networks recorded any tangible outcomes at the level of accountability efforts. Proceedings were confined to the pursuit of individuals at lower command levels, without extending accountability to higher authorities or to the dismantling of implicated networks. Meanwhile, violations continue in the same areas and by the same methods, indicating that the announced measures have not produced meaningful change, prevented the recurrence of violations, or led to the dismantling of the existing trafficking system.

### ***Human Warehousing Facilities***

108. Human warehousing facilities constitute a principal stage in the smuggling and trafficking chain, used as collection and holding points during the movement of migrants between areas, and for detention for the purpose of financial extortion through ransom. Documentation files indicate that these facilities are situated along interconnected routes extending from south-eastern Libya, beginning in Kufra, passing through al-Wahat, and reaching Ajdabiya, a convergence point for smuggling operations between eastern and western Libya. This route is further linked to points in western Libya, particularly Sabratha, Zawiya, Zuwara, al-Khums,

Tripoli, and Bani Walid, as well as to other routes and corridors along the eastern Libyan coast, extending from Tobruk through al-Bayda to Benghazi

109. Within human warehousing facilities, LCW's field team documented twenty-seven (27) testimonies pointing to recurring practices of unlawful killing, torture, and ill-treatment against migrants, including women and children. These encompassed killing resulting from torture, the deliberate denial of medical care, severe beatings, deprivation of food and potable water, denial of medical care, extreme overcrowding, and detention in complete isolation from the outside world.
110. In one testimony concerning a facility in the city of Sabratha, a survivor reported witnessing the detention of migrants for months for the purpose of extracting ransom, with some compelled to perform forced labour and subjected to various forms of torture, including burning and stabbing. The survivor reported the killing of at least two detainees, whose bodies were subsequently transferred to unknown locations. Detainees were further compelled to contact their families whilst being subjected to torture, as a means of pressuring families into paying ransom. The survivor also noted the presence of armed individuals in military clothing and vehicles at the site, which may indicate the involvement of armed groups or individuals affiliated with security apparatuses in the administration or protection of the facility.
111. Notwithstanding multiple announcements by the security and military authorities in eastern and western Libya, as well as the Libyan Attorney General, regarding the opening of investigations, the conduct of raids, and the liberation of migrants, LCW's database indicates that many victims are transferred following their "liberation" to detention centres, placing them in conditions of renewed detention, hardship, and exploitation. The findings of investigations have not been publicly disclosed, and even in cases that resulted in the arrest of individuals implicated in violations, LCW's local networks confirmed that prosecution proceedings were confined largely to lower-ranking operatives, without extending to the senior leadership within smuggling and trafficking networks.
112. According to LCW's local networks, there are further indicators that some raids were preceded by leaks or tip-offs, enabling the transfer of detainees to alternative locations prior to the operations. Moreover, the prosecution of certain individuals operating human warehousing facilities appears to stem from internal disputes within the networks themselves, in which armed groups and security apparatuses are implicated, rather than from any genuine effort to dismantle or end smuggling networks.

## **Detention Facilities**

113. Detention centres and prisons constitute an environment of escalating grave violations to which migrants are subjected, where the risks extend beyond deprivation of liberty outside any legal framework to encompass inhumane conditions of detention that directly contribute

to death and severe and long-term suffering. LCW's field team documentation indicates that at least seven of the ten detention centres and prisons covered by the documentation, including both official and unofficial facilities, operate effectively outside any judicial or administrative oversight, and are in many cases administered as an integral part of the smuggling and trafficking system in which armed groups and security apparatuses affiliated with the authorities in eastern, southern, and western Libya are implicated.

114. In western Libya, the al-Assa and al-Nasr detention centres stand as examples of the nature of this system, in terms of the violations perpetrated therein and their functional role within the detention and exploitation chain. Migrants arrive at these facilities following targeting on the streets or through arrest campaigns that have continued for more than three years, encompassing raids on their homes, as well as arrest following interception at sea and following their sale between groups operating within smuggling and trafficking networks.

### ***Al-Assa Detention Centre***

115. LCW's field team documented repeated occurrences at al-Assa Detention Centre, located near the city of Zuwara and an official facility administered by the Border Guard under the GNU Ministry of Interior, of detention cases intersecting with the activities of trafficking networks. Testimonies from survivors documented by the field team confirmed that the centre is used as an initial point of arrival for migrants transferred across the border from Tunisia and Algeria into Libya in the context of collective expulsion incidents. Survivors further reported that other detainees were arrested following the interception of vessels carrying them by the coast guard in Zuwara, or following their handover by local residents. According to testimonies, migrants within the centre are subjected to enforced disappearance and held in complete isolation from any legal proceedings or judicial oversight.
116. LCW's field team further documented al-Assa's association with recurring practices of detention for the purpose of ransom extraction, with migrants, including women and children, subjected to torture and ill-treatment within the facility. Conditions of detention are characterised by severe overcrowding, inadequate ventilation, insufficient food and potable water, denial of medical care, the prevalence of infectious and chronic diseases, poor sanitation, detention in buildings unfit for use as detention facilities, and deprivation of basic necessities, including beds and blankets, compelling detainees to sleep on the floor for extended periods. In one case documented by the field team during the year, a woman suffered a miscarriage following deprivation of food and ill-treatment during detention. In another testimony, a Sudanese detainee witnessed the killing of four fellow detainees as a result of torture and the deliberate denial of medical care. Documentation files further indicate that migrants continue to suffer from chronic illnesses following their release, reflecting the long-term consequences of conditions of detention.

117. **In testimony provided by a migrant woman who was detained in al-Assa detention centre, she described the trafficking she was subjected to from Tunisia to Libya, and the ill-treatment and inhumane conditions of detention that led to the loss of her unborn child.**

**She stated:**



This is the second child I have lost. I lost the first in Tunisia, where I was living, before I was sold to the Libyans. They did not give me his body, and they did not even allow me to see him. I had left my country fleeing death, after members of my family were killed during the war. I then arrived in Tunisia, and later attempted to flee to Europe, but the Tunisian authorities stopped us and detained us, then transported us in buses. We did not know where we were heading until we arrived inside the Libyan border, where we saw armed men in military clothing. Someone who was with us told us they had negotiated a price for each of us and then handed us over to the Libyans. They placed us in a prison known as al-Assa, in the heart of the desert. We were deprived of food, and they attempted to extort my family into paying a ransom for my release, but they were not able to do so. I slept on a dirty floor in a place resembling a warehouse, with no food and no water, until I lost the child I was carrying. Only then did they allow me to leave, but I remain stranded in Libya and continue to suffer from the consequences of what I endured.

118. LCW's database, accumulated over previous years, indicates that al-Assa Detention Centre forms part of a cross-border network engaged in trafficking in persons, operating through established routes beginning with forced transfer or interception at sea, proceeding to detention and exploitation within Libya, including ransom extortion and the sale of detainees between members of the same networks. Indicators further point to the violations within this facility, including torture, ill-treatment, and extrajudicial killing, constituting part of a policy aimed at generating additional pressure on detainees to compel them to pay ransom in exchange for their release.

### ***Al-Nasr Detention Centre***

119. LCW's field team documented the continued association of al-Nasr Detention Centre ("Osama Prison"), located in the city of Zawiya, an unofficial facility administered by organised crime networks, with recurring practices of detention for the purpose of financial extortion through ransom. One survivor reported that migrants were arrested following the interception of vessels carrying them at sea by the coast guard in Zawiya, before being transferred to al-Nasr Detention Centre, where they were placed in enforced disappearance and held in complete isolation from any legal proceedings or judicial oversight.
120. Detainees were subjected to torture and multiple forms of ill-treatment to compel them to pay ransom, including severe beatings and sustained threats, alongside inhumane conditions

of detention characterised by severe overcrowding, denial of medical care, insufficient food and potable water, the prevalence of infectious skin diseases, and deprivation of any communication with the outside world. The survivor further reported that some detainees were offered the opportunity to work for the facility's administration in exchange for limited "privileges," through assignment to internal tasks such as guarding, monitoring other detainees, or conveying and intermediating in the collection of ransom demands, in exchange for less severe treatment and certain concessions.

121. The field team further documented those conditions of detention contributed to the deterioration of detainees' health even following their release, including permanent injuries and disabilities resulting from beatings, alongside long-term psychological consequences. LCW's database, accumulated over previous years, indicates that al-Nasr Detention Centre forms part of a smuggling and trafficking network, with detention used as an instrument of financial gain through ransom. The inhumane conditions of detention further constitute a deliberate policy aimed at compelling migrants to pay a ransom in exchange for their release.
122. In the context of accountability for violations against migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers during 2025, and notwithstanding repeated announcements by the Attorney General and the security and military authorities in eastern and western Libya regarding the opening of investigations into grave violations against migrants, LCW's field team received testimonies from victims and witnesses indicating that these proceedings did not result in genuine accountability. Witnesses reported that certain investigations focused solely on prosecuting lower-level smugglers, whilst senior officials and commanders continued to evade accountability. Other investigations failed to produce clear outcomes and encountered obstacles to their continuation, whilst the findings of certain investigations were not disclosed, leaving no guarantees of non-recurrence.
123. Victims and witnesses further reported to LCW's field team that they feared reporting violations due to the confiscation of their identity documents by armed groups and security apparatuses, and out of fear of prosecution and arrest on account of their irregular status. They also reported receiving direct threats in the event of reporting and expressed reluctance to submit complaints, given that the violations were perpetrated by individuals affiliated with powerful armed groups and security apparatuses.
124. In eastern and southern Libya, LCW's field team documented testimonies reporting the absence of any effective efforts to identify the bodies recovered from mass graves or to pursue those responsible for their killing. Witnesses further reported that liberation operations from human warehousing facilities announced by the authorities typically resulted in the transfer of migrants to other detention centres, where their ordeal recommenced, reflecting the inability of the authorities to hold the actual perpetrators to account.
125. In western Libya, notwithstanding the announced dissolution of the DCIM under the Ministry of Interior of the GNU and the suspension of the detention centres it administers, within

which grave violations against migrants occurred, this measure amounted to no more than a structural reorganisation of the agency into a directorate under the Ministry of Interior, rather than its genuine dissolution or the accountability and prosecution of those responsible for the violations committed under its auspices. The field team further documented testimonies indicating the continued operation of the detention centres it administers and the continued subjection of migrants to grave violations therein.

126. In eastern, southern, and western Libya alike, relatives of victims and members of LCW's local networks reported the absence of serious investigations into cases involving bodies recovered from the sea and the desert, and delays in the disclosure of their findings. They further reported that the absence of effective proceedings to investigate these incidents and pursue those implicated in the drowning of migrants reflects the incapacity or unwillingness of the authorities to protect those affected and hold those responsible for these recurring tragedies to account.

## IX. CONCLUSIONS

### *Legal Framework*

127. The majority of violations documented by the field team constitute grave violations of IHRL, including violations of the right to life, health, liberty, and personal security, assaults on the person and on human dignity through torture, degrading and cruel treatment, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and trafficking in persons, occurring in the context of violations of freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly and association, and freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, as well as the right to a fair trial. These violations contravene the International Bill of Human Rights,<sup>43</sup> and numerous conventions to which Libya is a state party, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>44</sup> (ICCPR) the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,<sup>45</sup> and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.<sup>46</sup> They further contravene the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination<sup>47</sup> and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.<sup>48</sup>
128. There are indicators that some of these violations rise to the level of crimes against humanity, including wilful killing, imprisonment or severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, torture, cruel treatment, enforced disappearance, trafficking in persons, and persecution. These violations further contravene Libyan national

<sup>43</sup> The Charter provides for the right to life (Article 3), the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 5), protection against arbitrary arrest and detention (Article 9), equality before the law and non-discrimination (Article 7), and the right to peaceful assembly and association (Article 20).

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), 1948. United Nations.

<sup>44</sup> The Covenant provides for the right to life (Article 6), the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 7), the right to liberty and security of person (Article 9), respect for the dignity of persons deprived of their liberty (Article 10), the right to a fair trial (Article 14), freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 18), freedom of opinion and expression (Article 19), the right to peaceful assembly (Article 21), and freedom of association (Article 22).

[International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#), 1966. United Nation

<sup>45</sup> The Convention provides that every individual shall be treated with humanity and dignity (Articles 1 and 16). [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#), 1984. United Nations.

<sup>46</sup> The Convention provides for the child's right to life and development (Article 6), protection from violence and abuse (Article 19), and the prohibition of torture, cruel treatment, and arbitrary detention (Article 37).

[Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), 1989. United Nations.

<sup>47</sup> The Convention obliges States to eliminate racial discrimination (Article 2) and to guarantee equality in the enjoyment of all rights, including the right to personal security and a fair trial (Article 5).

[International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), 1984. United Nations.

<sup>48</sup> The Charter provides for the protection of the right to life (Article 4), the prohibition of torture, slavery, and cruel treatment (Article 5), the right to liberty and security of person (Article 6), and the right to a fair trial (Article 7). [African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights](#), 1981. African Union

legislation, including the Libyan Constitutional Declaration of 2011 and its amendments,<sup>49</sup> Law No. 10/2013 on the criminalisation of torture and enforced disappearance,<sup>50</sup> and Law No. 6/2006 on the Libyan judicial system.<sup>51</sup>

129. Violations occurring in the context of military operations constitute grave breaches of Libya's obligations under the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, and of customary principles,<sup>52</sup> including violations of the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution. These occurred in the context of the direct targeting of civilians, failure to fulfil obligations to take necessary precautions, conduct advance planning, ensure safe passage for civilians, and minimise harm to them, as well as the laying of landmines and the failure to observe obligations to clear weapons from populated areas. Some of these violations rise to the level of war crimes, including the unlawful killing of civilians.

### ***State and Individual Responsibility***

130. LCW's database indicates that the Libyan state bears responsibility for grave human rights violations committed during 2025, encompassing extrajudicial killing, unlawful killing, enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary detention, civilian casualties resulting from military operations, and grave violations against migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, as well as vulnerable and marginalised gender, religious, and cultural groups. Legal analysis indicates that there are grounds to consider these violations grave in nature, as they constitute breaches of peremptory norms of international law, affect non-derogable rights, have had grave consequences for their victims and for society, and were committed in a context of severe disregard for human dignity.
131. The Libyan state bears responsibility for these violations as constituting grave breaches of its obligations under international law, having been committed by the authorities in eastern, southern, and western Libya, foremost among them the Government of National Unity (GNU),

<sup>49</sup> The Constitutional Declaration provides for the State's obligation to protect human rights (Article 7), and to guarantee a fair trial, respect for the rights of the accused, and equality before the law (Articles 1 and 31).

[Libyan Constitutional Declaration of 2011 and its Amendments](#). National Transitional Council. 7 August 2014.

<sup>50</sup> The Law provides for the prohibition and criminalisation of torture and enforced disappearance (Article 2).

[Law No. 10 of 2013 on the Criminalisation of Torture, Enforced Disappearance, and Discrimination. General National Congress](#). (AR) 14 April 2013.

<sup>51</sup> The Law provides for the independence of the judiciary and guarantees of a fair trial (Article 1), the protection of the rights of the accused during trial (Article 92), and other fair trial guarantees.

[Law No. 9 of 2006 on the Libyan Judicial System](#). 5 March 2006.

<sup>52</sup> Customary principles criminalise attacks on the right to life, and require the distinction between military objectives and civilians, respect for the principle of proportionality in the use of force, and the provision of special protection to vulnerable groups, such as women, children, and detainees.

[Customary International Humanitarian Law Database: Customary Rules](#). International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Website.

the Libyan Presidential Council (LPC), the Libyan House of Representatives (HoR) and the Government accredited by it, and the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF). State responsibility arises from the fact that these violations were committed directly by security apparatuses and armed groups affiliated with, delegated governmental authority by, or operating with the support of the authorities; from violations committed pursuant to the directions of the authorities and within areas under their control; from the assistance and support extended by the authorities to the entities that perpetrated them; and from the failure of the authorities to fulfil their duties of prevention, protection, investigation, accountability, and prosecution.

132. LCW found that certain of these violations were not isolated incidents but were accompanied by clear indicators that they were part of a pattern that has persisted for several years. They occurred as part of recurring practices targeting specific groups on the basis of their political opinions and expression, sexual orientation and gender identity, religious beliefs and faith, civil society engagement and human rights defence, or journalistic and media work. The methods of perpetration recurred across these patterns: the responsible parties were similar or closely related and, in all cases, affiliated with the same authorities; the violations spanned a multi-regional geographic scope; and they escalated in similar contexts, indicating their connection to systematic policies.
133. In the context of systematic nature, LCW found that certain violations were accompanied by sufficient indicators, in terms of their systematic nature and scale, to conclude that they may rise to the level of crimes against humanity, including wilful killing, imprisonment or severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, torture, enforced disappearance, persecution, and trafficking in persons.
134. Indicators of a systematic character were evidenced by the fact that these violations did not occur spontaneously or in isolation, but appeared in certain cases to be the product of an organisational policy or established practices adopted by security apparatuses and armed groups affiliated with, or operating under the authorisation or support of, the authorities in eastern and western Libya, in pursuit of specific objectives. This systematic character was further reflected in the recurrence of similar operational methods across patterns of targeting, raids, detention, interrogation, torture, enforced disappearance, transfer, and the use of official and unofficial detention facilities, as well as in the commission of certain violations by entities operating within a chain of command and security or military structures exercising effective control over the executing elements, and through the use of resources and capabilities of a sovereign or governmental nature.
135. Indicators of scale were further present in certain of these violations, manifested in the multiplicity of victims, the targeting of categories of the civilian population on political, religious, gender, sexual orientation, professional, or social grounds, the occurrence of violations across a trans-regional geographic scope encompassing eastern, southern, and western Libya, and their recurrence in a sustained and continuous manner over extended

periods, in some cases spanning at least five years. These elements, taken together, indicate that certain documented incidents were not confined to individual, isolated violations, but occurred in the context of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, including through the targeting of specific groups or categories, in a manner that may confer upon certain acts the character of persecution as a crime against humanity.

136. Through LCW's analysis of patterns of responsibility, indicators emerged of potential individual responsibility extending beyond direct perpetrators to civil, security, and military officials who, each according to their position, issued orders, exercised oversight, coordinated, provided support, or failed to prevent, intervene, or refer violations for investigation despite knowledge of those violations or the existence of reasonable grounds for such knowledge. Indicators relevant to the principle of command responsibility were also present in certain cases, where violations were committed by elements under the effective control of superiors or commanders who had the capacity to prevent, halt, or report them but failed to take the necessary measures.
137. These indicators encompass, in certain documented cases, officials and commanders whose names were associated with command or supervisory positions within security or military structures linked to the violations. The most prominent among these during 2025 were **Saddam Haftar**, in his capacity as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the LAAF, and **Khalifa Haftar**, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief, in addition to **Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh**, in his capacity as Prime Minister of the GNU, Minister of Defence, and Chief of General Staff, and the Under-Secretary of Defence in his government, **Abdulsalam al-Zoubi**, with regard to potential individual responsibility, and to the extent permitted by the documented cases and the analysis of effective control, chain of command, and command responsibility. It is affirmed that the definitive determination of individual criminal responsibility remains contingent upon independent investigations and judicial proceedings meeting the requisite legal guarantees.
138. Documented accountability efforts further reveal that the limited proceedings targeting certain direct perpetrators did not, in most cases, extend to commanders or officials in supervisory positions, notwithstanding indicators that command structures and chains of command played a role in the occurrence or continuation of these violations. This reflects a manifest accountability deficit: the prosecution's confinement to lower-level perpetrators, without pursuing those in positions of potential command responsibility, leaves intact the structures that enabled the violations, thereby perpetuating their continuation and recurrence even as the individuals executing them at lower levels change.
139. LCW further found that the recurrence of these violations was linked not only to the similarity of incidents or responsible parties, but also to recurring objectives, manifested in the suppression of civic and political space, the restriction of freedom of expression and media, the control of information and public narrative, the intimidation, deterrence, and exclusion of targeted groups from the public sphere, the protection of centres of power and the

entrenchment of political, economic, or social influence while preventing accountability, and the instrumentalisation of repression to serve private interests or resolve disputes over influence, resources, or property.

140. The violations documented by LCW during 2025 demonstrate that a significant portion of the recommendations set out in LCW's preceding Annual Report for 2024<sup>53</sup> did not receive an adequate response from the Libyan authorities, whether at the level of prevention, protection, investigation, or accountability. The same patterns of violations persisted, including unlawful killing, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and violations committed against activists, human rights defenders, journalists, migrants, and vulnerable religious groups, indicating the absence of effective measures to halt or reduce these violations and the continued failure to address their structural, legislative, and institutional root causes.
141. The incidents documented during the year further demonstrate the continued limited impact of national and international accountability efforts in altering or deterring the conduct of parties responsible for violations, including matters in respect of which LCW had previously called for action, such as the investigation of grave crimes, the protection of civic space, the cessation of targeting of migrants, the combating of trafficking in persons, the disclosure of the fate of the forcibly disappeared, demining, and the reform of legislation restricting rights and freedoms. This reinforces LCW's conclusion that the failure to implement previous recommendations, in particular those relating to effective accountability and guarantees of non-recurrence, contributed to the continuation and recurrence of violations throughout 2025.
142. On the basis of the foregoing, LCW concludes that a significant portion of the violations documented during 2025 cannot be understood as mere isolated incidents or situational responses, but rather as part of an ongoing repressive environment that has enabled the recurrence of grave violations and entrenched patterns of systematic targeting of specific civilian groups, against a backdrop of fragmented centres of power, weak legal and institutional guarantees, and the continued failure to prevent, protect, investigate, and ensure accountability.

<sup>53</sup> [Annual Report 2024 – Libya: Accountability Is the Solution, Violations Persist Amid Impunity](#). Libya Crimes Watch (LCW). 8 April 2025. p. 45.

## X. RECOMMENDATIONS

### Authorities in Eastern and Western Libya

#### *Libyan Attorney General*

- Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) calls upon the Attorney General to open independent and transparent investigations into all documented violations, including cases of extrajudicial killing, deaths resulting from torture in official and unofficial detention facilities, and arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance. Such investigations must be conducted in conformity with international fair trial standards as set out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan Attorney General to conduct transparent and independent investigations into all attacks targeting religious groups, including members of Sufi orders, and to take the necessary measures to prevent such violations and ensure the protection of these rights in accordance with Libya's international obligations.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan Attorney General to open comprehensive and independent investigations into cases of trafficking in persons, and to seek cooperation with the ICC to arrest those implicated in these systematic and widespread practices that may amount to crimes against humanity, including the torture of migrants, their subjection to forced labour and enslavement, and their sale through trafficking and smuggling networks administered by and operating in connection with individuals affiliated with the authorities in eastern and western Libya.
- LCW calls for the conduct of independent investigations to identify those responsible for the laying of anti-personnel landmines, including the placement of landmines in civilian areas, which constitutes a grave violation of international law and may amount to war crimes warranting national and international criminal accountability.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan Attorney General to disclose the findings of all open investigations relating to grave violations and to publish periodic and transparent information regarding the measures taken and their outcomes, including investigations into the enforced disappearance of HoR member and MP Siham Sergiwa and the disappearance of Ibrahim al-Deris, and to ensure the accountability of all those responsible for these crimes in accordance with Libyan national law and Libya's international obligations.

#### *The Military Prosecutor*

- LCW calls upon the Military Prosecutor to cease the trial of civilians before military courts, as this constitutes a violation of their right to a fair trial under the Geneva

Conventions and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and to ensure that all civilians are tried before competent civilian courts in accordance with international fair trial standards.

***The Government of National Unity, the Libyan Presidential Council, the Libyan House of Representatives, the Government Accredited by it, and the General Command of the Armed Forces***

***Arbitrary Detention and Enforced Disappearance***

- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to release all arbitrarily detained persons and to disclose the fate of missing and forcibly disappeared persons held in official and unofficial detention facilities under the control of the Libyan Armed Forces or the authority of the Government of National Unity, and the military, civilian, and judicial institutions affiliated with or loyal to them in eastern and southern Libya.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to immediately cease all practices of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, to ensure that no person is detained except pursuant to a lawful judicial order issued by a competent authority, to enable detainees to communicate immediately with their families and legal counsel, to subject all places of detention to effective judicial oversight and independent monitoring, and to hold accountable all those proven to be implicated in issuing, executing, or concealing unlawful detention orders or enforced disappearance, in accordance with Libyan national law and Libya's international obligations.

***Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and Peaceful Assembly***

- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to respect and protect the right to freedom of opinion, expression, and peaceful assembly, in accordance with Articles 19, 21, and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It further calls for the immediate suspension of arbitrary laws and legislation that criminalise civil society activity and other provisions used to restrict public freedoms and enable security bodies to arrest, torture, and persecute activists and civilians.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to cease campaigns targeting civil society activists and to guarantee freedom of association and the operation of independent organisations in accordance with Libya's international obligations. The right to peaceful expression of opinion, the right to protest, and the practice of journalism must be respected without fear of reprisal or prosecution.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of activists, human rights defenders, and journalists, to protect their right to carry out their work freely and safely, to cease all forms of assault, intimidation, or harassment directed against them, and to hold those responsible for such violations to account.

### ***Rescue and Protection of Migrants***

- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to take immediate and effective measures to protect migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from grave violations, including arbitrary detention, ill-treatment, torture, and trafficking in persons. It further calls for the cessation of cooperation with parties implicated in these crimes and for the accountability of all those responsible in accordance with Libyan national law and Libya's international obligations.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to close all unlawful detention facilities, to subject all places of migrant detention to regular and independent judicial oversight, and to ensure that competent international organisations are granted unrestricted access thereto, so as to guarantee the protection of detainees from torture, ill-treatment, and arbitrary detention, and to ensure respect for their fundamental rights in accordance with international standards.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to establish effective and permanent search and rescue mechanisms along migration routes, at sea, and at land borders, in cooperation with competent international and local organisations, so as to ensure the protection of lives and respect for human dignity. The authorities must cease any policies or practices that expose migrants to danger, forced return, or collective expulsion, in contravention of the principle of non-refoulement as established under international law.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to respect the dignity of deceased migrants and to ensure their burial in a humane manner consistent with international standards. Effective measures must be taken to identify victims, including through DNA analysis, and to ensure that embassies and the families of the deceased are notified of the location of burial, or that remains are repatriated to their countries of origin where possible, in accordance with applicable legal and humanitarian norms.

### ***Vulnerable and Marginalised Religious Groups***

- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to respect and protect the right of all religious groups and minorities to practise their beliefs and religious observances freely and safely, without fear of discrimination, violence, or persecution. Effective measures must be taken to prevent all forms of incitement, assault, arbitrary detention, torture, or killing targeting these groups, and to ensure independent investigations and the accountability of all those responsible for such violations, in accordance with Libya's obligations under IHRL.

### ***Demining and Protection from Explosive Weapons***

- LCW calls upon the General Command of the Libyan Armed Forces to immediately and fully disclose the maps of landmine locations laid during military operations in Tripoli, Sirte, al-Jufra, and the surrounding areas. The continued withholding of this information constitutes a violation of IHL and places the lives and safety of civilians at serious risk.
- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to intensify their demining and ERW clearance efforts, particularly in populated areas, and to ensure the provision of urgent medical care and psychosocial rehabilitation for survivors. It further underscores the necessity of implementing comprehensive and ongoing awareness programmes for civilians, particularly children, regarding the risks of landmines and ERW. LCW emphasises the imperative of preventing the exploitation of migrant workers or other vulnerable groups in demining or ERW clearance operations in areas that have not undergone a technical survey by competent authorities, as this constitutes a violation of safety standards and labour rights protections under international standards.

### ***Legislative Reform***

- LCW calls upon the Libyan legislative authorities to repeal or amend all laws and regulations that conflict with human rights or restrict fundamental freedoms, including the Law on Combating Cybercrimes, the Law on Combating Sorcery and Witchcraft, the Anti-Terrorism Law, the Press and Publications Law, and the Telecommunications Law. These legislative instruments must be brought into conformity with international human rights standards, particularly regarding freedom of opinion and expression, fair trial guarantees, and protection against arbitrary prosecution. The authorities must further refrain from using legislation as an instrument of repression or to restrict civil liberties and ensure that the national legal framework aligns with Libya's international obligations.

### ***International Mechanisms and Bodies***

#### ***The International Criminal Court (ICC)***

- LCW calls upon the ICC Prosecutor to continue investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Libya, and to intensify efforts to identify and prosecute those responsible, within the framework of the jurisdiction conferred upon the Court under the Rome Statute, so as to strengthen the fight against impunity.
- LCW calls upon the ICC Prosecutor to expand the scope of investigations and to issue additional arrest warrants against officials in respect of whom sufficient evidence exists of the commission, ordering, incitement, or contribution to crimes falling within the Court's jurisdiction in particular officials holding senior command and military

positions whose responsibility is established under the principle of command responsibility as enshrined in the Rome Statute, thereby ensuring that senior officials do not evade international criminal accountability.

- LCW calls upon the ICC to prioritise the investigation of crimes committed against migrants, given the continued and escalating grave violations to which they are subjected, the inability of the Libyan national judiciary to conduct independent and effective investigations, and the absence of a national legislative framework affording adequate protection to migrants and refugees.
- CW calls upon the ICC to take all available measures under the Rome Statute to ensure the enforcement of its arrest warrants, and to call upon the Libyan authorities and all states parties to cooperate fully with the Court, including by surrendering persons sought for international justice without delay.

### ***The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)***

- LCW urges the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to exert clear and consistent diplomatic pressure on all Libyan parties to respect human rights and fulfil their obligations under international law. It further urges UNSMIL to accord clear priority to strengthening transitional justice mechanisms and combating impunity, particularly within the human rights and national reconciliation track of the structured dialogue, and to ensure that this track is victim-centred and grounded in the principles of accountability and non-impunity.
- LCW calls upon UNSMIL to ensure the meaningful engagement of civil society, both inside and outside Libya, in all political processes under its auspices, so as to guarantee genuine and effective participation by human rights defenders and victims.

### ***Special Procedures***

- LCW urges the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council (HRC) to accord priority to the situation in Libya within their respective mandates in particular the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID), the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD), the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, and other relevant mandates.
- LCW calls upon the Special Rapporteurs to issue urgent communications and appeals to the Libyan authorities regarding documented violations, to request official country visits to Libya, to include the situation in Libya in periodic follow-up reports and joint

public statements issued by the Special Procedures, and to use their mandates to call upon the Libyan authorities to fulfil their international obligations, ensure the accountability of those responsible for violations, and take effective measures to protect victims and prevent the recurrence of crimes.

### ***The Human Rights Council (HRC)***

- LCW calls upon the HRC to establish a Special Rapporteur mandate on the human rights situation in Libya, encompassing regular and independent monitoring of violations, the submission of periodic reports to the Council and the General Assembly, and the follow-up of the implementation of recommendations issued by relevant international mechanisms. LCW affirms that establishing a dedicated mandate for Libya is a necessary step to address the monitoring gap left by the conclusion of the Fact-Finding Mission's mandate, strengthen accountability, and prevent the continuation of impunity.

### ***States with Influence in Libya***

#### ***Support and Protection of Activists and Civil Society***

- LCW calls upon the missions of states with influence in Libya to exert clear and consistent diplomatic pressure on all Libyan parties to ensure compliance with their obligations under IHL and IHRL, in particular with regard to the protection of activists, human rights defenders (HRDs), and civil society organisations, and the cessation of all forms of targeting or harassment directed against them.
- LCW calls upon influential states to strengthen sustained financial and technical support for independent human rights organisations in Libya, so as to enhance their capacity to document violations and advocate for accountability. The lack of funding constitutes one of the principal obstacles to civil society work, limiting its capacity to monitor violations and contributing to the shrinking of civic space and the entrenchment of impunity.
- LCW calls upon states engaged in Libyan affairs to condition any security, military, political, or technical cooperation with Libyan parties on their compliance with human rights obligations, and to establish clear and measurable benchmarks relating to the protection of civilians, the guarantee of accountability, and the cessation of grave violations. Any support proven to be used in the commission or facilitation of violations, or contributing to the entrenchment of impunity, must be suspended or reviewed.

***Ending Support for Forced Return Policies and Violations Against Migrants***


- LCW urges European Union (EU) member states to cease financial and technical support provided to the Libyan Ministry of Interior and the Libyan Coast Guard under bilateral agreements, given their direct role in the forced return of migrants to detention facilities within Libya, here they are subjected to grave violations including torture, killing, exploitation, sexual violence, and forced labour, in contravention of the principle of non-refoulement and applicable international obligations.
- LCW further calls upon the EU and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) to review and bring to an end any cooperation that enables the Libyan Coast Guard to intercept and forcibly return migrants to Libya, or to obstruct search and rescue operations at sea, in a manner incompatible with international obligations relating to the protection of the right to life, the rights of migrants, and the duty of rescue at sea.



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