

9 December 2013 Last updated at 23:51 GMT

# UN inspectors to assess Libya's uranium stockpiles



The UN envoy to Libya, Tarek Mitri (above) said 6,400 barrels of yellowcake were under the control of an army battalion at Sabha

## Post-Gaddafi

- [Guide to the militias](#)
- [Land of the gun](#)
- [Might of militias](#)
- [Q&A: Lawless Libya](#)

The United Nations says nuclear inspectors will visit Libya to assess its uranium stockpiles, amid concerns about fragile security in the country.

The UN envoy to Libya, Tarek Mitri, told the Security Council that the IAEA team would arrive later this month.

He said 6,400 barrels of concentrated uranium, or yellowcake, were stored at a former military base in southern Libya, guarded by an army battalion.

Yellowcake is used in the production of nuclear fuel and weapons.

Mr Mitri, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to Libya, said an inspection team from the International Atomic Energy Agency would "visit this month to verify existing stockpiles and conditions of storage" at the former military facility near Sabha, in southern Libya.

"They are under the control of an army battalion," he said.

The IAEA visited the Sabha site in 2011, shortly after the end of Libya's civil war.

Chemical weapons

The Vienna-based agency recommended implementing tighter safeguards on the storage of the processed uranium ore - which is used in the preparation of nuclear fuel and weapons - once the security situation in Libya stabilised.

The increased safeguards typically include regular visits by inspectors and seals on nuclear storage and production facilities.

Mr Mitri was addressing the UN Security Council as concerns grow about the Libyan government's failure to rein in militia groups which have gained in influence and control in key cities since the removal of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.



Yellowcake, or concentrated uranium oxide, is used to produce nuclear fuel

Mr Mitri said that "despite steps by the government to quickly deploy army units in Tripoli to prevent a security vacuum, the weak capacity of state military and policy institutions remains a serious problem".

He also said there had been protests in Benghazi over the "unprecedented levels of insecurity over the past few weeks" including an assassination attempt in November against the city's military commander and heavy fighting involving the Islamic group Ansar al-Sharia.

Only last week an American teacher was shot dead while jogging in Benghazi. The US ambassador was killed there last year.

An inspection team from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is also expected to visit later this month, Mr Mitri said.

He said it would verify the elimination of relevant material following the destruction of almost nine metric tonnes of mustard gas earlier this year.