

# PARADISE HOTEL AND CIVILIAN AIRLINE ATTACK

**Situation:** Israelis and Kenyans Killed in Seaside Resort.

On 28 November 2002, terrorists used a suicide vehicle-borne IED to attack the Israeli-owned Paradise Hotel in the seaside resort city of Mombasa, Kenya. The attack devastated the hotel and killed thirteen tourists and local nationals. Only moments later, two shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles narrowly missed an Israeli-chartered aircraft taking off from a nearby airport. The events of 28 November were an obvious attack on Israeli interests, one of America's most stalwart allies in the Middle East. The attacks occurred on the one day of the week that Israeli-chartered aircraft flew in and out of Mombasa. The attackers sought to kill the Israeli tourists that had just arrived by plane and were checking into their hotel and others that were departing on the same plane returning to Tel-Aviv.



The attacks in Mombasa employed new tactics, techniques, and procedures. They were the first attempt by a terrorist cell to down a civilian aircraft with surface-to-air missiles. These November 2002 attacks also demonstrate the ability of terrorists to carry out simultaneous attacks against multiple targets with different tactics and weapons.



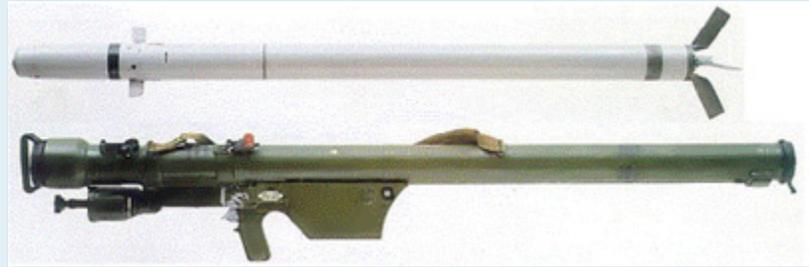
According to an eyewitness report from a hotel security guard, the vehicle used to attack the Paradise Hotel was a typical white SUV. A few minutes before the attack, the vehicle drove by the front gate of the hotel in a normal fashion. About 10 to 15 minutes later, the vehicle, with three occupants, came back down the same road in reverse at full speed. Once it passed the hotel, the driver stopped and drove forward, ramming through the hotel's entrance gate.

Upon reaching the steps to the lobby it exploded with devastating effects. The blast shattered windows, hurled trees hundreds of feet, and tore the roof from a large section of the hotel. Many people seeing the SUV crash through the gate dove for cover, but the attack still claimed

the lives of 3 Israeli tourists, including two children, and ten Kenyan nationals. At least 40 additional people received injuries during the attack.

If you witness activity that may indicate a threatening situation, warn others and get out of the area immediately. Resist the urge to be a spectator and be mindful of the possibility of a secondary attack.

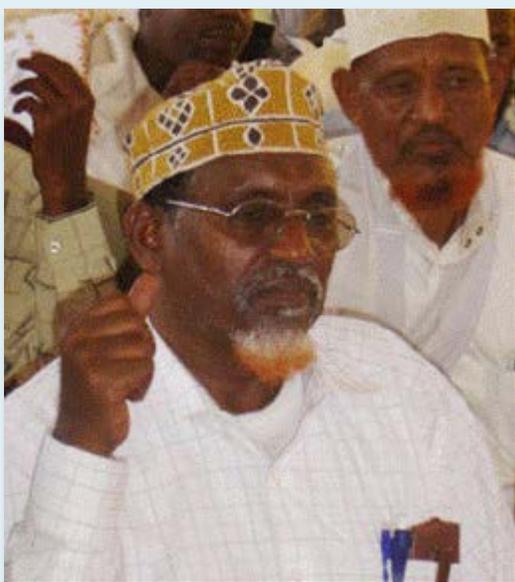
Within a few minutes of the attack on the Paradise Hotel, terrorists launched two should-fired surface-to-air missiles at an Israeli-chartered Boeing 757



passenger jet taking off from Mombasa's Moi International airport. The Soviet-made Strela 2 (SA-7) missiles narrowly missed the ascending aircraft. Had the infrared-seeking missiles hit their target, they might have brought the 757 down, potentially killing all 271 people on board.

While there were no direct eyewitness accounts of the terrorists firing the surface-to-air missiles, one person reported seeing a suspicious white jeep in the area of the airport shortly before the attack.

Terrorists may attack multiple targets simultaneously. If you are in the general area of a terrorist attack, you should consider taking additional precautions to protect yourself, family, and unit members. At the minimum, you should increase your vigilance and be on the lookout for suspicious activities that might indicate an additional attack.



Following the attacks, several terrorist organizations claimed responsibility including Al Qaeda, the Government of Universal Palestine in Exile, and the Army of Palestine. While responsibility has never been definitively determined, several intelligence agencies believe Al-Ittihad al Islamiya was involved, a Somali-based terrorist organization with links to Al Qaeda and possibly connected to the 1998 bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi. Al Qaeda may have aided Al-Ittihad al Islamiya in planning the attack.

Prior to the attacks, many intelligence analysts believed Mombasa was one of Al Qaeda's East African bases. Leaders in the coastal area, with its heavy Muslim population, proclaim sympathy for the plight of the Palestinian people and oppose

many policies of the Israeli government. In addition, prior to the November 2002 attacks, several governments had issued strong warnings to its citizens to avoid travel to Kenya, and Mombasa specifically, due to the possibility of terrorist attacks.

Be aware of your environment. Prior to traveling to a new location, research the area and try to learn a little about the culture and ideology of the local population. An attacker's perception of your nationality, religious affiliation, and political views may identify you as a target.