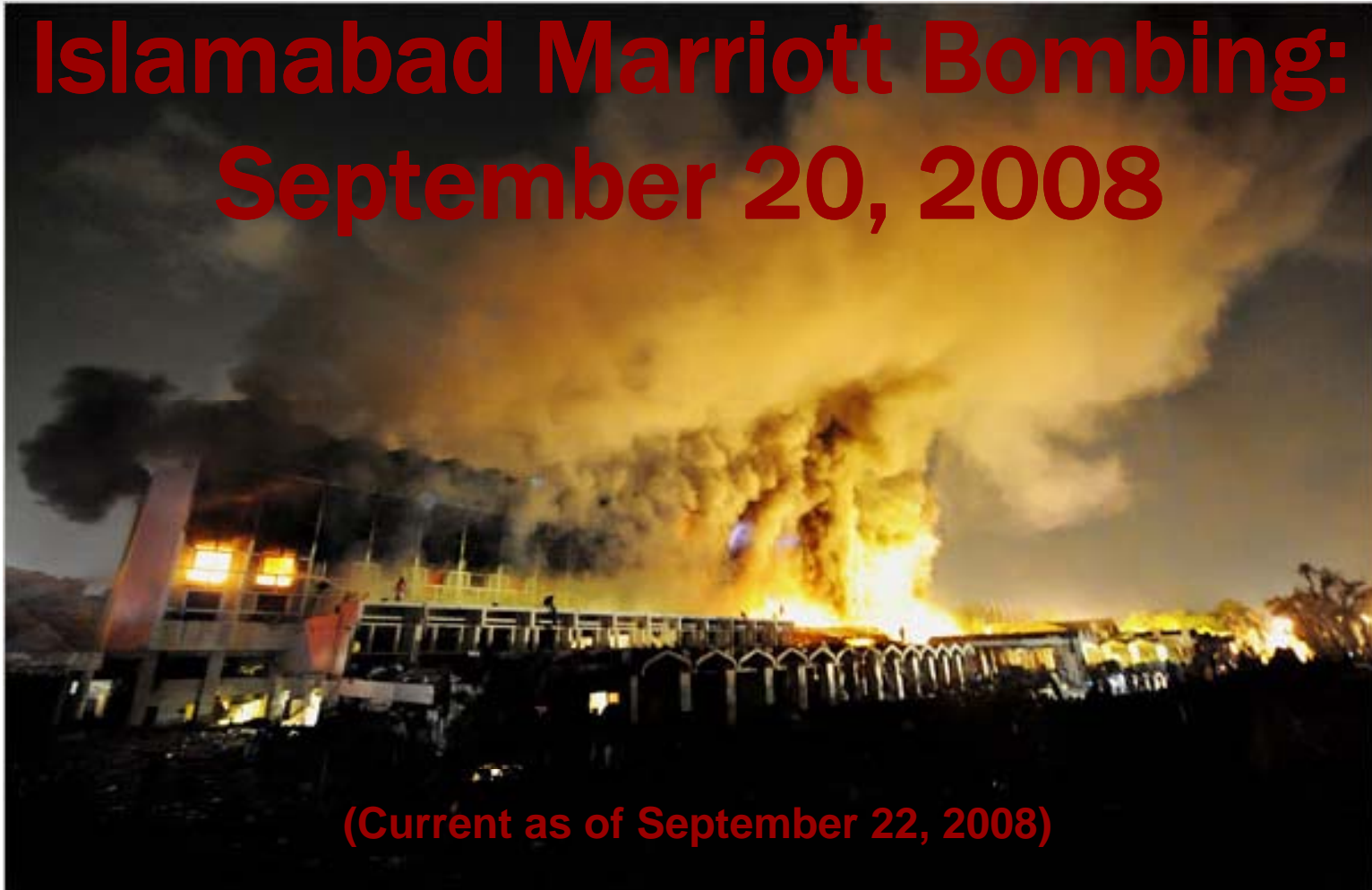


# Islamabad Marriott Bombing: September 20, 2008



**(Current as of September 22, 2008)**

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## Marriott Hotel Bombing

### ATTACK DETAILS:

- At approximately 2000 local time, a dump truck rammed the security gate at the Marriott, Islamabad.
- While stopped at the gate, the driver exploded a suicide vest, lighting the truck on fire.
- Mortars, other explosives cook off for approximately three minutes, while security organizes and attempts to stop fire.
- Minutes later, the main explosive of about 600kg of RDX and TNT, combined with an aluminum powder to accelerate the flame.



# Marriott Hotel Bombing



Main blast resulted in crater 59-feet wide and 24-feet deep.

Natural Gas line ruptured, ignited, burning top floors of hotel.

Blast, fire, shockwave devastated the entrance, hampering rescue.

# Marriott Hotel Bombing

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

- Sprinkler System on top floors failed due to excessive heat.
- Shock wave blew out windows, for hundreds of meters around.
- Victims were taken to the following clinics:
  - Shifa (primary hospital where victims were taken)
  - Polyclinic
  - Pakistan Institute of Medical Science
  - Capital clinic
- Fifty-seven dead, 233 injured.



## Marriott Hotel Bombing

### PERPETRATORS:

- No group has claimed of responsibility for the attack, although most link the attack to al-Qa'ida or Pakistani Taliban.
  - Pakistani Taliban have denied involvement in the bombing.
  - No indication that Marriott received any warning of attack.
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- In addition, senior al-Qa'ida leader Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, who claimed the June Danish Embassy bombing in Islamabad, **recently threatened additional attacks against western interests in Pakistan** in a video timed to the recent anniversary of the September 11 attacks.
  - Pakistan authorities have arrested between 3-5 suspects from the city of Kharian, Punjab, including the imam of a mosque, Qari Muhammad Ali.



Mustafa Abu al-Yazid



## Marriott Hotel Bombing

### TIMING OF THE ATTACK:

- The blast occurred hours after Pakistan's new president, Asif Ali Zardari, told parliament the country will continue its fight against terrorism and extremism.
- The explosion occurred a few hundred yards from the prime minister's house, where high-level government officials were dining after the president's address to parliament.
  - That dinner was moved from the Marriott at the last moment, but there is no indication Pakistani authorities were aware of the attack.
- The attack occurred during peak dinner time hours when the hotel is typically crowded. Patrons included Muslims breaking the Ramadan fast.
- Indian High Commission was scheduled to host a Republic Day function later in the evening.
- In addition to coinciding with ongoing violence in the tribal areas, this attack follows an unprecedented rise in attacks in Pakistan's urban areas.



# Marriott Hotel Bombing

## PRIVATE SECTOR RESPONSE:

- OSAC confirms that a number of U.S. companies in Islamabad, Karachi, and elsewhere in South Asia and the Middle East are on highest alert and have increased their security levels accordingly.
- Nearby facilities, including an office building housing several American companies, have reported extensive structural damage.
- Companies in major cities throughout *South Asia*, including Islamabad and Karachi, have alerted their companies senior directors and taken the following actions:
  - Placed all personnel and facilities on high alert and reviewed internal procedures.
  - Increased the number of security personnel on duty and reminded them to remain vigilant.
  - Hotels in the region have fully deployed all security equipment, emplaced security restrictions, such as closing underground parking, limiting hotel access to essential employees and registered guests and performing 100 percent scans on luggage.
  - Canceled non-essential travel within Pakistan and to-and-from Pakistan.
  - Some employees working from home.
  - One company confirms increased patrols of Pakistani military 'rangers' outside their location.
  - Convened fully staffed command centers throughout South Asia.
  - British Airways has suspended flight to Islamabad.



## Marriott Hotel Bombing

### PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES' RESPONSE:

- Pakistan's authorities have condemned the attacks and put all major cities in Pakistan on high-alert and have increased security patrols around high-profile Pakistani government and western targets throughout Pakistan.
- One OSAC constituent with high-visibility in Karachi confirms having difficulty in getting local security services to enhance security of their facility.

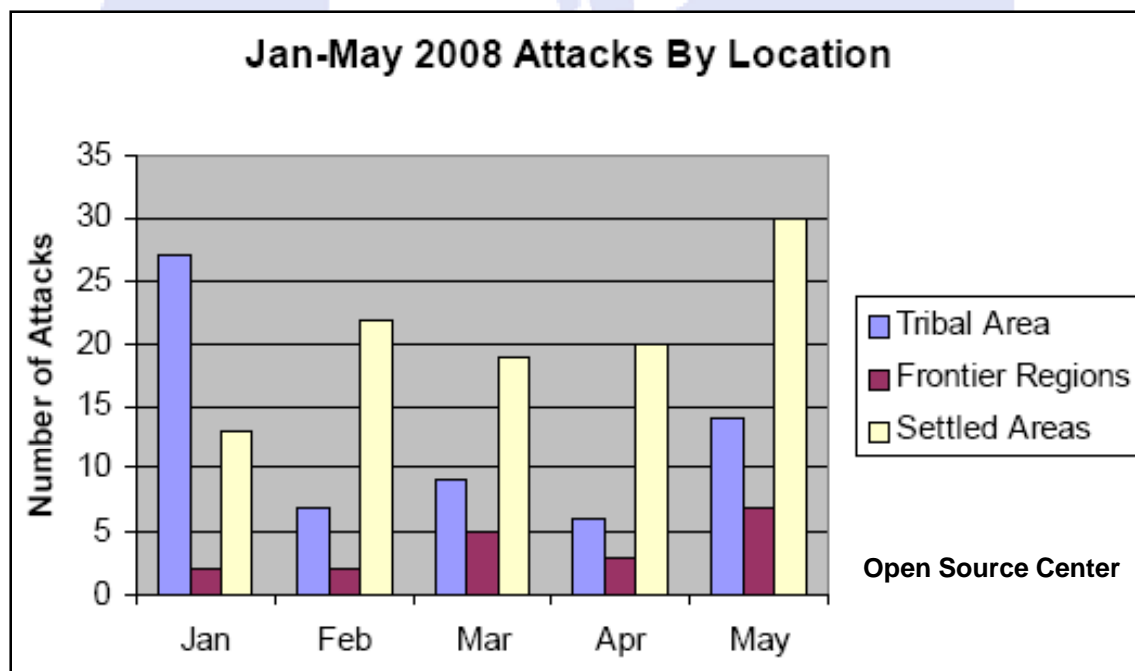




# Marriott Hotel Bombing

## Attack Location Trends in 2008 :

- Militant attack patterns since January 2008 have markedly demonstrated increased targeting of Pakistan's settled areas. Of the 186 militant attacks from January to May 2008, 43 attacks were located in or near major cities.**



# Marriott Hotel Bombing

## Timeline of Major Attacks in 2008

- **January 10:** Suicide bomber outside court in Lahore detonates explosive vest - 16 police and three bystanders dead.
- **February 9:** An explosion at an election rally in northwestern Pakistan leaves 25 people dead. The attack is believed to be targeting members of the secular ANP party, the leader of which was assassinated two days earlier.
- **February 29:** Approximately 38 people killed and 75 injured when a suicide bomber blew himself up in Mingora in Swat District during the funeral of a senior police officer.
- **March 2:** 40 people die when a suicide bomber attacked a traditional tribal meeting in the Darra Adam Kheil region, near Peshawar.
- **March 11:** Twin suicide car bomb strikes government security office in Lahore - 24 dead.
- **March 15:** Bomb thrown over the wall of an Italian restaurant in Islamabad, a favorite hangout for foreigners. Four FBI agents killed.
- **June 2:** A suicide bomber blows up a car outside the Danish embassy in Islamabad killing at least six people and wounding about 20.
- **July 6:** Suicide bomber kills at least 18 in Islamabad near the Red Mosque.
- **July 7:** A string of seven explosions occurred within a radius 15-20 km north of Karachi.



# Warden Message: Marriott Islamabad Bombing

- U.S. Embassy Islamabad released the following Warden Message on September 21:
- This Warden Notice is to alert American citizens that, after an assessment of the current security situation in Islamabad following the bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Downtown Islamabad on September 20, U.S. Embassy personnel have been advised that until further notice they should limit their movement to travel to and from the Embassy and to shopping for essential items only.

The U.S. Embassy will be open for business during normal business hours on Monday, September 22.

- Click here for full Warden Message:  
<https://www.osac.gov/Reports/report.cfm?contentID=90748>
- Warden Message: Marriott Islamabad Bombing (September 20):  
<http://www.osac.gov/Reports/report.cfm?contentID=90730>



# Marriott Hotel Bombing

## ASSESSMENT

- At this time, U.S., Pakistani and private sector representatives are performing 100 percent accountability checks of their personnel. There continues to be wild speculation regarding who carried out the attack, although most analysts are agreeing that the attack is linked to al-Qa'ida.
- Considering the scale and gravity of the attack, OSAC constituents have instituted extraordinary security precautions (see slide 6) until more information becomes available.
- OSAC will continue to closely monitor the situation.



## For Further Information

### Reports:

- [Warden Message: Islamabad Bombing Update](#)
- [Warden Message: Marriott Bombing in Islamabad, Pakistan](#)
- [Pakistan Bombings: July 6 & 7, 2008](#)
- [Warden Message: Police Seize Three Explosive Laden Vehicles in Rawalpindi](#)
- [Warden Message: Police Seize Three Explosive Laden Vehicles in Rawalpindi](#)
- [Warden Message: Car Bomb Near Danish Embassy, Pakistan](#)
- [Warden Message: Pakistan Security Guidance](#)
- [Warden Message: Popular Islamabad Expatriate Restaurant Bombed](#)
- [Travel Warning: Pakistan](#)

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