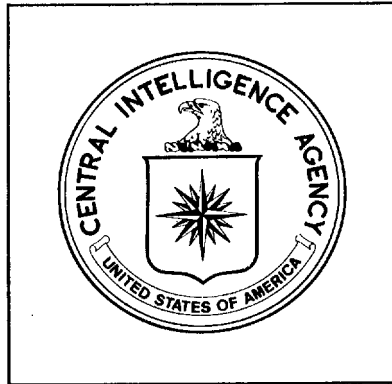


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Middle East - Africa - South Asia

STAFF NOTES

State Department review completed

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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Algeria-Morocco

Harassment of Moroccan Nationals

Algiers is venting its anger over Morocco's move into Spanish Sahara by harassing Moroccan nationals living in Algeria. Some 200 Moroccans living in the western Algerian city of Oran have been arrested and more than 300 other Moroccans have been deported. Rabat will almost certainly soon retaliate in like manner.

The official Algerian media assert that those being expelled are illegal residents. [redacted] however, the Algerians are in fact confiscating permits from Moroccan workers and then expelling them.

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The Algerians are clearly frustrated by the growing Moroccan presence in northern Spanish Sahara. A press report from Rabat indicates the deportations began on December 11, the same day Moroccan troops were officially welcomed in the Saharan capital of El Aaiun.

Algeria's harassment tactics have alarmed the estimated 350,000 Moroccans living in Algeria. Algiers may continue these tactics on a selective basis, but probably will not attempt to expel the entire Moroccan community. [redacted]

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Ivory Coast - South Africa

South Africans Visit Abidjan

Ivorian spokesmen have acknowledged in recent discussions with US officials that recent press reports of a South African delegation visiting Abidjan in late November were indeed true, and that landing rights for South African Airways in Ivory Coast were among the subjects discussed. The press reports also speculated that the South Africans raised the matter of opening a consulate in Abidjan.

The visit falls within the context of President Houphouet-Boigny's determination to encourage a dialogue with Pretoria and the exchange of visitors. Last month, for instance, the Ivorian information minister paid a much-publicized visit to South Africa.

When queried about the possibility of a South African consulate in Abidjan, one Ivorian foreign ministry official said he thought the establishment of relations with South Africa was a "certainty" and would come "very soon." The US embassy believes, however, that the Ivorians are likely to proceed cautiously in moving toward closer ties with Pretoria because of the adverse publicity being given to South Africa's role in Angola and the mounting criticism of South Africa by members of the Organization of African Unity.

In discussing landing rights, one Ivorian official would go no further than to say that the matter was "being worked out" for South African Airways. This contrasts sharply with remarks to the press by a member of the South African delegation on returning to Pretoria, who said that all obstacles to regular use of Abidjan "had been removed." One Western diplomat in Abidjan also reports that an actual agreement had been negotiated. With the OAU's continent-wide trade union affiliate calling once again on all African countries to ban flights of foreign aircraft to and from South Africa, it would be surprising if Ivory Coast had chosen this time to grant landing right to South African plans. [REDACTED]

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