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~~(S)~~/[]/~~(NF)~~ **SUBJ: IRAQI-LIBYAN INVESTIGATION OF URANIUM EXTRACTION POSSIBILITIES IN SOMALIA**

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Central Intelligence Agency

13 March 1999

Doc Number: []

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SOURCE A []
CONTEXT A []

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~~(S)~~/[]/~~(NF)~~ 1. ON 7 MARCH 1999, AN AIRCRAFT ARRIVED AT THE FORMER SOMALI AIR FORCE BASE AT BALIDOGLE WITH A DELEGATION OF 15 PERSONS CONTAINING TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS IN THE EXTRACTION OF URANIUM FROM GROUND DEPOSITS. THE DELEGATION INCLUDED SEVEN IRAQIS [] FOUR IRANIANS, AND FOUR LIBYANS. [] COMMENT: THE IRANIANS APPEAR TO BE TECHNICIANS ASSOCIATED WITH WHAT SEEMS TO BE A JOINT LIBYAN/IRAQI PROJECT.) IN EARLIER ACTIVITY CONNECTED TO THIS DELEGATION, FIVE LIBYANS ARRIVED ON 5 MARCH 1999 IN SOMALIA TO EVALUATE AND DISCUSS WITH THE SOMALIS THE POSSIBILITY OF EXTRACTING URANIUM FROM THE DEPOSITS AT BUR ACABA, ABOUT 180 KM WEST OF MOGADISHU TOWARDS THE ETHIOPIAN FRONTIER, AND MOVING THE EXTRACTED URANIUM TO THE SOMALI PORT OF MERCA. [] COMMENT: WITH THE BREAKDOWN OF THE PEACE IN SOMALIA, LIBYA IS INCREASING ITS INFLUENCE AND PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY. BALIDOGLE AIR BASE HAS BEEN USED FOR FLIGHTS IN THE PAST BY LIBYA AND IT IS ALSO USED FOR SMALL COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS FROM THE ARABIAN GULF.)

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~~(S)~~/[]/~~(NF)~~ 2. THE ITALIAN ENERGY COMPANY ENI HAD OBTAINED THE CONCESSION TO THE URANIUM DEPOSITS IN BUR ACABA AND HAD WORKED IN THE AREA IN THE EARLY 1980S, BUT FIGHTING IN SOMALIA SUBSEQUENTLY CLOSED ALL FOREIGN ACTIVITIES. [] COMMENT:

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INITIAL INDICATIONS, [] ARE THAT ENI DID NOT CONSIDER THE
URANIUM IN BUR ACABA TO BE OF HIGH QUALITY.)

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