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At Least 70 Killed in Damascus Bombings

By Jason Ditz

May 10, 2012 @ 8:50 am In [News](#) | [8 Comments](#)

A pair of powerful car bombs were detonated outside of a key intelligence compound tore the front off the building and caused havoc on the highway nearby, [killing at least 70 people, including a large number of civilians, and wounded 372 others.](#)

It was the largest single attack against the Assad regime since protests began in March 2011. No group has yet claimed responsibility, but state media blamed Saudi-backed terrorist factions for the strike. [The Free Syrian Army denied any role.](#)

There are a number of different terrorist factions operating within Syria on behalf of the rebels, [including al-Qaeda in Iraq \(AQI\)](#), which has reportedly sent large numbers of fighters across the border at the behest of Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Early UN statements were careful not to blame the rebels for the large number of civilian deaths, saying only that “it is not going to solve any problems.” The US State Department issued a demand that the Syrian government immediately stop all violence in the country.