

CSIS

AFRICA NOTES

A publication of the African Studies Program of The Georgetown

University Center for Strategic and International Studies

No. 32 • August 15, 1984

Iran and Africa, 1984

by J. Coleman Kitchen, Jr.

In the last two years, Iran's foreign policy has entered a new activist phase that reflects both the consolidation of the Islamic regime of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and its desire to achieve greater legitimacy in the international community.

The ideological basis of this policy is militant Third World activism blended with radical Islam. The present international system is viewed as fundamentally unjust, and the globe as divided into the "oppressed nations" and the "oppressors," with the two superpowers grouped as the worst of the oppressors. The "oppressed" can save themselves only by joining forces and cooperating with each other. The outreach to Africa—arguably the world's poorest and most exploited continent—is a logical priority.

A second dimension of Iran's growing attention to Africa is economic, and involves the same practical considerations that underlay relations with a number of (mostly pro-Western) countries on the continent during the Shah's rule.

There is also a third dimension to Iran's foreign relations, and that is the role of Islamic zealots dedicated to exporting their message of radical Islam and encouraging other Islamic revolutions on the Iranian model. Africa, the home of some one-fourth of the world's Moslems, is of obvious interest to Tehran's proselytizers, whose activities, carried out under the direction of the Ministry of Islamic Guidance, include establishing contacts with Islamic communities in Africa, recruiting students for training at the religious schools in the holy city of Qom, and conducting seminars with participants from Africa. In May 1984, for example, one of a series of seminars that have been held for imams drew participants from 40 countries, including a number of African nations with Moslem majorities or sizable Moslem minorities. In this seminar the clerics reportedly were urged to use their position and Friday prayers to awaken the faithful to the populist/political aspect of their reli-

gious responsibilities.

There is also some evidence that Iran's Islamic zealots are training subversive elements to further their aims in the Islamic world, including Africa. In a cover article entitled "How Khomeini Wants to Conquer the World," for example, *L'Express* (Paris) reports in its July 6 issue: "The export of the Iranian revolution is not [merely] a mystical cry issuing from distant minarets in the Islamic Republic. Beyond blustering words intended to galvanize the people, there are thousands of adepts, present on every continent, who are inspired by faith, armed with the Koran or the Kalashnikov. This is a very real crusade, willed by a state that has invested in it all its financial, moral, military, and religious power, served by men and women all of whom are ready to die for victory . . ." As part of this effort, notes *L'Express*, "the Iranian Ministry of Islamic Guidance has decided to create a permanent liaison bureau. For the budgetary year 1984-1985, the Iranian government has released \$65 million to be used solely for propaganda aimed abroad . . ."

The article in *L'Express* may exaggerate Iran's subversive intentions and capabilities—and to some extent may be read as a reflection of current Franco-Iranian tensions, French sensitivity to events in Africa, and France's internal problems with its own African immigrants. Nevertheless, Iran's new activism in Africa, particularly its unofficial and more militantly Islamic aspects, is an important development which deserves close attention. The following is a chronology of some key events relating to Tehran's diplomatic offensive in the continent:

1970-1983. Although Iran has political and economic links with a number of African countries during the Pahlavi era, the most important is with South Africa. The Shah's interest in South Africa appears to derive in part from his concern for the security of the Indian Ocean and the Gulf, and the maintenance of the

safety of maritime routes. Although diplomatic relations with Pretoria are only at the consulate-general level, Iran supplies almost 90 percent of South Africa's crude and refined oil imports after the imposition of the Arab embargo in 1973. Moreover, under a 20-year contract signed in 1970, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) supplies about 70 percent of the crude used by the National Petroleum Refiners of South Africa (Pty) Ltd. (NATREF), and NIOC holds a 17.5 percent interest in NATREF.

After the downfall of the Shah in early 1979, the Ayatollah's new regime promptly announces the end of commercial and diplomatic ties with South Africa, and says that it will no longer sell oil to that country. In fact, however, there are indications that Iran continues to maintain some quiet backdoor connections with South Africa. According to the 1979-80 edition of Colin Legum's authoritative *Africa Contemporary Record*, "it was reported in June 1979 that [Iran] was continuing to import significant quantities of [South African] goods, particularly once European suppliers grew more reluctant to export to Iran. Most of the goods were industrial plastics, construction steel, vehicles, plate glass and food grains. To circumvent the political ban on trade . . . , middlemen operated through Swaziland. [South Africa] was reported to be maintaining an unofficial consulate in Tehran." There are unconfirmed reports that South Africa may have become a source of arms for Iran after the outbreak of the Gulf war. (See entry for April 7, 1984 below.)

Meanwhile, Iran's revolutionary government gradually expands its contacts with a range of other African states. This process is entering high gear by the middle of 1983.

May 1983. *South* magazine (London) reports that Iran has opened, "in quick succession," new embassies in Angola, Ghana, Madagascar, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Libya and Algeria are cited as Tehran's best friends among North Africa's Moslem states, "while relations with moderate African states . . . are 'normal' at best, as in the case of Nigeria, 'cool' as in the case of Tunisia, or simply nonexistent, as with Morocco." *South* quotes a member of Iran's Majlis (Islamic Consultative Assembly) who headed a group of his countrymen on a tour of the continent as saying that the Khomeini regime's purpose was to open contacts with the people, particularly with Moslems, to present to them the real image of the Islamic revolution and help them to realize the same revolution in their countries: "Once we are in a country, we do not try to contact officials. We are after people who can help us to export and disseminate the [Islamic] revolution; young and dynamic elements we can invite to Iran to study [Islamic principles] in Qom and then go back to their native countries [or elsewhere] to proselytize."

May 12, 1983. The Tehran daily *Kayhan* quotes Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi as saying in an interview that both the Iranian and Libyan revolutions are "threatened with force . . . This makes it incumbent upon us to unite in one front against an enemy who tries to trample us with his feet, plunder our wealth,

and control our land. Peoples have no choice other than to form a wide front against imperialism and put an end to it, mainly in Iran. We call for the formation of a unified Islamic revolution, unified revolution guard corps, unified revolution committees, and a unified masses movement because we are the common target of the enemy. How can we fight this enemy when we are not united? We have to fight him together."

August 1983. Against a backdrop of rising international tension over Libya's renewed activity in Chad, Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) cites a foreign ministry statement that "recent provocations by the United States and France against the friendly republic of Libya . . . were a conspiracy against the progressive and revolutionary governments of the region." The statement affirms Iran's backing "for the Libyan stance in countering U.S. provocations." (See "Why Chad?" by Alex Rondos in *CSIS Africa Notes* no. 18, August 31, 1983.)

August 12, 1983. A delegation headed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Akbar Velayati departs Tehran on a bridge-building trip that includes stops in a number of African countries.

August 15 - 17, 1983. Velayati meets with Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere and Foreign Minister Salim Ahmed Salim. According to Dar es Salaam radio, Velayati announces that "Tanzania may now import any amount of oil from Iran following the withdrawal of various provisions which were hindering the importation of oil under the agreement signed between the two countries several months ago," and states Iran's willingness to send experts to help in oil exploration (see entries for March 25 and May 19, 1984). According to IRNA, an August 17 joint communique *inter alia* expresses support for the independence movements in Namibia and South Africa; urges renewed commitment to the principles of the Nonaligned Movement; calls for "the unconditional evacuation from [Afghanistan] of external forces"; and emphasizes "the need for maintaining mutual cooperation and resistance against external pressures by dominating powers which seek to undermine the political, economic, and cultural independence of the two countries." The IRNA account says that Salim has accepted an invitation to visit Iran at a not-yet-decided date.

August 17 - 18, 1983. Velayati meets with Zimbabwe's Prime Minister Robert Mugabe in Harare. In a public statement, Velayati denounces apartheid as a "thorn in the flesh" and praises as "great" the fight for its complete removal. South African press reports note that the talks with Mugabe included a discussion of "technical and bilateral relations." (See entries for May 16 and 19, 1984 below.)

August 18 - 20, 1983. Velayati's next stop is Niger. On August 18, he meets with Niger's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Daouda Diallo for what IRNA describes as a discussion of "the mode of maintaining strong ties in such fields as politics, economics, and culture between the two Moslem countries." According to the official news agency's report, Diallo "called for the signing of a memorandum of under-

standing at the conclusion of their meeting." Velayati is quoted as reiterating "Iran's solidarity and cooperation with the people of Africa in confronting exploiters." Velayati also has a meeting with Niger's Minister of State for Planning, Commerce, and Transport Annou Mahamane, in which (according to IRNA) "both sides viewed issues of bilateral interest in the fields of commerce, economics, and culture." On August 19, Velayati meets with Prime Minister Oumarou Mamane and President Seyni Kountché. IRNA reports that President Kountché indicated "his country's preparedness to dispatch cultural and religious delegations to Iran to further strengthen existing ties," condemned "conspiracies of imperialism in harming Moslems' relations," and accepted an invitation to visit Iran. (See entry for late March 1984 below.)

August 20-22, 1983. During a stop in Sierra Leone, Velayati meets with Foreign Minister Abdulai Conteh for what IRNA describes as a discussion of "common fields of cooperation between Iran and Sierra Leone and the ways to expand the existing bilateral ties."

On August 22, Tehran radio announces that the two countries have signed "the draft of a cultural agreement" which includes "cultural contacts, the exchange of experience and information in various educational fields, the exchange of books, periodicals, and films, close cooperation between universities and centers of higher learning, cooperation between news organizations, radio, television, and press, the granting of scholarships for technical and vocational courses, cooperation in the fight against illiteracy through the exchange of information and experience and the dispatch of experts, the construction of mosques, Islamic philanthropic centers, and theological schools, the provision of books and teaching staff for these centers, and the dispatch of cultural representatives to [the] two countries." According to the broadcast, Velayati spoke optimistically of the "many possibilities for cooperation" in economic fields, and Conteh confirmed that "the various goods that we receive from Iran are of vital importance to us [and we] also have some goods we can put at Iran's disposal . . . In political fields we can adopt harmonious policies and positions in the Islamic Conference and the Nonaligned Movement."

The next day's *Financial Times* (London) reports that Sierra Leone asked the delegation for aid in the gold mining, oil and gas exploration, and agricultural sectors, assistance in taking over the \$12 million share in the national oil refinery held by Mobil, Texaco, and Shell, and help in creating a national oil company. In its July 20 and September 7 issues, the London biweekly *Africa Confidential* suggests that President Siaka Stevens' absence "in the countryside" during the Velayati visit was no coincidence, and reports that "An agreement may have been signed for the Iranians to manage the Freetown oil refinery." *Africa Confidential* speculates that Conteh may have lost favor with Stevens earlier in the year when he signed an oil supply contract with Iran for the delivery of a crude oil grade that turned out to be unsuitable for the country's refinery, and had to be sold at a loss for the right grade of crude. (See

Categorization of African Nations According to Estimated Percentage of Moslems in Population

89 to 100%	51 to 88%	26 to 50%	2 to 25%	Less than 2%
Algeria	Comoros	Chad	Benin	Angola
Djibouti	Gambia	Ethiopia	Cameroon	Botswana
Egypt	Guinea	Guinea-Bissau	Central African Republic	Burundi
Libya	Niger	Nigeria	Ghana	Cape Verde
Mali	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Ivory Coast	Congo
Mauritania	Sudan	Tanzania	Kenya	Equatorial Guinea
Morocco			Liberia	Gabon
Somalia			Madagascar	Lesotho
Tunisia			Malawi	Namibia
			Mauritius	Rwanda
			Mozambique	São Tomé & Príncipe
			Togo	Seychelles
			Uganda	South Africa
			Upper Volta	Swaziland
			Zaire	Zambia
				Zimbabwe

entries for May 11 and July 6, 1984 below.)

August 22-24, 1983. Velayati's next stop is Libya. Upon his arrival, he condemns "U.S. imperialism and Zionism," and tells the Jamahiriya News Agency (JANA) that Libya and Iran "are acting on the basis of their impartiality to assert the establishment of security and peace in the world." In an August 23 meeting with Abd al-Ati al-Obeidi, secretary of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, Velayati is reported by IRNA to have urged that "the Moslem countries should use their efforts to revive [the] glory of Islam." Velayati subsequently meets with Qaddafi, presenting him with a letter from Iran's President Sayed Ali Khamenei.

Tripoli radio reports that on August 24 the two foreign ministers sign a "joint cooperation agreement" that includes "increasing cooperation in agriculture, transport, communications, investments, trade, oil, and cultural, information, and technical cooperation." IRNA adds some further details: "Bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture, as agreed upon in the memorandum, will involve the despatching of a delegation from the agricultural research center of Libya to establish a joint agricultural subcommittee in Iran, exporting of sample seeds by Iran, and providing Iranian expertise in the stabilization of sand dunes to Libya. In the field of air transport, the two parties finalized the signing of an earlier memorandum and also announced the visit of [Libyan] experts to Iran to discuss cooperation in civil aviation affairs. The two parties, while expressing satisfaction over trade exchanges in the past, agreed to study the new proposals with a view to making known goods to be exchanged. Also the providing of facilities for possible setting up of trade exhibitions by private firms in each other's country were also a point noted in the [memorandum]. The two parties also expressed interest in expanding cooperation in the field of oil. In the memorandum it was furthermore agreed by both parties to open cultural centers in each other's country. Also the Libyan side agreed upon opening of

an [IRNA] branch office in Tripoli as soon as possible."

In a statement to JANA before his departure for Syria, Velayati praises "the prominent and effective role played by [Libya's] September 1 Revolution in the African continent and the world to liberate the continent and ensure the triumph of the liberation movements in the world"; he is reported to have said that his visit "achieved positive results that will bolster the bonds of friendship between the great September 1 Revolution and the Islamic Revolution in Iran" and to have emphasized "that the basic measures agreed upon through the political, economic, and cultural committee formed during the visit will be implemented immediately."

August 26, 1983. In an interview with IRNA, Libya's al-Obeidi emphasizes "the strengthening of Libya-Iran solidarity" and says that the talks with Velayati had "centered on Iran-Libyan resistance and ways and means of thwarting plots of their common enemies, particularly those of U.S. imperialism."

On the same day, Iran's deputy prime minister in charge of legal affairs, Eftekhar Jahromi, arrives in Algiers carrying a message from Iran's prime minister to his Algerian counterpart.

August 30 - September 4, 1983. Libya's al-Obeidi meets in Tehran with senior Iranian officials, including the president, prime minister, and minister of foreign affairs, and delivers a letter from Qaddafi emphasizing what JANA terms "the need to mobilize all Arab and Islamic resources to confront U.S.-imperialist-backed Zionist aggression."

September 5, 1983. *The Times* (London) reports that Ayatollah Khomeini has called for the creation of an army composed of "tens of millions of believers" ready to defend Islamic countries from outside attack. (See entry for December 16 below.)

September 7 - 9, 1983. Benin's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Tiamiou Ajibade pays an official visit to Iran. Tehran radio reports that during a September 7 meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati, Ajibade expresses "complete confidence in Iran's Islamic Revolution" and says that "there could be harmonious cooperation [between the two countries] in international forums and organizations," while Velayati reiterates Iran's commitment to nonalignment, and expresses the hope that "countries such as yours will stand up to the plot aimed at obtaining recognition in Africa for the regime occupying Jerusalem and will resist countries that recognize that regime." (See "Zaire and Israel" by J. Coleman Kitchen, Jr., in *CSIS Africa Notes* no. 10, March 21, 1983; and "Liberia: Return to Civilian Rule?" by J. Gus Liebenow in *CSIS Africa Notes* no. 21, November 30, 1983.) On Chad, according to the radio report, Velayati states: "Intervention in Chad by U.S. and French forces is condemned by us. To solve this problem, we support the views of the OAU . . . Chad is used as a pretext for the United States to bring pressure to bear on Libya. We support Libya in its struggle against U.S. expansionist policies in North Africa . . ." The broadcast concludes by noting that Ajibade had "expressed his country's interest in a diplomatic presence in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in opening an

Iranian embassy in Benin."

In the course of a meeting between Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi and Ajibade, according to Tehran radio, the prime minister accuses Iran's former regime, "with the help of U.S. imperialism and through widespread propaganda," of trying to keep "our nation ignorant of the rich culture of the African continent."

On September 8, Ajibade meets with Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of the Majlis (Islamic Consultative Assembly), who is quoted by Tehran radio as saying: "We consider it an obligation to our revolution as a Moslem and noble nation to assist the oppressed people of Africa in every way possible in their liberation. We have no expectations from the people of Africa in return for our cooperation, and on the basis of the principle on which our foreign policy is formulated, that is, giving priority to Third World countries and Africa, the visit of our foreign minister and his accompanying delegation to African countries was for the same purpose . . . We severed our relations with Israel and South Africa soon after the success of the Islamic Revolution and instead forged political, economic, and cultural relations with the free countries of Africa and we will continue to follow this policy."

At the conclusion of Ajibade's visit to Iran, the two foreign ministers issue a joint communique which, according to Tehran radio, *inter alia* appeals "to all the world's oppressed countries—particularly Islamic countries—to help the Palestinian people"; expresses "support for the liberation struggles of the Namibian nation"; condemns South Africa's apartheid and aggression against the Front Line states; declares the two countries' anxiety over the situation in Chad and the intervention of foreign powers, particularly the United States and France ("There is no practical solution to [the] country's problem except by the withdrawal of the foreign forces and by allowing the Chadian people to determine their future"); expresses "support for the just struggle of the people of the Sahara to achieve the right to determine their destiny and to establish a sovereign and independent government [and support for] the resolution issued by the nineteenth OAU summit in this connection"; reiterates both countries' commitment to the principles and goals of the Nonaligned Movement; announces that agreements have been reached "on the expansion of relations in the political field and on permanent coordination in the arena of international organizations with the aim of coordinating [the two sides'] views on the Third World's problems, particularly the difficulties facing the Middle East and Africa"; and states that the two sides intend to open diplomatic missions in their respective capitals and to "undertake background studies to set up a joint commission." Velayati accepts an invitation to visit Benin "at an opportune time."

September 21, 1983. The Sudan News Agency (SUNA) reports that Minister of Guidance and National Information Mohammed Khawjali Salihin, in a news conference in Saudi Arabia, has stated that the government of Sudan has confirmation that Iran's ambassador in London contacted some "outlaws" living in one of

Sudan's neighbors and lured them with money and arms to cooperate with Libya. According to Salihin, some of these outlaws went to London and received money from the Iranian ambassador through the Libyan People's Liaison Bureau in that city. This is described as an Iranian effort to undermine security and stability in southern Sudan.

October 21, 1983. Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam, Iran's deputy foreign minister in charge of political affairs, arrives in Libya. On October 22, he is received by Foreign Liaison Secretary al-Obeidi, and on October 23 has a five-hour meeting with Major Abd as-Salam Ahmed Jallud, Qaddafi's second-in-command. Jallud is cited by IRNA as stating Libya's support for Iran in its war against Iraq.

October 24, 1983. Sheykh ol-Eslam arrives in Algiers for talks with Algerian officials.

October 28, 1983. Sheykh ol-Eslam arrives in Nigeria, where he meets with President Alhaji Shehu Shagari and delivers a message from President Sayed Ali Khamenei. IRNA reports that the Iranian envoy conveys his country's desire for "further expansion of relations with African countries, particularly Nigeria," and condemns France for creating tension in the Gulf and Chad. According to the IRNA account, Shagari praises Iran's struggles against Eastern and Western imperialism and its severance of ties with South Africa, and calls for greater unity within the Nonaligned Movement. (See entry for late March 1984 below.)

Later in the day, the Iranian envoy flies to Gabon. According to IRNA, he tells reporters upon his arrival that relations between Iran and Gabon are "satisfactory" and expresses the hope that, with the cooperation of Gabon and other friendly countries in OPEC, it will be possible to "thwart plots of superpowers to weaken OPEC."

November 2, 1983. Sheykh ol-Eslam meets with Gabon's President Omar Bongo to deliver a message from President Sayed Ali Khamenei. IRNA reports that the Iranian envoy conveys his government's "willingness for further cooperation between the two countries in the OPEC meets," and that Bongo praises "the supportive stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran toward the struggles of the people of Africa against [the] South African regime and Iran's cessation of oil exports to the apartheid regime of South Africa," and indicates his country's interest in expanding existing ties and promoting cooperation in the international arena and in OPEC.

November 8, 1983. Sheykh ol-Eslam is in Madagascar for a meeting with President Didier Ratsiraka. IRNA reports that Ratsiraka has affirmed his government's interest in expanded bilateral ties, and that the "two sides . . . discussed the purchase of oil from Iran." In its November 17 edition, *Foreign Report* (published by *The Economist*, London) suggests that Madagascar's interest in relations with Iran may stem from a sense of isolation in the wake of a more conciliatory attitude toward South Africa and the West on the part of two other Indian Ocean OAU members, Mauritius and the Seychelles. (See entry for May 19, 1984 below.)

December 16, 1983. Colin Legum's *Third World*

Reports (London) refers to a new Islamic revolutionary movement launched in January 1982 by Ayatollah Hoseyn Ali Montazeri, "Khomeini's principal lieutenant." (See entry for September 5 above.) According to Legum, this means that "the Moslem world now has three principal centers in rivalry for the role of authentic Islamic Thought: Tehran, Riyadh, and Tripoli. Each maintains its own international organization through which their struggle for supremacy is being waged. The weakest, by far, is Qaddafi's Islamic Call Society, whose revolutionary appeal has been superseded by Iran's and diminished by the Libyan leader's unpredictable behavior. Moreover, because Qaddafi remains committed to Iran in its war against Iraq, he has not been in a position overtly to oppose Montazeri's initiative, although Libya plays no part in it." (See entries for April 18 and July 6, 1984.) A special school is said to have been established at Qom where sponsored students (including some from Egypt, Morocco, and Nigeria) "pursue both religious studies and methods of armed insurrection."

January 7, 1984. Mohammed Hoseyn Lavasani, director-general of the Iranian foreign ministry's department of African and Arab nations, meets in Ouagadougou with Upper Volta's minister of interior and delivers a letter from Foreign Minister Velayati. He also meets with Upper Volta's head of state, Captain Thomas Sankara, who is quoted by IRNA as saying that the improvement in relations between Iran and Upper Volta will serve to strengthen the revolution in his country.

January 8, 1984. Tehran radio reports that Sheykh ol-Eslam met for two hours (presumably on the previous day) with al-Obeidi in Libya, and both sides emphasized "maximum cooperation" between their countries.

The Iranian envoy arrives in Algiers and meets with Prime Minister Mohammed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Taleb Ibrahim. In a January 9 interview with IRNA before his departure for Tehran, Sheykh ol-Eslam states that Iran will not be attending the Islamic Conference summit in Casablanca, but that Iran has sent letters to the leaders of the "progressive" Moslem countries informing them of its views on "various issues"; he warns that any "partial decisions made about the Iraqi-imposed war and bringing Egypt back to the Arab political fold, as well as any capitulatory measure on the Palestinian issue, would be strongly opposed by Iran."

February 4, 1984. In a Dakar-dated dispatch, *Agence France-Presse* (AFP) reports that "The Iranian embassy in Dakar was closed earlier this week on the orders of the Senegalese authorities." According to AFP's sources, "the Senegalese authorities accused embassy personnel of engaging in 'fundamentalist propaganda' among Senegalese Moslem groups and among the Lebanese Moslem community in Senegal, of providing finances for some Senegalese associations and newspapers, [of] increasing its personnel without authorization, and [of] having organized trips to Mecca for some Senegalese in spite of several warnings." (See entry for July 6, 1984 below.)

February 8, 1984. AFP quotes Senegal's Minister of

Information and Telecommunications Djibo Ka as saying that the Iranian embassy in Dakar had been closed to put an end to "a long process while there was still time" and that embassy personnel were involved in activities that violated "international norms." The minister explains that the government of Senegal had closed the embassy in "an act of sovereignty" but had not severed diplomatic ties with Tehran.

On the same day, the government-aligned daily *Le Soleil* observes that the embassy closure and the deportation of "Iranian diplomats who had not entered the country in a regular manner . . . is nothing other than an act of sovereignty which was taken to reestablish normality," and that "this unfortunate development in relations between Dakar and Tehran is not in any way Senegal's fault." Meanwhile, the daily *Takusaan* (close to the opposition *Parti démocratique sénégalais*) explains the closure as a corollary of Dakar's position on the Gulf war, which the newspaper says "is clearly in favor of Baghdad."

According to the March 12 issue of *Africa News*, the embassy closure has made it uncertain whether Iran will continue to provide aid for a number of projects: "Supplies of Iranian oil to Senegal—and on quite favorable terms—could also now be reduced."

February 10, 1984. Tripoli radio carries the "text" of a telegram sent by Qaddafi to Ayatollah Khomeini on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Iranian revolution. *Inter alia*, Libya's "brother leader" reaffirms "our continuing alliance with you against colonialism, Zionism, and reactionaryism," expresses his appreciation "without limit" for "your historic stand, which turned Iran from a state in the service of the United States, the Israelis, and the racists in South Africa," and claims that "[o]ur revolutionary alliance has enabled the patriotic Lebanese forces to expel the Atlantic forces of occupation and to make them leave . . ."

March 5, 1984. In a radio address, Guinea's President Ahmed Sekou Touré asks Ayatollah Khomeini to "accept an immediate cease-fire" and end the war with Iraq, adding that the Islamic Conference Organization's Islamic Peace Committee, of which he is chairman, is ready to go to Tehran "without delay in order to find a just solution that would honor the entire Islamic community."

March 10, 1984. Rabat radio announces that Morocco's King Hassan II, chairman of the Islamic Conference Organization, has addressed a message to the UN secretary-general urging "strong and decisive action" to end the Iran-Iraq war, and offering to host negotiations between the leaders of the warring countries.

March 10-14, 1984. On March 10, Iranian Deputy Prime Minister Jahromi arrives in Algiers. (See entries for August 26 and October 24, 1983, and January 8, 1984.) He is followed the next day by Foreign Minister Velayati, making an official visit at the invitation of Algerian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ibrahim, who paid an official visit to Tehran in 1983.

A March 12 *Algérie Presse Service* (APS) commen-

tary on the Velayati visit remarks: "The excellent relations between the two countries were proven during the affair of American diplomats held in Tehran. Algeria had made all possible efforts to preserve Iranian interests and to settle this humanitarian case. Algeria's mediation was highly appreciated by Iran, and contributed to consolidate mutual consideration and confidence."

On March 13, Velayati tells IRNA that his talks with Ibrahim have covered "political issues of the Islamic and Third World countries," including "problems facing the African states who are increasingly becoming victims of the superpowers' plots, especially those of the U.S. and Zionists which desire to make certain African countries their satellites. Both sides mutually agreed to work to eliminate this danger." Both sides also "expressed the hope that the exchange of technical and agricultural cooperation would pave the way for a strengthening of bilateral economic relations." Velayati says that "committees [will] be formed to follow up on technical issues" and that "the draft of a letter of understanding" concerning the expansion of cultural relations has been signed.

Velayati also meets in Algeria with Mohammed Salem Salek, head of the international relations of the [Western Saharan] Polisario Front, who is reported by IRNA to have wished Iran victory against Iraq and said that "if the Polisario Front was not faced with many problems, it would have fought against the Iraqi forces in the war." Velayati reportedly noted that Iran "seriously and continuously" supports "the revolution of Moslem people of the Sahara." (See entries for May 22, June 22 and July 6, 1984.)

On March 14, IRNA reports: "The Iranian foreign minister . . . spoke in support of the struggling nation of the Western Sahara and congratulated them on their victory in the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. However, he said the United States and France were continuing their plots against the security and sovereignty of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. On the racist regime in South Africa, Dr. Velayati said the threat of South Africa to its neighbors was not different from that of the Zionist regime in the Middle East."

On the same day, Velayati meets with President Ben-jadid Chadli. According to Tehran radio, the Algerian leader observes: "At a time when they are being subjected to vast onslaughts, Islam and the Islamic movement have terrified the world because Islamic movements, apart from their political dimension, also have extensive cultural dimensions. It is for this reason that propaganda attacks against Islam have been stepped up with the aim of misrepresenting Islam." President Chadli is also quoted as saying that "there exists a joint desire to expand Iranian-Algerian relations in the economic, political, and cultural fields." Before leaving Algeria, Velayati holds a press conference at which he says that agreement has been reached on an exchange of visits by economic experts from the two countries.

Late March 1984. Hoseyn Kazempur Ardabili, the Iranian foreign affairs ministry's under secretary for in-

ternational and economic affairs, visits a number of West African states, including Niger, Benin, Nigeria, Guinea, and Sierra Leone.

In Niger, where Iran opened a diplomatic mission in December 1983, the visit follows reported negotiations earlier in the month on the sale of uranium to Iran. According to a March 17 AFP dispatch from Niamey, (1) uranium was the source of 75 percent of Niger's 1983 export income; (2) in 1981, after the start of the Iran-Iraq war, Niger delivered 100 metric tons of uranium to Iraq, as well as more than 1,000 metric tons to Libya; and (3) unspecified "observers" view the 1984 talks with Iran as "evidence of Niger's determination to gain the maximum benefit from its mineral wealth, putting aside political or ideological issues." Tehran radio reports on March 18 that Ardabili discussed with Niger's foreign minister "the prospect of purchasing uranium from Niger, as well as Iran's proposed dispatch of oil, mining, road construction, and communication experts to Niger." Ardabili also meets with President Kountché in the course of his visit and invites him to pay an official visit to Iran. (See entry for August 18-20, 1983.)

Another highlight of the Ardabili trip is a meeting with Nigeria's Minister of External Affairs Ibrahim Gambari (see entry for October 28, 1983). Subjects discussed reportedly include South Africa, Namibia, Chad, and the Western Sahara. According to a March 23 AFP dispatch from Lagos, Ardabili told journalists that "he had explained the Iranian point of view concerning [OPEC]." In summary, "Iran favors a crude price rise [on the grounds that] the production level increase sought by numerous producers, including Nigeria, can only bring a fall in oil prices . . . the production quota should be attributed to countries as a function of their foreign currency needs, notably depending on their population size." (See "Nigeria 1984: An Interim Report" by Daniel G. Matthews in *CSIS Africa Notes* no. 24, February 29, 1984.)

March 25, 1984. Dar es Salaam radio reports that "Tanzania today received a shipment of 80,000 [metric tons] of light crude oil from Iran under an agreement signed between the two countries [in August 1983]. Under the agreement, the National Iranian Oil Company agreed to supply crude oil to Tanzania on commercial terms to meet a large part of its 1984 requirements." (See entries for August 15-17, 1983 and May 7 and 19, 1984.)

April 2, 1984. According to Maputo radio, Mohammed Hoseyn Lavasani, director-general of the Iranian foreign ministry's department of African and Arab nations, meets with Mozambique's Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano.

April 7, 1984. Citing the not-yet-published 1984 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) yearbook on world armaments, *The Times* (London) reports that Algeria, Libya, and South Africa are among Iran's sources of "major weapons" for its fight against Iraq; of these three, Algeria and Libya are cited as sources of "other support" during the war.

April 18, 1984. A Tehran-dated JANA dispatch

reports that a Libyan delegation from the Islamic affairs department of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison visiting Iran met a number of individuals involved with Iran's "Islamic affairs media organization." Subjects discussed reportedly included "ways and means of confronting hostile campaigns directed at Islam and Moslems and the success of the Islamic call." The group also "met a delegation of the College of Theological Studies in Tehran and exchanged views on [Qaddafi's] Third Universal Theory and the spreading of Islam." (See entries for December 16, 1983 and July 6, 1984.)

May 7, 1984. The new Iranian ambassador to Tanzania presents his credentials to President Julius Nyerere.

May 10, 1984. Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati meets with Jallud in Tripoli.

May 11, 1984. An AFP dispatch from Freetown reviews a warming trend in relations between Iran and Sierra Leone. (See entries for August 20-22, 1983 and July 6, 1984.) In addition to the establishment of an Iran-Sierra Leone friendship organization in Freetown, Iranian delegations visiting the country in February and March were respectively received by the minister of trade and industry and by First Vice-President Sorie Ibrahim Koroma. In the wake of these visits, a joint communique reaffirmed support for the "independence struggle" in the Western Sahara, and condemned any attempts to resume relations with Israel (a noteworthy development in view of speculation that Freetown might be about to do that very thing). Despite its "concessions" to Iran, AFP reports, Sierra Leone "periodically" seeks to reassure its "other partners, especially Saudi Arabia, which . . . gives Sierra Leone substantial aid," and has not condemned Iraq in its war with Iran.

May 16, 1984. An Iranian "political-economic delegation" headed by Ardabili arrives in Zimbabwe (see entry for August 17-18, 1983). Ardabili presents President Canaan Banana with a message from President Sayed Ali Khamenei. According to IRNA, Ardabili reiterates his country's willingness to expand ties with Zimbabwe in political, economic, and cultural fields, and stresses the necessity for bilateral cooperation in international bodies on issues pertaining to Africa and the Middle East.

May 19, 1984. Tehran radio reports that, during a morning meeting with Prime Minister Mugabe, Ardabili "commented on the expansion and strengthening of mutual relations, the possibility of trade exchanges between the two countries, and meeting the oil needs of Zimbabwe [and] announced [Iran's] readiness to provide its engineering and technical facilities for the reconstruction, expansion, and commissioning of the disused Zimbabwean refinery." The broadcast states that Mugabe "expressed pleasure" at Iran's stance "with regard to oppressed African countries, including Zimbabwe," "praised the aid sent by [Iran] to the countries on the front line of war against South Africa, which he described as a positive step toward expanding and strengthening mutual relations," and "warmly received" an invitation to visit Iran. Members of the delegation reportedly met with Zimbabwe's energy minister and

"studied the possibilities of close cooperation between the two countries in energy."

Somewhat confusingly, Dar es Salaam radio reports that on the morning of the same day, Ardabili was in Tanzania and met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Ndugu Benjamin Mkapa. The broadcast cites "a foreign ministry official" as saying that the talks "centered on the situation in the Middle East, southern Africa, and relations between Tanzania and [Iran]," and that views were exchanged on "strengthening the existing relations between the two countries."

Meanwhile, a May 20 report on Antananarivo radio states that a seven-member Iranian commercial delegation visited Madagascar's harbor of Toamasina on May 19, and that talks "centered on means for ensuring the export of Malagasy products from Toamasina Harbor directly to the Iranian Bandar Bash Harbor." The Iranian delegation is said to have "already negotiated with Malagasy officials on the export of a number of products such as cloves, coffee, vanilla, and other agricultural products that might interest Iran." (See entry for November 8, 1983.)

May 22, 1984. According to Tehran radio, Iran's ambassador to Mozambique meets in Maputo with the foreign minister of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. (See entries for March 10-14, June 22 and July 6, 1984.)

June 5, 1984. Monrovia radio reports that Liberia's ambassador to the UN, in an address to the Security Council, has "expressed regrets that ships flying the Liberian flag have often been hit and damaged by missiles in the Gulf by [Iran and Iraq, resulting in] a severe loss of revenue in the Liberian economy"; said that "it is therefore expected that those involved in such actions will be equally prepared to pay the cost for their action"; appealed to both countries to cease any further attacks on ships flying the Liberian flag; and called for a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

June 8, 1984. Maseru radio reports that Lesotho's Minister of Foreign Affairs E.R. Sekhonyana has told "Iran's special envoy" that "Lesotho was happy to receive an envoy from an old friend and shared the hope that friendly relations between the two countries would soon be resumed." According to the broadcast, Lesotho had "suspended its relations with Iran in October 1980 when conditions during the revolution made it impossible for its mission to continue functioning properly." The report also cites Iran's chargé d'affaires in Harare as saying that during 1983 Iran opened 10 diplomatic missions in Africa in one month.

June 22, 1984. An AFP dispatch from Rabat reports that Khadri Ould Die, founder of a new Mauritanian opposition group called the Organization of Mauritanian Nationalists, said in an interview in the Moroccan capital on the same day that Iranian officers had arrived in Mauritania more than a week previously "on a drive to sign up both Mauritians and guerrillas from

the neighboring Western Sahara territory to go and fight for Iran in the Gulf war." While recruitment into the Iranian army for Mauritians was purely voluntary, he said, "because of the famine into which the policy of [Mauritania's president] has plunged their country, several dozen Mauritians have signed up to go and swell the ranks of Khomeini's army which is fighting our Iraqi brothers." (See entries for March 10-14, May 22 and July 6, 1984.)

July 6, 1984. The cover story in *L'Express* cited earlier includes the following particulars on Iran's activities in Africa:

The very brilliant Bagheri is in position in Mauritania. The diplomatic mission in Nouakchott recruits Mauritians and Sahrawis of the Polisario Front for the Tehran camps. It also watches the situation in the Maghreb, where *intégrisme* [Islamic fundamentalism] sails before a favorable wind. In Algeria, where scuffles are on the increase at the University. In Morocco and Tunisia, where the riots of this year have exhibited all the Khomeinist signs. Little by little, the Iranian "realism" has superseded Libya's disordered agitation in the region's schemes of destabilization.

During the abortive coup attempt in Cameroon [in April 1984], the partisans of ex-President Ahidjo called for the aid of Qaddafi's Islamic Legions in overthrowing President Paul Biya. Qaddafi would have told them that they would do better to ask for the aid of the elite corps of Pasdaran [the Guardians of Iran's revolution, led by Ayatollah Montazeri (see entry for December 16, 1983 above)], even intending to contact Tehran directly . . . in other words, the Libyan colonel appears to have been overtaken.

In graphics accompanying its article, *L'Express* shows Iranian "propaganda bases" in the capitals of Mauritania, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

July 18-19, 1984. The Islamic Conference Organization's seven-nation peace committee meets for two days in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The committee's chairman is President Sir Dawda Jawara of Gambia, succeeding Guinea's late President Touré. The meeting ends with an announcement that Jawara will visit Iran and Iraq in an effort to bring about a cease-fire in the Gulf war.

J. Coleman Kitchen, Jr. is the CSIS African Studies Program's research associate and text editor. He received his undergraduate degree (*magna cum laude*) from St. John's College (Annapolis), and his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. His contributions to *CSIS Africa Notes* have included the article "Zaire and Israel," issue no. 10, March 21, 1983.