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Libya  
EAST AFRICA

I highly appreciate your efforts towards reinforcing the everlasting ties between the peoples of the Jamahiriya and Ethiopia, and the backing you pledged for the Ethiopian revolution ever since its eruption.

As an expression of the love and appreciation of the Ethiopian revolutionaries and masses for you, the government and people of Ethiopia have decided to decorate you with Africa's highest order.

I have great pleasure, in the name of the Ethiopian Government and people, to decorate you with this great order. Long live the Libyan and Ethiopian revolutions! Long live the revolutionary peoples of Ethiopia and Libya."

Colonel Mu'ammr al-Qadhafi, in turn, addressed President Mengistu saying: "Dear brother, President Mengistu, dear Ethiopian revolutionary friends:

I am very honoured to be decorated with this order. I feel that it is not only an honour for me personally, but also for the Libyan delegation and consequently an honour for the whole people of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. I am certainly honoured to be decorated by your person, yet I also feel that I am decorated by all the Ethiopian friends and brothers.

This decoration, dear friends and brothers, entrusts in me an everlasting obligation towards both our peoples and revolutions, that of allegiance to both our peoples and revolutions. I will keep it with me all the time. I will never forget it, nor will the people of the Jamahiriya.

I know it is not feasible to decorate all your Libyan brothers, but through me [it is] as if you did. It is no doubt an evidence of Ethiopia's appreciation toward their Libyan brothers and a proof of the alliance between both great revolutions, the Ethiopian and al-Fatah. I promise to be a soldier in defence of both revolutions and both peoples till the end. Allow me to thank you, dear president and dear Ethiopian revolutionaries, and through you I thank the whole great Ethiopian people."

(Mu'ammr Al-Qadhafi) News Conference

— BF (Libya)

LD220902 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0700 GMT 22 Aug 81

[Text] Addis Ababa, 22 Aug (JANA)--Yesterday evening the brother commander made a statement to the press in the Ethiopian capital about the U.S. attack on the Jamahiriya. He said that the whole world has heard the news that orders were issued to the U.S. 6th Fleet to carry out provocative maneuvers within Libyan territorial waters and airspace in the Gulf of Sidra. This news was carried by the American press, particularly NEWSWEEK. Thus, he added, from an official and legal point of view, the United States has used its 6th Fleet in a military operation with a view to invading Libya.

The brother commander said that "This time, the 6th Fleet has openly and officially carried out a campaign of invasion against the Jamahiriya." This, he added, has actually happened.

With regard to the Libyan aircraft, Al-Qadhafi said, they had no orders to attack the U.S. 6th Fleet. The two aircraft were on routine patrol duty guarding Libyan territorial waters and airspace and it was their duty to chase any object violating these waters and this airspace.

The brother commander pointed out that the two aircraft were of a type suitable for attacking sea targets and not air targets, and that they were equipped with missiles or machineguns.

"While the two Libyan aircraft were carrying out their reconnaissance duty," he added, "they were surprised to see a U.S. F-14 fighter aircraft enter Libyan Arab airspace. They rushed to warn it, but it persisted in violating Libyan airspace.

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In this case, like all aircraft guarding Libyan borders and airspace whose duties include pursuing anyone violating the borders--this is the duty of all land, sea and air patrols--the two Libyan aircraft chased and shot down the U.S. aircraft because it continued to violate Libyan airspace. The aircraft was manned by two U.S. airmen. [quotation marks as received]

The two Libyan aircraft then saw eight U.S. aircraft take off from the U.S. aircraft carrier and attack them. This formation of U.S. aircraft shot down the two Libyan aircraft as they were carrying out their legitimate mission: to defend Libyan territorial waters and airspace. Thus, one U.S. F-14 aircraft and two Libyan Sukhoi aircraft were downed in Libyan territorial waters.

In his Addis Ababa press statement the brother commander affirmed that the U.S. aircraft, having fallen close to the Libyan coastline, provided the best proof that it had violated the Jamahiriyah's territorial airspace. The aircraft's debris was removed to Misrata port and was shown on television.

The brother commander pointed out that nothing is yet known about the fate of the two American airmen of the downed aircraft. He told the press that the Libyan Arab Airforce had monitored message exchanges among the U.S. teams searching for the two airmen. The last such signal asked the salvage units to return immediately from the area.

The brother commander told the press that the Jamahiriyah is prepared to offer all technical assistance in the search for the two U.S. airmen whose plane was shot down off the Libyan Arab shores.

As a result of what has happened, he said, the U.S. maneuvers were cancelled and the 6th Fleet has withdrawn from the Libyan territorial waters. I hope, he added, that the United States has learned a lesson.

The brother commander said I believe that this battle at such a place has affirmed that the Gulf of Sidra is an indivisible part of Libyan territory. It should also be stated, he said, that the Libyan Arab air and sea forces will continue operating in the Gulf of Sidra, which will always be an indivisible part of the Libyan territory, even if it means the death of the last Libyan man and woman.

The brother commander affirmed that the Libyan Arab people are fully prepared, and will remain so forever, to defend the Gulf of Sidra, even if it means a bilateral war between us and the United States, or even a third world war.

The brother commander pointed out that the whole world is now convinced that the United States is playing with fire and that it poses a serious threat to world peace. We consider the United States to have actually threatened international peace in the crucial Mediterranean region, he added.

He declared that the world-wide support that poured into Libya from governments, peoples and organizations affirms world denunciation of the United States. He added that a catastrophe could occur if the United States were again to play with fire in this area.

The brother commander pointed out that the U.S. aggression has not prompted him to change his travel plans, because he is confident of the Libyan Arab people's preparedness to fight, as was manifested by yesterday's tumultuous demonstrations. He said the people possess all the necessary authority, wealth and arms and they are all Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi's. They are happy with this world support and it is their right to defend themselves, he said.

The brother commander said that the map of Libya was drawn by our forefathers from the times of the Phoenicians and it is not up to the United States to define the map of this country or of the world.

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Our confrontation of this U.S. aggression was in defense of all the world's peoples and peace and was a stand against the forces of oppression, he said, adding: We accept fighting the United States one-to-one, but should NATO, which held a meeting immediately after this aggression, become involved, then Libya too has its allies and friends in the world.

The brother commander reminded the newsmen that the Gulf of Sidra was declared part of Libyan territory in 1973. Why is it that the United States has come to object to this in 1980? We know and realize, he said, that the American blustering will not end except with a breakout of a new Vietnam, "so let it be now."

Mengistu 22 Aug Rally Speech

EA221934 Addis Ababa Domestic Service in Amharic 1255 GMT 22 Aug 81

[Excerpts of speech by Ethiopian leader Mengistu at a mass rally held in Addis Ababa to denounce U.S. imperialism--live]

[Excerpts] Imperialism will never stop working against the peace and progress of the oppressed people of the world. The recent provocation and aggression of the United States against the people of Libya is a living example of the vicious intentions of imperialism against the peoples of the world struggling for independence, economic progress and peace.

Why should the U.S. Government come all the way from the United States and intimidate the Libyan people on their own doorstep? The answer to this question is contained in the history of the people of Libya. The people of Libya pride themselves on a long-standing history of struggle against colonialism and exploiters.

We are honored to have with us brother Col Mu'ammur al-Qadhafi the leader of the Great al-Fatah Revolution, who, through his able and revolutionary leadership liberated Libya from the bondage of feudalism which oppressed the masses of Libya in collusion with U.S. imperialism.

Over the last 12 years, Libya has made great strides in its economic and social development endeavors, mainly due to the able and revolutionary leadership of my brother, Col Mu'ammur al-Qadhafi.

The country has shown remarkable progress since the people of Libya took over their means of production. The people and leadership of Libya won the acclamation and respect of the peace-loving and progressive peoples of the world not only because they have succeeded in transforming Libya from a state of poverty to one of development and prosperity, but also because the people and the leadership have fully recognized their respective responsibilities and have aptly adopted practical policies.

Their unequivocal support for all those struggling against imperialism and their readiness to identify their struggles with those of the peoples of the world struggling for independence stand as shining examples of their practical and progressive policies. The contributions of the people and leadership of Libya in the struggles of the peoples of Africa and the Arab world against colonialism, imperialism and Zionism are highly regarded by all peace-loving and progressive peoples of the world.

We attach great esteem to the contributions of brother Col Mu'ammur al-Qadhafi, the leader of the Great al-Fatah Revolution to the progressive struggles of the people of Libya. Thus, the people of Libya could not go along with imperialism because through the country's pragmatic and progressive leadership, the peoples' long history of struggle against colonialism, exploitation and imperialism and their contribution to the struggles of the oppressed masses of the world for freedom, justice and progress, they have antagonized those proponents of exploitation and oppression. Consequently, imperialists bear deep ill will toward the Libyan leadership.

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There are a number of reasons behind the increasing antagonism of imperialism toward Libya. Libya is rich in natural resources, in particular, massive oil reserves. It is strategically situated in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea facing Europe, Africa and the Middle East. In addition, it is blessed with progressive leadership with a strong anti-imperialist stance.

Therefore, the aggression of imperialists who thrive on exploitation against the people of Libya should not surprise us. In fact, the people of Libya have won the unwavering support of the peace-loving and progressive peoples of the world to the extent that imperialist aggression mounts against them. The people of Libya should be proud of their progressive contributions to the contemporary history of the world.

The broad masses of Ethiopia through the great radical revolution of 1974 managed to throw off from their shoulders the yoke of exploitation and oppression that had weighed down on them both from within and abroad and scored a glorious victory against both feudalism and American neocolonialism.

However, as victory over them would mean the end of their exploitation, the imperialist unleashed war against us, coordinating the internal antirevolutionary and antiunity forces and the external forces of reaction.

Although we managed to win a glorious victory as the result of the sacrifice of the beloved children of the Ethiopian broad masses, the price we were forced to pay in terms of human lives and material was extremely high. This is the reason why only recently we embarked upon the task of economic and social reconstruction which is the basic objective of our revolution.

Even at present, we are still not in a position whereby we dare say that imperialists and their followers no longer present a threat to us. With the sacrifices made by our revolutionary army our people have been able to gain breathing space and concentrate on tasks of national development, but our enemies have never refrained from antagonizing us in every possible way.

However, the growing strength and expansion of socialism, the guarantor of the equality of mankind, has made it impossible for imperialism to continue with its unquestioned expansion and exploitation which it previously enjoyed. It has been forced to refrain from extending its tentacles of exploitation to all places where the flag of people's freedom is flying high--prevented only by the extensive sacrifice it would be forced to make.

American imperialism, however, which has been unwilling to learn from history and which, from World War II onward has appointed itself spokesman of the imperialist circle, has not refrained from attempting to hinder the people's progressive movement. Although it has been forced to experience defeat everywhere, its behavior has not allowed it to fully accept history's verdict. In addition, American imperialism has been exploiting the wealth of the developing countries through its neocolonialist policies, and when this policy fails to serve its purpose, American imperialism, through its kidnapping, espionage and murder organization, the CIA, in an attempt to stifle peoples liberation struggles and to destabilize progressive governments in developing countries, has caused several reactionary wars which claimed several million lives.

The peoples of Vietnam, Korea, Laos, Kampuchea, Chile, El Salvador, and other peoples of African, Asian and Latin American countries are among the victims.

In addition, U.S. imperialism, in total disregard of the rights of peoples, now has over 2,500 [as heard] military bases in over 100 countries. Through assuming leadership and supremacy over NATO, SEATO, CENTO and so forth, U.S. imperialism is threatening world peace.