

ABUJA BOMB BLAST**Suicide bomber blows up Abuja UN House**

- 25 dead
- FG says it's an attack on global peace
- Hospital appeals for blood donation

BY ENIMA UJAH,
KINGSLEY OMONOBI
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The United Nations Building in Abuja came under a massive bomb attack when a suicide bomber rammed into the building in his car, yesterday morning, killing at least 25 people and injuring over 40.

As at 2.35 pm, a total of 14 dead had been recorded; eight corpses had been counted at the National Hospital Mortuary and another six at the Garki Hospital Morgue. The number of those injured was still being collated while rescue work was on-going.

The car blew into pieces along with those in the reception at the time of the incident. Security officers at the entrance and the reception who tried in vain to stop the bomber suffered worst casualties.

The suicide attacker drove the Honda salon car at top speed, ignoring the speed bumps, with headlights fully on and rammed into the first gate of the exit point of the UN building, uprooted it, continued to the 2nd gate, uprooted it and drove into the reception hall of the building where the suicide bomber detonated the explosive.

The impact of the explosion caused the ground floor, 1st floor and 2nd floor of the UN building to cave in, with several bodies of staff on these floors immediately blown into pieces while the other floors had several parts of the building collapsing on one another and on staff of UN agencies working there.

Saturday Vanguard gathered that four policemen attached to the UN building for security duties but who were not allowed the use of firearms in accordance with UN rules, were seriously injured when the blast went off. The same could not be said of the privately arranged UN security personnel manning the gates into the complex.

It was as if the bomber knew that only one part of the gate was always open where both incoming and outgoing vehicles followed for screening purposes. He then made for the exit gate which was permanently locked, smashed into the

gates and before the security staff could react, drove into the reception. The body of the bomber was later recovered in parts as it was split into three parts by the explosives.

Moments after the blast occurred, the Commissioner of Police, FCT, Mike Zuokumor, Guards Brigade Commander, Brigadier General Atewe, Commissioner of Police, Federal Operations, Haruna John, the CP in charge Police Bomb Squad, Ambrose Aisabor, CP Anti-Terrorist Squad, Mshelbwala, CP in charge Mobile Police, Philemon Leha all moved to the scene with police personnel to commence mobilization of evacuation, comb the scene for any other explosives and commence investigation.

At about 11am, a 5-man American military team, made up of explosive ordinance detonation experts (EOD), from the nearby US embassy, was seen moving into the building, examining the charred remains of the Honda car used for the suicide and collecting some items from the scene believed to be parts of the type of bomb used in the attack.

The Deputy Inspector General of Police, second-in-command to the IGP, Mrs. Ivy Uche Okoronkwo, DIG in charge, FCID, Ganiyu

Dawodu, DIG in charge, Training, Abubakar Sadauna, DIG in charge 'F' Dept. DIG Yesufu, AIG Zone 7, and AIG Intelligence (Yar'adua), were also at the UN building to see things for themselves.

Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Azubuike Ihejirika, who had just arrived from Kaduna, also visited the UN House at about 12.15pm where he was briefed about what happened by his officers, including Maj-General Nasamu, Commander AHQ Garrison and Commander Guards Brigade, Brigadier General Atewe.

The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General (SRSG), Mrs. Margaret Log, who arrived the country on Wednesday, visited the UN building on Thursday and spent some hours discussing with UN personnel on several issues affecting their work and that of Nigeria's peacekeeping commitments to UN missions around the world.

Parts of the car used by the bomber was said to have gone up in flames immediately after the blast which also destroyed virtually all the glass windows of the building. The entire ground floor adjoining the reception was a complete mess of blood, water, sand and dust.

The impact was so strong that even buildings as far as



Group Chief Operating Officer of Globacom, Mohamed Jameel, (right) exchanging documents with the Chairman of Afripay, Obinna Ofuma, at the signing in Lagos yesterday of an MOU in readiness for the commercial launch of Glo Text Cash and UBA's U-MO, Nigeria's first mobile money transfer service. With them are the Managing Director of Afripay, Yinka Adedeji (2nd right) and the Deputy Managing Director designate of UBA, Kennedy Uzoka.

400 metres got their windows also shattered.

Fire fighters from within the vicinity of the building which is situated in the exclusive diplomatic zone of the Central Area and those from the Area 10 Garki Headquarters of the Federal Fire Service, the heavily guarded American Embassy, which was nearby, as well as security men, were some of the first to arrive at the scene.

However, they could not do much other than to put out the fire from the car and the reception and the havoc had already been done.

With a short period, ambulances from various organisations: the Road Safety, National Hospital, which is situated opposite the building, the American Embassy, National Emergency Management Agency, police, Civil Defence, Nigeria Air Force

were everywhere rushing the dead and the injured to the National Hospital.

Dead bodies and parts of those who were blown to pieces were still being conveyed to the National Hospital with ambulances shuttling between the scene and the hospital for well over two hours.

The injured were rushed to the over-flowing emergency ward, while corpses and bags of parts of those blown to pieces were taken to the mortuary.

Doctors and other hospital workers had hard time trying to control the crowd of sympathizers and relatives of those who work in the UN House which houses all UN organs in the Federal Capital.

Man loses both eyes to blast

One of the victims of the UN House bombing lost

both eyes to the blast. Doctors at the National Hospital, Abuja, disclosed that the man had his two eyes blown up and they had to operate on him to, at least, save his life.

It was also learnt that 80 per cent of those injured had broken bones as a result of the strong impact of the bomb.

Hospital appeals for blood

The National Hospital management has appealed to the public to donate blood to victims of the UN House blast in Abuja, yesterday.

Doctors and other hospital staff came out to the entrance of the emergency ward on several occasions to plead with sympathisers who gathered in the hospital to generously donate blood in order to save the lives of victims who had lost much blood.

• • • **It's assault on global peace — Jonathan**

...Calls for more rescue efforts

...As security heightens in FCT

BY DANIEL IDONOR,
Abuja

PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan has reacted to the attack on the United Nations Building in Abuja, saying, "the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria utterly condemns the barbaric, senseless and cowardly assault."

A statement by Dr Reuben Abati, Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, said "the President believes that the attack is a most despicable assault on the United Nations' objectives of global peace and security, and the sanctity

of human life to which Nigeria wholly subscribes."

He extended his sincere condolences to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon and all members of the United Nations family who lost their loved ones in the heinous attack.

President Jonathan reaffirmed the Federal government's commitment to vigorously combat the incursion of all forms of terrorism into Nigeria, and reassured Nigerians and the international community that his administration would spare no effort to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The President also directed all relevant government agencies to assist in the search and rescue effort at the UN Building, and ordered heightened security across the Federal Capital Territory.

He asked Nigerians to cooperate fully with the

government in its efforts to expose the desperate elements who promote violence, terrorism and division in the country.

Jonathan declared that, "We are once again reminded of the international character of terrorism and its indiscriminate targeting of innocent civilians."

He affirmed Nigeria's determination to continue to play its part in the global

effort to eradicate the scourge of terrorism in all its ramifications.

He therefore urged all Nigerians and foreigners resident in the country to go about their normal affairs with the full assurance that the Federal Government and its law enforcement agencies will continue working diligently to ensure the full protection of lives and property in the country.

UN condoles victims, sends delegates to Abuja

BY UDUMA KATU

UNITED Nations Secretary general, Ban Ki Moon yesterday condoled with families of victims of the bomb blast on the UN headquarters

yesterday describing as "an assault on those who devote their lives to helping others."

In a press statement signed by Mr. Charles Nosa. Osazuwa, Officer-In-Charge, United Nations

Information Centre, Lagos, Ki Moon said, "These buildings house 26 humanitarian and development agencies of the United Nations family."

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