



# Two dark and horrific days in October brought Somalis closer together

BY MOHAMED ALI

**A** day of horror, a day when Alshabab struck the center of the city with the purpose of killing as many people as possible and a day when they succeeded in their objective, a day in which almost every Somali lost a relative or someone he knew, both the 29th of October this year and the 14th of October, five years ago, are eternally etched in Somalis hearts and minds.

It is now known for certain that 109 people lost their lives and nearly 300 more were wounded on the 29th, but on the 14th, explosions involving trucks claimed the lives of up to 600 persons. Although Al-Shabaab has not taken responsibility for either incident, it is certain that they are to blame since they are the only group that have the means, motivation, and expertise necessary to carry out an attack of this scale.

Alshabab doesn't normally claim

responsibility when they kill hundreds of civilians, but given the target of a heavily populated civilian area, it only implies that they intended to massacre as much as possible.

Alshabab doesn't generally claim responsibility to prevent a large revolt, as Somalis unite in their indignation at the most probable culprit, Al-Shabaab.

According to reports, al-Shabab, which has been losing territory as of late, is trying to fight back by timing this attack with a meeting between regional leaders and the Federal president, prime minister, and other senior officials in Mogadishu to discuss increased efforts to counter violent extremism, in particular that of al-Shabab.

## Horror days

Frenetic family members have been searching for missing members by peering inside corpse bags and behind plastic sheets at hospitals and other facilities. "We don't know whether he is dead or alive

but the last time we communicated he was around here," she a family member searching for a relative.

Witnesses to the attack were stunned. "I couldn't count the bodies on the ground due to the (number of) fatalities," said one witness. He revealed how the first blast hit the perimeter wall of the education ministry, where street vendors and money changers were located.

## Coming together

Surprisingly, both of the terrorist bombings carried out at Zoobe had the effect of bringing Somalis from all walks of life together for a rescue mission. This has strengthened their resolve to fight back against the terrorist organization.

The President visited the site and asked all Somalis to stand up for the rescue of their people who were affected by the terrorist bombings. He also asked them to come together to provide support and care to the families, children, and parents left



behind  
by the citizens

who were martyred.

President Hassan has also instructed the government to provide immediate medical assistance to the injured, some of whom are in serious condition. In his message, the president praised the various segments of the Somali population for donating blood to their own people. He also noted that water and food, clothes, and other essential supplies reached the injured, and he mentioned that he himself had donated blood to encourage the ongoing national rescue effort.

During a visit to the site, the President said this: "Our people who were massacred included mothers who were holding their children, fathers who were ill, students who were sent to school, businessmen who were struggling to provide for their families,

and teachers and physicians who were serving their people. Whoever perpetrated such a crime, what was his motivation, the faith he claims, and the humanity he might claim, should be held accountable."

#### Well wishers

There have been organizations striving to ensure that the injured get proper care. The average Somali has been doing all they can within their means. Others are delivering home-cooked meals to hospitalized injured patients. The Somali people have a long tradition of assisting one another in times of adversity, whether through assisting those affected by drought, flooding, war, or sickness.

Large sums of money have also been contributed by the Somali businesses, and the office of the prime minister has said that his government has taken a variety of initiatives, some of which include, OPM

office setting aside one million dollars to the relief fund for the victims of the barbarous bombings that were aimed at innocent people by terrorists. These explosives were carried out by the terrorists.

The government has also assured that it will sponsor the education of the children left behind by the martyrs who died in explosions, in accordance with the promise made by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud when he visited the site of the explosion.

Additionally, it has been ordered that all Ministries and other government agencies engage in the continuing emergency in their full capacity. The incident has also encouraged the government to come up with concrete measures to ensure security and to make urgent adjustments in accordance with the current situation in the nation.

#### Donations

Leading Somali telecommunications business Hormuud has contributed \$200,000, while Dahabshiil Group has contributed \$500,000. Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars will be used to assist individuals wounded in the assaults, and two hundred and fifty thousand dollars will go to small merchants who lost their enterprises and hence their means of subsistence. The electrical provider firm BECO has contributed a donation of 50,000 dollars, while the Astaan Company has contributed 20,000 dollars.

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### War on terror

The terror gang is now being targeted by a continuous offensive, and the Somali people desire to eliminate Alshabab has only been strengthened as a result of this assault. Expert says, this horrifying incident, which has been condemned on a worldwide scale, will attract attention to the continuing battle with al-Shabaab, which has been going on for 10 years.

According to the Prime Minister, the explosions that took place today are an illustration of the larger objective of the terror group, which is to destroy the Somali country as a whole, without making any distinctions between children, youth, women, and the old.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed that the government is dedicated to dismantling the terrorist organization that is now in disarray, and he urged the general populace to collaborate in order to foil the plot being hatched by the terrorists.

In recent weeks, the group has suffered territorial losses as well as losses in the number of fighters it employs as a result of the Somali government's declaration of all-out war against the group, which is being supported by forces from the

African Union, the United States, and several local clan militias. In addition, the authorities have taken a number of steps to limit Al Shabab's access to financial resources, have threatened to shut down companies that pay taxes and extortion fees to the organization, and have issued a directive that restricts how local news outlets can report on Shabab's activities.

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