



Libya International Peace Forum: Supporting the Role of Municipalities, Civil Society & Citizens in Peacebuilding at the Local Level

Dates: 6 – 7 September 2017 Tunis, Tunisia

The **Libya International Peace Forum: Supporting the Role of Municipalities, Civil Society & Citizens in Peacebuilding at the Local Level** is a joint effort of local, national and international organisations and municipalities involved in local level mediation, peacebuilding and peace support efforts in Libya. At the initiative of the Libya Local Governance and Stabilisation Project (funded by the EU and Dutch government, implemented by VNG International in partnership with Centre for Innovation Local Governance (CILG)), this Forum aims to facilitate exchange between local, regional and community-based peace initiatives in Libya joined by international partners around their respective approaches, mechanisms and experiences until date. By doing so, this Forum will highlight successes and achievements, make visible the **extraordinary work being done by local peace initiatives** across the country *today*, and enable practical discussion to identify key challenges as well as what can be done to further support and empower Libyan communities, municipalities, civil society, youth, women, and other key stakeholders working for peacebuilding in *future* time.

The **Libya International Peace Forum** is dedicated to making visible the importance of local and sub-national peace initiatives as indispensable steps towards unified stabilisation, particularly in the case of Libya. A multitude of initiatives are ongoing, it is for the first this unique two day event will provide a space for these Libyan peace activists and initiatives, including citizen-based efforts, municipal authorities and local, national and international partners to **discuss and develop concrete ongoing and future strategies and measures to support community-based peacebuilding, sub-national mediation and peace processes, reconciliation, cease-fires and peace consolidation**. That way, the effectiveness of these efforts, the ownership of this process by the people of Libya as well as the international support for their work shall be reinforced.

The Libya Local Governance and Stabilisation Project, implemented by VNG International and CILG-VNG International and supported by PATRIR, has supported 5 peace and mediation initiatives at local and regional level in Libya since 2015. Central in the implementation of this project is the conviction that local governments, in close cooperation with civil society, play an indispensable role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The initiative for this Forum is born from the belief that these different experiences together with the multitude of experiences stemming from other initiatives can reinforce one another in contributing to national-level stabilisation, if given the opportunity to communally reflect on that.

Why the **Libya International Peace Forum**

Thus, the **Forum** is principally about providing a space for stakeholders involved in community-level and municipal peacebuilding efforts in Libya to come together, learn from each other's experiences, make visible their efforts, and see how to strengthen and support this work going forward. Five key themes will be addressed:

1. Strengthening Local & Sub-National Mediation, Dialogue and Peace Efforts
2. Learning from Failures & Successes: What's working and what isn't working
3. Strengthening Networking & Cooperation: Libyan Peace Actors & Supporters

4. Supporting Key Stakeholders: Libyan Municipalities, Civil Society, Women, Youth and Business
5. The role of international partners & donors: enabling healthy support to Libyan-led peacebuilding

The **Forum** will consist of **plenary sessions** and parallel **workshop sessions**. Organizations active and involved in peacebuilding, mediation, violence prevention, reconciliation, training and capacity building and other peace support efforts in Libya will contribute to the key sessions to be held during the Forum.

Participants

Participants to the Forum will include:

- Libyan Municipalities and key municipal advisors and professionals involved in city, local and regional level peacebuilding, mediation, cease-fire and peace support efforts;
- Local & National Civil Society Organizations working in peacebuilding, mediation, reconciliation and peace support efforts in Libya;
- Libyan women, youth, professionals, religious leaders and other key stakeholders involved in supporting and strengthening communities for peace in Libya;
- International NGOs, UN, Donors and partners involved in supporting Libyan-led peace efforts and initiatives.

Proposing a Session

More than 12 workshops and plenary sessions will be organized throughout the 2-day **Libya International Peace Forum** addressing topics such as:

- Sharing examples of peacebuilding and mediation efforts in Libya
- The role of municipalities, local leadership and local stakeholders: sub-national peace processes
- Supporting the role of women and youth in peacebuilding efforts in communities and nationally
- Engaging with militias and armed actors in peacebuilding and peace consolidation in Libya
- The role of donors in supporting peacebuilding efforts in Libya: Lessons Learned, Bad Practices, What needs to be improved

Principles of the **Libya International Peace Forum**

The **Libya International Peace Forum** is committed to the recognition that local stakeholders such as municipalities, civil society organisations, professionals, women, youth and local businesses in Libya play a key role in peacebuilding in the country. While national level peace initiatives are essential, there is extensive evidence from both within Libya and internationally of the importance of building peace within and between communities, including the powerful impact of local level peace charters, cease-fires, and strengthening the constructive engagement, empowerment and mobilisation of key social leaders, women and youth in peacebuilding. The **Forum** is intended as a space and practical platform to enable dialogue, experience sharing and exchange to support, strengthen and empower local and sub-national peacebuilding, mediation and peace processes in Libya.

Next Steps: Preparing the **Libya International Peace Forum**

A website for the Forum has been created (www.libyainternationalpeaceforum.org), it will be continuously updated throughout the coming weeks and you can find a form to sign up for the conference. Direct invitations sent out to local, national and international organizations, municipalities and individuals engaged in peacebuilding and peace support efforts from and in Libya.