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North Africa

Jan. 3 — Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba cancels price hikes on subsidized grain products in a televised appeal for calm amidst widespread disturbances following the government's December announcement that food prices would soon double. Officials later confirm that as many as 70 people have been killed by security forces attempting to control demonstrators in Tunis and Sfax.

Jan. 5 — Fueled by expected increases in the cost of basic foodstuffs, the anger of poor Moroccans erupts into violence. Trouble begins with student strikes in Marrakech, then escalates to arson and looting in the northern cities of Tetouan, Al Horeima and Nador. King Hassan II rolls back the price hikes in a televised address Jan. 22, blaming "Zionists, communists and supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini" for the unrest. More than 100 are left dead.

Jan. 16 — Chadli Benjedid is sworn in for a second five-year term as president of Algeria, after capturing 95% of the vote in national elections.

Jan. 16 — Amid the bloody unrest spreading across his nation, King Hassan II manages to host the annual summit of the 42-nation Islamic Conference Organization in Casablanca. On the summit's final day, members vote 32 to 0 to invite Egypt to rejoin the body from which it was expelled nearly five years earlier, following the Camp David peace accord.

February — Egyptian President Mubarak visits the sub-Saharan countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia and Zaire, following a visit to Kinshasa by Israeli President Chaim Herzog.

Feb. 27 — As the POLISARIO Front marks the 10th anniversary of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Haidalla tells SADR's President Mohamed Abdelaziz that Mauritania has accorded the Saharan government recognition as a sovereign state. The move further isolates Morocco, which is trying to control the mineral-rich Western Sahara.

March 8 — Mauritanian President Lt. Col. Mohamed Ould Haidalla reshuffles his cabinet, relieving Lt. Col. Maaouya Ould Sidi Ahmed Taya of his duties as premier and defense minister and taking on these portfolios himself. It is unclear whether Taya, who resumes his former position as armed forces chief of staff, was dismissed or resigned voluntarily after serving for three years as prime minister, but he retains the support of a powerful group of army officers, opening a serious split in the Mauritanian leadership.

April 17 — London Police Officer Yvonne Fletcher is killed by gunfire apparently originating from the Libyan People's Bureau in St. James Square as a demonstration is held outside the embassy by Libyan dissidents residing in Great Britain. The incident leads to a complete break in British-Libyan relations.

May 8 — Libyan security forces in Tripoli fight several hours to repel an assault by two dozen armed rebels who mount an attack on the Bab al Azizya barracks, headquarters of the "revolutionary committees" and often used by Col. Muammar Qaddafi as a personal residence. The coup is put down and all but three of the rebels killed.

May 27 — Hosni Mubarak's National Democratic Party claims 391 of 448 seats contested in Egypt's parliamentary elections, taking 87.3% of the vote.

July-October — Egypt and the United States charge Libya with responsibility for Red Sea mines which damage more than 20 ships passing through the vital international waterway leading to the Suez Canal.

July 27 — Libya withdraws its team of six from the Los Angeles Olympics in protest of U.S. refusal to grant visas to three Libyan journalists seeking to cover the games.

Aug. 9 — Moroccan track star Nawal el-Moutawakel becomes the first African woman to bring home Olympic gold, taking first place in the 400-meter hurdles. A few days later, countryman Said Aouida joins her in the winner's circle after taking the men's 5,000-meter race.

Aug. 14 — Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi and King Hassan II ink a "Treaty of Arab-African Union" in the desert town of Oujda near Morocco's border with Algeria.

Aug.28 — Libya dedicates the first phase of the $27 billion "Great Manmade River Project," an