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Similar to the Westgate Attack, Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen Targets the "14 Riverside" Compound in Nairobi

A Special Report by Shahada Agency

The Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen claimed responsibility for the attack on the 14 Riverside compound in the Westlands district of the Kenyan capital Nairobi on Tuesday.

The attack, which lasted for two consecutive days, started with the detonation of a car bomb at the compound followed with a number of Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen fighters storming the building, leading to the killing of many including a number of foreigners in addition to Kenyans.



The military spokesman of the Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen Sheikh Abdul Aziz Abu Musab said that the number of people killed in the attack, according to information received from inside the compound, reached 47 dead so far, including 17 white-skinned foreigners, while the Kenyan press reported 15 killed and admitted the killing one American and one British. However, the Kenyan Red Cross has reported 24 killed.

But eyewitnesses at the scene saw the arrival of a US armored vehicle, to transport the dead and wounded from the scene of the attack, and some reporters pointed out that most of the movers were Americans.

Details about the Attack

According to what eye witnesses, two cars had raced towards the compound at roughly 3 in the afternoon, then one of them blew up before the gate of the compound, and Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen fighters from the entered the compound.

The fighters were wearing military uniform and carrying arms and ammunition. And images from surveillance cameras showed them entering the compound directly after the blowing up of the gate.



And fire crews were occupied with putting out the fires that conflagrated in a number of cars parked in the compound's parking lot, without knowing the source for the fire, according to witnesses.



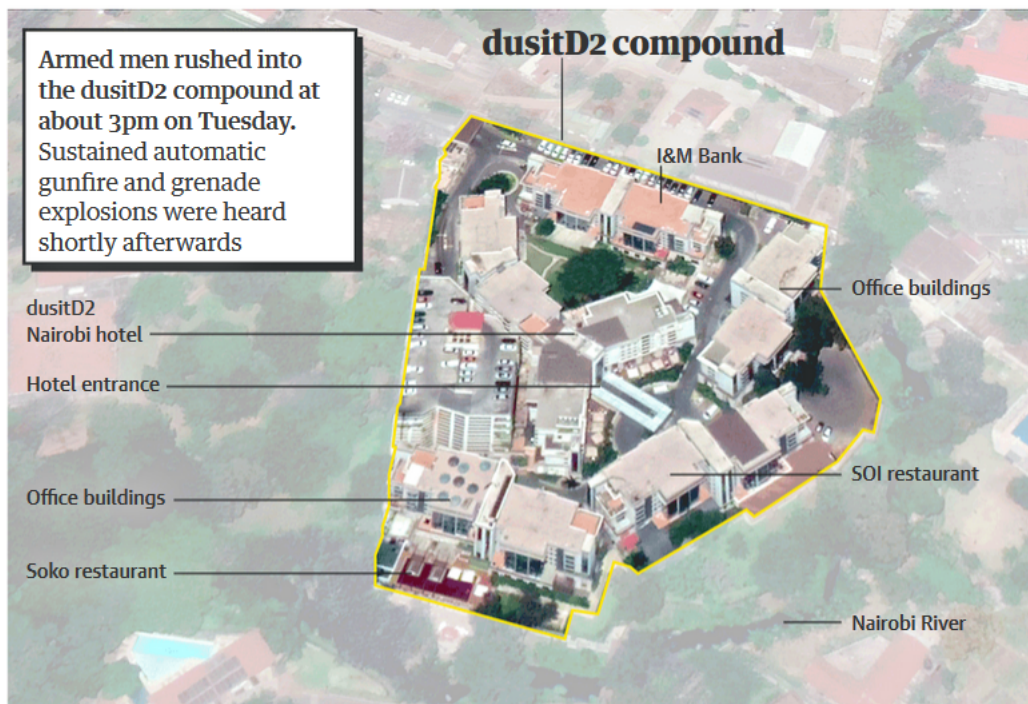
Journalists confirmed the arrival of Western troops to support the Kenyan forces in the clashes after the latter's inability to end it, and the bringing of helicopters as well as the arrival of US and British Special Forces.



The Target

The attack took place at the famous 14 Riverside complex in the upscale Westlands neighborhood of Nairobi, which houses offices and offices of American, British, French, Spanish and Japanese companies, as well as banks, hotels and luxury restaurants frequented by diplomats and Western citizens.

The neighborhood is densely populated with trees and is one of the most important tourist destinations for the Kenyan tourism sector. The site is frequented by foreigners and international actors.



Guardian graphic. Image: Google Earth

"I think the choice of the target was very smart, as many foreigners live in this region," said Stig Jarle Hansen, author of the book "Youth in Somalia," to NBC.

Kenyan statements

Kenyan Interior Minister Farid Matianji said on the same day that his forces "managed to secure the complex and that they were in the final stages of surveying the area, gathering evidence and documenting the results of the unfortunate events."

But eyewitnesses confirmed that the attack continued for the second day and continued with the sounds of violent clashes and explosions that were heard from the scene for the second day.

Kenyan police chief Joseph Point said it was a "coordinated attack." In reference to the force of attack in terms of planning and implementation.

Today, Uhuru Kenyatta has declared that the attack has ended and killed 14 people and four attackers. To increase the confusion in the authorization of Kenyan sources on the number of dead.

Meanwhile, Kenyan officials confirmed continued vigilance that Kenyan troops were not sure the building had become fully secure.

It seems that the Kenyan media and the statements of Kenyan officials follow the method of obscuring the news, and prevent the transparent coverage of the event, according to some Western journalists, and some observers attributed the reason for the fear of Kenya to get involved in the embarrassment of another media such as Kataib Media Foundation, which belongs to Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen, when it revealed the degree of confusion and the lying Kenyan officials during the news coverage of the Westgate attack, at which they presented contradicting voice and image, causing a big confusion among the Kenyan people and the government media.

Recognition of the killing of one American

The US State Department admitted the killing of one US citizen in the attack on the complex, "14 Riverside," in a statement quoted by US newspapers.

Although the State Department did not announce the name of the dead man, the NBC news agency revealed his identity based on his mother's statements to the media, Jason Spindler, whose mother said about him: "He was trying to make things more positive in the Third World. "

According to the newspaper, Spindler joined the Peace Corps after the September 2001 attacks.

Simulation of Westgate attack

The Kenyans had lived in the same horrific atmosphere of the famous West Gate attack in 2013 when al Shabaab gunmen stormed one of Nairobi's most prestigious shopping malls. Military and security intervention, including foreign support forces, failed to resolve the battle at the time, 69 and dozens were injured and the building destroyed.

It should be noted that the 14 Riverside compound in which the attack takes place in Nairobi is less than 2 miles or 3.2 kilometers from the site of the last Westgate attack.

In a clear message to Kenya that al-Shabaab has demonstrated the failure of security plans recently boasted by Kenyan government officials. It is again striking near Westgate at an unexpected place and time.



The attack came three years after the Mujahideen Youth Movement stormed a Kenyan military base in Somalia in El Adde, killing about 200 Kenyan army. The pictures of their bodies were published, their deaths were documented and the Kenyan army was defeated through the Shabaab's media, during which Kenya suffered heavy losses in lives, money and equipment.

Read the attack messages



It is worth mentioning that one of the attackers killed in the recent Nairobi attack was wearing a bandana with the inscription "Labyk ya Aqsa", which seems to indicate to the one of the Shabaab fighters messages that their fight is directly related to the issue of Palestine and al-Quds, which was recently declared by US President Donald Trump as the capital of the Israeli occupation state.

Note that the Harakat Al-Shabaab has issued a statement announcing that the Trump Declaration will not change the fact that Jerusalem for Muslims.
(<http://shahadanews.com/?p=1126> (<http://shahadanews.com/?p=1126>))

Since the deployment of the Kenyan army in October 2011 to Somalia, the number of attacks carried out by the Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen movement inside Kenya has increased significantly.

In Kenya, the Kenyan government warned of the consequences of its troops entering Somalia and confirmed that the Kenyan targets were a legitimate right until Kenya withdrew all its troops from the country.

The Shabaab warnings were not mere statements but launched a series of bloody attacks inside Kenya and opened a new fighting front in Kenyan territory, where it had taken control of villages and counties in Lamu, Garissa and Mandera several times.

On September 21, 2013, the group carried out its 80-hour attack on the Westgate Commercial Center in Nairobi, killing 67 people and destroying the building.

On April 2, 2015, the group denied an attack on Garissa University in the east of the country, killing 148 people.

In addition to a series of dozens of sporadic attacks that hit targets in Nairobi, Mombasa, Garissa and elsewhere.

The guerrilla war continues

The attack at 14 Riverside compound in Nairobi comes at a time when the Shabaab is waging a fierce guerrilla war inside Somali territory, where the Movement carried out yesterday, a large attack on nine military bases for African forces and government militias in the southern province of Shabelle, where they were able to gain control of two bases, as well as the forces of AMISOM and the militias lost lives and equipment.

Al-Shabaab is determined to continue targeting Kenya deep into its territory, which threatens the security of Kenya and threatens its economy as well, especially the tourism sector, which is one of Kenya's main economic sectors. It also threatens the treasury of the Kenyan state.

The movement confirmed that its attacks will not stop targeting Kenyans until the Kenyan government withdraws its troops from Somalia.

Will Kenya respond to the language of reason or will continue to receive strikes indefinitely at a time when AMISOM's forces have announced their full withdrawal from Somalia by 2020. This will be revealed in the coming days.

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