

# Palermo Conference for Libya starts with second-level attendances



The Italian international conference for Libya in Palermo has kick-started with two meetings for the UNSMIL and Libyan parties discussing economic and security reforms in a row.

The Palermo Conference has been shunned by all international leaderships, who preferred instead to send ministerial delegations to Italy, including Russia, France, US, and Germany.

France's Foreign Minister's office reported that the Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian will be heading its delegation.

Libyan stakeholders all registered their presence with delegations sent by

the Presidential Council, High Council of State and House of Representatives.

However, the commander of the self-styled army in eastern Libya, Khalifa Haftar, changed his mind three times regarding his attendance, thus arriving at last late on Monday to the Palermo Conference and meeting with the Italian Prime Minister, but refusing to take part in the dinner event.

On the Arab level, the Tunisian and Egyptian presidents arrived to the conference, in addition to delegations from Qatar, Morocco, Algeria, and Sudan.

Neighboring countries Niger and Chad also sent delegations to the conference.

Meanwhile, the European Union announced that Federica Mogherini will be the head of the delegation to be present at the conference.

Prior to the start of the conference on Monday, the Head of the UNSMIL, Ghassan Salame, told Reuters that he will be discussing June 2019 as a date for the elections in Libya, after Paris-Brokered December 10 has been left out.

He added that he hoped Libyans would agree on a form for the constitution referendum in the National Conference in Libya in early 2019 and then carry out a vote for the constitution between late March and late June.