

Satellite Sentinel Project

Explosions in Khartoum
satsentinel.org



Situation Report: Explosions in Khartoum, Sudan

October 26, 2012

Explosions in Khartoum

At approximately 12:30 a.m. local time on October 24, 2012, a series of explosions rocked Sudan's capital, Khartoum.

Within 20 minutes of the conflagration, the Satellite Sentinel Project, or SSP, communicated with eyewitnesses on the ground, who reported seeing flames, smoke, and “many explosions” in the Al Shagara neighborhood of southern Khartoum in the vicinity of an oil storage facility, a military depot, and an ammunitions plant. SSP received reports that the sky was “red from fireballs,” and that three fighter jets were “flying fast around southern Khartoum, to the northwest and northeast,” as a fourth, larger plane flew to the northeast at a much higher altitude.

SSP's sources said that many citizens flooded the streets in search of news. At approximately 12:51 a.m., the Governor of Khartoum, Abdelrahman Al-Khidir, stated, “Until this moment, we do not know the cause of the explosions.”¹

Hours later, Ahmad Bilal Osman, the Minister of Culture and Information, stated in a news conference in Khartoum that “60 percent of [the] Al-Yarmouk ammunition factory was completely destroyed while 40 percent was partially destroyed.”² Osman claimed the facility was attacked by Israeli jets.³

SSP's comparative analysis of DigitalGlobe imagery acquired on October 12, 2012 and on October 25 confirms the presence of an ammunitions plant at the Yarmouk Base, located approximately 11 kilometers southwest of the Khartoum International Airport, and confirms that large explosions took place within the base.

The explosions were centered on a site that, as recently as October 12, consisted of a 60-meter-long, shed-type building and approximately 40 shipping containers, each 6.5 meters long, stacked nearby. The October 25 image reveals evidence of massive explosions at this site and no evidence remains of the 60-meter-long building or the shipping containers. While SSP cannot confirm that the shipping containers seen on October 12 remained at the site on October 24, analysis of the imagery is consistent with the presence of highly volatile cargo in the epicenter of the explosions.

The explosions destroyed two buildings and heavily damaged at least 21 others, all within 700 meters of the epicenter. Visible damage includes roof panels blown off and scattered around the area, windows blown out, and walls knocked down. Nothing remains of the 60-meter building, which appears to have been pulverized in the blast.

Fields adjacent to the military depot appear to be burned, but there is no indication of fire damage at the nearby Central Gas and Oil Company depot.

At least six impact craters, each approximately 16 meters wide, are visible near the epicenter of the explosions and are consistent with craters created by air-delivered munitions. If the explosions resulted from a rocket or missile attack against material stored in the shipping containers, then it was an effective surgical strike that totally destroyed any container that may have remained and the adjacent 60-meter-long, shed-style building.

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enough

DIGITALGLOBE®

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References

1. Al Rakoba, “Big explosions rattle Yarmouk military factory in Khartoum.” October 24, 2012. Available at: <http://www.alrakoba.net/news-action-show-id-75440.htm>
2. *Sudan Tribune*, “Sudan accuses Israel of bombing military factory, talks of ‘inside job’”. October 25, 2012. Available at: <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article44324>
3. Al Jazeera English, “Khartoum fire blamed on Israeli bombing.” October 25, 2012. Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/10/20121024142531802810.html>

Yarmouk Military Base



Central Gas and Oil Plant

Explosion Site

Ammunition Plant

Yarmouk Military Depot

0 125 250 375 500 Meters

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Yarmouk Military Base, Khartoum, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, October 25, 2012

Burned Areas



Explosion Site

Burned Area

Burned Area

0 125 250 375 500 Meters

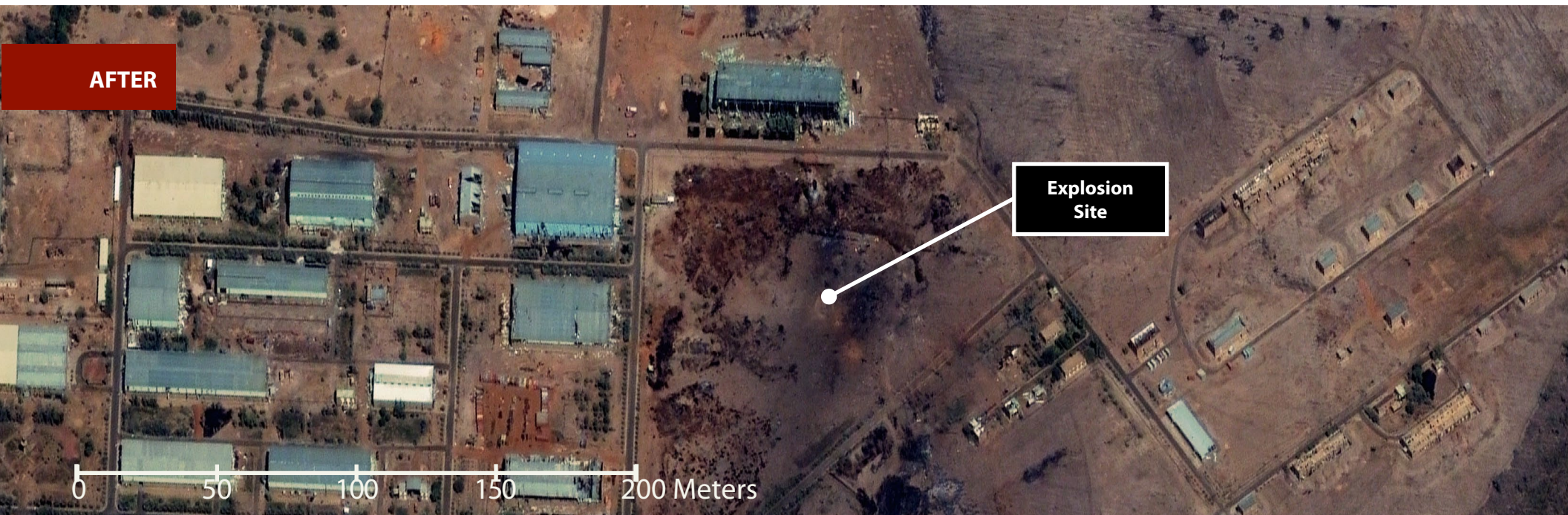
DIGITALGLOBE

Yarmouk Military Base, Khartoum, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Color Infrared Image, October 26, 2012



BEFORE

Shipping containers
and building



AFTER

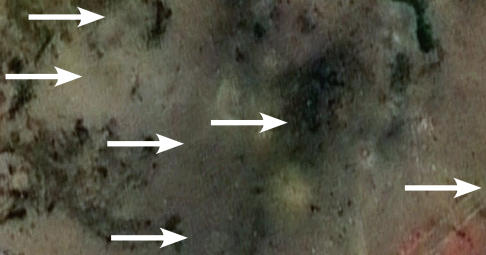
Explosion
Site

0 50 100 150 200 Meters

Explosion Site, Yarmouk Military Depot, Khartoum, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, October 12, 2012 (Upper Image)

Explosion Site, Yarmouk Military Depot, Khartoum, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, October 26, 2012 (Lower Image)

Impact Craters
(16 Meters Wide) →



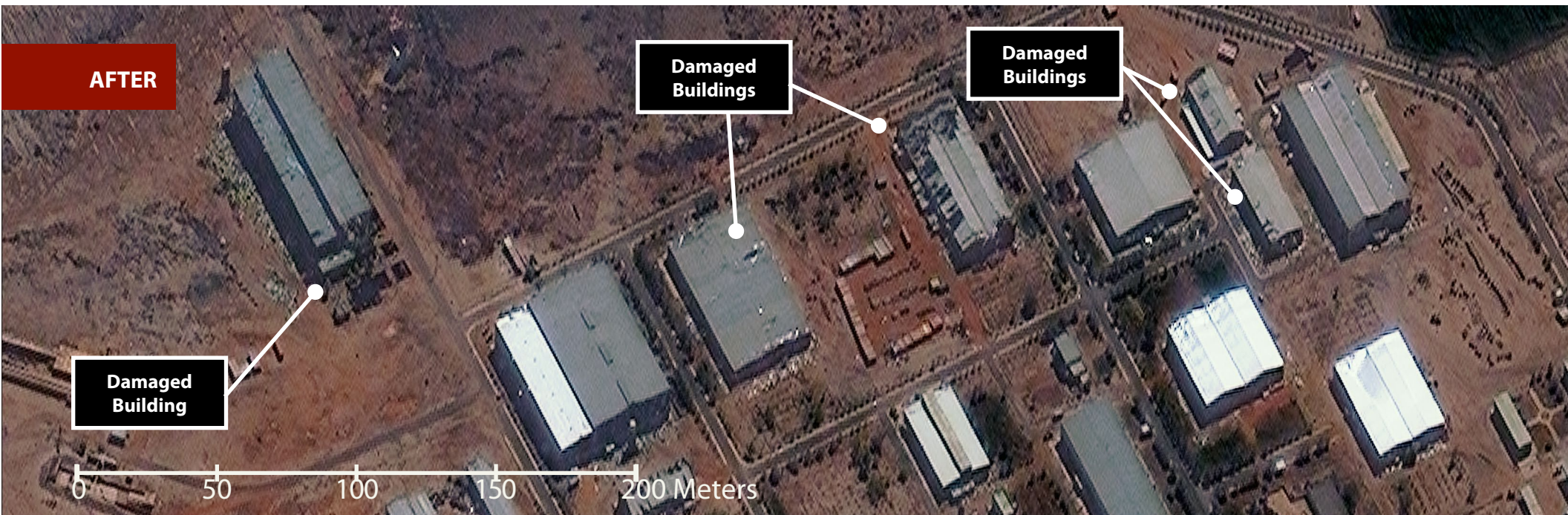
0 125 250 375 500 Meters

DIGITALGLOBE®

Yarmouk Military Base, Khartoum, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Color Infrared Image, October 26, 2012



BEFORE



AFTER

Damaged Buildings

Damaged Buildings

Damaged Building

0 50 100 150 200 Meters

Yarmouk Military Depot, Khartoum, Sudan

DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, October 12, 2012 (Upper Image)

Yarmouk Military Depot, Khartoum, Sudan

DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, October 25, 2012 (Lower Image)

**Yarmouk
Ammunition Plant**



**Damaged
Buildings**

**Explosion
Site**

**Damaged
Buildings**

0 50 100 150 200 Meters