

U.S. Drone Strike Kills 30 in Southern Somalia



Mogadishu, July 17 (RHC)-- A fresh U.S. drone strike has claimed the lives of at least 30 people in southern Somalia, local residents and officials say. The sources said that the deadly attack was carried out near the town of Bardere, about 400 kilometers southwest of the Somali capital, Mogadishu, in the southern Gedo region on Thursday.

According to sources, the casualties were caused after an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) belonging to the US military fired two missiles at a convoy of vehicles in the militancy-riddled region. There were no exact details about the identity of those killed in the drone strikes. Officials in neighboring Kenya, however, claim the victims were al-Shabab militants, including some of their commanders.

The U.S. uses assassination drones in several countries -- including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen - to target what it calls militants. According to witnesses, however, the attacks have mostly led to civilian deaths.

In early July, a U.S. non-governmental organization - U.S. Global Drones Watch – said that Washington must refrain from staging a unilateral drone campaign in Somalia.

Medea Benjamin, founder of Global Drones Watch, said that drone attacks in Somalia and the Middle East should be conducted through the United Nations and the African Union.

According to the Human Rights Watch (HRW), the U.S. drone strikes have killed many civilians over the past few years in a blatant violation of international law.

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