



Quick Look Report



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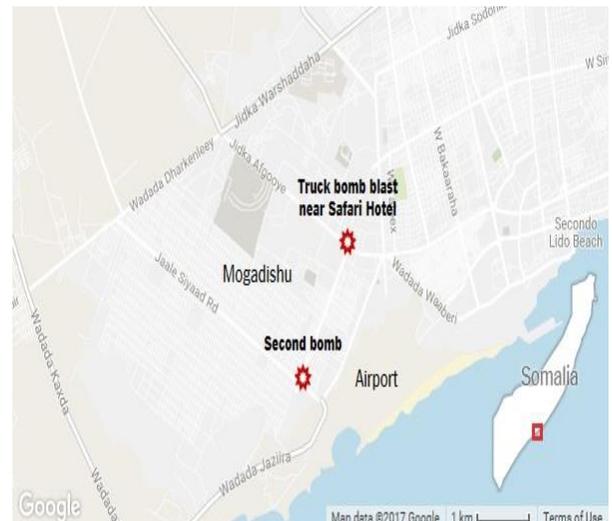
Double attack in Mogadishu

Event Date: 14 October 2017

Report Date: 16 October 2017

1) Key Facts:

1. October 14, 15:00h and 17.00h.
2. A heavy blast caused by a truck bombing in Mogadishu, close to a Safari Hotel building which it was entirely destroyed.
3. A second car bombing exploded two hours later at southwest, Medina district, where two civilians died.
4. Main attendance of children and teenagers in Mogadishu.
5. More than 300 people now believed to have been killed and hundreds more seriously injured. After two days of this attack the casualties are increasing.
6. No one claim at this moment the responsibility of the attack. But is believed that Al Shabaab was the responsible of this terrorist act.



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2) Background and other related events

1. On July 30, a strike killed Ali Jabal, a commander who led forces and conducted attacks in Somalia. After he was killed, the Pentagon's Africa Command said his removal from the battlefield would significantly degrade the Shabaab's ability to coordinate attacks in the capital and in southern Somalia.
2. United States Special Operations forces have launched 15 airstrikes against Shabaab leaders, fighters and training camps since the beginning of the year, including five strikes last month
3. It is probably that the group might have received help from operatives with the Qaeda arm in Yemen, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which is renowned for its prowess with explosives.
4. Africa specialists said the attack could backfire on the Shabaab and that may be one reason the group has not claimed responsibility, at least so far.

3) Description:

The explosions rocked the heart of the country, making it the deadliest attack ever to hit the country.

A truck bomb exploded outside the Safari Hotel in the K5 intersection, which is lined with government offices, restaurants and kiosks.

Several buildings were flattened and dozens of vehicles set ablaze in the attack.

Two hours later, another blast struck the capital's Medina district.

More than 200 people were injured as hospitals struggled to cope with the

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carnage, amid warnings the death toll could still rise.

A truck was packed with several hundred kilograms of military-grade and homemade explosives.

The military-grade explosives could be stolen from Amisom.

The truck had been stopped at a checkpoint and was about to be searched when the driver suddenly accelerated. It crashed through a barrier, then exploded. This ignited a fuel tanker parked nearby, creating a massive fireball.



4) Assessment:

The attacks have not been claimed but several indications suggest that it could be Al Shabaab.

Al Shabaab terrorist group carries out suicide attacks in the Somali capital and other areas of the country. Its

objective is to weaken the government to the maximum and to overthrow it.

In the year 2011 the group was expelled from the capital and little by little it has been losing control of its main bastions. However, they continue to control rural areas.

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Its modus operandi is to carry out attacks against the military, the Government, civilian targets and in Kenya.

It is the most bloody attack perpetrated by the group throughout its history. The images are impressive, showing a landscape of desolation, burning business, calcined vehicles without talking about unrecognizable victims.

One reason to believe that this is a group is the accuracy in time to perform attacks.

It is taking advantage of the current situation of the country that is with a split government and at a critical moment.

In this case the group has taken advantage of the security vacuum after the resignation for personal reasons of

the Minister of Defense and the head of the Army.

Another reason is the visit during this week of the head of the African Command of EE. UU. to Mogadishu.

In addition, in March 2017, President Trump announced that one of his objectives is to overthrow the terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

It could be pointed out that when the group feels more pressure or feels curled up is when their attacks are stronger and violent.

.It is quite probable that another such attack will occur in a short period of time, unless the present situation of the country is solved.

5) Other information:

What is Happening in Somalia?

Somalia has not had an effective national government for more than 20 years, during which much of the country has been a war-zone.

Al-Shabaab gained support by promising people security. But its credibility was knocked when it

rejected Western food aid to combat a 2011 drought and famine.

With Mogadishu and other towns now under government control, there is a new feeling of optimism and many Somalis have returned from exile, bringing their money and skills with them.

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Basic services such as street lighting, dry cleaning and rubbish collection have resumed in the capital.

But Somalia is still too dangerous and divided to hold democratic elections the last one was in 1969.

So, a complex system has been devised to choose a parliament and president, with clan elders playing an influential role in the process.

Who are Al Shabaab. AlShabaab means The Youth in Arabic.

It emerged as the radical youth wing of Somalia's now-defunct Union of Islamic Courts, which controlled Mogadishu in 2006, before being forced out by Ethiopian forces.

There are numerous reports of foreign jihadists going to Somalia to help al-Shabaab, from neighboring countries, as well as the US and Europe.

It is banned as a terrorist group by both the US and the UK and is believed to have between 7,000 and 9,000 fighters.

Al-Shabaab advocates the Saudi-inspired Wahhabi version of Islam, while most Somalis are Sufis.

It has imposed a strict version of Sharia in areas under its control, including stoning to death women accused of adultery and amputating the hands of thieves.

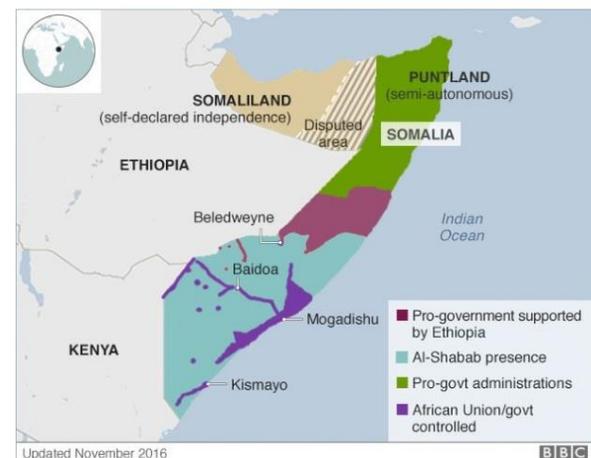
Supports of Al Shabaab. In a joint video released in February 2012, former al-Shabaab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane said he "pledged obedience" to al-Qaeda head Ayman al-Zawahiri.

The two groups have long worked together and foreigners are known to fight alongside Somali militants.

There have also been numerous reports that al-Shabaab may have formed some links with other militant groups in Africa, such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, based in the Sahara desert.

Al-Shabaab debated whether to switch allegiance to the Islamic State (IS) group after it emerged in January 2014.

How much of Somalia does Al-Shabaab control? Although it has lost control of most towns and cities, it still dominates in many rural areas.



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It was forced out of the capital, Mogadishu, in August 2011 following an AU-led offensive, and left the vital port of Kismayo in September 2012.

The loss of Kismayo has hit al-Shabaab's finances, as it used to earn money by taking a cut of the city's lucrative charcoal trade.

The AU-led ground offensive has been backed by US air strikes, which led to the killing of the group's leader, Aden Hashi Ayro, in 2008 and his successor, Ahmed Abdi Godane.

Al-Shabaab is currently led by Ahmad Umar, also known as Abu Ubaidah. The US has issued a \$6m reward for information leading to his capture.

It has also regained control of several towns, following the withdrawal of some Ethiopian troops.

Ethiopia said it had pulled them out because of the financial cost of maintaining them in Somalia, though analysts said the soldiers were needed in Ethiopia to quell the biggest anti-government protests seen in more than two decades.

The group eventually rejected the idea, resulting in a small faction breaking away¹.

¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15336689>

6) Open sources:

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/866726/Somalia-Mogadishu-bomb-al-Shabaab-terror-truck-attack>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/01/us-military-somalia-airstrike-al-shabaab-terrorist-targets>

http://www.abc.es/internacional/abci-menos-20-muertos-explosion-somalia-201710141727_noticia.html

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/15/truck-bomb-mogadishu-kills-people-somalia>

https://elpais.com/internacional/2017/10/15/actualidad/1508077129_570589.html

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/October_2017_Mogadishu_bombings

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/15/world/africa/somalia-bombing-mogadishu.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/somalia-mogadishu-bomb-lorry-truck-attack-safari-hotel-dead-al-shabaab-a8001271.html>

http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2017/10/15/massive_blasts_rock_somalia_s_capital_of_mogadishu.html

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15336689>

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