

Militancy/Terrorism

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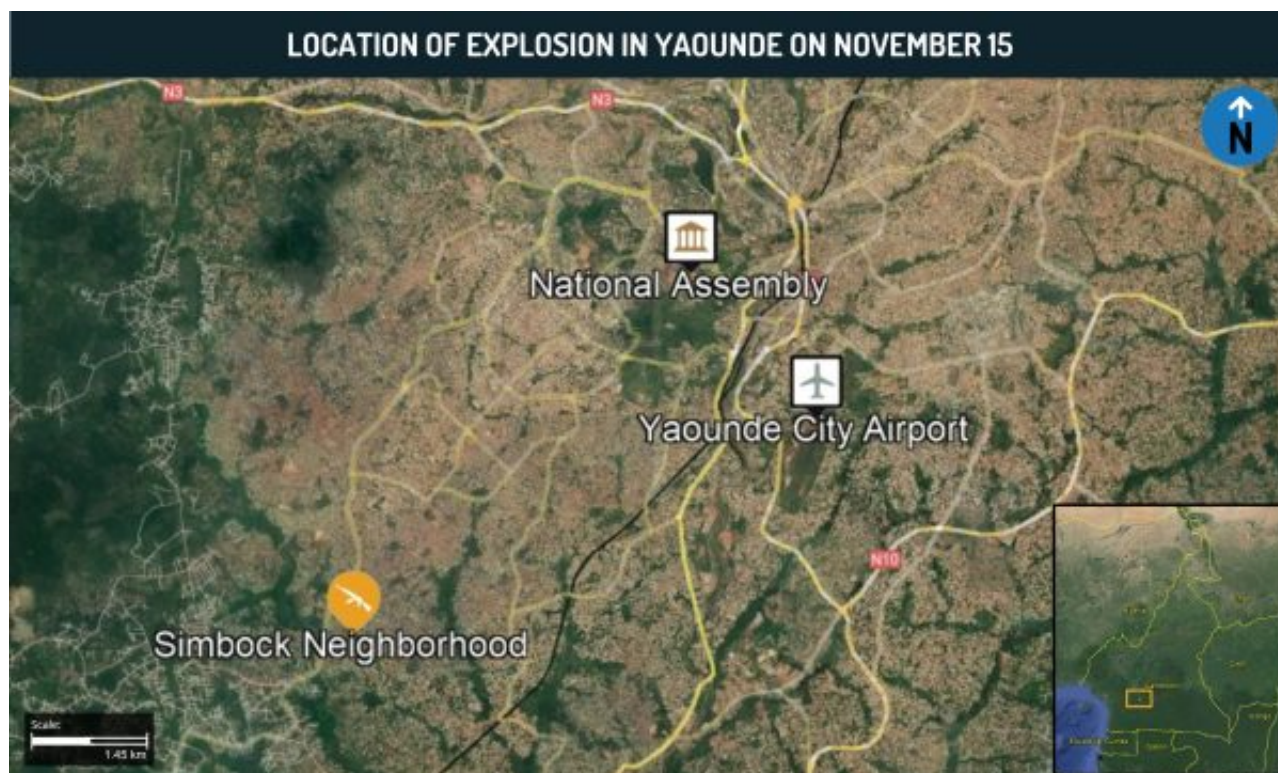
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Cameroon Alert: At least one explosion recorded in Yaounde's Simbock neighborhood on November 15

Please be advised

- Reports indicate that at least one explosion took place at a school in Yaounde's Simbock neighborhood, located in the city's western outskirts, on November 15.
- The explosion reportedly took place at a boarding school operated by a local church that belongs to the Anglophone community in the capital, causing damages to the administrative section of the school.
- Unconfirmed reports suggest that another explosion occurred at a private residence in the same neighborhood.
- Reports indicate that in both cases, the explosion was caused by IEDs planted in advance by suspected Anglophone separatists.
- No group has taken responsibility for the attack and no casualties were reported.
- The security forces reportedly reacted to the explosion location and launched investigations.



Assessments & Forecast

1. This comes after a relative lull in separatists' attacks in Yaounde since four attacks between June-[November 2020](#), with their last IED attack outside the Anglophone regions taking place in Douala in [January](#). Considering the details of the latest attack, it is likely that these explosions were indeed related to the ongoing Anglophone secessionist conflict. This illustrates the continued effort of Anglophone separatists or those who support their cause to launch attacks, as well as their ability to have access to explosives and assemble crude IEDs. However, the fact that no attacks took place in Yaounde for a year, combined with the limited damage and the fact that the attack occurred in a relatively remote area of the capital, all suggest that the involved individuals or cells have relatively limited capabilities. This is both in terms of the quality of the explosive device as well as with regards to their ability to access more central and secure areas of the city.
2. The fact that the explosion took place at a facility serving the local Anglophone community is highly notable, given that it is not expected for separatists or sympathizers to attack fellow Anglophones. This may reflect a perception harbored by the assailants of the involved church cooperating with the authorities and thus being a legitimate target. It is also possible that the explosion was accidental with the assailants using the church facilities to hide from the authorities. This scenario may be bolstered by the fact that those responsible for the 2020 explosions have never been apprehended with the police suspecting the local Anglophone community of having cooperated and assisted those assailants.
3. Given that approximately a year has passed since the recent IED attack in Yaounde, it is possible that the security forces' alertness regarding a potential Anglophone separatists' attack was relatively relaxed, and this might have facilitated the attack to take place. **FORECAST:** Regardless, the security forces are likely to increase their alertness and further bolster their presence. This is likely to include multiple checkpoints across the capital, particularly around areas inhabited by the Anglophone community, as well as arrests, including arbitrary arrests of Anglophone civilians. Considering that the assailants remain at large, and given that they still likely have access to explosives, further sporadic attacks may recur over the coming weeks and months, although with the inflicted damage remaining relatively low due to the crudeness of the IEDs.

Recommendations

Travel to Yaounde and Douala can continue while exercising increased vigilance and adhering to stringent security precautions regarding criminal and security threats.