ICPVTR Incident Report

Title: Kampala, Uganda Twin Bomb Blasts, July 2010
Type: twin bomb blasts
Date From: 11 July 2010
Date To: 11 July 2010
Country(s): Uganda

Narrative(s): Some 74 people were killed and more than 60 injured in near-simultaneous bomb blasts in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, many while watching the World Cup final in a rugby club and an Ethiopian restaurant that are approximately 7 kilometers apart. The attack was carried out by the Somali terrorist group Al-Shabaab. The Ethiopian Village restaurant was hit at approximately 22:25hrs local time, killing 15 people. The Kyaddondo rugby club was hit 50 minutes later with twin bombs, where approximately 49 people died, as there was a higher concentration of people in that area watching the match. Both are known to be popular areas where expats gather. The rugby club blast happened near the very end of the match. Many of those killed are believed to be foreign nationals, in addition to Ugandans, and include at least one American. The United States is assisting Uganda with the investigation and has sent a 3-person team from its Federal Bureau of Investigation to aid in the collection of evidence. Two U.S. Diplomatic Security officers are also on site. In addition to the US, the UK has also condemned the ‘cowardly’ attacks. An Irish woman was also killed, along with Ethiopian, Eritrean, Indian, Sri Lankan and Congolese nationals.

The Somali-based insurgent group, Al-Shabaab, claimed responsibility on 12 July 2010 for the attack. Al-Shabaab Spokesman Sheikh Ali Mohamud Rage announced on Monday, 12 July, “Al-Shabaab was behind the two bomb blasts in Uganda” and threatened additional attacks. Rage continued, “We will carry out attacks against our enemy wherever they are...no one will deter us from performing our Islamic duty”. To justify the attack, he said, “We are sending a message to Uganda and Burundi: If they do not take out their AMISOM troops from Somalia, blasts will continue, and it will happen in Bujumbura too.” A few arrests have been made in connection with the bombing in Uganda, but no names have been released.

Before the announcement, it was widely speculated that Al-Shabaab was to blame. Ugandan Army Spokesman Felix Kulaije supported this theory saying, “We suspect it’s Al-Shabaab because they’ve been promising this for long.” Previously, Al-Shabaab has targeted Uganda owing to its contribution to the 5,500 strong African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia. Somali militants have been involved in prior strikes in East Africa, but this was the first time the militant group has conducted a successful attack outside of its home. An Al-Shabaab

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1 ‘Somalia link’ as lethal Uganda blasts target World Cup’, BBC News, 12 July 2010
2 ‘Somalia link’ as lethal Uganda blasts target World Cup’, BBC News, 12 July 2010
3 ‘Uganda bomb blasts kill dozens of World Cup spectators’, The Guardian, 12 July 2010
4 ‘Uganda bomb blasts kill dozens of World Cup spectators’, The Guardian, 12 July 2010
5 ‘Somalia link’ as lethal Uganda blasts target World Cup’, BBC News, 12 July 2010
6 ‘Twin blasts kill scores of World Cup watchers in Uganda’, The Washington Post, 12 July 2010; ‘US sends FBI team to investigate Kampala blast’, Express India, 13 July 2010
7 ‘Somali militants say they carried out deadly Uganda World Cup blasts’, The Guardian, 12 July 2010
8 ‘Somali militants ‘behind’ Kampala World Cup blasts’, BBC News, 12 July 2010
9 ‘Somali militants ‘behind’ Kampala World Cup blasts’, BBC News, 12 July 2010
10 ‘Somali militants ‘behind’ Kampala World Cup blasts’, BBC News, 12 July 2010
11 ‘Somali militants say they carried out deadly Uganda World Cup blasts’, The Guardian, 12 July 2010
12 ‘Uganda bombs kill 74, Islamists claim attack’, The Star, 13 July 2010
13 ‘Uganda bombs kill 74, Islamists claim attack’, The Star, 13 July 2010
14 ‘Uganda bombs kill 74, Islamists claim attack’, The Star, 13 July 2010
commander, Sheik Yusuf Sheik Issa, said on 11 July, “Uganda is one of our enemies. Whatever makes them cry, makes us happy. May Allah’s anger be upon those who are against us.”

A third high-profile member of Al-Shabaab, Sheik Muktar Robow, previously called for attacks on Uganda, as well as Burundi, on Friday, 9 July 2010. Al-Shabaab has not been shy about its allegiance to global terrorist organization al-Qaeda, nor about claiming credit for attacks launched against Somalis and foreign entities within Somalia. They have the proven capability and intention to launch attacks of this scale, having demonstrated that on previous occasions in Somalia.

Al-Shabaab has not said whether its attack was also related to the forthcoming 15th Ordinary Session of the African Union, scheduled to take place in Kampala, 19-27 July 2010, as some have suspected. The attack could also be tied to the upcoming Ugandan elections, scheduled to take place in 2011, if Al-Shabaab were looking to affect the political process.

**Tactic(s):** Either a planted bomb or suicide bomber. Police suspect there may have been a suicide bomber, as there was a severed head at one of the two locations. In addition, there was an unexploded, “ready to blast” suicide belt at a third location, the ICS disco in Makindye, south of Kampala.

**Weapon Used:** bomb

**Target(s):** World Cup fans, Ugandans, foreign nationals

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15 ‘Somalia link’ as lethal Uganda blasts target World Cup’, *BBC News*, 12 July 2010
16 ‘Scores dead in Uganda bomb blasts’, *Al Jazeera International*, 12 July 2010
17 ‘Scores Killed in Sunday’s Twin Bomb Blasts in Uganda’, *Voice of America News*, 12 July 2010
18 ‘Somalia link’ as lethal Uganda blasts target World Cup’, *BBC News*, 12 July 2010
19 ‘Somalia link’ as lethal Uganda blasts target World Cup’, *BBC News*, 12 July 2010
20 ‘Unexploded suicide belt found at Uganda blast site’, *Associated Press*, 13 April 2010; ‘Unexploded suicide belt found in Kampala: police chief’, *Xinhua*, 13 July 2010
Images:

The green marker is at the Kyadondo Rugby Grounds, Nakawa, Jinja Road, Uganda. The red marker ‘A’ is at the Ethiopian Village restaurant and bar, Muyenga Tank Hill, Uganda. The distance between the two attack sites is about 7 kilometres.

21 ‘Scores Killed in Sunday’s Twin Bomb Blasts in Uganda’, Voice of America News, 12 July 2010