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**Director of
Central
Intelligence**

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Libyan Capabilities and Activities in Sub-Saharan and Northwest Africa

Special National Intelligence Estimate

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LIBYAN CAPABILITIES AND ACTIVITIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AND NORTHWEST AFRICA

Information as of 22 December 1981 was
used in the preparation of this Estimate.

Note: This Estimate is focused on Sub-Saharan Africa. A discussion of Libyan involvement in the Western Sahara dispute has been included, but treatment of relations with the Arab states of North Africa—notably Egypt, Algeria, and Tunisia—has been omitted because these topics would require delving into aspects of Arab politics and of the Arab-Israeli dispute which are outside the scope of this paper.

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THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Treasury.

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

The Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps

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25X1

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Top Secret 25X1
25X1

KEY JUDGMENTS

Libyan meddling in Africa is motivated by Qadhafi's attempt to accelerate what he sees as the inevitable unification of the international community of Islam, as well as by territorial, strategic, and economic goals. Libyan furtherance of these goals has taken numerous forms—economic and political support; aid to indigenous subversive groups; provision of terrorist and guerrilla warfare training; sponsorship of coups and assassination attempts; and outright military intervention.

Libyan and Soviet short-term goals have often been complementary. Libya's transfer of funds and Soviet-supplied military equipment to other countries and insurgent groups serves Soviet interests in promoting regional instability. Moreover, Libya's role as a major, direct supporter of international terrorism fosters leftist, anti-Western elements while allowing the USSR to remain one step removed from overt involvement in such operations. Moscow views some Libyan activity as counterproductive and adventurous, but the advantages of the overall relationship outweigh any concerns that the Soviets might otherwise feel.

Neither Qadhafi's political ideas nor his Pan-Islamic goals have struck a responsive chord with governments in black Africa; they do, however, hold some appeal for Muslim and dissident political groups. Chronic economic difficulties, coupled with traditional religious, ethnic, and regional rivalries and the corruptibility of many African government officials, however, make the region highly susceptible to Libyan meddling.

The threat from Libya is primarily subversive, rather than conventionally military. Although Qadhafi's acquisition of a huge inventory of arms and equipment has substantially enhanced Libya's military combat capability, Tripoli cannot hope to succeed in a major offensive against such countries as Algeria or Egypt, or to defeat US forces operating in the region. But his funneling of arms into existing trouble spots impedes the finding of moderate solutions to the continent's problems.

Libya's high-priority objectives in Sub-Saharan Africa will remain the domination of Chad, the unseating of Sudanese President Nimeiri, the ouster of Siad Barre of Somalia, and the toppling of Kountche of Ni-

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ger. While meddling in those countries, Libya will pose as the defender of Africa and the Middle East against US imperialism, thus undercutting possible criticism from the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Despite the recent Libyan withdrawal from Chad, Qadhafi has reason to expect that the OAU peacekeeping effort may collapse, returning Chad to a state of civil war. In that event, he probably hopes that his protege Acyl Ahmat will emerge on top and call for renewed Libyan aid or that Goukouni will again request his assistance. Such a scenario could find Libya in a stronger position in Chad than before the withdrawal.

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