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Directorate of  
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# Terrorism Review



5 October 1989

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5 October 1989

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# Terrorism Review [Redacted]

5 October 1989

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Focus: The Downing of UTA Flight 772 [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]	[Redacted]
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*This review is published biweekly by the Directorate of Intelligence. Other elements of the CIA as well as other agencies of the US Intelligence Community are encouraged to submit articles for publication.*

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[Redacted]  
5 October 1989

[redacted]

**Terrorism Review** [redacted]

5 October 1989

**Focus**

**The Downing of UTA Flight 772** [redacted]

Terrorists were almost certainly responsible for the crash of the French UTA Flight 772 on 20 September in the Niger desert, killing 171 persons, including seven Americans. Following the examination of flight recorders, the French Transport Ministry issued a statement indicating that the crash was the result of a midair explosion. The French investigation has revealed that traces of explosives were located in one of the cargo holds in the front of the plane. Recovery operations—which have been hampered by the remoteness of the crash site—are continuing, and Paris has named [redacted] a magistrate specializing in terrorism, to coordinate the criminal investigations. Investigators have yet to determine where the explosive device was placed on board—in Brazzaville or N'Djamena—or who was responsible for the attack. Several terrorist groups had the motivation and technical expertise to perpetrate the bombing. The most likely suspects at this point are radical Shia elements and Libya. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

**The Libyan Connection**

Although Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi has shown signs of moderation over the past year, his strategic goals—including ending French influence in Africa—and terrorist capabilities remain intact. Qadhafi has sanctioned attacks against UTA airliners in the past, and some evidence suggests Tripoli was involved in the most recent attack. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

- In 1984 a bomb exploded on board a UTA plane in N'Djamena. Some evidence suggests Libyan involvement.

Qadhafi supports a diverse group of terrorist operatives, some of whom have the technical capability to mount an operation like the downing of the UTA plane. We cannot rule out the possibility that Tripoli supported an attack carried out by a client group. [Redacted]

*The above article is ~~Secret~~* [Redacted]

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