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Agency Responses [redacted]

NLSA [redacted]

1 May 1990

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Response to Secretary of State Cohen Query on Libyan Support to Liberian Rebels:

1. Given a successful takeover of Monrovia, what would be the response from Libya?

Libya probably would recognize and politically support the rebels if they took Monrovia. Limited material support is also likely. [redacted]

2. Would Libya support the rebels even before they reach the capital?

If the Libyans believe the rebels will win, they probably would increase clandestine support to them even before they reach the capital. [redacted]

Libyan actions in Africa are aimed primarily at countering Western and Israeli relations there and undermining moderate African regimes. We believe Tripoli began aiding Charles Taylor in late 1987 with these goals in mind. Tripoli had doubts about Taylor and viewed him as little more than an opportunist. Assistance was continued, however, probably because Tripoli concluded it had little to lose. We believe only moderate assistance was provided--military training, funds, possibly arms. [redacted]

We do not think Libya expected Taylor to be successful and Tripoli may not have thought out what to do in that event. It seems reasonable to assume, however, they will increase or at least continue aid to Taylor when he is a winner since they helped him when they had little hope for his success. [redacted]

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 14-Sep-2009

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