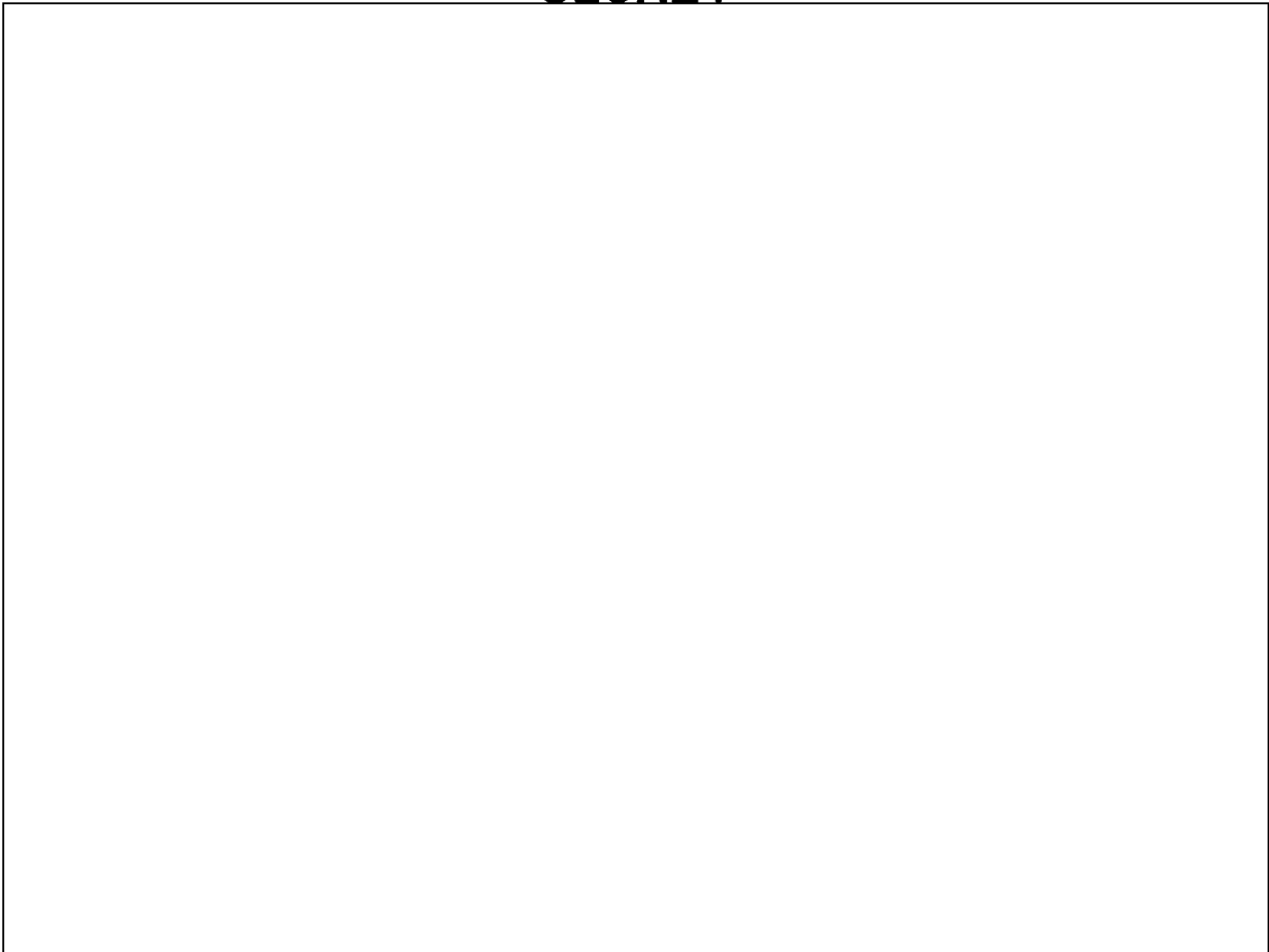


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MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA BRIEF OCPAS MEA 85-011 FOR 14 JANUARY 1985.

FROM: DD1/O/CPAS.

CONTENTS

1. LIBYA-ITALY: LIBYAN DIPLOMAT KILLED



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POLITICAL OPPONENTS OF LIBYAN LEADER QADHAFI APPARENTLY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLING THE HEAD OF THE INFORMATION OFFICE FOR LIBYA'S PEOPLE'S BUREAU IN ROME YESTERDAY. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE A GROUP CALLING ITSELF 'AL BURQAN' CARRIED OUT THE ATTACK. LIBYA IS THREATENING TO RETALIATE AGAINST THE DISSIDENTS, AS WELL AS AGAINST SUPPORTERS OF PLC CHAIRMAN ARAFAT AND LEBANESE SHIAS SUSPECTED BY

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
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TRIPOLI OF COLLUding IN THE OPERATION. 

COMMENT: THE ASSASSINATION OF THE LIBYAN DIPLOMAT MARKS THE FIRST SERIOUS STRIKE BY QADHAFI'S POLITICAL OPPONENTS SINCE THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE SALVATION OF LIBYA FAILED IN ITS ATTACK ON QADHAFI'S HEADQUARTERS LAST MAY. THE KILLING WILL BOOST THE CREDIBILITY OF THE DISSIDENT MOVEMENT, WHICH HAS BEEN KEPT OFF BALANCE BY QADHAFI'S MIX OF STRICT SECURITY MEASURES AT HOME AND MURDERS OF DISSIDENTS ABROAD. THE SHADOWY AL BURQAN GROUP, WHICH CLAIMED TO HAVE KILLED QADHAFI'S RANKING REPRESENTATIVE IN ROME LAST YEAR, PROBABLY IS SMALL AND CLOSELY KNIT. ITS LINKS TO THE LARGER DISSIDENT ORGANIZATIONS ARE UNCLEAR. 



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