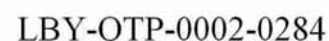


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**ANNEX 9.84**

AFRICA AUTOSICAS ASIA PACIFIC EUROPE MIDDLE EAST





The day had begun with growing signs that Colonel Qaddafi's grip on power might be slipping, with protesters in control of Libya's second-largest city, his security forces pulled back to key locations in the capital as government buildings smoldered, and a growing number of officials and military personnel defecting to join the revolt.

But the violence Colonel Qaddafi unleashed Monday afternoon on Tripoli demonstrated that he was willing to shed far more blood than the deposed rulers of either neighboring Egypt or Tunisia in his effort to hold on to power.

Two residents said planes had been landing for 10 days ferrying mercenaries from African countries to an air base in Tripoli. The mercenaries had done much of the shooting, which began Sunday night, they said. Some forces were using particularly lethal, hollow-point bullets, they said.

"The shooting is not designed to disperse the protesters," said one resident, who wanted to be identified only as Waleed, fearing for his security. "It is meant to kill them."

"This is not Ben Ali or Mubarak," he added, referring to the deposed leaders of Tunisia and Egypt. "This man has no sense of humanity."

Colonel Qaddafi, for his part, remained largely out of sight. Around 2 a.m. on Tuesday, after a rainy day, he appeared on state television for about 30 seconds, holding an umbrella up through the open door of a passenger car. He denied rumors that he had fled to Venezuela and called the cable news channels covering Libya "dogs."

As rioters overwhelmed the streets around 1 a.m. on Monday, Colonel Qaddafi's son, Seif al-Islam el-Qaddafi, delivered a rambling but bellicose speech threatening Libyans with the prospect of civil war and "rivers of blood" if they turned away from his father.

Apparently enraged by the speech, protesters converged on Green Square soon after and clashed with heavily armed riot police officers for several hours, witnesses in Tripoli said by telephone.

By dawn in Tripoli, police stations and government buildings — including the Hall of the People, where the legislature meets — were in flames. Debris fires from the rioting the night before burned at many intersections.

Most stores and schools were closed, and long lines were forming for a chance to buy bread or gas. Protesters had torn down or burned the posters of Colonel Qaddafi that were once ubiquitous in the capital, witnesses said.

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*Reporting was contributed by Sharon Otterman, Neil MacFarquhar and Kareem Fahim from Cairo; Nada Bakri from Beirut, Lebanon; and Colin Mounihan from New York.*

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