

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EAST AFRICA EMBASSY BOMBINGS
Recollections from Employees and Staff of the U.S. Embassies in
Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Nairobi Roar, August 27, 1998, Volume 1, Issue 41
Documenting Heroes, Lee Reed
A Note From the Ambassador, Prudence Bushnell

Part I

Recollections of Foreign Service Nationals of the American Embassy in Nairobi
2nd Anniversary
August 7, 2000

Rukia Ali, General Service Office

Marina Kirima, Motor Pool

Caroline N. Ochieng, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health
Inspection Service

Mary Ofisi, Financial Management Center

Patrick Oketch, Motor Pool

Linda Okudo

S. K. Macharia, Senior Security Investigator

Kirumba W'mburu Mukuria, Procurement Office

George Mimba, Information Systems Manager

James Ndedas, Computer Technician

Belinda Chaka, Computer Technician

Part II

20th Anniversary

U.S. EMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

Tibruss Minja, Mailroom Supervisor, Information Programs Center (FSN)

Sajjad A. Gulamali, IT Specialist (FSN)

Evitta F. Kwimbere, Administrative Section (FSN)

Adam Messer, Spouse of USAID Officer Diana Putman

Elizabeth “Lizzie” Slater, Information Management Specialist

Vella G. Mbenna, Information Management Specialist

John E. Lange, Chargé d’Affaires, Embassy Dar es Salaam

Sherry Zalika Sykes, USAID/Tanzania Private Sector Development Team Leader (locally hired American)

Monica Stein-Olson, USAID Controller

Justina “Tina” Mdobilu, Translator and Political Assistant (FSN)

U.S. EMBASSY NAIROBI, KENYA

C. Steven McGann, Labor Attaché

Stanley K. Macharia, Senior Security Investigator (FSN)

Teresa Peterson, Co-Community Liaison Officer

Paul Peterson, Regional Security Officer

Steve Nolan, Management Officer

Howard Kavalier, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United National Environment Program

John Dunlop, Regional Nutrition and Food Security Adviser, USAID

Neal Kringel, Security Cooperation Officer in the Kenya U.S. Liaison Office

Patrick Mutuku Maweu, Appliance Technician (FSN)

Mathew M. Mbithi, Warehouseman (FSN)

Lee Ann Ross, Deputy Director, USAID/Kenya

Maria Mullei, USAID/Kenya Senior Agricultural Development Adviser and Senior Assistant Team Leader (FSN)

August Maffry, Commercial Counselor

Rizwan “Riz” Khaliq, Commercial Officer on Temporary Duty

Prudence Bushnell, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya

Charles Slater, Senior Financial Management Officer

Michael Trott, USAID Executive Officer

George Mimba, Information Systems Manager (FSN)

Joanne Grady Huskey, FS Family Member

Joyce Ann Reed, Administrative Assistant for Communications

Worley Lee Reed, Office-in-Charge of the Engineering Services Center for Central; and South Africa

Justus Muema Wambua, Warehouse Team (FSN)

Larry Meserve, Director, Regional of the Food for Peace Office and the Sudan Field Office, USAID

Susan Nzii, USAID/Kenya Administrative Assistant (FSN)

Lucy Morgni, USAID/Kenya Administrative Assistant (FSN)

George Jones, USAID Mission Director (retired), United States International University

Livingstone Busera Maahana, Voucher Examiner, Financial Management Center

Carmella A. Marine, Spouse of the Deputy Chief of Mission

Charles R. Chase, Diplomatic Security, Washington, DC

Gregory Gottlieb, USAID Kenya Office of Foreign disaster Assistance

Brian W. Flynn, Ed.D, Rear Admiral/Assistant Surgeon General, United States Public Health Service

Sam Thielman, FS Regional Medical Officer/Psychiatrist

Ron Roughead, Chief of the Kenya U.S. Liaison Office

Addendum: List of published articles

RECOLLECTIONS

**Nairobi Roar
August 27, 1998
Volume 1, Issue 41**

DOCUMENTING HEROES LEE REED

I have searched for human words to express the thoughts and feelings concerning our recent catastrophe. There are no words that adequately perform this duty.

I wish, however, to pass a message to our colleagues who did not directly participate in the old embassy search and rescue operations:

For the ones who were TDY or on leave during this nightmare, we are thankful for your lives. We are thankful that God, in whatever form you believe in Him, kept you safe from this criminal act. Never ever permit yourself to wish that you were there at the time of the bombing. We are thankful that we were not required to carry you from the building. Never ever permit yourself to wish that you could have helped in the search and rescue. We knew that each time we entered the building that we may not be coming out alive again. If you had been here to help, you may have been the last victim of this tragedy. God saved you to serve a higher purpose than to add to the death toll of this criminal. We are happy that you are alive. We want you to also share that happiness.

Finally, for the ones that left the bombed Embassy to start the construction of our new temporary Embassy, the same rational applies. If we let this criminal stop our Embassy functions, then we give him or her a victory. No matter, who lives or dies or is injured, our Embassy must endure. Your actions helped us show that we are not afraid of this madman. We also did not want you to be the last victim of this horror. For the people working in the bombed building, your work helps us in terms of logistical support and in the knowledge that nothing can stop the United States Foreign Service. On behalf of the

people who worked at the bombed Embassy, we honor you for your hard work and efforts. There are many forms of heroes.

**A NOTE FROM THE AMBASSADOR
PRUDENCE BUSHNELL**

During this trying period since the bombing, I have had two top concerns: first, ensuring the welfare of the living, and, second, ensuring that we recognized appropriately the sacrifice of those who died serving the U.S. Government and the mission. Unfortunately, because of the competing claims on my time, I was unable to attend personally all of the funerals and memorial services for our fallen colleagues.

I have asked, however, that an embassy employee represent me at every such ceremony, and deliver a personal message from me. On a few occasions, because of logistical and other difficulties resulting from the destruction of the chancery and its relocation to USAID, I have not been represented at some of these events. To the family and friends of those honored at ceremonies where the mission was not represented, I say pole, and for all, my message to the families of the bereaved at these ceremonies follows below.

I have asked a mission colleague to represent me because much as I would have liked to be personally with you, I am unfortunately prevented from doing so. Be assured, however, that I am with you in spirit, and that your suffering is also my suffering.

We are indeed mourning, with broken hearts, the loss of a valued and dedicated Embassy employee, who was torn away from us on that fateful day of August 7, 1998. S/he was taken by a band of criminals who, whatever rationale they may have for their misdeed, were actually heeding the darkest impulse of evil. In the blink of an eye, a precious life that meant love, joy, caring, and friendship to so many of us, family, friends, and co-workers, was brutally extinguished. Our eyes weep and our hearts grieve, at a loss that seems so senseless, so unnecessary, and so difficult to understand. Many of us no doubt wonder if the tide of sorrow that has engulfed us following the death of our colleague and so many other innocent lives in the tragedy of August 7 will ever subside.

Yet, no matter how deep and dark the night, it is ultimately followed by light, at first feebly, then ever more strongly. In the same way, out of death and tragedy emerge rebirth and hope. As we together grope in the darkest night of sorrow and mourning, we can already perceive the first glimmering of light and hope.

For as our colleague departed us, s/he left us one last gift – our memories of him/her. Indeed, s/he may have departed us in body but s/he continues

to live with us in spirit – his/her light shining steadily in our hearts and in our souls. This is because we will always remember our colleague with all of the beauty, warmth, and comfort s/he brought to our lives. To some, his/her gift was the love of a close relative. To others, it was the beauty of a smile, or a kind gesture, or a helping hand at work. For all of us, our lives were enriched by his/her presence, and we will always remember them. As the words of one hymn put it,

In the rising of the sun and its setting, we remember them.
In the blueness of the sky and the radiance of the day, we remember them.
In the beginning and the ending of the year, we remember them.
When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.
When we have joys we yearn to share, we remember them.
So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us as we remember them.

Part I
Recollections of Foreign Service Nationals of the American Embassy in Nairobi
2nd Anniversary
August 7, 2000

RUKIA ALI
FSN

Friday August 7, 1998 was a normal day, like any other Friday. As usual the Embassy was a beehive with lots of activity, people preparing for the weekend, cashing checks, etc., and as usual the mood was TGIF. This was not to be like any other Friday but a BLACK FRIDAY.

GSO was the center of attraction that morning. Ardis Stott had brought in a big cake and cookies in the office. We were calling around different offices to come and share the goodies with us. This was around 10 a.m. I recall that I personally called the Personnel Office and told the girls to join us in GSO and share the goodies. Caroline Gichuru told me that the late Hindu was on the 1st floor and she intended to come and see me, so I asked her to come down. Both Caroline and the late Lucy Onono came to my office and I told them to take some of the goodies back to their office. The late Lucy then told me that she was not going back to her office, as she wanted to go across the street and buy her husband a card. I asked her whether it was his birthday and she said that it was their wedding anniversary. She told me that normally they exchanged cards over dinner or whatever function they hold, but the strange thing is her husband had given her his card the previous day and she could not understand why, so she felt she had to give him her card that evening. (I think, if I can remember well, their wedding anniversary was

supposed to be on Sunday, 9th of August. I am not sure about the exact date.) So we talked for a short while and Lucy and Caroline left. Shortly thereafter the late Hindu came and we sat talking the usual lady stuff. She ate a cookie and I asked her to carry some goodies to eat later. We laughed about that; she did carry for the other girls in the office. I remember asking her not to go but stay longer with me as we had many people in the office. She insisted that she wanted to go so that the other girls could come down. She left and went back to the office at about 10:25 in the morning.

I was left in the office with Lydia Sparks, Jay Bartley, Michelle O'Connor, Frank Pressley and Liz Kitao. Liz and Michelle went back to their offices and Jay joined Michelle in her office. The phone in my office rang and I picked it up. It was Dean Wooden in Bujumbura who wanted to speak to Ardis Stott. I told Dean to hold on while I looked for Ardis. I ran to FMC office and asked a few people there whether they had seen Ardis and they told me no. I went to the Embassy cashier, the answer was the same; the Citibank cashier also had not seen her. So I opened Prabhi Kavalier's office and asked her whether she had seen Ardis and the answer was the same no. Then I decided to check in the shipping office; Lydia, Joe, Vincent, Dominic, Geoffrey and Tony were in the office and they told me they had not seen her. So I went back to my office to tell Dean that I could not find Ardis and if he had any message to leave with me. Then Dean wanted me to find out which of the expeditors was going to meet him at the airport when he arrived from Bujumbura that evening, but before I could answer him we heard a very loud bang. Lydia Sparks and Frank Pressley immediately went towards the shipping office. Michelle and Jay came from the inner office to my office and stood at the door facing the shipping office. I told Dean that there was a loud bang and I would like to go and see what it was and asked him if I could call him back. Before he could answer me there was a very, very loud bang and the phone was thrown off my hands. For a second I did not know what happened and then I heard screams of "Help! Help!" Still I could not register as to what had happened. Then I saw people from the procurement office coming into my office and then I realized something terrible must have happened to our building.

As the building was dark we could not see and could not know exactly what had happened. The window in my office had been blown off, so we decided to jump from the window. People outside screamed back and said we should not jump as help was coming. We tried again to find our way out of the office and the building. Luckily we saw light in the corridors so we decided to go through the stairs. When we got to the stairs, it was very dark and we could not see, but because we knew these were the stairs, we decided to just use them. I was the first one to take the stairs, and alas there were no stairs so I rolled to the next flight of stairs where there was a lot of debris. I told everybody to be careful and not to hold the rail, which was loose. We managed to get out with the help of the Marines and some people who were at the front door.

When outside we realized that we had been bombed and people were badly hurt and at that time I had not realized that some of my colleagues had died. I could see people being put into vehicles and taken to hospital. My colleagues and I were asked to board vehicles and be taken to hospital. They went to hospital but I refused because I was waiting to see everybody out of the building and this time I was screaming. Eventually I was forced into

a vehicle and taken to Nairobi Hospital where I was even more shocked to see how badly people had been injured. This is the time I realized that I was hurt and could not walk. What happened after this was a nightmare.

The doctors and nurses were working like bees and I have never seen the love and concern, which I saw on that day. I got treated and because they could not find anything serious they bandaged the leg and asked me to report to hospital the following day. This I did not do because I was still eager to find out what actually happened and if all employees both Americans and FSNs were safe.

The following day an Embassy vehicle picked me from the house at the request of Don Teitelbaum, DCM Khartoum, and the then Admin Counselor Steve Nolan. I gladly went to the USAID building where everybody had assembled for head count and started in helping in different ways. This is where I learned about what actually happened and found out who perished, who was being evacuated, and all the works. I started assisting in evacuation of the injured employees, those going back to the States and those accompanying the injured, by preparing travel orders and getting tickets. Everybody who was there was doing something; this is one time where nobody looked at his or her watch. People were working throughout nonstop. Nobody stopped to say he/she was tired though people were getting tired, fatigued and the works. All that was worrying was to do what one had to do to accomplish the final results of duties assigned. As I could not walk I got two walking sticks which I still have today, one from the Personnel Officer Lori Magnusson and the other one from Don Teitelbaum, DCM Khartoum. I was working with one of my legs up on a chair. The management thought that I was straining myself so much, they decided to send me to Silver Spring Hotel to help with the families of the deceased and injured persons. I lasted only one day and was sent back to the office. I could not take it and was crying most of the time rather than helping. In the office I did not mind, as I was kept very busy. Although I was crying I could still help in one way or the other. All this time I did not realize that I was pushing my luck, by forcing myself to help when I actually needed help.

After a week and half of all the work and moving from one home to another counseling with families, I was sent to Nairobi Hospital for review of my leg as it was still very swollen and I had not gone back as required. When I got to the hospital, I was examined and admitted. Apparently my leg was not doing well and I had a backache and concussion. All this I knew after about a week in hospital. I was seeing doctors coming in my room and leaving without talking to me but reassuring me that all was well. I thank the doctors at the hospital, as I got the best attention and counseling while in hospital. I'm still getting counseling assistance to this day but I am in better shape. My back and leg keep recurring, but nothing serious that the doctors can't take care. I get nightmares but not as bad as the first few months after the bomb blast. I know I am still traumatized and I cry very easily. I hate to hear loud bangs and cannot sleep alone in bed for fear that something will happen to me.

We lost several colleagues and friends in the bombing. The following months after the disaster were very traumatic to this day. This was the worst thing to have happened to anybody. I forgive the sick people who did this but I CANNOT FORGET.

May Allah grant eternal rest and peace to the souls of those departed and give the rest of us the strength to go on. Amen

MARINA KIRIMA

FSN

Friday, 7th day of August, 1998, started like any other normal day. I was working at the Motor-Pool section and my duties were to transport official passengers from the Embassy to other destinations. At 10:00 a.m., I was to take the RSO to View Park Tower for a meeting. We did not leave until 10:15 am. I dropped him, drove back and parked at the back of the Embassy. I remember we were a number of drivers there. Unfortunately, none of them is alive today. I decided to go to the Post Office, which was just opposite the Embassy, to check on my mail. That is how I escaped death. On my way back, just a block from the Embassy I heard a loud bang followed by smoke, screams and people running in all directions. The Embassy was covered by heavy smoke and for once I thought it had collapsed. I sat in the car not knowing what to do next. I was imagining that the loud bang might come again. I thought the end of the world had come. I called base and there was no response but instead I started receiving calls from the other staff members, asking me what had happened in town. I will never forget the voice that calmed me down, "Please calm down, there has been a bomb blast. Take everybody who is hurt to the hospital – it does not have to be an Embassy Staff." The voice kept on saying this and that is when I came back to my senses. There were people knocking on my car windows. One was bleeding heavily and I took him to Nairobi Hospital. On my way back I met a colleague and I dropped him at the hospital too. There were so many ambulances, police and vehicles and by the time I got back there were thousands of people around the Embassy. I decided to go and see what had exactly happened. I could not believe that so many Embassy Staff had died. It was like a dream hearing the names of all those people I had talked to a few minutes ago. My boss (American Supervisor), instructed us to make a temporary Motor-Pool out there because there were so many runs to be made. We did the best we could. I then decided to check on my brother who was working with me. I was told that he was okay but I was not settled. Finally, I left for home at around 10:00 p.m. to find my house full of anxious people waiting for me. They were happy to see me and we prayed and thanked God, hoping my brother was safe too. The next day, I was woken at 5:00 a.m. and a car from office was waiting for me. When I saw it, I became hysterical. The car's registration was 29CD. "Is he alive?" I asked of my brother. The driver told me that I was needed to accompany my brother to Germany for medevac. We went with the driver to Nairobi Hospital's I.C.U., where I found my brother in critical condition. I was told to be ready but later in the evening, I was informed that he was not stable enough to travel.

Another day and you realized that it was not a dream. My brother finally left the country after four days but I did not accompany him since I was a committee member in the funeral arrangements. I learnt that there were many people who had died and as days passed by, we had to face the reality. Thanks to the American Government who did everything possible to see that all those wounded were given maximum treatment. They also assisted in funeral arrangements for those who died. Those left behind were given proper counseling and every assistance possible. It was time to count our losses and the whole country mourned. I had to go to the medical unit each morning to check on my brother's condition. And all there was: "Moses Kinyua – still in critical condition." I had a lot of urge to see him and when I approached the American Supervisor, he gave me permission. I went to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington and was able to see him and stayed with him for ten days. I was happy to learn that he was now out of danger but will not be able to work.

I was also happy to see the rest of the staff who were there. I also saw my daughter who was very happy to see me. When I returned, I sought to know from the authority whether I could be reimbursed, since the relatives of the victims had been assisted to accompany victims, but it was not possible.

I depend on my salary and up to this day, I am still paying the loan that I took to be able to go to Washington to see my brother. Finally, the bomb blast has affected me mentally and financially.

CAROLINE N. OCHIENG
FSN

Friday morning of August 7, 1998, was like any other day until about 10:30 a.m. when terrorists bombed the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi.

By that time I was working with United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. (The agency moved to Pretoria, South Africa on October 1, 1998). My workstation was located 5 blocks away from the Embassy building and I had gone to the Embassy that morning at about 8:00 o'clock to get a driver to take me to Dr. Cheryl French's (my former boss) residence at FBO-317. She had just arrived 2 days before the bombing. I arranged with Moses Kinyua, USDA driver, to take me there that morning but, unfortunately, he was not available as agreed so I took a motor-pool driver and off we went. We were scheduled to return to the Embassy at 10:15. I was to go to FMC and Cheryl was to see the RSO. We arrived at FBO 317, at 8:30 and drove to the warehouse to fuel the car. The car, 29CD72K, had a hard start having been stationary for 2 months and William, the Embassy mechanic, decided to check the terminals while at the warehouse. This took some time. We left warehouse for the Embassy at about 10:15. When we were about 2 km from the Embassy we met vehicles speeding very fast out of town and occupying both dual carriageways. We got to a point where we could not move any further and had to get an alternative route to town. Unfortunately getting access to

town was impossible and traffic at that particular point got to a halt due to the confusion. We asked a lady who stood by if she knew what had happened and she replied she's been told the Co-operative House had been bombed.

We did not have any radio or cell phone with us. The car had no fitted radio at that time. Since we could not get to town, we tried looking for a phone booth to call the Embassy to get to know what was happening but unfortunately we did not manage. The next thing, we realized it was even useless because we did not have any Kenya coins on us. I suggested to Cheryl that the nearest place to get a phone would be my niece's house at Kenyatta National Hospital. We drove to her house and on getting there she saw me and hugged me and remarked, "Auntie! I'm happy to see you!" I got a bit confused why she told me that! I then asked her why she said that and she told me that the American Embassy has been bombed. I brushed it off and told her it's not the Embassy but the Co-operative House. She insisted "It's American Embassy," as shown on TV. With all the security we have at the Embassy, I still assumed she got it wrong. Since her phone was not even working, we left for my cousin's office near Nairobi Hospital. On reaching there, her reaction was more or less the same as my niece's. I got more confused because I could not believe someone could get access to the Embassy to act that way due to the tight security in place. Well, her phone was also dead so the next place now was my house to see if we could still manage to call the Embassy and get proper information! While driving past Nairobi Hospital I noticed an Embassy car and we flashed the driver to stop. I jumped out and dashed to him. He came out of the car with tears flowing from his eyes. I asked him why he was crying and the answer was - "Carol, the Embassy is no more – our people are dead, injured, etc. I've just been to the hospital to bring one of the casualties." I did not make any remarks. I got so confused and for a moment, it's like I had cracks in my brain. After about a minute I got my senses back and got back to the car and told Cheryl what had happened. I suggested to her that we drive into Nairobi Hospital to assess the situation. We got in at around 12:00 and did not come out until about 11:00 p.m.

I helped the casualties with moral support, at least. The fact that they could see someone from the Embassy meant a lot to them. The medical team consisting of Dr. McCoy, the Embassy nurses, Barbara Muli and Trusha Patel, together with Dr. Cheryl French (though a veterinarian) were there to do the technical bit as I put together a list of names of those who were either treated and discharged or admitted at Nairobi Hospital, which we later took to AID for recording. I made sure that those who were discharged got transport home except for one driver, Julius Ogoro, who I could not trace after I told him not to move away from his location until I got transport for him, but did not find him on my return. Some 2 ladies from AID joined me in the evening, one was Shabina and I can't remember the other, very well. We continued with the exercise. After reporting at AID, at Dr. McCoy's request, we went to visit Gideon Maritim, the motor pool supervisor at Mater Misericordiae Hospital ICU. Although still in pain and semi-conscious, he responded when we called him by his name and stayed for about 5 minutes while Cheryl talked to the casualty nursing staff to get to know his progress. We then left for the Embassy, and when I got there, my Lord, I could not believe what I saw and would never wish to talk about it.

We drove back to AID and spent the night at the control room. The following morning at about 7:00 a.m., an AID driver took me home so that I could take a shower since I still had my blood stained clothes as a result of holding the injured colleagues. From there we were told to go to Josiah Obat's house to tell the wife that he's to be medevaced to Germany the following morning and that she is needed at the Embassy for briefing. On reaching there, the same person who was to be medevaced is the one who opened the door for me. Eeh! I wondered whether I was in the right place or not but later, after we got back to the Control Room, we realized we should have gone to Josiah Okindo's house and not Josiah Obat's house but this was due to conflicting names.

We went back to AID and stayed there until 8:00 p.m. The following day we went visiting the hospitals in Nairobi to check on those admitted, and also to check on the names of those dead, and back to AID. I left at about 5:00 p.m. for home and reported to my workstation on Monday then proceeded to AID. I continued to help with the deceased FSNs family members needs until November 10, 1998, when I transferred to the Department of Commerce.

I'm left to wonder why this happened to us. I feel that execution to such a person may not be enough punishment, but what else?

For my departed colleagues, life in the Embassy will never be the same again. MAY GOD REST THEIR SOULS IN ETERNAL PEACE!

MARY OFISI FSN

Hallo. Thank you so much for giving me another opportunity to be able to narrate what happened to us and to me in particular on 7th August, 1998.

I remember with a lot of tears in my eyes that fateful week. We in the FMC (Financial Management Centre) had been used to celebrating each other's birthdays with a cake and soda (soft drinks) . Incidentally, that week we had a cake iced blue which was like a birthday cake. But this time, we did not have soft drinks. Now I understand why it had to be slightly different from the normal birthday cakes we usually had. I don't want to dwell on the issue of the cake but this cake was also eaten at about 10:30 o'clock without sodas but with tea. To my amazement, every one of us had a piece, including the guys who never used to eat the birthday cakes because of teeth problems. This time, we never even invited the ISC staff, who were our neighbours, as was our practice. But I thank God we never invited them.

The lady who baked the cake is now a widow. She narrated to us, that for the first time her husband, the late Sheikh Farat, asked her to bake at a short notice. She said she iced the cake well past midnight. True this was our last supper.

So the morning of Friday came, and people reported on duty. Somehow, people were in a low mood . Why do I say so, because there was no calling of each other by the nicknames which most of us in that department had. There was great silence which was strange for area five (vouchering section) where I belonged. But people just concentrated on their work although at the time we did not have an American Supervisor. We were waiting to receive the new FMC Director Mr. Charles Slater on Monday and we just wanted to clear most of our pending work. We were expecting areas of salary increment which had been delayed for quite some time. I remember talking to my colleague who is now deceased. I commented on her hair style which had been nicely done. I also had missed her for some time and she told me because she had much work and her boss was strict. So she hurried to the office. Little did we know that we would never see each other again in this world.

At about 10:00 o'clock normally people move quickly with their cups to make themselves a cup of tea, but that day people were buried in their work. As for me I remember I made a cup of dry tea and ate with a leftover piece of bread. I received a call from a young lady friend of mine. After we talked, she felt like she had talked to the wrong person because I seemed to be in a very low mood as she later on commented.

Then the minute and time arrived. To me I first heard what sounded like a tyre burst. At that time, we were curious to run to the window from where the sound came to see what was happening. This is because at that particular time the teachers and banks were on strike. The teachers had been on strike for some time. Thus, the atmosphere was very tense and one could not be unaware of whatever was going on outside. The Embassy was situated right in the centre of the town, and whenever there was a demonstration or strike, the demonstrators would come to the Embassy first or before they finished their match. And we liked to watch these events from the windows. So I saw my colleagues go to the window. I can't explain why I did not rush to the window with the rest. It was God's divine working. Then quickly I heard two gun shots at very close intervals. At the sound of these gun shots, I ran quickly to the window to see what looked to me as a chase between police and robbers. When I was close to the window, I never knew what happened. In fact I did not hear the blast . I think I was already gone. I was thrown down and covered with a lot of debris. I know of this because the Lord gave me a chance to live. So I found myself down and I could remember where I was lying. I thought I was having some nightmares. Being a Christian, I started calling on the name of Jesus. The ceiling was coming down rapidly. There was a hissing sound, smoke, dust and things were just crazy. The world had turned upside down. I was still pinned on the floor. I tried to get a chair to shield myself from the falling debris but to my surprise there was none. I thought I would get the computer keyboard to use as a shield but there was none. All this time, I was dreaming because I could not imagine anything like what happened was happening. Because I had not heard the Marine announce in their authoritative voices, "When you hear this sound, secure all classified materials, open the windows and escape to the safe haven." I also thought with America being a super power with many enemies, the building must be bomb proof. (Nobody ever told me it was bomb proof. This was my imagination.) When things in my mind became clearer and I realized that indeed something has happened and we were in danger, I started praying, "Lord please help us.

Please Lord forgive us." Then I called out to the colleagues I had seen going to the window. Njamani muko wapi? (Guys where are you?) I guess one was trying to answer back, but could not pronounce any word but only roared. This is when I knew that they had not run away and left me. Since at that time, I was the only lady in the FMC as the four were on leave and one was in GSO section. The Lord Jesus helped me wake up from the debris. I saw some light through an opening of the window. At first, I wanted to go and jump to escape the flames of fire I was seeing. (We were on the first floor of the building.) But somehow, because I was praying and asking the help of the Holy Spirit to guide me, I never managed to get to the window. I was led out using the longest route from where I was. But God is so mighty, in that with the falling of the ceiling nothing hit my head when I was standing. One step would take like three minutes as I would fall and have to pull the leg out of the debris. By that time, blood had covered the eye that I was using to see as the right eye was in pieces. My mouth was torn and the blood was clotting in my mouth making it very difficult to talk. I moved to a quarter way and I could not see. At this moment, I just spit out the blood and asked for help in English. I remember asking, "Isn't there anyone to help?" I heard the voice of a man, an American because of his accent. He held my hand and told me to follow him. When I guess we reached near the lifts, he left me and ran back to help more survivors. I have ever wished to know the man that helped me. He thought I could not see because of the dust. I could not find my way out because I could not see. But I stood there, and when I heard the footsteps of someone running out, I grabbed him and we went out. I did not know at this time the extent of injury but I could feel some burning. I was in great shock. I heard the crowd that saw me shout, "See this one, see this one." Some were saying go to the car park. I guess they thought I could see. But I had to imagine how to get to the car park. So I started feeling with my hands to get to the metal that went round the Embassy's front part and I knew if I would knock the litter basket I would know I was about to turn to the car park. But I thank the Lord someone held my hand and took me to the car which took us to the hospital. My experience is that, be at peace with each other, be kind and don't take one another for granted. And that as the Bible says, unless God watches over a home or city the watchmen do zero work.

Visiting the bereaved families, after I had come back from treatment, in a way helped my healing. As part of FMC we could visit each family of the FMC colleagues who died. We would pray and join the family members in crying for our great loss. We would then leave the small luggage we carried for every family. And we would end our fellowship with reading the word of God and praying for the family. Because of the closeness we had, it has been quite difficult for me. At times I remember the occasions we went for lunch together especially on pay day. So I sometimes think my colleagues are on leave and they will appear. But I am so grateful to my present colleagues and my boss who have given me their time and their love. I feel accepted now. And life must go on. Thank you, from Mary M. Ofisi.

PATRICK OKETCH
FSN

I will never forget the 7th August, 1998, for the rest of my life. On 7 August 1998, I was working for the Embassy Motor pool. On that day I was booked by Dr. Gretchen McCoy and Personnel Officer Magnusson for an appointment to see an E.N.T. Clinic Doctor (personal reasons). I arrived at the Embassy at approximately 1000 hours to check-in. I then took a local Matatu for my trip to the clinic. When we were next to the Parliament building, I heard a very big blast and felt a strong wind blowing. Suddenly the roof of the Matatu was pushed in slightly and the windshield was damaged. I completely forgot about going to the clinic and left the Matatu to run back to the Embassy. Upon arriving at the Embassy I saw many people with their faces covered in blood. I was totally confused, but I gathered enough courage to start chasing away the people who were coming to loot.

About an hour after my arrival to the Embassy building, the Americans started the process of removing any dead and wounded. Ms. Trusha Patel (Medical Nurse at the Embassy) requested that I assist with the identification of the FSN deceased and to tie a tag (label) on the legs or fingers. I was also asked to assist with dispatching these bodies to the hospital mortuaries and later to the warehouse mortuary. I also helped any injured employees to the ambulances that were standing by.

The next night I started duty at the airport and continued this duty for many days meeting and assisting with some of the loading and unloading of the many aircraft that came to help us. Working with Major Wiley and Major Neal Kringel, we would meet different airplanes that were bringing medication and equipment. Some of the planes would leave with the injured Americans. There were many soldiers from the Army, Air Force and Marines as well as some people from the FBI coming in to assist with the efforts at the Embassy. My duty was to drive them to different locations throughout the city.

During the days I also drove the Embassy Mini Bus (29-CD-100K). Most of my duty was to drive the FBI personnel around the city to different locations per their request. Major Wiley assigned me the task of moving the soldiers to and from the airport and the Grand Regency Hotel. However, most of the time was spent with the FBI personnel. Mr. Sexton was with the FBI personnel and knows about the assistance I gave during this time. Although the Embassy had hired many vehicles, the Embassy drivers (myself included) were very busy throughout this time period.

Mr. Robert Grech (RSO) and Mr. Charlie Chase (RSO) selected one of the USAID drivers, Mr. Nginya, and me to ferry victims of the bombing to the Airport for two consecutive days. The work was hard and the days were long. I thank the GSO from Nigeria and Mr. Nester (FBI) for their letters of appreciation (copies are in my personnel file). I also want to thank Mrs. Montgomery who showed us a lot of kindness by giving us some food to eat on the third day after long days when water was the only thing that was being offered.

I am not asking for money or some great award. I did my job (as did many others) and feel that I gave 100 plus percent over and above the call of duty. People such as Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery and Mr. Ackerman witnessed my dedication and hard work during this

difficult time. (I have mentioned them because they are still at this Post). The best award I can ask for is recognition for my work. I humbly request that I be given a Certificate that shows appreciation for the work that I did during this difficult time. I thank you for your consideration.

LINDA OKUDO
FSN

MY EXPERIENCE ON AUGUST 7, 1998

My daily schedule was to go to the embassy for business everyday between 9:30 – 10:30. On August 7, 1998, I left Barclays Plaza at 9:30 heading to the embassy. Ms. RP, a colleague who rarely goes to the embassy, was on the shuttle together with me. On arrival at the embassy, each one of us went separate directions. On arrival at FMC, my counterpart there had just taken leave for the day so I headed to GSO Shipping Office where the officers there were too busy to serve me. I immediately left. On my way out I met Ms. RP who encouraged me to leave her behind because she was a long way from finishing her business. I went straight to the car and drove away at 10:25.

On reaching Barclays Plaza, we heard a loud explosion, which rocked even Barclays Plaza which is approximately 3 kilometers away. At first we thought it was the electricity transformers situated next to Barclays Plaza. Within no time, messages came across the radios that the American Embassy had been bombed. Our office in Barclays Plaza was like a typical Kenyan funeral scene. Everyone screamed in crying because we knew all our colleagues were no more. We decided that “seeing is believing” and one colleague and I took off running towards the Embassy. Everyone was running all over the city in terrible panic and fear.

When we got there I learned that my colleagues with whom I had cracked jokes few minutes before, were no more and nowhere to be found. Some of their remains were found 2 – 3 days later. Because we did not know the whereabouts of everybody, we went to various hospitals searching. At MP Shah Hospital we found one Embassy driver being treated for head and facial injuries. At Aga Khan another Embassy driver was waiting to be treated. We could not recognize many people because they had severe facial and head injuries. Ms. RP was nowhere to be found.

The next day, Saturday, I woke up as early as any other working day and went to my office at Barclays Plaza despite the announcement that all employees should stay away. I was in my office by 7:30 a.m. I wanted to know where everybody was and what the situation was. I headed to RP’s office to find out if she ever made it. It was obvious that she did not make it because her lunch container was intact with food under her desk. Her body was found 2 days later at the Embassy Warehouse Cooler together with many others.

At 8:00 a.m. I joined my supervisor and straight away we went to the Embassy Interim Office at AID building where all available employees assembled to map up the procedure of looking for the missing people. At 10:00 I was grouped with 3 other people and assigned to go to Kenyatta National hospital and its mortuary. This was a distressing exercise. I had never been involved in the task of identifying a corpse. This was going to be the first time in my life. At this hospital we found one person LM at ICU. At the mortuary we found 3 people lying useless on the floor which was littered with many other bodies.

On Sunday evening I was at my house when I saw a car belonging to a Mr. CB, who had been presumed dead in the bomb blast but not yet found, drive to my gate. I got curious and anxious to see the occupant. They were CB's brother and another relative. They had been told that I was at the Embassy on that fateful Friday morning and they wanted to ask me if I saw CB at the Embassy that morning. Of course I saw and cracked jokes with CB regarding the forthcoming boom barely 15 minutes before the bomb exploded. There was no doubt CB was dead. His remains were later found on Monday at one of the hospital mortuaries in Nairobi.

In the past it was customary for FSNs to make cash contributions to the bereaved colleague's family but the bomb blast was beyond their ability. It was not even possible to visit every home of the deceased colleagues because they were too many. I personally attended church services for three colleagues and one burial. We were overwhelmed with sorrow. The healing process was not easy. Most people became so temperamental that some time it was not comfortable to cope. I am traumatized by loud reports such as tire bursts, exhaust leakage, etc. After the bomb blast work kept piling as most paper work was destroyed. Payments to vendors were delayed. I had to re-do and re-submit many requests for payment.

Above all, God is great that we have managed to overcome and are back on track. Thanks to all who made it possible.

June 26, 2000

S. K. MACHARIA
FSN

It was slightly over a year since joining the Embassy and Friday the August 7, 1998 was as ordinary as any other day. I reported on duty at 7.00 a.m. and settled for the day's work in my office on the ground floor, Western Wing, facing Moi Avenue next to the MSG and Company F Offices. The Local Investigator's office had two rooms, one that I occupied and the other occupied by my secretary Irene Kung'u, who has since moved to the U.S. on a green card program. Friday was usually a good day when staff came on duty dressed casually, looking forward to the weekend, and this was my expectation like every other mission employee in the Embassy.

The Embassy had become like my safe-haven compared to my 30 years of service in the Kenya Police Force and particularly the last few years before retiring as the Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge operations in Nairobi City. Never in my mind would I have imagined my life under any threat whatsoever while working in an environment so secured by the U.S. Marine Guards. About 10.00 a.m. or some minutes past, I visited the FMC offices located on the second floor. Bramshill Police College that I attended in Britain in 1996, while working for the Kenya Government had invited me to attend a disaster crisis management seminar. The RSO, then Mr. Paul Peterson, had approved my request and I had therefore gone to present my papers for traveling arrangement. The FSN who attended to me advised that I leave the papers, promising to bring them down to my office as soon as possible.

Unfortunately that was the last time I saw him and the papers because as soon as I returned to my office, I heard a loud noise outside the building. I called my secretary asking if she also heard. She told me no. I became more inquisitive and decided to go out and check. I quickly walked to Marine Post One area and found the Marine on duty appeared not to have heard the explosion. He was busy screening through his CCTV. I wanted to alert him but something urged me to get out and investigate first. I quickly walked down the stairs leading to Basement One but before I opened the rear door leading to the underground parking, something strange happened. I became extremely terrified like I was walking through a dangerous dark alley and all of a sudden an instinct told me that I was doing wrong. I made an about turn and started running towards the Embassy main entrance door but before I passed Post One, there was a big loud explosion. I remember losing control, staggering a little and finally falling to the floor. As I lay there for a few seconds I realized that it was actually a bomb and quickly remembered to call God for assistance. It was dark and dusty all over and the fear of another explosion or collapsing of the building made me decide to run out for safety. As I made to the Embassy entrance, a lady family friend, who had come to the Visa section, joined me. She recognized me and shouted out my name. I held her hand firmly and asked her to run for safety. She had one shoe on and as we ran she kept stepping on broken pieces of glass. The entire place we passed was full of wailing people badly injured and blood was all over Moi Avenue. Ahead of me, I saw telephone booths and rushed to make a call to the police 999. Annoyingly, none of the booth were working. They were all dead and I felt very frustrated. I was shaking and even trembling. Some thought told me to go away to a far distant place for safety but as I was agonizing in my mind, I turned towards the Embassy and saw huge billows of smoke and a lot of dust that engulfed the area. I imagined that my colleagues were dying and something urged me to go back and save lives. I started walking back. It was a difficult walk as my body was so heavy for my legs to carry. On my way I met my secretary Irene. She was crying uncontrollably. I asked if she was well but she didn't respond but I noticed she had no visible injury and I decided to walk on to the Embassy.

The Rescue of Ambassador Bushnell

As I neared I met many people and I could recognize some were injured, others dusty, while others were lying on the ground. I wanted to go into the Embassy and at the entrance I saw two Americans coming out holding Ambassador Bushnell. The two were injured and their faces partly covered with blood. The Ambassador too had blood on her face. I quickly resolved to evacuate the Ambassador from the scene and ushered them into a vehicle at the parking lot, ordering the driver to drive away. He was a driver to Mr. Ted Andrews of the Political Section. He obliged and drove towards Kenyatta Avenue through Moi Avenue. My mind was blank. I didn't know where we were heading to but somehow in my mind I felt the need to remove the Ambassador from that area. She was sandwiched between me and an American who had traveled from the U.S. to arrange for an official visit to Kenya by Commerce Secretary Daley. The other American sat in front next to the driver in a Trooper that was decorated in Kenyan wild life colors. About half a kilometer from the Embassy, Ambassador Bushnell reached for the driver's shoulder. She patted him slightly and told him "Driver..., pole pole." These words were said in Kiswahili, meaning that, "Driver....., drive slowly." The driver who apparently appeared nervous, panicked and confused, reduced speed. After a short distance, Ambassador Bushnell turned to me and said, "Stanley, I am not badly injured. Don't take me to the hospital. Take me somewhere I could wash away this blood and go back to be with my people" I said, "Yes, madam." One of the Americans had a room at the Serena Hotel and we took her there. As we proceeded, something strange happened to me at once as a result. Despite my being a career soldier for many years, the incident had left me shaken to the extent that I was nearly disoriented. Ambassador Bushnell was NOT. In spite of what had happened, she was courageously in charge and in control. That statement inspired and encouraged me greatly. I regained my consciousness and courage to face the reality. I am glad that I had the opportunity to tell her this during her farewell meeting at the USAID offices in the presence of the DCM, Mr. Michael Marine. She deserved praise for the manner she handled the bombing incident as a whole, the Mission employees that were injured, the bereaved families, quick evacuation abroad of the seriously injured and the subsequent counseling session programs to the Mission Community.

Chaotic Scene of Crime and Meeting My Brother

I returned to the Embassy building some minutes past 11:00 a.m. The situation was chaotic. There was no order and people were running all over trying to help and rescue others without proper guidance or leadership. The first person to meet was my younger brother Geoffrey Kinyua who traveled to come and check my condition. He was so happy to see me. We embraced and after a joyous hugging I requested him to go back home and tell my wife that I was well. As I mentioned earlier the bomb scene looked chaotic and the sight of Policemen standing-by holding rifles were disturbing and made me disgusted. Disgusted even more when I saw many people brought down from the damaged and collapsed buildings badly injured while others were dead. I approached the Commissioner of Police and his Director of Operations urging them to kindly take over the scene but little seemed to happen despite repeating my appeal several times. Mr. Stephen Nolan, the Administrative Counselor at the time, and Mr. Paul Peterson, the RSO, were on my neck asking for police protection against people intruding into the Embassy building on the pretext of rescuers. The MSGs were busy pushing the crowd

back despite their number. As the rescue mission went on, looters took advantage of the situation. I found myself helpless; as the local Investigator and a person who was supposed to act as the liaison between the Embassy and the host country Kenya, this frustrated me. To this day I find myself unable to comprehend the reason police neglected to take control of this scene. But rumor that circulated later indicated that the Commissioner of Police was chased away from the Embassy entrance when he arrived. I don't know if this is what prompted the police attitude but the mismanagement of this serious scene of bombing incident annoyed and disheartened many. Kenyans present, on the other hand, worked extremely hard on their own until the time reinforcement forces from the British Army, the U.S. and the Israel joined the Kenya Army. A Kenya Army Major General took over the management and control of the scene between 3 to 4.00 p.m. I tend to believe that two factors are likely to have influenced this situation. First and foremost, Kenya as a country had never before experienced or expected a disaster of that magnitude. The country was therefore not prepared. On the other hand, the U.S. Embassy equally never expected such a disaster in a country like Kenya with no record of terrorism. The Embassy MSG's and other Mission employees' subsequent behavior in securing the Embassy after the blast was a security precaution and therefore justified given the fact that if opportunity presented itself, the perpetrators of the heinous crime would have perhaps placed another bomb inside the destroyed embassy building to achieve their objective.

Identifying Bodies of Mission Employees

That day I retired to bed about midnight and was back on duty at 6.30 a.m. the following morning. The night though short turned out to be the longest. I was too exhausted to sleep and nightmares were terrible and disturbing. The following day the scene was properly managed and the rescue mission were going on well. I assisted in identifying bodies that were being removed from the Embassy and represented the Embassy in a series of meetings with the police who had by now launched investigations. They wanted to start performing postmortem examinations on bodies that were likely to be taken away by the relatives. Towards the end of that day, the body of the late Julian Bartley Sr., the Consul General, was missing. He was presumed dead but a search in our three morgues yielded no results and I was therefore asked to join the Embassy search team.

I easily identified bodies of most of my colleagues including that of Julian Bartley, Jr. but the Consul General's body could not be found until the following day. It was approaching past nine in the night and turning of bodies, some that were badly damaged and mutilated, was a real nightmare that I would hate to remember. Once again I retired to bed very late that night but didn't manage to catch some sleep. Nightmares had become the order of the night. I kept turning on the bed, agonizing the great loss. At one point I felt the urge not to risk my life by working for the Embassy. I wondered what would happen if another calamity struck soon. As I struggled hard in my mind, friends and relatives comforted me by bringing in prayers to my house. In one of the prayer sessions, I realized that there was only one person who knew of my destiny. He knew me even before I was born and knew all my ways more than I could ever imagine. God had therefore saved me from the calamity. He must have had a good reason for doing that and

fearing death would be tantamount to letting him down. I was not going to give up. Death was not confined to the U.S. Embassy, it was everywhere. I took a moment of silence to pray to the Almighty God to give me peace, teach me the importance of life's central things; to change what I could and accept the rest that are beyond my control. This became a turning point in my life. I recognize and accepted God more than ever before and asked him to give me daily strength to live for others and perseverance to keep on, for tomorrow may bring the answer.

KIRUMBA W'MBURU MUKURIA

FSN

Seven has always been a lucky or sacred number and was given to all manner of grouping in the antiquity.

SEVEN days of creation

SEVEN wise men

SEVEN wonders of the world

SEVEN churches of Asia

The SEVEN seas

The city of SEVEN hills is Rome

The SEVENTH day is the Sabbath Just to mention a few

I am also associated with some SEVENS; after all I was born on the SEVENTH (7th) day of May. On the SEVENTH day of August, I had an occasion to witness a life-threatening incident from which I have learnt a lot in life.

On the fateful day SEVENTH of August in 1998 we were a staff of SEVEN in my section: 1. Francis Maina, 2. Jacinta Wahome, 3. Margaret Gitau, 4. Florence Okoth; 5. Elizabeth Muli-Kibue; 6. Stella Mbugua; 7. Myself, and we all SURVIVED (Note "SURVIVE" is a SEVEN letter word.)

The normal working hours (then) at the Embassy were set as SEVEN fifteen. However, I usually made a point to arrive in the office between 5:30am and 6:00 and on that day I was at my desk at 5:45am or thereabout. By 7:15 a.m. when I started my normal work for the day, I had read the day's newspaper, cleared the pending work for the previous day and had my breakfast.

I worked in Procurement Section on the first floor of the Embassy building, which was situated at the corner of Moi Avenue and Haile Selassie Avenue popularly known as the Railway Station Roundabout. The view from my office window could not be described as pleasant by whatever standards. It consisted of "KIOSKS" (eating houses constructed from temporary structures), a very busy Railway Station and the Railway Headquarters; of course not to forget a Matatu (Public transport) terminus which was as noisy as it was busy. Our office was situated at the far end of the building and we did not have a clear

view of the Co-operative House as our section was accommodated in the middle portion of the office.

By about 10 o'clock I felt the urge to relax. I felt very strongly like walking upstairs to the 2nd floor to discuss "politics" and "current affairs" even if for only a few seconds with my good friend Edwin Omori (R.I.P.). On my way to Omori's office I met Moses Kinyua on the staircase. Moses assumed that I was going to see Caroline Ngugi because I had asked about her the previous day and he volunteered information that, "I've left her in her office. Today she didn't go to "UFUNDI" for her typing lesson." Through this distraction on the way I failed to see Omori. Instead I proceeded to FAS office and found Evans Onsongo (R.I.P.) and Caroline at their office. I was offered a seat and Evans gave me a special mint chewing gum. As I was leaving their office after a little chat, Evans asked me, "So where will the party be tonight?" It was Friday and the next day we would resume duty would be Monday, and it was and it still is normal to plot how we shall spend Friday evenings and the earlier it was planned the better. "Today we'll only have a pre-party," I answered jokingly. "Wait till we get the BOOM" (salary arrears we were expecting), "then we will have the party." From FAS I went to FMC where I missed Ambrose Gitau (R.I.P) and decided to say "hi" to Anne Odinga, whom I also could not find but I found Mary Ofisi whom I only greeted in passing.

I was returning to my office and I had to pass by the Computer Section on the way. The door was left open and I could not resist entering. There was a very beautiful lady from Kigali (Rwanda) on Temporary Duty and I had to complain to my computer colleagues why they did not introduce her to our office. But I did not manage to air my complaints in full, before I could finish my sentence, David Kiarie (the "big talker") interrupted me and was airing his own complaint. I had to leave even without giving the Kigali lady "A Knowing Wink".

I still had to pass through GSO to pick a piece of cake. I found Rukia Ali who showed me my piece, took it, and now I had reason to go back to my desk because I remembered two things. When I felt tired at 10:00 a.m. I had asked for tea. I also had to pay my telephone bill and that was the last day, otherwise my phone would be disconnected. As I walked in the office I told Francis "Wandahuhu" (i.e. Kikuyu equivalent for somebody who likes eating) "Go have your share (piece of cake)." The check was on top of my desk and I felt the urgency but I had my piece of cake and the cup of tea was on my desk. First I had to eat and finish my cake. I was now under pressure. I looked at my watch as I stuffed the last piece of cake in my mouth.

I could not understand why the urgency and pressure was building up. I had one sip of my tea and looked at the watch, it was about 10:30 a.m. I was not so keen at knowing the exact time. What was most urgent was to ensure I took the check to City Square Post office IMMEDIATELY. I took the second sip and looked up. Stella Mbugua had stood with her back to me and was wearing a T-shirt marked "I SURVIVED THE CRASH" and I felt like saying something to diffuse the tension that had built up in me about sending the check. I had planned how I would deliver the check to the post office: I would go down to the basement, come out of the back door, near the Co-operative House,

walk across Haile Selassie Avenue, go over the bridge and walk to the post office. “So which crash did you survive, Stella?” I asked sheepishly as I took my fourth sip. I was able to count the number of sips thanks to the feeling that the tea was what was delaying me. Stella did not have time to answer me. There was a sudden violent sound outside. “That’s a bomb,” said Jecinta Wahome. “Tire bust,” I retorted, not giving a chance to anything that may interrupt my journey to the post office. We then heard gun shots and all of us were now concerned. Francis called us to the window “Come and see how people die in Nairobi,” he said, trying to illustrate how the Nairobi crowd has a habit of running towards where there is an incident, to watch what had happened. With the urge to seeing what was happening, I rose up, walked towards the window, and what followed is beyond description. Some item which I thought was a windowpane hit my chest and I fell on the floor facing up. I thank my God that I did not lose consciousness. Momentarily stunned and dazed, I watched the ceiling. The ceiling board had peeled off and became exposed. I thought of fire. I rose, but then there was darkness. I could not see any of my colleagues but I noticed something blocking my path. I went over the barrier not knowing where. But thanks to God I noticed an opening. I proceeded towards it and found it was a door leading to a corridor. As I passed I noticed a motionless human body lying next to the door of an adjacent office. I jumped over it and proceeded down the corridor. I mustered some courage and opened a door. It was the door leading to the stairs. Here I found Frank Pressley crouching on a corner and groaning in pain. I recognized him but I developed a feeling that was where the Blast originated from. I had to turn back to seek help. I noticed the Computer Room door open I looked inside and saw people lying down. I did not know whether they were still alive but I told them “Things are bad here.”

I decided to turn back towards my office, I found myself in the office of GSO and there were some people there, I don’t know how many. One of them came and grabbed my shirt. She was holding her hair scarf in one hand and praying in a language which sounded like Arabic. I noticed she was Rukia Ali and that was the first time (since joining the Embassy) I saw her hair. I walked towards the window facing Moi Avenue as Rukia was holding my shirt. I decided to observe the situation outside. I knew I was on the first floor and I was disturbed how we would jump out. On reaching the window I looked down and saw a Marine outside who signaled us from down not to jump. I then saw Frank Pressley being led out of the building and with Rukia still holding my shirt I shouted that I knew where the escape route was. Those in the office followed me as I followed the way out. On reaching the staircase door, I opened it and saw a ray of light and that was when Rukia released me and dashed out. The rest of us followed suit and went out.

At the main entrance I met somebody who told me that I was out of the building and was safe, as I took a few strides towards the parking lot I noticed an Administration Policeman pointing his gun to the sky and asked whether they have overthrown the Moi Government. He told me it was a Bomb Blast. I was unable to decide what to do next, as I did not quite understand him. There was a total confusion, the crowd had built up and I did want to wander away to far yet I was walking up and down.

I noticed that I had a cut on the back of my left wrist and also on my upper left arm. I jumped into an Embassy vehicle bound for the hospital, and was driven away with my colleagues. We went along Valley Road. When we reached the gate of Nairobi Hospital the driver was turned away. We proceeded past Hurlingham and Yaya shopping centres to Masaba Hospital. There we found such a large crowd on coming out, we had to wait. After a long wait the First-Aid was administered. We decided with Chris House to go to Adam's Arcade to buy some mineral water because we were thirsty and get a ride back to the office. We got a taxi at Adams and were driven back to town. We were dropped off on the Haile Selassie/Uhuru Highway roundabout and walked back to the scene. Then I realized I had not informed my family and started looking for a telephone booth. Near the Nairobi Fire Station, I found a working booth and telephoned my parents. I found it difficult communicating with them as they had already received information that the American Embassy was flattened by a bomb and there were no survivors. Later in the evening I was treated at Aga Khan Hospital and I went home.

Following a radio announcement, I was at the Parklands office of USAID the following day, Saturday 8th August; and this continuity in the face of the tragedy is perhaps the single most fulfilling experience in my life. I was allocated duties with the "Medical Team" and we visited and identified our injured colleagues and comforted and assured them. There was the painful task of going to the morgues to identify our departed colleagues at a time when the morgues were full of "other people" but thanks to co-operation and reassurance from other colleagues we found even this task tolerable.

Then came the counselors who reminded us to keep talking about the incident whenever we got an opportunity to, and also to keep on revisiting the damaged building, among educative tips. These are mainly what has kept so many of us focused and useful.

We managed to visit fallen Heroes homes and attended church (funeral) services and burial of several colleagues and this added a feeling of responsibility and belonging.

At 10:35 a.m., had I not delayed in eating my cake and taking my tea, the path I was going to follow to the City Square Post office would have led to my death. It was a path of mindless extermination.

All efforts need to be intensified by the International Community to eliminate terrorism from the face of the earth.

In hindsight (looking back), what I regret most about the incident is my inability to assist Frank Pressley whom I found writhing in pain at the staircase and turned away. But most of all I thank my Lord, and all the other friends and colleagues who participated in saving lives or in playing whatever role during and after the incident. Some people also say that you never know how valuable life is until you experience a situation where you're almost lost it, and this I can vouch for personally.

My friends may continue believing in the LUCKY SEVEN. I do not want to be superstitious but I will keep asking them why it had to occur on the SEVENTH day of August.

GEORGE M. MIMBA
Information Systems Manager (FSN)

It was one beautiful sunny morning. Embassy Motor pool driver had just picked me up from my residence to the Embassy. I was scheduled to leave the country for Accra, Ghana to attend Africa Bureau (AF/EX) Systems Manager's conference, together with the then ISO, Chris House.

I had not picked up my per diem the previous day and so I was waiting for Sheikh Farhat, the Embassy cashier to open at 9:30. I was expected to leave for Jomo Kenyatta airport at 11 o'clock that morning. Because I had reported at seven in the morning and cashier was opening at 9 a.m., I had some time to check the system. I had worked so hard to ALMA team to survey, plan and install the new system that it became part of me. Any minute spent without working on this system was just too much for me. That morning I spent a better part of my time working on the system and showing my colleague what needs to be done and tasks to watch in my absence. I also had the morning to show systems manager for American Embassy Kigali, Rwanda how our system was set up. She had stopped over in Nairobi for a day. She was also attending the same conference.

It was past nine and just remembered to go to the cashier for my per diem. I went straight to the cashier only to find a long queue. This is when the mystery began. While waiting at the queue, the late Lucy Karigi of Consular saw me. She broke the silence in the queue and called my name out aloud. "George! What are you doing in the queue. I thought you are leaving at 11. Please come over and take your money and get the hell out here. If you wait for this queue you will be late for your flight." Lucy was that morning banking Consular's money with the cashier. Without hesitation, I jumped the queue, got the money and headed straight to my office.

On my way to the office I met the late Lucy Onono of Personnel office. Lucy was on her way back to her office. Seeing me she stopped and asked me what I was still doing in the office. "You are still here?" she asked. We then started laughing together. Lucy asked me jokingly what I was going to bring her from Accra. When I asked her what she wanted from Accra, she told me that "I would like you to bring me an African dress. You know African dress? she asked." I replied in affirmative. We then left each other laughing. I still remember and will always remember that moment. Lucy had a green "Kitenge" dress with flowers. I remember it so well.

Leaving Lucy, I went straight to my office, which was not far from where Lucy and I were talking. I placed the money and my passport in my briefcase started composing an email to my staff on some of the projects I wanted done while I am gone. No sooner had I

sat on the computer than the first blast went off. It sounded like a tremor. One American asked me what it was and I said, "It sounded like a bomb. It must be very far, those sides of Limuru." In my life I had never known how blast or bombs sound. I have no idea why I said so. Immediately after this first sound, people ran towards the windows in FMC. I locked my office and started towards FMC not to miss what people were running for. I did not move for two minutes when the killer explosion went off! Life changed that minute! I will be lying to describe the sound. It was too much for my five senses. It was a big ruthless force and blast that shook the entire building. I was thrown down by the blast and landed on my belly. Walls started falling, ceiling and debris coming down on me. I was being buried alive in a place that was my office! A place that was like my second home. A place I felt safe, with Marines at Post 1. A place I believed was terrorist proof. Well I was wrong! The falling objects are burying me, dark fuel smoke from the generator station and dusts from collapsing walls choke me. I knew that was my last moment on earth! I said a short prayer then lay still waiting for that moment.

The choking smoke was too much. I knew I was going any time. I then remembered if I had my ID badge on. I knew the building was coming down and there was no way we were going to survive. I thought it would make it easier people or my family members to identify me using my embassy badge. It was funny. After fumbling for my ID in vain, I kept on thinking how my body could be easily identified. It kept bothering me. I had no peace. I could not breathe. I could not see or open my eyes because they were filled with dusts. I could not inhale because the choking fuel smoke was too devastating. I gave up on myself and lay calm.

How would my body be identified? It kept bothering me. I started moving on my belly and reaching for one of my colleagues. I could not know who it was. His head was shattered. He lay motionless by the time I reached where he was. I kept moving, not inhaling too much. I could feel some fresh air coming from a direction. I started moving towards the direction to get fresh air. Little did I realize I was moving towards the window, which had been blown off! I remembered about my body not being identified if the building collapses. I thought about one thing: "If I can die outside this building, then my body would be intact and could be easily be identified!" I have never understood why my dead body was so important that it had to be identified. I guess because my dad loved me so much that he would have wanted to confirm I was dead. Ridiculous, eh?

At the window, I saw the garden outside and decided I would die outside. It was far down but because I was going to die, I did not care how far down or where I would land. I closed my eyes and threw myself down. I did not want to survive having seen dead bodies of what used to be my colleagues! I landed down with a big bang! I did not know where I was! I did not know I was still alive. I was shocked I was still breathing. I said to myself, "Well if am alive, then it would be worthless living on this earth. There is no way my body can be intact. I must have broken my bones all over and I cannot live with so much pain in my life." I then started crawling around the fence, making movements so that the attackers could shoot me dead instead of living. I had a feeling that if the embassy had been attacked by terrorists, they would be waiting to kill the escapees. I wanted them to see I had jumped out so they could shoot me dead instead of living with

so much pains and trauma. Somehow I was convinced I had fractured most parts of my body but because I was still in shock. I could not feel it. I could see I was bleeding but I did not know where the blood was coming from. Death was not forthcoming. I then decided to jump over the perimeter fence with the help of the gardener who was also injured. My fingers were bloody and too slippery to hold on to the iron bars. Finally I managed to climb over the fence, then jumped and landed on the pavement outside. I was bleeding, shaking and terrified. At that moments one of the Ambassador's windows came falling down on me. At first I did not know what it was. It looked too big to be an object. I thought it was helicopter coming down. It was coming down on me! I rolled under one of the vehicles parked outside. It fell with a big bang and glass particle flew in all directions. The flying glasses cut those who were running towards the railway station.

I came out and started towards the Embassy door. I could not stand the cries of my colleagues trapped inside. When I realized I could walk, I moved fast. Before I could start the stairs, I saw an American lady with two little girls crying for help. They were trying to run out of the fence but there was no opening. The lady cried out "Help! Help! Please help my little children. Help!" I started towards where they kids were. They were trying to pass though the opening between the fence. They were too big to fit the gaps. Bob Godec and I lifted the little girls over the fence and handed them to Linda Coulson, former Admin Secretary. I did not know what happened to their mother. I don't know whether she survived!

Still thinking about my colleagues inside, I started towards the entrance when one of the Marines came out with a gun and shouted at me to back out. "Stay out of the building! This building will fall down anytime. Stay out!" I ignored him. I could not stand the cries inside. I continued. "George! Stay out! I will shoot you!" he barked at me. "People are dying inside and there is no way am going to stay here and watch my colleagues die. Go ahead and shoot me!" I shouted back in anger. He gave up and let me enter the building. It was still, dark, with dangerously hanging walls, ceiling and dead bodies all over. It was still dark and smoky. I reached out for the few I could save. I feel bad I did not move in time to save many lives. I cannot remember those whom I helped out. There is one thing that has been bothering me over the years. There was this man I helped out of the building but whom I do not know whether he survived. The photograph appeared in the Newsweek and Times Newspaper. He lost so much blood. I would be happy to know if he survived.

One of the most painful moments during the operation was when, after walking this man to the vehicle I went in for more recovery. I managed to hang on what was left of the staircase and reached 1st floor. Because it was still smoky and dark, I started calling out, "Is anybody there? Can you hear me". It was quiet except for the noise that coming from outside. I felt devastated, sad and weak. I did not know who among my colleagues were under the collapsed walls. I did not understand why those I was laughing with few minutes ago could not answer me. I did not understand what had happened to my staff and visitor from Kigali. I did not know why. A lady's voice came moments later calling my name "George, George, please help me!" I moved fast towards that direction, tapping bodies to feel any motion. Yes, I got it! I convinced myself. Without looking at the

person I was pulling, I started for the stairs, forgetting it had collapsed. We all landed on Post one from up-the stairs! Still lying on the floor with the person, some people came running and grabbed the person from me. They wanted to take me too but I refused. I told them I was o.k. Still remembering the voice that had called my name, out of curiosity I raised my head to see if that was the lady who had called me. She was not the one. It was a man. I was happy the man was alive but I was devastated and felt like I was responsible for the lady's death if she did not make it. I have been waiting for this lady to come and ask me why I did not save her for two years now! Please come out if you are there! I don't sleep when I think of that moment. I can hear it so clearly. I hate myself that I cannot even remember whose voice it was. We were such a small happy family.

The operation was still going on. I kept thinking about the lady's voice. The Embassy had been fenced off. I was still bleeding. This time I could tell where the blood was coming from. I had incurred injuries on my left knee, left elbow and on my back. When I jumped, I had landed on the metallic flower support bars. It had cut my left knee and started bleeding. I was forced taken to St. James Hospital, along Mombasa road. I was dressed and injected. I asked one of the nurses where I was and she told me that was St. James Hospital. I then asked her what had happened. She asked me where I was working and after telling her, she told me that the Embassy had been bombed. I then asked if there was a taxi that I could take back to the Embassy. She told me there is not any vehicle. The nurses protested against me leaving the hospital. I insisted that my colleagues could be trapped inside. I limped to the main road when I took a matatu. I did not know I had no money on me. The conductor did not bother to ask for bus fare. I was bandaged! That was my first time to get a free ride on a matatu!

No vehicle was allowed downtown. On reaching Nyayo Stadium roundabout, I alighted and started limping back to the Embassy. I arrived to find the place fenced off and recovery going on. The Marine we had shouted each other with spotted me and ordered that I be taken home and locked indoors. Because there were no vehicles, my family members put me in a cab and took me to my residence.

I went straight to bed. I was in shock. I started recollecting few moments before the blast and the aftermath with lots of pains and trauma. I was shivering and crying uncontrollable throughout the night. Relatives, colleagues and friends kept my house phone ringing throughout the night. While some callers wanted to know whether I survived, some were passing the sad news of the demise of the colleagues. The news of their deaths devastated me further.

The first person I asked for when I woke up was the late Consul General, Julian Bartley Sr. I was with Julian the night before the blast until past 10 o'clock at night in the office. Because it was eve of my departure to Accra I was trying to get most of the pending work done. Julian used to call me every evening for email problems or just to go and talk to him. He used to like me a lot. That night he narrated to me his autobiography. How he grew up, went to school and challenges he faced in his career. He kept encouraging me to keep working hard. When I informed him I was going to Accra the next day, he asked me to bring him an African mask. He told me to let him before I leave so he could give me

50 dollars. We left each other few minutes to eleven at night. That morning I called him as he had asked me to. He then asked me to wait in my office, that he was bringing the 50 dollars. I told him he doesn't have to come to my office for 50 dollars, that I will use my per diem then he will refund when I get back. He did not want to listen, He said to me "Chief, Man I have to come and see you off." I never saw Julian then. I never saw him later. I never saw his body. I will never see him again!

The Embassy resumed operations at USAID towers. IPC and ISC crew begun counting the losses. A new computer we just installed had been destroyed. My next worry was whether the valuable information were intact. We had put in place recovery procedure and so I kept thinking if this would work out. I started working on rebuilding the Department of State E-Mail system back on line to facilitate recovery and communication. Of the salvaged computers and servers, we put together a network that was used until we moved to the Interim office building. Users could not believe reading emails they had received and documents they had done seconds before the blast. The information was intact. Our recovery plan worked.

There is a say that "time is the best healer." I don't know if I will ever get over August 7 experience. To those who were taken adrift by cruel waves, my your souls rest in eternal peace. This mission will never be the same without you. You are the heroes of the day. May your lights shine on your beloved families. To those who survived, I have this to say: DO NOT GIVE UP ON YOURSELF. DO NOT HATE YOURSELF AS I DO. GOD HAD A REASON FOR SAVING YOUR LIVES. IT IS TIME YOU ASK GOD WHAT HE HAS IN STORE FOR YOU.

JAMES NDEDAS FSN

On the day of the Bombing in Nairobi, I was on the late shift. I reported on duty at 9:00 am. As it was a routine, when one comes in late he/she was expected to know what was going on with the system. I went to the computer room shortly. Soon after, Mr. Frank Pressley who was the IMO (my Boss) walked in. I was under tension because Frank was such a guy that whenever he came he would at least get a mistake on you. He was nicknamed Power Failure because whenever he passed by, our body system would lose power. This day seemed to be my good day because he was in his happy moods. He called us for short meeting in the computer room. After the meeting, we dispersed. Thank God the meeting ended at this time because, it took about ten minutes and things changed.

I had just received two calls, one from the late Lucy Onono, Personnel Office. She had a problem with her computer. The second call came from UNEP (Mr. Kavalier). Lucy called again asking for urgent help. I declined her call because I knew her problem was not as urgent as she put it. I went to UNEP on second floor. When I entered Mr. Kavalier's Office, I found him reading an E-mail. I drew his attention and asked him if I

could look at computer problem he had called me for. He told me he had received a very urgent e-mail and he was to respond to it. He asked me to come back at 2:00 P.M. As I was walked out of his office, his secretary (Yasmin) asked for assistance on her computer. I took her seat, and as I moved to sit down, I heard a loud noise like a gun shot. After about 5 seconds there was another one. Yasmin asked me what that was. I said, "Maybe, it is a bank robbery from Co-operative Bank". I stood up to peep through the window. I had not even reached the window. There was a loud bang that sounded like "DO! DUUNG!... DU! DU! DU! DU!..." which threw me in the air to a drawer. For sure small bodies are good. This saved my life. The first thing I said was for God to forgive me and take care of my family. Debris started falling slightly hitting my legs. I still thought whatever was falling was bullet shots. For sure being born in an African country without exposure, one cannot differentiate between a gun shot and a bomb blast. After the situation was calm, I came out and by then, Yasmin was calling me. "James!! James!! Are you ok?" I replied "I am o.k." Little did I know that I was operating with one eye. There were two staircases. I went to the first one. I could not see the stairs. I moved on to the second one. Still I could not see the way out. I got confused and up to now I cannot remember what happened to get me from the second floor to the first floor. After sometime, I found myself on the first floor, in my office. Chris House who was the ISO was in the office taking water and he had minor injuries in the face. He asked me; "Are you OK?" I replied, "Yes". He then said, "I am trying to shut down this computers." I did not want to annoy him. I said, "o.k." in a low tone as I tried to get out through the window. I thought this was the doorway because it was wide open. There was a voice from behind "Wait!, Wait!, Wait!, get out from here." This was Chris directing me. At this time I realized that I was on first floor.

I walked downstairs and went past the exit door to Basement One. As I opened the door to that floor, I met a broken leg of someone who might have died. There was a glowing light that seemed to be fire on the same floor. This made me run back upstairs in a confused mood. I then did not know how I got out. I just found myself in the middle of Moi Avenue panting like a thirsty dog. I saw several of my colleagues standing nearby but nobody talked to one another. We were just looking at each other like "Oh yap you survived."

I then saw a huge smoke from the rear side of the ill-fated U.S. Embassy building. The army personnel, well-armed with machine guns, were already at the scene. I thought Moi's Government was overturned. I started looking for the way out to the country bus station where I could catch a bus to Kakamega (my home village). I had even forgotten that my family was in Nairobi. As I was running to the bus station with low vision a certain lady came to my rescue. She knew I was injured from the way I was walking. She tried to convince me to get in to a car and be taken to hospital but I declined. She eventually overpowered me and threw me in to a car to hospital. As soon as I reached the hospital, I got a blackout. I came back to my senses after sometime. I vomited blood until I became helpless. I still thank the lady who took her initiative to save my life. For sure if I was not married, this was the woman.

I came out of hospital after a day, and life continued.

BELINDA CHAKA
FSN

Friday 7, August started out for me as a normal day like all the other days... we had had a busy week and I was glad that Friday had come. At about 8:30 a.m. I went to my boss's office. Chris House and asked him if I could step out for 30 minutes at about 9:00a.m. He told me to first finish installing the new PC in the Commercial office. I went down and installed the PC. I was a bit in a hurry and was installing it very fast until the lady who had come from Rwanda on TDY told me that she had not quite understood how I terminated the cable, and I promised to come back with her and walk her through the installation . Mr. Wamwai wanted me to help him out on a document he was working on. I promised I would come back later. We went back to the office at around 10:10 a.m.

Then Mr. Bonyo came in and asked me to escort him to his desk; he had a problem.. I went with him checked it out quickly. Finished with him, I went back to my office. Lucy from Personnel had called and left a message that she was having problems sending a cable out. She wanted me to look at it. I thought my time was running out since I had asked for permission to step out about an hour ago. So I thought. I should go out first then attend to Lucy when I came back. I asked James whether he could assist Lucy but he too was running to UNEP to solve a problem there. Just as I was leaving the office, Lucy from Personnel called and asked me to come up quickly because she needed to send the cable out. I told her on phone that I had to step out and would help her out when I come back. She insisted that I go to her office. Then I promised to pass by her office on my way back. As I was coming out of our office, I thought maybe I should pass by Personnel though I had promised her to pass by on my way back. David was standing at the door. He said he had come to pick one of us ISC staff to help him out on a document he has to submit to his boss. I left him in our office talking to Sam. I went to the elevator, tried the elevator, so it was taking long, decided to take the stairs. When I reached the stairs, I changed my mind about going to Personnel office. I decided to step out and I had the first bang when I was in the stairway walking down. As I opened the door on ground floor I had another bang and before knowing what was happening I found myself running down the front stairs of the building. People were screaming and running in all directions. There was smoke in the air, sparkling images in the air, and a suffocating kind of stuff in the air. In the confusion I tried to run back into the Embassy knowing that it was much safer back in the Embassy but the crowd of people pushed me to the road. I couldn't go back on the road. There were cars, not stopping, just driving along and many people were at the roadside trying to cross. I tried to push back and was not able. I was pushed to the road by the crowd. I realized the car that was near me kept moving. I held it by the bullbear and kept shaking my head, telling the driver to stop. My legs gave way. The car braked and I found myself rolling on the road. I saw another car coming and I could not stop rolling. I had a loud bang and I said, "Oh God my children." Then I thought I was dead. After some minutes, at least more than 30 min., I came to and found myself under a car. I must have passed out. I rolled on one side and I tried to wake up and could not. My

knees were weak.. I crawled off the road. On looking back I saw the car that I was under had rammed into another in front. There were people standing very far and they were waving at me not to go to the side of the embassy. But I knew the only help I could get was from the embassy. A few meters from me was a man lying down dead near the booth. I wondered what could have happened. At that moment I was not remembering what had happened. There was tear gas and since I didn't have the strength to run, I limped to the Co-operative House and with the people who were standing there we entered that building. I had blood all over. I was bleeding from my knees. I didn't know where my one shoe was etc., so when we entered the Hermes Hotel opposite the embassy, we found ourselves in the kitchen. I asked them to give me the phone to call the Embassy for a colleague to come get me, because I was in a lot of pain and did not know what to do. The phone was not going through. Then I had a few people talking, saying that a bomb had exploded at the Co-operative House. We were helping each other. Most of us had cuts with pieces of glass sticking out from our flesh. We helped each other pull out the pieces of glass. There was spirit in the kitchen. After some times, a man came in and said that outside was clear and people were not running around anymore but there was a car burning behind the Embassy. So I walked up the stairs and out of the building, limping and walking near the wall, assisting myself holding the wall, and after going round the building, now heading towards the embassy. Just as I was now walking towards the road to cross and go to the Embassy, I looked up and saw smoke coming out of the Embassy windows. I screamed and saw James shaking/screaming uncontrollably, with what looked like white powder over his head. His one eye swollen, he was telling me that everybody in the Embassy is dead. Then I had somebody hold me from behind and she too was screaming the lady from Rwanda.. I told her not to worry that we would go with her. Now the problem was that we did not have any money or shoes. I begged from a lady I did not know I told her I would give her my address if only she could help me out with a few coins for me to reach home with the Rwandese lady. She did. I was so happy. I went to the telephone booth and knew my family would be worried. I called and told my house help if anybody calls, I am fine.. I at that time I had had rumors that the bomb had hit the embassy. We didn't have shoes. We went to an Indian shop. I promised to come back and pay if only they could give us sandals. They gave us a pair each and told us not to worry about paying because God had taken care of that. We stood around the bus-station area. The entire route to the Embassy was sealed. Armed police stood around. I told the TDY lady that we could go with her to my house. She was to leave for Rwanda the very day and her luggage was in the office. I told her not to worry; we would get to know about that later and proceeded to my house. There was no transport in town. We had to walk to the outskirts of town centre to get transport and even then we did not get transport to my place. We decided to take transport that goes to a different route, then connect from there. We just wanted transport out of town.. We were hurting, tired, not knowing what was going on, worried about our colleagues and wondering what next. We reached home safely and I found people in my house praying for me. We go to the same church. We prayed and thanked God for having brought me safe home. I told them I was safe but needed to see a doctor. We went to a nearby clinic where I was treated and discharged. Then the nightmare began. My colleague's children came to my house and wanted to know whether Cecilia Mamboleo had made it out of the building. I just could

not sit in the house. That evening with a few of us, we went round looking for our other colleagues who stay in the neighborhood and the shock began to sink.

I wondered why/how I had survived, because the person I was talking to 30 minutes ago in Commercial section, Mr. Wamwai, did not make it. Mr. Bonyo whom I had left his desk less than 15 minutes did not make it. The Personnel office for Lucy & Cecilia where I was going to then because of the elevator delaying changed my mind did not make it. I was bitter at our attackers. Why our colleagues had fallen? Why us etc.? Later, I thank God for each new day and believe I must go on and make the best of each new day that God gives me, for I do not know whether I will live to see the end of this day. Death comes without a warning

PART II

U.S. EMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

TIBRUSS MINJA

Mailroom Supervisor, Information Programs Center (FSN)

**EAST AFRICA SHAKED on August 7, 1998!
TERRORISM IN TANZANIA and KENYA.**

God is great to us every day.

This was in the morning of August 7, 1998 Friday while every one of us expecting a nice weekend while work for half day hours! It was NOT easy as expected! Abruptly between 10:30 am and 10:45am the Embassy ground was in debris, fire everywhere in the front, people running around blooded all over, others holding hand on their face!

Oh! What makes all these disaster! Bomb blasts!

My Location at the time of Blast.

I will say oh! It's my Lord GOD who makes that day for me! As my work was in the mailroom, with one of my colleague Chris, and that day was the day we send out the Diplomatic mail pouch to Washington. By 10:00 am. At 10:30 am we had our Diplomatic pouch ready to send to the airport, and we were ready outside by the main entrance where the car was already waiting for us to load the pouch. We were able to load those bags which were four (4), and Chris was the one scheduled to escort with the driver via AMI where we prepare the freight documentation. The car left at least five minutes before 10:30 am and I was at the main gate talking to two of the guard I remember Mtendeje (perished! RIP) and Mathew (survivor)! He was removed from debris the second day!

Immediately I remember I left the mailroom door opened while taking those pouch out and Marine usually take care on watching from their end! So I told the guard sorry I have to go back to the office as the door still opened and we will talk later as we close the business in few minutes.

It was a minute by the time I get to the door and close the door, walked like 8 steps to my office before I take my seat I heard a big boom! While the shake goes on like 1 minute! It was really a heavy blast! Everyone was in shock! I then checked back on the door I used to get in! Could not believe the way it was smashed! That door has 250 lb.! I asked myself that place is not safer! My first thing to do is to walk back to my office and grab phone call my family at Mbezi Salasala and ask them two questions very quick! Are you all safe there! Did anyone of you hear anything like Boom! The answer was YES. Then I told them it may happen near to our office I don't know yet but keep your ear on! It took me very few minutes to secure the few stuff and find a way to go, by that time we had gathered few of us from the mezzanine floor of Political, mailroom and switchboard to find a way out as the Marine announces to evacuation immediately follow instructions to meet at the back as the front entrance was at fire!.

We decided to walk up to stairs thru the west wing door the Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission use to get to the Office. That was the safer place most of the staff use to come down and gathered back yard! But the back yard to me was yet safer place to gather! I was able to speak out and say NO! How do we stay inside the barrier anything can still happen or building to collapse! Why don't we get out of the campus completely! If you saw the exit ladder which was hooked up on the barrier wall from the inside! I was the one who grabbed it from the back yard and put it over the wall! someone brought another one and we put it outside the wall adjacent to French Embassy offices. We used that two ladder to exit to the now Old Bagamoyo road and that is where most of the victims and injured ones were taken to various hospitals, Muhimbili Hospital receive those with critical injury! The fire was still heavy at the front because there were many cars parked there. The more they catch fire more tires blast and makes more worry to people! It has never happened that extent to our countries in Tanzania neither Kenya! We used to hear the war in Congo at that particular time, and that was what I thought it could be the war in Congo Hutu and Tutsi might have invaded our country! No idea someone like the cowered and killer Osama bin Laden could landed a tragic twin Bomb to African countries at the timeframe of 5 minutes in KENYA and TANZANIA simultaneously! That attack was very heavy which shake the city of Dar es Salaam and its Districts! It was a story and groups of people gathered every place in the City and District, with Radio and Television air news of the BOMB blast at the American Embassy!

By the time we were struggling to get out of the campus area I was not feeling anything besides shock! But within half an hour I was sweating and feel kind of headache! I was transported with others to Mikocheni Hospital where I received treatment and discharged me at 8 pm. I had my friend live near the hospital I was able to call him for help to give me ride home Mbezi Africana. There were no one knew my location as from last time I was able to call on minute after explosion! That makes my family to contact friends and

they were focusing on Muhimbili hospital while waiting to hear the names of those admitted or dead!

God is such great!

I was home by 9:30 pm and find the family, friends had already gathered likely there was death happened and were in tears and others happy celebrating of my appearance!! Are you real one and surviving! One of my sister in law asked! Oh! Thanks to Lord God! We have being grieving since we heard about the blasts and we could not reach you at all! Welcome home again! We had long night that day. The next day we were called to meet for those who were not in hospital, and the plan was to arrange for temporary office home, and it was decided to relocate to the home of USIS Director at 285 Toure Drive. (Dr. Dudley Simms). Many thanks and prayers goes to Dr. Simms and family to allow the office to locate to their home.

Since there were big team from Washington was sent immediately to volunteer with various activities and setting the office for business to keep going on! It was awesome for the home at 285 because the house and the yard was big to accommodate the most of the offices. Our office of Mailroom was at the back yard where there was servant quarter, I remember that time we had a lot of staff arriving to volunteer and also to work with the government of Tanzania on security issues. Equipment to run the office, and so many stuff were arriving every day. Therefore you can imagine how much of the pouch and mail we had to receive and ensure delivery at the right time. Although the mailroom room was small but we work very close with everyone and the business was highly success! No complains! Thanks God. Many of officials from Department of State were visiting. We were very thankful for the President Bill Clinton for considering the tragedy allowing the DOS to send various teams which also help to do research for the new home of the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam where they secured temporary place at Kinondoni area where we moved and stayed long until the new land was approved at new Old Bagamoyo road at Msasani area.

Again another terror in New York the WTC!

As that was not only the terror hearts the feelings of many people! I was among the staff who were able to attend one of the bomb case for Dar es Salaam and Nairobi which was hearing on in New York Court. We spend our one week at New York visiting WTC! We left in about three weeks an attack happened which claims a thousand of innocent people! May God Rest all in Peace! Amen. That was again painful to me as I see the place.

As we near to remember the 20th anniversary it's time we also remember those who are not with us at this moment! And pray for the family for their love one.

God bless our loved Tanzanian and Kenyan, bring peace and Love. Bring the America closer to our country and blesses their highest efforts of helping those are in trouble and they need to survive and leave in peace and harmony.

America keep/bring Tanzanians/Kenyans together this 20th anniversary.

SAJJAD A GULAMALI
IT Specialist (FSN)

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

10 minutes before the attack, I was in the Embassy basement (Computer training room) to fix some computers to get them ready for an in-house training to be conducted by a local vendor the following week. Since I managed to fix the problem quicker than expected, I decided not to continue reading my IT magazine at the basement, hence I left the basement heading to my office and still reading the magazine on my way. Upon reaching my office and checking my email and finalizing my trip for the regional AF EX/SYS conference next week, I heard a loud noise that scared me and upon looking behind in my office I saw thousands of monitors shattering down that were kept on the shelf in my office. (My first instinct told me that it was the large battery in my office that could have exploded) However scared and confused, I reached out to my office door that was already ripped and saw my office co-worker lying down on the floor.

(My office was few meters away from the most damage caused by the explosion) Upon entering the corridor and going towards the staircase, I saw that whole staircase blocked and no way to exit, at that moment, I remember that fire drill we had a week early and I screamed at the top of my voice, let us use the emergency exit.

As I went through the emergency exit and down the stair, I saw blood everywhere and I told myself this is not good in anyway, and I kept on praying hard. In about less than 10 minutes I exited the building only to get the first glimpse of the devastation caused by the explosion (At this moment, I was not aware that I have been injured with few cuts on forehead and elbow). Still not knowing what happened, I was whisked into a pickup truck that was taking the injured to the hospital, as I sat inside, I saw a colleague from the finance department who was injured very badly in his eyes and I gave him the seat and I jumped to the back of the truck.

There was chaos at the National hospital where all the injured were taken, and it is at that time I heard people talking that there has been a bombing at the embassy and service was poor, I saw a few of my colleague at the hospital but it seemed we all were on our separate course, I finally screamed at the nurse as I was not taken care of my wounds, hence someone came to look at me cleaned my wounds and told me to wait for stitching up my wound. At this moment, I told them I would go to another hospital to get the stitches.

As I set there, I knew the next step is to inform my family of my whereabouts, hence a good Samaritan at the hospital offered me his cell phone (Which were very new technology in those days), I quickly called my aunt instead of my mom to tell her that I

was well and what happened but she already knew and told me that my sister and her husband were on their way to the embassy to look out for me. With my cuts still bleeding, I was wandering around the hospital thinking on what to do and at around 1300 hours (approximately 3 hours after the explosion I saw my sister and her husband at the hospital) who say they came here by chance as all roads to the embassy were shut down and they were directed towards the National Hospital so they decided to just check. Lucky for me I got united with my family. The next step was to go to another hospital and get my wound stitched. At around 1500 hours (approximately 4 hours after the explosion) I reached home only to realize that my clothes were all stained with blood from my wound. I strongly believe other than all coincident of the day the prayers of my mother may have saved my life.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

My mother is a very spiritual person and she believes in the power of prayers, upon hearing the explosion some 10 km away and the news that the embassy has been bombed, she prayed for me. Fortunately for me I got united safe and sound with my family within hours after the explosion, had it not been for the prayers, I would defiantly be writing this story differently. 2 days after the bombing, I was back at work to salvage IT items from the bombed building that could be used to set up the temporary office. My family's support has been superb from that day until my last day of working for the Embassy on June 21, 2017, when I decided to take the opportunity of special immigrant visa to migrate to the USA. I am currently a proud resident of Austin, Texas.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

Life immediately after the bombing was very frightful, having to go to work where I was almost to lose my life was a daunting task, to add to the misery was going to work in the temporary building where a desk and a chair was your whole office and to see military police day in day out as you go about working was taking a toll on me, however with constant time off and reflection on what could have gone wrong, I always kept positive thought. It was very hard to remove the memories of that dreadful Friday morning until my last day at work for the embassy there has never been a single Friday that I would not remember the day while driving to work and thank the Almighty Lord for giving me another chance to live.

One of the major life-changing decision that helped me to return to normal life was to bring forward my decision to get married, on September 30th, 1999, (13 months after the embassy bombing) I tied the knots with one the world's most amazing person; my wife. She has been a great support during the up and down of daily challenges and especially the recovery from the embassy bombing.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

As a former scout, I always believe in the scout motto “ Be Prepared” the embassy bombing took me by surprise but being prepared for the worst case scenario and taking my fire drills seriously, I was able to remember the emergency exits in a few seconds had things been worse than what I saw, I would have to find my way on my own. Though it has taken so many years to overcome as a survivor, I truly believe meditation and prayers can overcome the most difficult challenges. Last but not least, I would always enforce and encourage you to take your fire drills and emergency preparedness seriously; it could save your life.

EVITTA F. KWIMBERE
Administrative Section (FSN)

I woke up early in the morning by saying “Thank God it’s Friday.....”, took my breakfast, made sure the kids were okay kissed them goodbye and left for work. It was a bright sunny day, but I had this uneasiness that week but ignored the feeling. I just recall telling my daughter (12) the previous night, “I don’t know but I really don’t feel like going to work this week, and she told well, you could always take a day off, she has ever been a matter of fact child since an early age, tell you like she sees it.

Once I got to work, I prepared my To-do list for the day, I noticed that several American employees’ passports required an extension of re-entry and exemption permits, therefore, I made it a priority. After preparation of diplomatic note and signatures required, I prepared my envelopes ready for a motor pool driver to dispatch to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. My Office being in the second floor while Motor pool Office was in the ground floor, I delivered the envelopes with the register book to the Dispatcher for drop off to the Ministry.

On my way back to my office I remembered that I had booked an International call with the switch board seeking some information, therefore, I had to rush to not to miss the call, passing near the gate where bomb blasted. I stopped at the strong door in the first floor waiting for Marine security guard to open the door, however, it took longer than expected, there after I heard a big blast and the strong door hit me on my left side and I hit the floor so hard and I fainted...

When I came to it took me a few seconds to figure out what exactly had happened and where I was. I remember my colleague, Tina she was then 8 months pregnant gave me a helping hand to stand-up and informed me that there is a bomb blast. I was too dazed but I just followed everyone to the safe zone as directed.

I smelled blood and felt blood dripping from my face, my batik jumpsuit had spots of blood all over. I realized I had a big cut on my face, on my head and on my left arm, I had difficulty breathing as my chest was heavy and it was painful for me to breath in and out.

When we reached at the safe place another blast sound was heard outside of the compound. A colleague called Tibruss told me “no.... this is not a place to stay, let’s get out of this place....” He found a ladder lying down on the grass, he put it against the wall and lead me to climb the ladder pushing me from the back, with the help of another colleague, Michael, managed to push me up to the top with difficulty, I did not have energy and I had severe pains in my ribs on the left side which disabled me to bend or move fast. Finally, I jumped from the ladder outside the wall/compound. They too came after, stopped any car passing for help. A good Samaritan with double cabin truck stopped and drove us straight to the National Hospital called Muhimbili.

At the hospital it was Mayhem, they too heard the blast, in fact I was told later that it was heard at quite a distance from the area, my husband later told me he thought someone had banged at his office window and his office was several kilometers away, my daughter at home said she was surprised to hear thunder on such a clear day!

I was received at the reception and they laid me on a bed, I felt the pain on my chest and left side worsen.

My husband and other family members started to search from one hospital to another. My brother in-law found me at Muhimbili hospital in the afternoon and informed my husband and rest of the family members.

As I was heading to the room for admission I faintly remember seeing my husband and children shock stricken faces, to be honest I thought I was going to die and my heart ached when I saw them and remembered my youngest who was then three.

The same night I was transferred to the private ward called MOI which specialized in Orthopedics, in order to have X-rays and other check-ups, the medical report showed that I had multiple broken ribs involving 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th ribs in the left hemithorax, lung contusion, moderate head injury, left shoulder joint sprain, Multiple cut wounds in the face, forearm and arm. I was admitted for a little over two weeks and then discharged after a little improvement. I was on wheel chair during the two weeks and on bed rest for two months.

My husband and daughter came every day to bring me home made food and left my daughter to give me company and came to fetch her at night, the hospital for some reason allowed her to stay during the non-visiting hours, I remember she used to help give me a cloth bath with the nurses. The staff were very empathetic and nice to me as well.

A lot of people visited me at the hospital, my colleagues including officers, government officials, church leaders and even people from the street whom I didn’t know came to give me their well wishes.

In Tanzania it was the first time a terrorist attack that involved a bomb of that scale to happen. Everyone had a different story about that day. My colleague Valerie told me that

I was very lucky I was not on my desk on the bombing day, the wall behind my desk fell right on my desk and I would have probably not survived.

I felt extremely lucky to have survived that day and started recollecting the series of event that took place, some saved me, the timing saved me! From the Marine delaying to open that door; The bomb blasted near the gate where I passed running for the distant call a minute after! Had I not been rushing I would have not been writing this note. I thank the Heavens to this day!

My heart went out to those who lost their family members, five guards who lost their lives protecting us, two truck drivers, one cleaner, one gardener and three public visitors. Nothing can replace a life, it is too precious and priceless!

It was a few days later that the then Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright would be visiting Dar es Salaam and meet all the injured victims at the hospital, I was pleasantly surprised and this made me feel that the American government valued their employees regardless of their locality. To this day I respect the American government for the utmost support and care.

I have valued life more from that day! I appreciated the value of having a family and friends and to never take them for granted!

To those who lost lives of their loved ones in this event or any other terrorist attack my prayers are with them!

ADAM MESSER
Spouse of USAID Officer Diana Putman

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

Friday morning, at the office of my Internet business, in Dar es Salaam, I was about a mile from the Embassy. Around 10:30 our building leaped. Had someone just slapped all of the windows? I called my wife, in her USAID office, where she too had felt the blast. What was that? Moments later one of my staff lunged into my office. "Your Embassy was bombed." Grabbing my security radio, I pinched a car from a friend downstairs and bolted, waving my dip passport to get me past the police barricades restricting traffic.

Vehicles smoldered outside of the Embassy, where the bomb ripped off the front of an annex. Sticky with diesel fuel and blood, and sprinkled with an emerald layer of shredded leaves, the street was unusually bright. Late morning sun poured through mangled trees, foliage absent. My first thought was that the management officer was probably dead; his third floor office was ripped in half.

Embassy staff had started to make sense of the shattered compound, they assessed and responded. Asked to locate the wounded CLO and the officer escorting her, I threaded my way through traffic to the main hospital.

Normally languid, today Muhimbili Hospital was churning with people and wails of grief. I pushed through the crowds, located the hospital director, and explained my mission. He had no idea where the Americans were -- every surgical theater held casualties. "OK, can I gown and go in?" The director assented.

Surgeons were doing everything they could to save the Tanzanians under their care, but it was clear that they would dispense a lot more grief. A doctor exhibited a metal chunk he had extracted from a victim; it looked like the bottom of a compressed gas cylinder. "Can I have that please?" He handed the pound of evidence, still warm and bloody, to me in a thin plastic shopping bag.

Finding no Americans, I traversed the hospital complex and bumped into the escorting officer. She guided me upstairs to the ophthalmology ward. The chief said that the CLO required immediate surgery to stabilize the wound to her orbit. She was lucky -- her thick plastic eyeglasses gave some protection against the concrete fragment which slammed into her face. And a deep gouge in one of the lenses proved it.

With surgery underway, I roamed the hospital, searching for Americans. The Peace Corps nurse Edith Mpangala, had arrived, and together we returned to triage, and visited the registrar's office. Among the victims it appeared that the CLO was the only AmCit.

In the halls we encountered an American, Susan Hirsch. "I'm looking for my husband." She explained the circumstances. Susan was in the Chancery cashing a check while her Kenyan husband waited outside. Edith and I both realized that this story was not going to have a happy ending; she stayed with Susan and I returned to the ophthalmology department. The surgeon had stabilized the CLO's eye. Now we had to medevac her.

The mobile phone network was unreliable; call completion rates plummeted as everyone checked on loved ones. Fortunately the IPO had sprinted to activate the Embassy's backup radio network so we had some comms. I began coordinating the hospital component of the medevac. Venturing to the parking lot for better radio reception I saw Susan sitting on a low and crumbling concrete curb, cradling her head while calmly talking on her mobile phone. "Jamal amekufa bom." She was explaining to her Mombasa family that the bomb killed her husband, their son.

By late afternoon the medevac team Land Rover rolled onto the hospital compound. We gently moved the CLO to the airport, where she had ten minutes alone with her husband, the MSG detachment commander, before boarding. Waiting for wheels up, we watched evening CNN reports of the bombing in where we lived and worked. Weird

Saturday morning, 8 August, at the emergency response meeting convened by the Embassy, I volunteered to assist the FBI. Having started two businesses in Dar I had a

good head for how to get things done and lots of contacts. The first FBI agent flew from Cairo, and we scurried to find lodging for the team of 50+ agents arriving Sunday. Rejecting all other options, we finally made our last stop at the Sea Cliff, a newly constructed hotel still in soft opening phase. I asked the night manager, named Hilton, if he had rooms available. Hmm -- thirty-three rooms for sure, but can you give me a credit card for guarantee?

I ultimately took time off from my company to help the FBI get in gear, and was astonished months later to receive a really thoughtful commendation from them.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

Sounds banal, but the bombing showed how fragile life is. One forgets.

We remain vigilant, wary of flashy hotels and restaurants in foreign lands. Everywhere. Dar was a soft target, as are other locales. I flipped one morning in Nairobi, years after Dar, when I saw a pickup truck delivering gas cylinders to the International School -- the Dar bomb was engineered from shaved TNT stuffed into industrial gas cylinders.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

No matter how pissed off we were with each other, my wife and I try to remind ourselves daily how much we love each other. Mostly we succeed.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

Carry your radio. Without comms, medevacing a wounded colleague would have been tough. Mobile phone networks saturate in emergencies, or get destroyed. Though having a radio slung on my ass scales somewhere between silly and pretentious, when bad things happen I'll be the smartest guy in the room. And maybe save someone else.

ELIZABETH "LIZZIE" SLATER
Information Management Specialist

Life can change in a second

Getting to this assignment had been difficult for a number of reasons, most prominently, as a tandem couple we had been unable to secure assignments at the same post so we did the next best thing and picked what we termed "an African commute" by choosing two neighboring countries and an hour long plane ride. My husband, Charlie Slater, and our five year old son were going to Nairobi, Kenya and I accepted a job in the haven of peace, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. We had struggled with where our son should be, but

settled on the fact that the International School of Kenya was touted as one of the best in the world making the decision that he should go with Charlie. At the very last minute Charlie was told that he had to attend consultations in Paris before going to post, forcing us to part-company in London where we were to leave our son with his Grandmother while my husband traveled to Paris. He begged me to come with him to Paris but my sense of duty to report to my new post won out. Kissing my boys goodbye was heartbreaking as I didn't know when I would see them again, and then this little voice said "Mummy are you going to die?"

Less than 48 hours after my arrival at my new assignment, my life changed forever when a massive truck bomb detonated about 50 feet in front of me.

My first day in the office was crazy as I was replacing the sole Information Management Specialist (IMS), Vella Wells (now Mbenna). So much needed to be done in the hand-over with her departing in just a few days. I also had much to learn as a first-time IMS as well as do my new arrival in-processing with the various Management sections, it was hectic. The one other thing that I did that day was have my security briefing with the recently arrived Regional Security Officer (RSO) John DiCarlo, who told me that there were a lot of security elements that he had changed in his short few weeks at post, but there was still a lot that needed to be done. Jetlagged and exhausted I dragged myself home to my temporary residence and crashed for the night.

Day two started early, learning the opening procedures for a new post is always a little different everywhere you go, so Vella and I got through "pulling the queue and clearing the traffic" but before getting into the more serious briefings and handover of communications security I went to attend my "Welcome to Dar es Salaam" briefing with the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Cynthia Kimble, as she was due to depart on leave the next day. I grabbed my travel voucher paperwork to turn it in and on my way to her office I passed Post One noticing that the RSO John DiCarlo was standing Post. Recognizing him from the previous day's briefing I waved hello and stepped into the CLOs office just down the hallway. She was on the phone, distressed and in tears so I offered that I could come back another time, but she waved me in directing me to take a seat, she smiled and said to me "everything will be alright" and the room went black.

All I could hear were the terrified screams coming from Cynthia's direction, I kept asking if she was okay, but she was hysterical and seemingly could only scream. I was buried under rubble, I had no sensation below my waist and figured that my legs were gone. I actually didn't know what had happened yet, but I couldn't move and I couldn't help Cynthia. After a while the screaming stopped, I didn't know if she was alright or even there anymore. I realized I could see the sky, which surprised me as there were no windows in her office

People were now scrambling around clearing debris, I felt a hand on my shoulder and said something like "don't move me I think I have lost my legs." This propelled them into frenzied activity, I heard "she is alive." Moments later there was this guttural cry and I felt something hit the bookcase that was immediately on top of me, it dislodged,

displacing everything that covered me and I popped up like a cork in water. I was freed and now I could feel my legs. Later I learned that it was the CLO's husband, Gunnery Sergeant Kimble that has used Herculean force to remove the debris covering me. My other rescuers were Chargé d'Affaires John Lange, RSO John DiCarlo, and WAE Consular Officer Jon Edensword who pulled me out of the rubble and moved me to safety.

Getting out of the building proved to be even trickier ... the stairwell was badly damaged, walls were at angles, even some body parts were laying around. I was accompanied by an American Citizen who was at the Embassy to tell his story about reenacting pioneer explorer Dr. David Livingstone's journey to discover the source of the Nile, he was clearly at the wrong place at the wrong time that day. About half way down we found one of our local staff just sitting on the stairs, I say "we must get out of here it is not safe" but she refuses to move, she quietly says "I can't find my shoes." I take off my shoes and give them to her and say "come, let's go." She moves forward with us. As we reach street level the chaos and devastation is surreal, it seems like everything is in flames, all the vehicles, a massive tanker truck, the buildings. People are trying to decide which way to go. My gut feeling was to get as far away from the front of the building where I now knew a massive bomb had exploded. I start shepherding people around the side of the building. We come across someone that looked to be skinned alive, he was barely breathing. I knew I could not help medically, I kept moving leading our dazed and confused contingent to the rear of the compound. I freeze when I see another tanker truck around the back hoping that nothing bad will happen now. I see others that had come down the back fire escape and approach to ask if they are okay, that is when I came to the realization that I have some facial injuries, the first person started backing up, she screamed, turned and ran. Suddenly a ladder materialized and we start scaling the perimeter into a growing crowd on the far side of the wall, people were being whisked off to waiting vans. Before I manage to get inside one a news reporter has his camera trained on me, my immediate instinct was to hold up my travel voucher and cover my face, all that was going through my mind was I didn't want my son to see me like this. That turned out to be a blessing for my siblings who did see me on the newsfeed and again that day "she is alive" was repeated, this time with a sigh of relief.

We were all taken to the safe haven at the Chargé d'Affaires' residence, where I was immediately taken in by the medical team to see if they could assist with my injuries, they were slammed as there were so many people that were injured and rightfully they were triaging the patients. The end of my nose had been ripped off, dangling like an old broken door barely hanging on its last hinge ... nothing life threatening ... but needed attention along with the hundreds of head wounds I had sustained that were still pumping blood. I could wait. I was also torn by the fact that we needed to have communications with Main State, so I checked to see if we had set up a command center and had managed to connect with the Operations Center in Washington - we had - with an open line with them which was going to be manned 24 hours. The nurse was now dragging me back to get my face attended to, she sat me down and said "I don't know what to do with your face, let's irrigate it." Sometime later another nurse stopped by and looked at my face, she said and did the same thing at which point I started laughing and said "I see the headline now

... Bomb victim drowns” which did lighten the mood in the room a little. I was literally covered in blood, dust, and grime. Everyone agreed that I needed to have a shower as I had wounds covering my entire body that needed attention. A kind spouse waiting in the safe haven offered to accompany me in case I passed out (everyone was worried about concussion), so I showered but now what clothes to wear? Mine were shredded and filthy. Eventually I was given shorts and a T-Shirt, they belonged to the Chargé d’Affaires ... I joked that I was ambitious, but I thought that I would be trying to fill his shoes not his britches! Finally the French Embassy Doctor was free and came to fix my face. He gently started removing the hundreds of pieces of glass embedded in my face, head, neck, and shoulders and suturing the wounds quietly reassuring me that I was going to look beautiful when he was finished patching me up. When he got to my nose, he hesitated said “close your eyes” and started to smooth out the skin that was torn from the sides of my nose and it felt like he flipped up the nose and reattached it. I was done and headed out to find Vella.

The next several days were a blur - we took over the Public Affairs Officer’s residence as our new Embassy building where Vella and I along with a RIMC team sent to assist worked day and night to get communications back up and running. I remember the local telephone company managed to bring new fifty-pair cabling to the house over the weekend (that was several miles of cabling installed down the road from the nearest exchange) so that we had the ability to get our normal Embassy phone numbers working at the new location. Our computers and servers were moved and we installed a temporary local area network so our salvaged computers were working on everyone’s desks. With RIMC’S help we had a fly-away satellite communications kit and a TERP5 installed so our cable traffic was operational again. They also brought a temporary telephone switch so that we could deploy phones on everyone’s desk. Basically, on the Monday morning, August 10, 1998 we opened our Embassy at the new location and people were able to get to work.

I believe that it was about five days after that fateful day of the bombing when the Chargé d’Affaires said that he would just like me to take a rest, “I am not asking you to sleep, just lay down and rest a little.” ... I woke up about 25 hours later.

About three weeks later I was getting the new Information Management Officer settled in, we were still moving things around and arranging how the offices needed to be set up to accommodate us and all the communications equipment. I mentioned to him that my right leg had actually been bothering me the last couple of days, it was really painful. He said that I should probably go and see the Embassy Doctor who had set up a new clinic in another house. I eventually got to see the Doctor, my entire body was still heavily bruised, literally from head to toe, so when I pointed to the general area of where I was feeling the pain he literally just had to press down on my leg to test where it hurt. All of a sudden my flesh just collapsed under his fingers and he said out loud “Oh dear, dead meat.” I just looked at him and said “for once in my life I really wished you used a medical term that I didn’t really understand - dead meat?” Unfortunately, I had received a blunt force trauma injury that had basically “killed” that part of my shin during the explosion and now it had turned gangrenous. The good news is that the Doctor provided

exceptional care while treating this frightening injury and my leg fully recovered, albeit I have a beautiful scar as a constant reminder.

Likewise with my nose, my husband's close friend living in Pensacola, Florida, Dr. Ian W. Rogers an exceptional micro-surgeon, had seen me on the news interview that I did a few days after the bombing. Almost immediately after it aired he was on the phone telling me exactly what I needed to do to fix my nose in the interim until he could work on it when I returned to the United States. For several weeks I walked around with play dough plastered around my nose as he said that this would stop the skin from "puckering." Naturally I had asked my colleagues with small children if they had any red play dough ... and that was why my radio call sign became Rudolph!

In closing, my son's question still haunts me to this day ... during the lead up to our separated tours we had been saying "you will go with Daddy to Nairobi and Mummy is going to Dar" he had understood "Mummy is going to die." That almost became a reality!

VELLA G. MBENNA
Information Management Specialist

When the attack occurred, I was sitting at my desk in the Communication's Center speaking on the phone with a colleague in the American Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa. I was expecting the call, but thought I could run a few errands before my operator processed the call and before my new American colleague I needed to train return to the Communication's Center. However, just seconds after exiting the Communications' Center to run the errands, I thought I heard a phone ringing, so I returned into the center to see if it was my office phone. It was my phone, so I went to a desk in the back of the center to take it. It was indeed the call I was expecting from South Africa to see why my request for training for one of my Foreign Service National (FSN) staff had not been processed yet. I was less than a minute into the conversation when I heard a blast and saw the wall come towards me. My chair, with me in it, was blown across the floor and slammed into a rack of communication's equipment. I was knocked out. When I came to, I heard the selectone wailing—"Please evacuate the building, this is not a drill" and I felt very weak; however, I immediately went to check on the other office colleagues and to send a message on the telegraphic equipment to Washington to stop transmitting telegrams to Post because something bad had just happened. I then sanitized the Communications Center as much as I could at that time before heading out to see what really had happened.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

- Sometimes without warning when I am in a crowd, I become nervous and feel the need to, or sometimes, abruptly leave.
- I often decline to attend work and personal events, even in retirement, because I fear to be in a crowd.

- I have a compulsion to always say goodbye to family and friends vice taking it for granted that I will return.
- Because I forgot for days to call the boarding school where my son (and niece) were to let them know I was fine, I carry a heavy burden that my son feels, to date, that I did not care about what he was possibly experiencing not knowing if I was dead or alive.
- I became burnt-out early in my career because I truly believe that I worked extremely long hours, even as a high level manager, ensuring and double checking on a daily basis that the Embassy was communications ready, in the event something like the bomb happened again.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

- Being alone a lot.
- Thinking of the good I did that day for my Tanzanian colleagues, my American colleagues, and my country.
- Talking about it with anyone who cared to listen.
- Writing, versions and versions, of what happened and how I felt.
- Returning to the old Embassy site (or simply be in Tanzania) year after year on the anniversary of the bombing.
- Keeping in touch with Foreign Service Nationals from the Embassy and letting them know how thankful and grateful I was then and still am for them.
- Being kind to everyone I meet, no matter how different they are from me.
- Praying a lot and becoming stronger in my faith.
- Being protective and worried about my son (at the expense of pushing him further away from me) and now my grandkids.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

For survivors:

- Do not ask, “why me”? Just be thankful.
- Don’t try to forget it, let it play out in words and any other expressive manner possible.
- Please call home to family and friends in the States, the first opportunity.
- Talk to others and give lots of hugs to other survivors
- If you are hurt, please ask to leave. You may do further harm to yourself by staying.
- Do not try to be a super hero and put yourself in danger or work until you drop.
- Take time to reflect and breathe.
- Pitch in and help others, even if you are not an expert in that area. You would be amazed at what you can do to help in a stressful situation.

For Helpers:

- Do not come with an “I am here to take over or save the day” attitude.
- Let those still on the ground be a part of helping.
- Listen a lot to survivors and do not give advice.
- Never criticize or remark on how a survivor is coping unless it is a medical condition and then you should tell a medical professional in private.
- Be patient and understanding.

JOHN E. LANGE
Chargé d’Affaires

We will not, and cannot, forget

I heard a low, rumbling sound a second before the office windows blew in over my head and landed on the people in front of me. A bomb with the equivalent of 1,500 to 2,000 pounds of TNT had exploded, killing eleven people and injuring over 85. The American Embassy in Dar es Salaam was devastated.

Our community – about 50 American employees, a few hundred Tanzanian locally-engaged staff, and all of the family members – was in a state of shock. Yet we were united: in our grief for the dead, in caring for and supporting the survivors, in resurrecting Embassy operations, and in welcoming the VIP visitors and hundreds of temporary duty employees who came to assist. As I wrote in the March 2001 Foreign Service Journal, absolutely everyone – Foreign Service generalist and specialists, Foreign Service Nationals, family members, Foreign and Civil Service employees in Washington, and many, many others – was critical to our recovery. Everyone mattered.

Two months later, when the FBI no longer needed the bombed-out building for evidentiary purposes, we offered all employees the opportunity to return to the Embassy to see the devastation they had escaped in the minutes after the bombing. Interestingly, roughly half declined the opportunity and never wanted to go inside that building again while the other half were eager to revisit their old offices and talk to others about it. Those feelings continue today: some wonder why we keep discussing that horrible day and feel it needs to be left in the past where it belongs, while others find discussion of the bombing, and lessons we have subsequently learned, to be therapeutic.

I am in the latter category, and in the decade after the bombing gave numerous speeches on the event and on leadership in a crisis. Once, after I addressed the Deputy Chief of Mission course, the Foreign Service Institute instructor told me that it seemed as if I was visualizing my actions minute-by-minute in the immediate aftermath of the bombing. She was right.

Everyone who was in Dar es Salaam on August 7, 1998 -- even those miles away from the Embassy -- heard and felt the blast, and they remember it to this day. I've had conversations in which people such as scientist Jane Goodall and former Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete (who was foreign minister in 1998) described exactly where they were, and how they reacted, when the bomb went off.

Even for those survivors who prefer never to talk about the bombing, reminders are frequent. I still remember sitting in my State Department window office, years after the bombing, and hearing the low, rumbling sound of the President's helicopters -- only to be reminded of August 7, 1998. I once told a U.S. military officer that every time the media mention "the East Africa bombings," I recall my experience in Dar es Salaam. He compared us to "war widows," whose spouses were killed while in the armed forces during a war; every mention of the war serves as a reminder.

Osama bin Laden's simultaneous 1998 attacks were the Foreign Service's wake-up call on the terrorist threat, but the 9/11 attacks three years later were the wake-up call for the United States as a whole. When 9/11 occurred, many of the Dar bombing "alumni" were very upset that bin Laden had not been captured earlier. And many of us relived the trauma of the East Africa bombings, using words such as "dysfunctional" or "incapacitated" to describe ourselves. At that difficult time I was the Ambassador to Botswana, and I remember my staff confidently looking to me as their leader based on my experience leading AmEmbassy Dar es Salaam in August 1998. I did my best even though I was emotionally devastated.

I do not know how many of us suffer from post-traumatic stress, but I do know that many do. Some of the people who were the most fearless in the weeks after the bombing, bravely working to restore U.S. Government operations, suffered the most later. One of the most important actions the State Department took was to send psychiatrists to talk with the staff about our experiences. But many of us believe that much more needed to be done in the months and years afterward. Just as the U.S. military is increasingly aware of the large number of cases of PTSD in war veterans, the State Department and the families of survivors need to be aware of the continuing mental health needs of those who go through such a traumatic experience.

An important element has been the relentless pursuit of justice by the U.S. Government. There have been three criminal trials in federal district court in New York, and several Americans, Tanzanians and Kenyans have testified. All trial defendants charged in the bombing conspiracy have been found guilty and sentenced to life in prison.

Professor Susan Hirsch, an anthropologist, was nearing the end of her time as a Fulbright Scholar in Dar es Salaam at the time of the bombing. She was in the Embassy while her husband Jamal, a Kenyan, waited outside and tragically died in the blast. She grieved with the help of friends and families on two continents and later witnessed the 2001 bombing trial in federal district court. Her introspective book, *In the Moment of Greatest Calamity*, examines the important role that the quest for justice can play in the recovery of survivors of terrorism.

Our Dar es Salaam group developed a bond that continues today. Annually around the anniversary of the bombing, a large number of American and Tanzanian bombing alumni send “thinking of you” email messages to the group to commiserate and to provide family updates. As one person wrote, “Each year the pain of August 7, 1998, rushes back. But longstanding ties of friendship, family, and community make it bearable. It's good to be in touch with this group every year and to acknowledge what we have all been through.”

We will not, and cannot, forget.

Ambassador John E. Lange (Ret.), Senior Fellow for Global Health Diplomacy at the United Nations Foundation, served as Charge d’Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam at the time of the bombing.

SHERRY ZALIKA SYKES
USAID Tanzania Private Sector Development Team Leader

The morning of August 7, 1998 began like any other day, but would end with immense sadness and a lesson about our multi-tiered community. I was in my office at USAID packing my briefcase for a meeting that I was due to attend in the Embassy, about one mile away. Suddenly I felt and heard a blast and could see from my office window a large plume of smoke. I immediately thought that something I had seen and feared would happen, had occurred: someone smoking near the Embassy’s gas tanks would ignite them. But that was not the case, as in that moment someone shouted through my door to turn on my radio. Over the airwaves, I heard an announcement that American installations were under attack in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, and possibly other locations in East Africa. My immediate thought was that I needed to get my daughters from their high school that was located directly across the Selander Bridge from the embassy – just hundreds of meters away. They were the only American children in their Islamic School. My daughters were broadly welcomed, however there still existed an element that resented their presence there. Due to the tenor of the radio broadcasts, for the first (and last) time, I feared for their safety at school.

In no time, there were several bloodied and injured Americans in the USAID offices, and “all Americans” were called into our largest conference room. At the door of the conference room, another locally-engaged American colleague and I were told “Not you.” You see, I was not an FSN. I was not a USDH officer. I was a locally engaged American PSC. The meeting, I was told, was meant for Direct Hire and USPSC Americans only. I waited outside with other locally engaged staff. It mattered not that I had already passed the Foreign Service Officer’s Test and one week later I was due to take the oral exam. It did not matter that I was the lead for the USAID Private Sector Development team. It stung, but I understood. I waited and when the USDH’s emerged, I was told that all the “Americans” would be going via convoy to the alternate command center on the other side of the bridge beyond the now destroyed Embassy. I sought to join

that convoy to get to my children which, at that time, was the only direct route from the USAID building. Due to my hiring status, I was denied participation in that convoy. I was extremely angry. This, I did not understand. I thought “Why are the lives of my American children any less precious than the lives of the children of the USDH – who would be accounted for in the crisis?!” Consequently, I had to fight my way past police blockades (using my accent, language skills and family name) to get to my children, and then across the otherwise closed bridge, past the Embassy carnage, and then onward to our home further down the Peninsula, without security assistance.

Over the next 6 days, I learned with great sadness from the news reports that a female security guard I had become friendly with had died, but I never received a word from the Embassy nor USAID. I understood that everyone was in crisis mode, and my anger subsided as I prepared to leave for the United States. I arrived in Chicago and took the oral exam exactly one week after the bombing. To my absolute delight, I passed the exams to join the Foreign Service! But the bombing had changed me. I made the decision that rather than join as an Economic officer as I had previously determined, I would join as a Management officer. I felt strongly that my experience during that crisis gave me a perspective on caring for all employees, on the value of security, and of preparedness that would best translate in a career focused on policies and practices in the leadership and resourcing of people.

My family and I never forgot how the bombing affected a much wider circle than the Embassy itself. At my daughters’ school, all things made of glass exploded – lab equipment, computer monitors, the few windows that existed, etc. While no one was badly injured, everyone was traumatized. Children were still moaning and crying when I arrived. Our family was very aware of the effect of the bombing on all parties, and felt that the USDH officers were not only unaware of the trauma experienced by non-USDH families, but the lack of communication left the impression that there also existed a lack of concern. My daughters witnessed how their mother was excluded from information and from support in the aftermath. Now both of my daughters are professionals in international health both with government (CDC) and the private sector. Like me, they learned from the bombing to pay particular attention to how policies and practices impact all staff – local and expatriate alike.

After a long and arduous clearance process, marred by anti-Islamic prejudice, my family and I joined the 95th A-100 class. We have taken pride in being a part of a government service that learns from our experiences, making policy and culture changes along the way to immensely improve our crisis response.

MONICA STEIN-OLSON
USAID Controller

Touching my belly over my clothes, I drove to the Embassy Dar es Salaam Health Unit for my first prenatal checkup. Dr. DaSilva wanted me to start early because of two

miscarriages over the past two years. He was concerned that I was at risk given my age. That day, I took the earliest appointment at 9 am because I didn't want to be too late for work. USAID was located about a mile from the American Embassy and I had a meeting at 10. I parked on Laibon Road right in front of the Konners house, directly across from the Embassy. I fretted that the Konners were on vacation that week and there would be no Friday summer playgroup for my boys, 4 and 2. Normally I would drop them at 9 am. I hated leaving them all day with the nanny but my husband Steve was traveling outside of the country. I did not know at the time, but the timing of the Konners vacation saved all of our children because, as part of the explosion a huge fireball ripped into the Konners house incinerating everything in its path.

I got out of my car and glanced at the line forming for the visas. I waved to the young female guard whose dream it was to work for USAID. She was taking secretarial classes at night. I could tell she wanted to talk about a job opening but I was too much in a hurry. Looking back, I wish I would have stopped even for a moment. But I didn't know that her life would be extinguished just an hour later. About 9:45, I drove to the office happy with the thought of finally having another baby. But my happiness left less than an hour later and I didn't get it back until years later. At 10:39 am, we heard a deafening BOOM. And then the building trembled which we later learned was the shock wave from the blast.

For two weeks straight, we were on adrenaline working long hours trying to make sense of what happened. I thought about how life was so random. That I was fortunate that I went to the Embassy for an early appointment. What if the early appointment had been taken? I was fortunate that the Konners were on vacation that day. What if they hadn't been on vacation? What if my husband hadn't been on a trip and needed to be at the Embassy that morning? I started to have panic attacks.

The August 7 attack most affected me how?

I began constant feelings of dread. I had difficulty concentrating. I was exhausted. I thought about the young female guard. I was irritable. But most of all, I began to anticipate terrible scenarios involving my children and became unreasonably protective of my family. I wanted the boys to push stuff up against their doors at night. I wanted them in our room at the floor of our bed. I kept imagining the boys at their play date at the time of the bombing. I imagined losing my baby. But I didn't. We had a healthy girl but I was still constantly fatigued and sad and I didn't know why.

The anxiety slowly turned into depression. In Moscow, I was asked to say a few words regarding the 5 year anniversary of the East Africa bombings. I opened my mouth and nothing came out. I tried to say the words, but I couldn't. They wouldn't come out. I went to the Embassy Health Unit. I was told, "You are a working mother and have 3 young kids. Go home. This is normal." I knew something was wrong when I met up with Ambassador Lange and for no reason at all, I began to sob and sob. I had been depressed by then for years. By the time I got to Morocco, I could no longer function. I was constantly worried about my children and I had lost interest in everything. Once when my

daughter was running on the beach and a large dog began running behind her, I began screaming and screaming myself into hysteria when there was no real threat. Alarming my husband. My emotional state began to affect my marriage. And our family. But things only got worse. I had nightmares about our children dying. I was easily startled, And I was easily irritable. And then our daughter became severely depressed. I needed to seek help. Again. So I could help her.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life

Where I grew up, in the Midwest, my parents never dreamed of going to a therapist. We were made to think that was for weak people. But when my 6-year old daughter was “psychovaced” from Post for depression, we got her the help she needed. She got better. But I got worse. Fortunately for me, one of the Embassy FSOs had a spouse who was a psychiatrist. And she was a friend. When I was having one of my bleaker moments, I called Susan and said, "You need to make an appointment with me right now, because I will never call back." And she did. As FSOs, we were so fearful for our security clearances. And that's why people don't reach out. Susan helped me over a two year period. She often reminded me that my daughter and I both suffered the same trauma even though she hadn't been born yet! Today we are both having happy and healthy lives, both physically and mentally.

I would like to pass on the following:

We all get stressed. And we don't have to get bombed to suffer from anxiety, depression and/or PTSD. A study contracted out by USAID to Greenleaf Integrative two years ago uncovered startling statistics that the majority of FSOs overseas undergo many of the same stressors that our soldiers in combat experience. How can that be? We serve in places without our families; we have crushing workloads; we have difficult or unsupportive supervisors; and we work in conflict zones. There are all kinds of stressors and my advice? Be resilient. Have a Work Life balance. Take vacations. Get a hobby. Focus on family. And above all, do not be afraid to seek help. We all need it at one point or another in our careers. One more thing. As I learned the hard way, our children can also feel our stress and fall into depression themselves. Make sure that you listen to them. Even when they are 6 years old. Did my therapy affect my security clearance? No. I am just grateful that I finally got help.

JUSTINA “TINA” MDOBILU
Translator and Political Assistant (FSN)

How August 7, 1998 Continues to Affect My Life

The terrorist attack at the American Embassy in Dar es Salaam on August 7, 1998 continues to affect me, those close to me and, surprisingly, those I meet daily.

Immediately after the blast I was affected psychologically. Hit with disbelief, disorientation and fear, some colleagues and I were taken by first responders to Muhimbili National Hospital for treatment. At the registration desk, as hard as I tried, I could not remember my family name and so they only entered my first name initially. In a specialized ward I encountered chaos as I tried to answer questions from anxious relatives who were looking for loved ones. The nurses were particularly concerned about me because I was eight months pregnant and they feared I might lose the child.

After a doctor allowed me to go home, in confusion I went to my parent's house instead. There, I found anxious relatives who had heard the news on radio. After I returned to my own home I discovered a relative had already called my family to say that I was dead.

After a few months I noticed I was becoming withdrawn and lacked confidence at the office. I was also losing interest in activities that were not strictly related to work, unaware that this was the beginning of two years of post-traumatic stress disorder and severe anxiety where I endured episodes of panic attacks and claustrophobia. Not wanting to lose my job, I had to find ways of coping with such an elevated perception of danger. This included looking for seating near doors no matter where I was. I remember once asking a supervisor if I could step outside the office because I found it hard to breathe inside. I particularly remember a trip where I escorted the Ambassador upcountry by plane. I arrived at our destination with pain in my neck because of the tension of feeling claustrophobic and the fear of having a panic attack mid-air. I later learnt there were others who were suffering as I was, and that a colleague had suffered a mental breakdown.

One month after August 7 I gave birth to a healthy boy that my husband and I named Immanuel, meaning "God with us," and we were thankful for life. However, it was during this time that I realized that I could barely hear with my right ear and I wondered what this would do to my career as an interpreter/translator. Although I now live in the United States and work as an interpreter for Swahili speaking refugees, I sometimes have to ask my clients to speak more slowly, repeat what they just said or ensure that I see their faces if they will be speaking rapidly because otherwise I may not catch everything they say. I remember interpreting for a client last year who was becoming aggravated because I was having trouble keeping up with her. At one point she turned to me and jokingly asked if I was becoming deaf. Although it hurt, I just smiled. I told her later that my hearing was not the same after the explosion. There are times when my children will tell me that my cell phone is ringing in my purse because I cannot hear it.

I have been affected also in how I relate to others. Although I briefly contemplated leaving the Embassy immediately after the bombing, I quickly realized that I was probably not the only one on the planet who felt uncertain about life and premature and violent death. When I moved to the United States with my family in 2013 I also found out that one could die through similar acts of violence in a movie theater, an office, a mall, an elementary school and even a church. Admittedly, all these examples do not fall strictly under the traditional definition of terrorism, but they carry its traits which include violence, spreading fear and targeting innocent members of the public.

Living in the United States in such challenging times forces me to become proactive for myself and my family. My children tell me sometimes that I worry too much, or that I am becoming paranoid, but I insist that as immigrants with unfamiliar accents, contrasting perceptions and different ways of describing things we all need to become examples of good foreigners to people who may genuinely not understand. My American friends laugh good naturedly when I call silverware “cutlery”, a garbage can “a dustbin” and refer to a trunk of a car as a “boot”, I suppose it also helps to laugh at yourself once in a while.

I am careful about what I allow into my mind and so I study my Bible and read motivational books. President Theodore Roosevelt once said, “Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” I may not be famous. I do not have a face book, twitter or Instagram account, but this quote inspires me to take the initiative, to boldly reach out to others in my circle of influence in order to understand even as I seek to be understood, one person at a time. I try with a friendly smile, a listening ear or even a simple “Hello”. Over time I discover this requires patience and an ability to look at the bigger picture as I remind myself not to assume anything of anyone based on the color of their skin, their religious faith, where they come from or what I think they have done in the past. I must be willing to give others what I want to receive, that is, the benefit of doubt.

Obviously not everyone will respond how I would like, but I choose to focus on what I can control, and I leave the rest to God. My son Immanuel is a constant reminder that good happened to our family during that horrific time in 1998, and because of this, I continue to hope.

U.S. EMBASSY, NAIROBI, KENYA

C. STEVEN MCGANN Labor Attaché

When the attack occurred:

I was scheduled to depart post the week of August 11, 1998. However, a request to co-chair the FSI Labor Attaché course that summer brought me back to Washington in early July. The morning of the attack, I was the only recent Embassy officer at the Department. For some reason, I woke up at 0530 and turned on CNN to see the immediate impact of the bombing. I immediately went to the Operations Center to begin work on the emergency task force for the next three days. I didn't leave the Op Center until August 12.

During that period, I was challenged in ways unimaginable. Often speaking directly with Ambassador Bushnell through the single open line to Nairobi, I helped carry out her instructions through an unprepared inter-agency structure. There was no one to issue country clearances, prepare overflight requests or authorize deployments of military and civilian rescue teams.

At that time, there was no Op Center Crisis Management Section and rules of authority were often blurred. As a result, I found myself making decisions far above my then FS-2 rank while briefing Seventh Floor and AF Bureau principals, particularly for media interviews.

Most importantly, being familiar with the emergency procedures we had practiced at post gave me the opportunity to help colleagues at post who were dealing with the traumatic aftermath on the ground. Having a familiar voice on the other end of the line was reassuring to my colleagues that all of their needs were being met. During those three days, I often found myself as the sole person speaking with family members of unaccounted for embassy personnel from all agencies and the military. That was the toughest duty.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

It reinforced that being a Foreign Service Officer was a career that should not be taken lightly. Moreover, it was the guide path that framed how I would interact with colleagues especially peers and subordinates for the rest of my tenure.

Those of us who served in Nairobi continue to speak fondly of our colleagues, particularly the FSN's who were in the embassy that day.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

Should you become a Chief of Mission, it is critical that you demonstrate every day the Emergency Action Committee is your highest priority. Always remember that your officers and family members are on the chancery grounds whether serving as interns, visiting the medical unit or in the commissary. There is no other greater policy objective.

STANLEY K. MACHARIA
Senior Security Investigator (FSN)

It is actually twenty years since the bombing incident and ten years since I retired from the embassy. Time passes and all this, is like yesterday, come to think about it. But looking at my own children and now the grandchildren, I realize that many years have passed and I am no doubt getting old. At the age of seventy, I must thank God for this far

He has brought me and most importantly thank Him for giving me an opportunity to serve the U.S. Government in the Embassy of Nairobi, Kenya.

In life there are many coincidences that occur during our lifetime. We draw many lessons from such occurrences. One of them and so cardinal to my life is, in about 1994 the American Embassy through a certain ARSO that I can't remember his name approached me to help secure the perimeter of the bombed embassy. They had tried to approach the Nairobi City Authorities with no success. I made it my duty as the Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge of Police Operations in the City, and had it done.

It is those metal barriers surrounding the embassy that saved me four years later. It is common knowledge that had the bad guys succeeded to drive the bomb carrier to the embassy basement; I would have definitely died together with all those that were inside at the time. The explosion was likely to uproot the entire embassy and affect the entire Nairobi CBD and the environs with terrible result. That means more thousands and thousands of life would have been lost with an unimagined damage to property.

Much of my story was covered in detail in my earlier statement but I can't forget to mention the second coincidence that actually saved me. This is what actually happened that day of the bombing. At about 10.00 a.m. I heard some explosions outside and decided to go and check. I headed to the rear of the building through the stairs leading to the basement. Halfway and as I was about to open the metal door to the Motor pool office, something strange happened, I felt nervous, terrified, like one walking through a dark path and all of a sudden my instinct indicated that all was not well. I eventually and unconsciously made an about-turn and started running towards the main embassy entrance. Before exiting the stairs, the bomb exploded. It was a very strong explosion that I lost control and fell to the ground. After a few seconds I gained consciousness and run out but before exiting, I met a lady I knew coming out of the Visa Section and I helped her out. She was bleeding from some injuries inflicted. I was luckily not injured but was dusty. Later I rescued the Ambassador from the area and joined the security rescue teams that came to help.

As a result of this incident the Government of Kenya has put in measures to combat this menace and the security agencies are more alert than before. As a person I have also learned to trust my instinct in every situation as I continue trusting God in everything that I do.

Last but not least I wish to mention that in January 2005, I attended Senior FSN Seminar in Washington DC. One of the lectures narrating of the Nairobi 1998 bomb insinuated that some local embassy employees knew about the bombing. This annoyed me and I protested because as far as I can remember, there was no such information.

I end with a good note of appreciation. That after twenty good years the victims of the embassy bombing have been remembered and granted a compensation that extended to the entire family and made a huge impact. We are now able to complete lifetime projects that will support our families for many years to come and I take this opportunity to

sincerely thank the United States Government for this consideration that has come at the right time for those who are living and their families and the families of those who perished in the incident.

May the Almighty God bless Government of the United States of America and all those that coordinated this matter from the beginning to the end.

TERESA PETERSON
Co-Community Liaison Officer

When the attack occurred, I was:

On the morning of August 7, 1998, I had planned to go grocery shopping with Sally, the wife of the Assistant Regional Security Officer, leaving my children with hers for a play date on a safe compound full of other children and plenty of supervision by the nannies. I had also planned to stop by the Embassy to cash a check, but at the last minute changed my mind feeling I had funds to purchase a few necessary items until the following week.

Sally and I were driven and escorted by Steven to the Village Market to observe the outdoor vendors and enjoy a girls' day out. The excitement of locals and the new culture were an intoxicating experience especially given the fact my family had only arrived in Nairobi two weeks prior.

As we strolled the outdoor venue, Steven came running to me with a handheld radio and spoke with anxiety in his voice, "ma'am something bad has happened – you should hear this." The three of us made our way to a curb away from the crowd and listened intently to the radio to gather information. We quickly learned of the Embassy bombing as everyone was asked to stay off the channel, as it was now the main line of communication. As we listened we learned two things – the magnitude of the damage, and that Sally's son was on the radio trying to find his dad. At that moment we realized the children were aware of the event. Both Sally and I decided we needed to get back to her house as quickly as possible, but learned the main roads were being shut down. Steven informed us he knew of other roads and would get us back as soon as possible.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

We continued to monitor the radio in search of familiar voices. We knew that Sally's husband would be working closely with my husband, the Regional Security Officer (RSO). Neither voice was detected during the hour ride back to her house, and anxiety was beginning to build. Upon arriving at the compound, children were playing, the sky was blue, and it was a beautiful day. At a glance, everything was right with the world.

Spouses gathered in the living room of one home and everyone placed their radios in the center of the coffee table continuing to seek a familiar voice. The TV was tuned to CNN. As we watched in horror the aftermath of the horrific event, we found comfort in one another. Hours went by and some were relieved to hear their loved ones' voice, while others remained numb.

I decided to return to my home with my children and try to remain calm and keep things as normal as possible until I learned one way or another the outcome of my husband. I became angry because he had not reached out to let me know of his safety, but I quickly reminded myself that he was working. This is what he was trained to do and that he works best under pressure. Stopping to call me was the most selfish act especially given the number of casualties and injured.

The bombing occurred at 10:30 a.m. It was after midnight before I knew my husband was alive. When I opened the door for him, I discovered a man I barely knew. He was covered in black soot from head to toe. We clung to one another for what seem like hours. As he showered and changed into clean clothes, I made sandwiches and coffee for him to carry back to the site as he returned to work. With our children safely tucked in their beds, all I could do was cry and pray for his safe return and for the loss of so many. I also learned that everyone in the line to cash a check had died. Why I changed my mind at the last minute I will never know. Quickly I realized material things didn't matter.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

The next day, Steven returned to accompany me to the school for events with the children. I realized we each had a role to play. For me, carrying on the normal family life, while my husband dealt with aftermath of this ugly event and work closely with the number of individuals that were arriving to assist. We felt like two ships passing in the night, but we were doing what we needed to do, our jobs.

Over the next week, I volunteered to sort through personal belongings and categorize items found at the blast site. Shortly after, I applied to work first in the General Service Office, later accepted the position as a co-Community Liaison Officer. I felt strongly the rebirth of the Embassy and community morale was within my ability to make a contribution. With the evacuation of many personnel and families, I took the tragic event as an opportunity to rebuild what was lost and for lesson learned.

As a family member, now Embassy employee, I felt the compassion needed for the Foreign Nationals, the surviving staff and families of the August 7th bombing, as well as the newly arriving personnel. Acting as a conduit between the newly arrived and the surviving staff was a challenge at times.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

Keep the event alive in remembering and honoring those that were lost, the victims, as well as the survivors. Everyone has a story. Be compassionate. Listen and offer direction for assistance and/or a shoulder to cry on. Be a friend.

PAUL PETERSON
Regional Security Officer

On the morning of August 7, 1998, I was sitting in one of my first Country Team meetings, having arrived at post mid-July, assuming the duties of the Regional Security Officer. The meeting was being held on the fourth floor of the Chancery in the Ambassador's Office. The acting Deputy Chief of Mission was presiding, as the Ambassador was out of building for a meeting. I recall that we happened to be discussing the security briefings that my staff provided to in-coming employees. Information on Nairobi's critical crime threat could be disconcerting to new arrivals and the question was "can we tone it down"? A few minutes into this conversation the meeting was interrupted when the windows on the back wall of the office blew in, throwing members of the Country Team from their chairs to the floor and showering us with debris. In the wake of the explosion came an eerie silence, lasting several seconds. I was struggling to crawl over some of my colleagues and head downstairs to Post One to attempt to our status, when I heard the screaming - the sounds of thousands of people in pain and horror. As I found my way down the darkened stairwell I realized two things: and we had been seriously damaged by an apparent attack and, this wasn't going to help me lighten up my briefings. Panicked employees, some whole, many injured, poured into the stairwell. As I moved down I assisted several injured employees down the stairwell to what had been the lobby and turned them over to other employees. At heavily damaged Post One I met with the MSG Detachment Commander to conduct a damage assessment, establish a secure perimeter, search for survivors, evacuate and triage the wounded, yell for help, and begin to address the hundreds of other details that managing a mass casualty event requires. The Gunny and I conducted a quick survey of the damage and began to develop a perimeter security plan. We were trying to manage chaos. Once our initial survey was completed an impromptu County Team meeting was then held in front of the ravaged building and responsibilities were delineated. We knew we had lost people, some of them close to us, but our job at that point was to try to ensure we didn't lose any more, either through terrorist attack or an accident during our rescue efforts inside the build. We spent the next straight forty hours trying to make that happen.

There are many memories I have of August 7, 1998, and the days to follow. I've realized, with perspective, that the courageous deeds and acts of kindness and compassion I witnessed on that terrible day (and in the days to follow) far outweigh the pain and loss we've had to address. I take immense pride when I look back at the many obstacles we addressed and overcame. It was an incredible experience being a member of the Nairobi team.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

I trained for most of my life as a first responder, prepared to address crises situations, other emergencies. Over twenty-plus years I had acquired considerable prior experience addressing stress situations and had not given much thought to how my job impacted my family. Nairobi taught me that my family paid a price for my choice of profession. Due to a bombing-related failure in communication it was several hours before many family members, mine included, were aware of whether we were victims or survivors, injured or whole. In the hours waiting for word families gathered together, shared what little information was available and hoped for the best. I later learned that, but for a last-minute change in plans, my wife would have been in an area of the Chancery in which there were no survivors after the detonation in an area. My colleagues could share comparable stories.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

I did my best to take the positive aspects of my Nairobi experience and use them to become a better husband, father, and professional. I still live with some of the negative images, but I've managed to maintain perspective. I've dedicated myself to the principle that's there's nothing more important than taking care of your family and your people and I do my best to live up to it.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

The value of leadership in crisis, as exemplified by Ambassador Prudence Bushnell, DCM Michael Marine, and the Country Team, demonstrated the highest standards of the Foreign Service and the other USG agencies who were present. The political lesson – USG and Foreign Service National employees deserve the highest levels of protection when representing the United States overseas. There was a failure on the part of the Department of State to effectively address the myriad of security issues that had been brought to their attention. However, as a direct result of the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam bombings new procedures were developed and enacted, many new embassies and consulates have been built to stricter security standards and, as a result of the Africa bombings, lives have been saved. We do need to continue to fight complacency.

Final lesson – people deal with stress differently. Not everyone has the capacity to deal with a tragedy of this magnitude and continue to operate effectively. Early screening of employees by professional medical/psychiatric professionals should take place in the wake of any major security incident or other disaster to determine how people are coping and if a change in environment would be beneficial.

STEVE NOLAN

Management Officer

Memory is a funny thing. Twenty years on from August 7, 1998, what sticks in my mind is not just the sound of the bomb blast or the shock wave that ripped through our embassy in Nairobi. It's that, during the country team meeting that Friday morning, we had been discussing the topic of security briefings and how to instill an appropriate level of awareness in new arrivals without tipping them over the line to paranoia.

Of course, we were thinking primarily about Nairobi's notorious reputation for crime rather than terrorism. Osama bin Laden was then still a relatively obscure figure, except for a 1996 interview in Time in which he had declared his jihad against America. Little did we know that this was just the opening shot in a protracted war.

Thus, my first thought after the blast was not "terrorism" but rather that a fuel tank for a generator or something similar must have somehow exploded. That was just my management officer's mind searching for a logical explanation, but the actual cause became clear as soon as I reached the ground floor.

I found myself looking through a huge hole in the back wall of the embassy to a deep crater and tangle of steel where the rear gate had been. Part of the car bomb's engine had been propelled like a cannonball by the force of the explosion through the gate, several walls and an elevator shaft, impacting directly on Post 1 where the Marine Security Guard stood watch.

The Marine on duty was uninjured thanks to the booth's heavy-duty construction and no small measure of providence, but it was clear there would be casualties throughout the embassy. Time seemed to slow down, and I felt at that point as if I was entering a long, dark tunnel with no light to show where the end might be. I knew it would be a long time before we got back to anything that looked like normalcy.

The scene in front of the embassy was chaotic. A crowd of thousands had formed in the street, clogging Moi Avenue and extending around Haile Selassie Avenue to the rear of the building. Acrid smoke and dust filled the air. Mangled, burning vehicles and debris were all around. An office building next door to us, Ufundi House, was completely leveled, trapping people alive in the wreckage. Other buildings were heavily damaged, with shattered windows extending for several blocks in all directions.

Most surreal of all, a television crew and photographers had already started recording the scene and sending pictures to news outlets around the world. I'm told the State Department Operations Center learned of the bombing from a breaking-news alert, and my family back home knew that I was all right when they saw my face flash by on CNN.

Injured and bleeding people were everywhere. Inside the embassy, 12 Americans and 34 Kenyans had been killed and dozens more seriously injured. Outside another 167 Kenyans died and over 4,000 had been injured in the surrounding buildings and streets, though it would take weeks to get a precise accounting. The bomb was an attack on the

United States, but the vast majority of its victims were Kenyans, and they had to bear the largest share of suffering.

We went into “self-rescue” mode since Kenyan emergency services were stretched to the limit coping with the rescue effort at Ufundi House. Our medical unit set up a first aid station on the sidewalk, quickly evaluating, treating and arranging emergency care for the injured at local hospitals. They saved more than a few lives in the process. The RSO was in charge of site security and recovery operations. Search and rescue teams were formed and completed multiple top-to-bottom searches of the embassy, digging the last injured person from underneath a pile of rubble just before sunset. Everyone pulled together and got on with what seemed logical and necessary. USAID immediately created space in their office building for an operations center and an interim embassy. Over the ensuing days, weeks and months, every employee of the 14 agencies in Nairobi played a role in the recovery and reconstruction effort. Many spouses and family members made equally significant contributions.

There was no manual for how to deal with such a crisis, but we did have an exceptional leader in Ambassador Prudence Bushnell, and she never let us stop being a Country Team for a single moment. More importantly, we never stopped being a community. Indeed, those bonds only grew stronger with time and we became more like an extended family. That mutual support, and a shared commitment to help the families of those who died and the seriously injured, provided a clear sense of purpose and, in my view, were the things that got us all through the catastrophe.

HOWARD KAVALER
Permanent Representative of the United States to the
United National Environment Program

At approximately 10:15 a.m. on August 7, 1998, I saw my wife, Prabhi Kavalier, for the very last time. I told her that prior to meeting for lunch I would go to the Community Liaison Office (CLO) in the front of the chancery to see if that office had an idea as to when the school bus would come to our house the following Monday to pick up our two young daughters for the first day of school. Prior to going to the CLO, I stopped into my office to save a cable that I was drafting. (I was the newly arrived Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations Environment Program.)

Upon arriving at the CLO, I hear a loud sound followed some ten seconds later by an extremely louder noise. At that point, the ceiling started to collapse upon us and the chancery was enveloped in darkness. Through clouds of dust, dangling wires, and much debris, I searched for Prabhi where I thought that her office was once located. My efforts were in vain; I was notified the next day that her body had been located.

When I could not find Prabhi and when she did not emerge from the embassy, I finally got a ride to our temporary quarters where I told my two daughters, Tara and Maya, who

were ten and five, respectively, that in all likelihood their mother had been killed in an explosion at the embassy. That remains the very worst moment in my 69 years.

Having packed our bags, my longstanding housekeeper, the girls, and I went to the home of our very good friends, Steve and Judy Nolan. Sometime during our stay, Ambassador Bushnell visited the Nolans to express her condolences to me. Shortly after receiving the formal notification at the Nolans' residence of Prabhi's death, my daughters, housekeeper, and I were driven to Jomo Kenyatta Airport where we boarded a flight that was the first leg of our journey back to the United States.

JOHN DUNLOP
Regional Nutrition and Food Security Adviser, USAID

Hi - Memories are funny, I'm sure some of this is wrong.
Nairobi Bombing 1998

I was in REDSO Towers in Parklands when the bomb exploded. A bit less than two miles away, the shockwave hit our building and for a moment we thought an earthquake had hit. As we went to the windows, a mushroom cloud appeared over downtown Nairobi. My first thought was that maybe someone had been welding near a gas line or some other sort of accident. From the size of the blast, it was a pretty good bet that people had at least been hurt, if not killed.

We watched for a few minutes, and then a call came over the loudspeaker for anyone with medical experience to report downstairs. Just as that call came, many bits of burning and charred paper started floating out of the sky around the building.

Being a former paramedic with search and rescue experienced, I headed downstairs and we were informed about what had happened. Maybe five of us piled into a car and headed downtown. The streets were already closed by police, but we managed to get through and made it to the embassy itself. I observed the embassy looking relatively intact from the road, but a big horizontal crack running along the foundation perhaps a foot or two above the ground spoke to the idea that perhaps the entire building had been lifted off the ground. Of course all the windows were blown out on the back side. The building next door, what had once been the sewing school, had been entirely reduced to a pile of bricks. The bank on the opposite side of the parking lot seemed like it had acted as a chimney, directing the blast upward and while it was still standing, many of the windows had been blown out.

We went to the front of the building where people were congregating and getting into cars and vans to go to the hospital. I found one of the RSO's, introduced myself, and we began to put together the first of two S&R teams. As we entered the building, it was clear that post 1 had been devastated. Broken glass and rubble was everywhere. We headed toward the back of the ground floor to find that the walls had been ripped away and the

entire back was open to the parking lot. A marine stood watching as red cross volunteers began to move into the building. We moved them out again fairly quickly as this was still the embassy and theoretically a controlled space. Controlling the chaos seemed like a good first step.

As we moved up the stairs to the upper floors looking for survivors, it was clear what had happened: the blast had brought down the interior walls on the side nearest to the parking lot and had blown in all the windows. Much of the floor was covered with cinder block-sized chunks of concrete, perhaps two feet in depth - deep enough to hide bodies.

As we got to the ambassador's suite, I remember the destruction not being quite as bad, but debris still lined the hallways. A vivid memory for me is a series of maybe 10 bloody handprints on the wall in the hallway leading to the stairs. Someone had walked down the hallway, steadying themselves against the wall and left those handprints, perhaps two feet apart as they got out of the building.

We cleared the floors from the top down, but by the time we got below the top floor, the job got slower and tougher. Looking for survivors, we cleared room by room but, to my recollection, found only one person who was still alive and hadn't already gotten out. The hard work then began as we sought to shift rubble looking for people trapped or hidden. Think of the small child's game made up of a set of squares that you slide around trying to make a picture. We would clear one area, maybe 4'x4' by dumping the debris out the window to the ground below. Next, we moved the rubble in the next 4x4 square into the empty one, and so on and so on, methodically clearing room after room. It was backbreaking work. Each chunk of concrete weighed maybe 40 pounds and we found very few bodies. This went on for two days until the Israelis eventually showed up with dogs that took over from us.

We tried to help with the sewing school too. But it was difficult. The building was so devastated that there was little we could do. They needed (and finally got)

I went home after that and slept for a couple of days.

NEAL KRINGEL
Security Cooperation Officer in the Kenya U.S. Liaison Office

My August 7th story is likely similar to many of my colleagues. Small seemingly insignificant choices, statements and actions ultimately decided who lived and who died.

As an Air Force officer, I was assigned to the Kenya U.S. Liaison Office (KUSLO) led by Colonel Ron Roughead. At the instant the bomb detonated – 10:39 AM – I was in the Ambassador's office for a core country team meeting. The Ambassador's office was located on the top floor, one floor up and on the opposite side of the building of the

KUSLO office. All those in my office were killed: Jean Dalizu, Sherry Olds, and Arlene Kirk and Ken Hobson who was in the adjoining office.

Normally, as the KUSLO chief, Ron would attend the 10:00 weekly core country team. I distinctly remember a conversation I had with him the morning of the 7th. Ron had a 10:30 meeting with the Kenyan Military Engineers in Thika (about a 45 minute drive north of the embassy) and was reconsidering going because he would miss country team. I said to him “Go to Thika, you’ve been trying to get this meeting for a while. I’ll take country team.” Ron agreed that I should pinch-hit. I was still relatively junior having only pinned on major a week prior. Normally if Ron couldn’t go to a meeting, his deputy would fill in. However, the deputy position was gapped with the new officer arriving in September. My fellow major, Joe Wiley, was TDY in the states. So, the fact that I was put in the position of attending a senior embassy meeting as a relatively junior guy required multiple twists.

I also remember working at my desk that morning, and at about 9:55 Jean Dalizu taps me on the shoulder and says, “Neal, you better head upstairs. The meeting starts in five minutes.” Those were the last word Jean spoke to me. Absent her reminder – would I have forgot? Of course, I’ll never know.

I remember enduring the seemingly unending meeting which was ultimately interrupted by several pops (the gun shots and grenades) and then by the glass-imploding detonation of the bomb. We all immediately jumped to evacuate the building, but I remember being drawn to the other side of the top floor -- in retrospect, maybe by a Divine hand. There I was able to pull out four victims from under piles of rubble; three of whom survived. I then made my way to the KUSLO office where I found my colleagues – all deceased. Arlene Kirk, on her first day back from leave, was lying by the window. Those of us who remember the embassy know there was frequently some type of commotion at the corner of Moi and Selassie. And normally it was Arlene and I who would run to the window to see what was going on. I’m sure she heard the “pops” and went to look. But I wasn’t there to check things out with her that day.

Survivor’s guilt, PTSD, or just living with answered questions – all of us who remain struggle with some or all of these. Why her and not me? Why them and not us? Why that day and not another? Twenty years later, I’ve stopped asking and simply accepted that I’m here and will make the most of the opportunity I’ve been given and remember and honor those who were taken from us. That’s all we can do.

PATRICK MUTUKU MAWEU
Appliance Technician (FSN)

When the attack occurred, I was:

I was at the embassy building just about three minutes or so before the blast. While at a distance of about four hundred meters I heard a big blast like thunder, saw window panes falling from buildings.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

My family never knew my whereabouts that day till the following morning.as we helped rescuing those trapped inside the building. I found my family terrified and in shock (wife, children, mum, dad, sisters and brothers).

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

We had some counselling sessions in the embassy for the survivors .

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

My advice would be, before rescuing others make sure your life is not at risk because I arrived at the scene while the building was covered by smoke, dust and debris and did not have second thought where another blast could have gone off while rescuing while in shock/disbelieve.

MATHEW M. MBITHI
Warehouseman (FSN)

On August 7th 1998 I was an Employee of the American Embassy in Nairobi Kenya. It happened that being a Warehouseman I was assigned to go and clean an FBO property. I had to pass through the Embassy building to collect the key. I passed there at round 8:30 AM in the morning. Other colleagues and I proceeded to the house, unfortunately I found that I took the wrong key for that house.

So, I had to return to the Embassy and get the right key. I took the other key around 10:15AM. And remember, the blast occurred at 10:45AM that morning -- which means a delay of 30 minutes would be a disaster.

I went back to the FBO. Just before I opened the door, I heard from the radio in our vehicle somebody shouting, the Embassy has been bombed. We stopped everything and went back to see what had happened. On reaching the scene, everything was in a mess people crowded everywhere.

The people trying to help those injured we joined in to rescue. Then what followed now was to remove the dead bodies. We went ahead, removed the bodies, putting them in our warehouse trucks and taking them to a temporary container set at the Warehouse. Then in

the evening around 6 pm, we had to remove those bodies take them to various morgues due to a large crowd of people gathering at the gate to look for their next of kin. It took almost the whole night since we were also looking for lost colleagues who were not found at the scene.

Now from the next day our work as warehousemen was to remove everything from the building, everybody was sent on leave those who were working in that building.

We at the warehouse continued at least for a month to set up another office for them. This was place called parklands, after some time, the embassy was moved to another place along Mombasa Road called Ole Seleni. We stayed there for about five years as the new Embassy Building was being constructed at Gigiri near UN headquarters.

Then we later moved and settled there until today. This tragedy affected me and my family greatly since I had to go through several counselling sessions offered by the Embassy, until I was able to get strength to continue with my normal life. It was not easy since my family was also affected psychologically. I had to get them to be counselled in order to continue normally. Since one criminal was arrested and taken to US District of Colombia court, after being tried in the court, I was getting the court proceedings. Lastly, he was sentenced for life in prison and ordered to pay compensation. Though some of our colleagues have received compensation, not every survivor did -- me included. I urge the lawyers concerned to consider me as well.

It is my appeal to those who have passed the kind of tragedy like me, to stand firm and advocate for peace in the World, so that something similar, does not happen again.

Thanks Very much for giving me this opportunity to hear my story.

LEE ANN ROSS
Deputy Director, USAID Kenya

When the attack occurred, I was photocopying some papers at the AID building and I thought a container had fallen off a lorry. Having grown up in Laos during the Vietnam War, I instinctively moved away from the windows. When I finally saw the smoke rising from near the Embassy, I thought the Kenya Teachers Union offices had been bombed as they were on strike and at odds with the government.

Chaos ensued. The AID building became command central. After a while the Ambassador arrived and asked for a volunteer to manage the offsite recovery effort. I volunteered. I was the USAID deputy director at the time. This was my second posting to Kenya so I knew my way around town and I knew my staff well. The fact that an AID officer was designated to be in charge spoke to Ambassador Bushnell's very successfully effort at building a true country team where all of us got along really well together. We

were a true embassy family rather than a collection of acronyms. I doubt if there was an embassy in the world that was better positioned than we were to get through this.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

We got blown up. We were a high crime threat post but a low terrorism post. No one expected this. We were used to crime. The music teacher at the school had recently been killed in a carjacking, another had been assaulted in a home invasion and had come to school all bandaged up, one of the teachers had been raped, another had been shot at in her car with the bullet narrowly missing her infant child. I personally knew 18 people who had been carjacked. I watched a motorist shoot at a street kid. Crime was normal and stressful; bombings were not on our radar screen.

In 1998, there was no 911 in Nairobi, no FBI, no FEMA, no first responders, virtually no ambulances. We were on our own. I can't imagine the horror at the embassy. At the AID building, we started trying to figure out who was alive and who was dead. We tried to use the phone list but that was out of date. We used the radio list for the US personnel and we called the regional accounting office in Paris for the FSN (Foreign Service National) payroll list. I asked our AID FSN staff to go to the hospitals and the morgue to try to identify our embassy FSN staff. I went down to the motor pool to let the dispatcher know that no one had to drive. No one had to do this. Everyone had to be a volunteer. I knew the trauma that was about to be inflicted on those going to the hospitals and the morgue.

Our Kenyan staff took to manning the phones taking calls from families wanting to know if their loved ones were alive or dead. If they were dead, we asked the families to come to the office, as we didn't want to give death notices out over the phone. At some point someone from Washington asked if we trained folks to do this. Are you kidding?

I called all the counselors I knew in town and asked them to come down. I told them that I didn't know exactly what we needed but I knew we would need them. Someone ordered body bags.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

Staying together as a group of survivors is what created the new normal for me. There is nothing normal about surviving a bombing that took over 200 lives. But, staying together and being with folks who shared the experience helped normalize it. I can't imagine rotating to a new post where no one could begin to understand what happened. We became our own family and we created our own normal. On the AID side, we got \$34 million from Congress to help bomb victims, which meant we continued to do bomb work every day for years after the bombing. This event did not go away.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

Get to know your peers. Become friends with your colleagues in the other agencies. Break down the institutional barriers. Get to know and respect your FSN colleagues. They are far brighter than you give them credit for. You never know when they may save your butt. You will find out who steps up to the plate to help and who goes home. Each person will react in his or her own way. Don't hold it against them. They did the best they could do at the time. Hope that you have an Ambassador as skilled in team building as Ambassador Bushnell.

The disaster tourists will come and go. They won't be very helpful. Nothing in DC will change because of it. You are not obligated to reinjure your psyche taking them on tours of the blown out building so you can tell them whose blood is on the wall. Take care of yourself.

If you get blown up, accept that all of you are on your own. If you think Washington gets it, you are kidding yourself. Washington is interested in placing blame, not in helping you. You've been told your whole career that you are among the best and brightest. For State MED this translates into "you don't need help." If you get PTSD, too bad for you, "you are weak." This denies you your humanity. Guess what, you probably will get PTSD if you go through something like this. You will be on your own to get your own help. Do so. Why, because you are human. PTSD is a physiological reaction to trauma. It is normal. It is not a sign of weakness or a character flaw. What is not normal is for the State Department to deny services to their employees who almost by definition go around the world collecting traumatic events over a career. It is unconscionable. If you have cancer, State MED will refer you out to a specialist. Will they do the same if you come in with PTSD? No. Can you get workers' comp for this? Yes you can. Document your trauma event and go get workers' comp. Will you be considered damaged goods by the system? Probably. Will you be damaged goods if you don't get help? Surely. If you don't do it for yourself, do it for your family. To this day, my daughter tells me that she lost her mother due to the bombing. Don't let that happen to you.

MARIA MULLEI
USAID/Kenya Senior Agricultural Development Adviser
and Senior Assistant Team Leader (FSN)

When the attack occurred,

I was at my home in the evening when I received a call from Lee Ann Ross, Deputy Director and asked me to report to USAID to help them to set up a hotline center which concerned Kenyan families could call to try to ascertain the status of their loved ones, similar to a "crisis hotline" in the US. The major different is this case was that none of us had any idea how to run such a center, let alone how to answer the frantic questions that were to come our way. I reported immediately and worked two long weeks assisting the bereaved families.

It is almost impossible to express how difficult this job was. Distraught families were calling to find out if their loved ones were alive or dead. I did not know how to do this and it was like none of the American or Kenyans knew how to do it. The only rule we were given was not to tell anyone of a death over the phone, we were told to ask the family to come to USAID building and we would tell them in person. Our hotline team worked on our own under the most extraordinary circumstances.

I remember very clearly one of the difficult cases I dealt with. A husband had let his wife off for work at the Coops Building in the morning and thought nothing was amiss, even after he heard of the bombing. When he arrived home and his wife was not there, the husband decided to check the local hospitals. When he didn't find her in any of the hospitals, he still assumed that she was fine and that she would show up sooner or later. It did not occur to him to check the mortuary.

The following day, the husband and some of his relatives came by the USAID building to check the status of our information. I took his call and went downstairs to meet the family. It was me who broke the news that his wife had died. The husband collapsed on the spot.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

I am still haunted by the sights I saw, the images on the television and the job I did. I still have not gone to the former Embassy site where the names of my former colleagues are listed. I have tried to avoid anything specifically related to the bombing. Seeing the names of some of the people who were killed would bring the memory back. Kenya had security issues such as crimes, carjacking, rapes but not bombings. The country was shocked by the atrocities experienced as a result of the horrific bombings. Kenya did not have an emergency preparedness prior to the bombings. The country has never been the same since the bombings because of the frequent terrorist's attacks. At a personal level, I do not watch media coverage on bombings. My memory and trauma are still too hurting to recall the events of August 7th. My family noticed increased stress level, fear and anger. I suffer from sleep deprivation at times.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

Holding together as one team (Americans and Kenyans) survivors under the excellent leadership of the most caring and skilled ambassador Bushnell is what created a new normal for me. Having worked with wonderful and appreciative supervisors like Lee Ann Rose and Meg Brown normalized my life. I have maintained close relationship with them and I feel they are part of me for it is as if we shared a collective trauma.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

While many of the other relating to the immediate aftermath of the bombing were temporary, the work of the hot line team went on for several years, and in some cases it still goes on today. The families of the bereaved looked to us Kenyan staff who manned the hotlines for moral assistance and support well after the bombing. I consider it one of the hardest and most gut wrenching jobs any of us did during the bombing. Building an organizational family culture is key to survivors and helpers in the future.

AUGUST MAFFRY **Commercial Counselor**

When the attack occurred, I was with Ambassador Bushnell in the Cooperative Bank Building meeting with the Kenyan Trade Minister.

August 7, 9:55 a.m. My deputy Riz Khaliq and I met the Ambassador in the embassy underground garage and headed for the Bank next door, about a 90-second walk. The Ambassador's driver escorted us, and we joked that he should carry the flag, usually mounted on the limo's front fender, high in his hand, because he and the Ambassador were on foot for a change.

10:05 a.m. In the Minister's 20th floor office we talked for 20 minutes or so about bilateral relations and plans for the upcoming visit of Commerce Secretary Daley.

10:35 a.m. A very loud boom stopped the meeting and brought everyone to their feet, puzzled. My first thought was terrorism, as I had heard bombs go off near Embassy Rome ten years earlier. Or was it construction, a blown boiler, gas tank? Against my better instincts and training, I approached the office window to within a few feet to have a look and asked "Is there some construction going on?" "Well you never know what's going on in the railyards (across the street)" the Minister observed. 10 seconds had passed since the first boom. The next moments defy description -- no words are adequate. My first observation was that the plate glass window was silently caving toward us, imploding and coming apart in slow motion. I saw the glass separating into shards (or thought I did) I feel a terrific wind, but no sound. A second later I remember an astonishing sense of disbelief as the whole office disintegrated in an instant amid the comic book CRRAACCK sound of a massive explosion.

Immediately dust and smoke were everywhere. Imagine earthquake, tornado and hurricane at the same time. It felt like the end of the world, a sense so many had and articulated that day. I lost consciousness for a few seconds, perhaps a half-minute. Having been thrown half-way across the room, I was disoriented in time and space and struggled to understand what was happening. I was face down, unable to see anything or breathe right, and covered in dust and debris, as the whole ceiling had come down in pieces. I wondered whether I was dying or already dead. The terror transcended fear in the usual sense -- I guess that's why they call it terror. No pain, just disbelief and

acceptance. The force of the explosion was so great I was certain no one in our vicinity could survive.

As the shock wave and sound passed, I realized I was conscious and probably alive. I got to my knees and checked that my limbs were still there. I suspected head and chest wounds but didn't know how bad. The blood and dust were blinding me; I could see only broken furniture and pieces of the overhead. I reasoned the blast so was powerful it had to have originated in the office where we sat. I thought of the attempt on Hitler by a satchel bomb under his office table in Upper Silesia I knew the bank had labor problems. Kill the Minister? None of it added up.

I knew next to nothing about Al Qaeda at the time. I couldn't see or hear much of anything, including my colleagues, but could see the office was evacuating into a stairwell. As we descended, it was a scene from hell. We gradually realized that the whole skyscraper had been blown up, not just the Minister's office. At each landing. All doors, walls and partitions gone, we could see daylight in all directions, all the way out through the windows on each floor, where offices now in ruins had stood. It had still not sunk in that the bank may not have been the primary target, but was a collateral target.

I was being swept on in a tide of humanity trying to escape the building, down the stairwell 20 stories -- some forty flights. People screamed, moaned and prayed. One woman kept repeating, "Dear Lord, if you get me out of this I swear I will never sin again." It was raining blood and the banister was slick to the touch. I stepped over three dead or dying bodies. There was no stopping, though, just a mass pressing on and down trying to save themselves, not knowing whether there would be another explosion, a building collapse -- whether they would survive. The real danger it turned out, wasn't another bomb but panic. I kept pleading with people that if they wanted to get out of there, they'd have to remain calm and not push. There was no panic.

The August 7 bombing most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

My office (commercial section) sustained 70% casualties, two killed and two blinded. This was the obvious big impact. Both surviving victims have successfully rebuilt their lives. I was determined to put our office back together and succeeded thanks to my remarkable U.S. and Kenyan staff's dedicated efforts. I also was inspired by the leadership of Ambassador Bushnell. After the bomb some of us went off on medevac to the hospital to lick our wounds. The Ambassador, herself with glass cuts, shaken and bloodstained, was back at work the same day. I also remembered the example of Riz Khaliq and his presence of mind in escorting Ambassador Bushnell safely out of the Bank Building. My family was not directly affected except for understandable anxiety about my welfare.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life.

The South African Air Force medevac team first, and then medical staff at Mil One in Pretoria got me through the early days. As for later PTSD problems, my hat is off to the civilian psychologists, some at State/Med but mainly at Walter Reed. Those military guys sure understood explosions.

Appreciating the fact and quality of life like never before. I don't any longer worry about something like having to get up very early. It's a thrill being **able** to do that, because **I can**.

Increased startle reflex. Much less worry about the small stuff.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors or helpers in the future.

1. Don't dwell on survivors' guilt. That was Fate at work.
2. Being present at a terrorist attack might seem like bad luck. If you survived more or less intact, however, you weren't unlucky, you were lucky. It's those who perished and their families, or who were severely injured who need our support and our homage.
3. Think of what is **really** needed in an emergency. On August 7 at Nairobi Hospital ER (2000 admissions in one hour) it was sandwiches for the overworked staff that were needed, more than doctors, nurses, and medicines. And be sure to send some staff home to rest right away, so everyone doesn't get tired at same time.

Word to the wise: Stay away from windows.

Bio for August Maffry

August ("Gus") Maffry, was Commercial Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in The Hague, The Netherlands, until 2006 when he retired. He entered the Foreign Service in 1981, serving subsequently as Commercial Counselor in Poland, the Philippines, Nigeria and Kenya, and as Deputy to the Minister Counselor in Italy and France.

In 1998 Mr. Maffry was promoted to the Senior Foreign Service. That year he also was decorated by the Departments of Commerce and State for heroism in connection with the terrorist attack in Nairobi. In 2003 he was awarded the Thomas Jefferson Star for Foreign Service by President Bush.

Mr. Maffry began his federal service in 1977 in the Bureau of East-West Trade at the U.S. Department of Commerce. Previously, he was Director of European Affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a journalist with National Journal and Congressional Quarterly in Washington, and a French teacher at St. Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire.

Mr. Maffry was educated at Phillips Exeter Academy (Exeter, NH), Princeton University (BA 1965), and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University (MA 1970). He also studied for two years (1965-67) at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris. He speaks fluent French, good Italian, and some Polish and Dutch.

Mr. Maffry is married to the former Elizabeth Moxon and lives in Marly-le-Roi, a Paris suburb. He has two daughters from a previous marriage, and three granddaughters, all of whom live in Washington, DC.

RIZWAN “RIZ” KHALIQ
Commercial Officer on Temporary duty

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I met Ambassador Bushnell in her office a little before 10am. We departed to meet with the Minister of Trade where we walked over ground zero just 25- 30 minutes before the bomb. The location of the meeting was on the 21st floor (I think) of the bank building, next to the Embassy. During the meeting there was a loud noise outside, I stood up and walked over to the window, as I looked outside the truck bomb exploded. I learned later that the first loud noise was a grenade, which was designed to draw people to the windows before the truck bomb was detonated, to cause maximum damage.

Once the bomb exploded , I was thrown 10-15 feet through the air, I hit my head on something and passed out, when I woke up and realized I was alive, I went into auto pilot. I looked for Gus, August Maffry, the new commercial officer in Kenya, and Ambassador Bushnell. I didn't find Gus, however, I did find the Ambassador passed out on the floor. I picked up the Ambassador, and began to find my way out of the building. The stairwell was full of smoke and darkness, people were rushing to evacuate, pushing and shoving. I will never forget the smell of death and the carnage caused by the bombing. As we exited the building, at which point the Ambassador was awake, I shielded the Ambassador and ran over to the embassy where the Marines were. I screamed to the Marine, “ I have the Ambassador here, we need to get inside”, the Marine instructed me to get in a car that was waiting to evacuate us from the site. I wanted to get into the embassy. Jenny, my wife, was supposed to meet me in my office after my meeting to go commissary and for lunch. I was scared and desperate. The marine was very clear no one was getting into the embassy, so I took the Ambassador to the car. Once we were in the car and we began to move away from the embassy, I asked the driver where he was taking us, he said to a temporary location. I needed to know if Jenny was OK. I instructed the driver to take us to my hotel. As we walked into the hotel, I asked the front desk to send the hotel doctor to our room ASAP. As we exited the elevator, Jenny was running down the hallway, I could not have been happier. However, as I said before, I was in auto pilot, I handed the Ambassador to Jenny and asked if she can help clean up the Ambassador and prep her to make comments to the media. If the attack was on the American embassy, we needed to show whoever did this that they did

not hurt the US. Jenny did just that, cleaned up the Ambassador in our room and prepared her for our comments.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

The bombing has had a lasting impact on my life, I have had to continuously manage the PTSD. The bombing has also given me a drive, I am not sure I would have if I had not been through the experience. The drive to be a better person, be grateful for the chance to be alive and to never be a victim.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

The support from my wife and my family has been at the core of me being able to create a normal life. I see the success of my life being realized through the success of my family and friends.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

Focus on the fact that you are here, you are loved and don't allow the "survivors guilt" to rob you of your happiness. You represent the greatest country in human history and be proud of who we are as Americans, no matter who is in the White House. The American beliefs and spirit are everlasting and transcends generations.

AMBASSADOR PRUDENCE BUSHNELL
U.S. Ambassador to Kenya

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I was into my second year as U.S. ambassador. With two colleagues from the Commerce Department I was meeting with the Minister of Commerce to discuss a visit of an American VIP trade delegation. We were on the top floor of the high-rise building on the other side of the parking lot from the embassy. An explosive noise attracted many to the window; I was among the last to stand up. A huge bang with the weight of a freight train bore through the room, throwing me back. The building swayed; I thought I was going to die. I blacked out for a moment, came to and descended the endless flights with a colleague. Only when we exited the building did I see what had happened to the embassy. I realized in an instant that no one was going to take care of me and I had better get to work. After leaving colleagues in the care of medical help, I went to the Crisis Control Room at the AID building. We were a large mission with competent and experienced people throughout the ranks. Colleagues had already set up communications with Washington. I saw the practice of leadership at every level of our wounded organization

and community; it continued and got us through the next ten months when I departed post.

The August 7 bombings most affected me in the following ways:

Our building, our organization, our community, and our neighborhood were blown up. As ambassador, I was responsible for the security and while I pushed and pushed to get Washington's attention to our vulnerabilities, I remain keenly aware that I failed. Hours after the attack as my attention was pulled in multiple directions, I suddenly remembered the advice of a mentor: "take care of your people and the rest will take care of itself." I did so as well as I could. I discovered a depth of sadness and breadth of anger I did not know I had. I also learned I could not take away anyone else's pain, trauma, anger or sadness, but I could accompany. I could also promote an environment in which leadership, healing and achievement were possible.

Every individual in our community responded differently. The diversity of reactions created a pace that helped us both to remember and to move forward. It also brought tension between the people who felt we were moving too fast and/or commemorating too much.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

My husband Richard Buckley and Office Manager, Linda Howard were with me from the start. Not only did they help me to cope in the immediate aftermath, they enabled me to face new and challenging assignments for the next six years.

Community: The kindness and forgiveness of families who lost loved ones. The trust, competence and teamwork people demonstrated helped us literally move on from the rubble. The support of family and friends, even if far away, provided a bridge to what "normal" looked like.

Work and Time: I had meaningful work to accomplish that built on the leadership experience from Nairobi. Better understanding and talking about what happened gave meaning while the passage of time gave comfort.

Healthy habits for body, mind and soul: Gardening, walking, knitting, reading, friendships.

Therapy: It was not until I retired seven years after the bombing that I tended to my symptoms of PTSD, using somatic therapy (EMDR) that I found helpful.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

-Get involved in community and help to grow teams that learn how to do things together. This will be essential in catastrophe and highly satisfying otherwise.

- Be kind to yourself and be kind to one another.
- Take care of your people and that means take care of yourself.
- Allow spouses, family, friends to take care of you and seek professional help to stay resilient.
- If you are going to help after a crisis, be clear about your mission and adaptable to reality.
- A bridge between “we” and “they” is necessary for the trust that will make recovery easier.
- Catastrophes breed crises and some go for years. Don’t expect this to end anytime soon.
- Finding meaning in the event – the “treasures among the ashes” – is possible and important.
- The media and our political leaders have short memories so do not depend on either to keep the story alive or create change.
- Remember, it will get better.

CHARLES SLATER
Senior Financial Management Officer

Finished with a few unexpected meetings in Paris, I was in my hotel room packing my bags before training to London to collect my son Forbes at his grandmother’s house to fly on to my new assignment in Nairobi. A Parisian friend called “quick, turn on the television... but first: they said no American was killed in Dar es Salaam”. My wife Lizzie was in Dar. Huh?

Embassy blown up in Nairobi. Embassy blown up in Tanzania. What??! Catch the train? I was by then so late there wasn’t anything to do but run catch the train. As I exited at Waterloo, I saw a picture of my good friend and soon-to-be boss, Steve Nolan, already on the cover of a London tabloid...he had blood on his clothes but was alive.

My mum and son met me there; we were to go to Heathrow together but seeing Steve’s picture added significance...I still had seen no reports except his picture, but him rushing an injured person into the street covered in blood painted a bad picture. I decided to leave my son with my Mum and rushed to my Nairobi flight.

Pre-internet days and on a plane, I arrived Nairobi early Saturday morning not really knowing what had happened in Dar or Nairobi except that it was bad, and my wife was – probably – alive. The usual embassy driver and expeditor weren't there to meet me, so I took a taxi...I can't remember why I knew, but I went to the USAID building in the Westland suburbs. But I clearly remember walking with my suitcase into the second floor where I was met by a whiteboard on an easel. The whiteboard had rows of names: on the left were "Missing" with names crossed out apparently as they reported in. On the right – I can't remember the heading – was a list of the deceased. There were seven friends of mine on the wrong side of the list. My deputy's name was there, the young mother of three small kids. I can't conjure up a word for my reaction.

That day was a blur. I did learn that of my 18 staff, half were either dead or seriously injured. I remember that. I remember that Steve saw me at about 10pm that night and asked me where I was staying, and I realized I had no idea. So, he took me home with him where I stayed for about 3 weeks. I couldn't call Dar, and Dar couldn't call Nairobi. Calls could get through to the USA so a friend relayed messages between Lizzie and me. Over the coming weeks, what started as "a few scratches" turned into a few cuts turned into some wounds turned into a loss of her nose and her eyesight and gangrene. They finally convinced my wife – her of unimaginable stubbornness and dedication to her friends and country – to be medevaced to Nairobi. I still remember her getting undressed that first night: first her shirt and she was basically about 50% black and blue. Then her pants: from her waist down was solid – solid! -- black and blue. And a gangrenous wound in her leg. I later saw the room that her and the CLO had been sitting in: the exterior wall was gone, the room had caught fire, and they had dug the two of them out of the rubble and fire.

And over the course of the next few weeks and months we all worked seven-day weeks, and about 18 hours a day. All my hair turned grey, and my weight dropped to 122 pounds. A few days after the bombing I took my deputy's husband, mother, and her three small children to the airport to fly home to the USA. We were in the departure lounge when her youngest, a three-year-old little cutie, looked up at me and asked "where is Mummy? Isn't she coming with us?". A woman I didn't know came to my office one day – picture an 18x18 room with 12 accountants and a group of Marines sharing it – and asked to pay her phone bill. I explained that the cashier had been killed and all our records were gone, but I could see that something was seriously wrong here: this woman was bent on pay her bill. I flipped through some papers and made up a number, and she wrote me out a check. I later learned that she had lost her husband and son in the bombing and was insisting on taking care of the usual details of departing post.

I would come home from work each night at about 7pm and have dinner with my son and chat with him. I found out that they had put my wife in front of the reporters the day after the bombing to answer questions, while they played video of her climbing over the wall leading a group of Tanzanians to safety after being dug out of the rubble; her face was bloody and torn, her nose was gone. As such things happen, my Mum was on the telephone in her kitchen unbeknownst that my son was watching this scene play on TV. During one of our dinner chats he asked me that since Mummy was dead, when would he

see her again. A very confused 5-year-old. “I saw her, she’s dead”. After having these dinners I would put him to bed and go back to the embassy and work until midnight or so, then wake with him at 7am to get him off to school. He failed kindergarten that year. An American woman who I had never met pitched up and started taking care of Forbes for me: Saint Susan I still call her.

I was driving one day when I was called to report to the Ambassador’s Residence, that the Kenyan staff’s families of the deceased wanted information on their finances. I was preparing my remarks as I drove, picturing 37 people being there; I mean, 37 Kenyan employees had died, so... As I entered the back garden I saw over 200 Kenyans waiting for me to explain what they would do now that their sole bread earner was gone. It wasn’t 37 Kenyans who had died that day; it was hundreds of Kenyans, and Americans, whose lives had died that morning. I think that was the day that crushed me the most, the sheer extent of the horror sitting in front of me waiting to hear “what’s next for us?”.

State eventually transferred Lizzie to Nairobi in November, and I don’t think there was a semblance of our healing until that day. Lizzie was a wreck, my son was totally traumatized, and I was emotionally overwhelmed by both my family and the loss of so many people around me. And we were the lucky ones.

Fast forward to 2012 when I was serving again in Nairobi. I was Chargé d’ Affaires when I was called back to the embassy late one night. We had pictures of a foreigner who had been killed in Somalia, and he looked just like Fazul Mohamed, Al Qaeda’s reported mastermind behind both the bombings. Fourteen years of searching with a \$5 million reward. For my small part I sent two FBI agents to the Mog airport early the next morning and they confirmed by fingerprint that this bastard was dead. I felt a circle had been closed 14 years later.

MICHAEL TROTT
USAID Executive Officer

Recalling Day 10 of Our Tour in Kenya

Friday, August 7, day 10 in country. I was the new USAID Executive Officer. We were in a temporary house, our housekeeper was due to arrive Sunday, and the car had not arrived so I was taking the motor pool in each day. I was literally just beginning to get to know the staff and find my way around. While I had briefly met the RSO, we had not had time to sit down and go over the real lay of the land. I was to meet with him that afternoon. I knew of the severe crime threat but not so much the terrorist side of the equation. In fact, I was impressed at the level of security in getting into the USAID building and wondered if there was something I did not know. Well, that question was answered that fateful morning.

As I sat working at my desk, I heard a very loud explosion. My first instinct was that it was simply a large transformer that had blown up nearby, knowing the frailties of the African electrical grids. After seeing nothing on my side of the building, I crossed over to see smoke downtown and quickly realized this was something far bigger. I did not think it was the Embassy until someone got a call that the Embassy had been hit. I will never forget how my heart just sank, thinking how this could happen in Kenya. I realized we had nearly our entire leadership there for country team and as I saw the smoke continue to billow up, I knew this was a cataclysmic event.

The USAID building was a separate building several miles away from the Embassy and was therefore untouched physically (redundancy is important, especially where you do not have the emergency services as in the U.S.). Two actions quickly followed. We somehow got ahold of the RSO Paul Peterson and both of us were thinking the same, that USAID would become the control room and temporary Embassy. At the same time, we sent a call out to any staff that were trained medically for emergency situations. Fortunately, we had four such people. We set them up in teams, scavenged for medical kits and basically ransacked our small morale store for any useful items. We told the drivers who were more than willing to go to the Embassy to just get them there, whether that meant going over sidewalks or thru whatever obstacles were encountered.

Meanwhile we started to set up the control room, relocating staff, setting up tables and computers and importantly radio and telephone stations. We were able to get a dedicated line from the post office but as importantly, our OFDA folks had SAT phones so we were able to establish communications with Washington. But finding the operations center number took far too long. That number has been included in any telephone register I have done since.

We had volunteers to cover the telephones and radios aplenty. These were not easy jobs as we had many calls coming in with the all-important status reports concerning our colleagues, while at the same time trying to get calls out and answering questions as best we could. Other teams were set up to search the hospitals and unfortunately the morgues. The teams were made up of one American and one FSN to make it easier to get through any red tape and to identify staff. Next to those who were doing the actual rescues under dangerous and very difficult conditions, these teams had the most difficult task. When they found someone in a hospital that was injured, it was a time to rejoice. Unfortunately, the other cases were of great heartbreak, with the moments forever etched in the mind's eye of those who had that difficult task. But on the wonderful news side, the teams doing the search and rescue were magnificent and lives were saved.

In the meantime, we started the process of moving the Embassy staff into the USAID facility. The REDSO Director and Deputy Director graciously moved to offices that were basically closets to make room on the top floor for the secure communication office and staff. Other USAID staff were crammed in together to make space for our colleagues from the Embassy who also were crammed in. I still remember standing by the elevator at times to say, "you have too much weight in them and if the elevators fail we are in real

trouble.” What was an office with 250 or so staff quickly and hectically became a facility with nearly 500 staff.

As this was going on, we had heard of the bombing in Tanzania and fears that there were possibly other bombs still out there. The RSO had the wisdom to call in for support from the Kenyans to help guard the USAID facility. We had already blocked off the entry to the road on both sides, with the main entry being controlled by our filled water truck. This meant that one of our drivers had to stay in the cab and move the truck back and forth for hours on end – a boring but absolutely essential job. The other drivers were tasked with helping to move the staff to the new building as so few Embassy drivers or vehicles were left. They worked for hours and hours on end with never a complaint. They were assisted by staff and cars from the Peace Corp, the Brits and Aussies who had quickly come to our aid. I must thank our residential neighbors who had to put up with multiple security checks and the need to get special approval for guests for months, with few complaints and a remarkable understanding of the situation.

The Kenyan soldiers were never trained to guard a facility in such circumstances and the security guards were not much better. If we did not check them once an hour to make sure they were in place, we would find them sleeping or otherwise occupied. Not a good feeling given the situation. The one time we skipped the hourly check, not only were most of the Kenyan military not to be found (a shift change) but the guards had gone due to an apparently miscommunications with the HQ of the company. It did not take long to get them back but in the meantime, the defensive line was very weak indeed.

In the time that followed there was so much to be done, from caring for our own including setting up medical evacuations and improving the security (until the Marine Expeditionary force got in), to arranging for the FBI, and military teams and Fairfax County Search and Rescue to arrive and set up, to responding to an overload of questions from reporters and Washington, and most sadly but importantly caring for those we lost and their families. I can never say enough for how the British Embassy and British Military assisted us. Their military did so very much of the heavy lifting for us to get the urgently needed equipment and supplies to the various locations. The Canadians took in some of the visitors as there was no more space in our building – a tremendous help and huge imposition on our Canadian colleagues but they did it with open arms. We also had the school to consider (the International School of Kenya – ISK was a joint US-Canadian school). There had to be a decision on delaying the opening and for how long, and how to tend to the kids who had lost their parents as well as security concerns.

Not long after we had to begin the search for new office space as the Embassy was destroyed and USAID’s site was untenable security wise. The Management Officer, Steve Nolan, found the perfect location. Until the new facilities could be built, USAID moved to a temporary cite at ICIPE, but that required the modification of two buildings and the building of an annex. Our contractors were magnificent as we got in to the temporary facility in under six months’ time. The timing was critical as we had been told if we were not in satisfactory facilities by the end of September we would have to close until they were completed.

The events of that day, and the days and weeks that followed are moments that stay with you forever. Despite what some not involved in such an event believe, one just does not simply move on afterwards. Even four years later when I was leaving post, the psychiatrist (that State Med finally added to Kenya) and I spoke and we figured that probably a third of the staff were still suffering seriously from PTSD. And all would never be quite the same again. I see it in myself, and in others, and in my kids, especially the youngest of the three.

I look back at those times and thank God (over and over) for the people we had at the post at that time, from our exceptional Ambassador Bushnell and our USAID leadership, to our US and FSN staff across all the agencies who took on the many tasks required, some of which no one should have to endure, and for our friends at the British, Canadian and Australian embassies – as well as my exceptional FSN EXO staff that did miracles and worked tirelessly without question. It was a terrible act of evil, but it could not overcome the good in so many people. Nor could their act stop us, as we were open the next Monday, wounded but functioning. We would not let an act of such cowardice stop us or drive a wedge between the United States and Kenya as they hoped. Importantly, we found we were not alone in dealing with this inhuman act, as we had each other.

A Side Note. The world does not stop turning even in the direst of circumstances. At 2 am on Monday morning following the bombing, I for the first time left the office to see and hug my daughter before she was rushed into surgery for an emergency appendectomy. Dr. McCoy (the RMO) told Wendy that she had no choice but to take whatever surgeon the hospital could find and just in case the job was botched, she would put her on the list for the medical evacuation flight that the military and Mike were setting up. I could not imagine what my daughter was going through – a new country, a strange hospital and an unknown Doctor – but she was courageous throughout. Fortunately, we ended up with a wonderful surgeon, who incidentally had to start practicing out of the children's hospital where our daughter was as his office, not far from the Embassy, had been seriously damaged by the bomb. Meanwhile, my eldest daughter had to look after our son, and greet our new (and fabulous) housekeeper and help set up her room as Wendy was at the hospital. I was so proud of all of them.

GEORGE M. MIMBA
Information Systems Manager (FSN)

It was one beautiful sunny morning. The Embassy Motor pool driver had just picked me up from my residence to the Embassy. I was scheduled to leave the country for Accra, Ghana to attend Africa Bureau (AF/EX) Systems Manager's conference, together with the then ISO, Chris House.

I had not picked up my per diem the previous day and so I was waiting for Sheikh Farhat, the Embassy cashier, to open at 9:00 am, that fateful morning. I was expected to leave for

Jomo Kenyatta International airport, Nairobi at 11 a.m. Because I had reported at seven in the morning and cashier was opening at 9 am, I had some time to check the computer system. I had worked so hard with Advanced Logic Modernization Approach (ALMA) team to survey, plan and install the new system that it became part of me. Any minute spent without working on this system was just too much for me. That morning I spent a better part of my time working on the system and discussing with my colleagues what needed to be accomplished while I was gone. I also had the morning to show systems manager for American Embassy Kigali, Rwanda, how our system was setup. She had stopped over in Nairobi for a day. She was also attending the same conference.

It was past nine and just remembered it was time to collect my per diem. I went straight to the cashier only to find a long queue. This was when the mystery began: while waiting in the queue, the late Lucy Karigi of Consular saw me. She was the first in the queue and had started depositing consular fees she had collected the previous day. She broke the silence in the queue and called my name out aloud. “George!!! What are you doing still here? I thought you are leaving at 11.00 am? Please come over, take your money and get the hell out here! (she was laughing aloud). If you wait for this queue you will be late for your flight.” Without hesitation, I jumped the queue, got the money, hugged her goodbye, and headed straight to my office.

On my way to the office I met the late Lucy Onono of Human Resource office. Lucy was on her way back to her office from Financial Management Center. Seeing me she stopped and asked me what I was still doing in the office. “You are still here?” she asked. We then started laughing together, during which she asked me jokingly what I was going to bring her from Accra. When I asked her what she wanted from Accra, she told me, “I would like you to bring me an African dress”. You know African dress? She asked. I replied in affirmative. We then left each other laughing. I still remember and will always remember that moment. Lucy had a green “Kitenge” (flowery African attire) dress with flowers. I still remember it so well.

Leaving Lucy, I went straight to my office, which was not far from where Lucy and I were talking. I placed the money and my passport in my briefcase, started composing an email to my staff on some of the tasks I wanted done while am gone. No sooner had I sat on the computer than the first blast went off. It sounded like a tremor. One American asked me what it was and I said, “It sounded like a bomb (I was not serious). It must be very far, those sides of Limuru (a small town on the way to the great rift valley)”, I said. In my life I had never known how bombs sound. I have no idea why I said so. Immediately after the first sound, colleagues on my floor started running towards the rear and side windows in the Financial Management Center (FMC). Not wanting to be left behind, I locked my office and also started running towards FMC to see by myself what was happening. I did not move for 5 seconds before the killer explosion went off! Life changed that minute! I would be lying if I describe the sound. It was too much for my senses. It was a big ruthless force and blast that shook the entire building. I was thrown and landed on the floor on my belly. Walls started falling, ceilings and debris coming down on me. I was being buried alive in a place that was my second home! A place I felt very safe in, with Marines at Post One; a place I believed was terrorist proof. I was

wrong! The falling objects are burying me, dark diesel fuel smoke from the standby generator fill the building and dusts from collapsing walls choke me. I knew that was my last moment on earth and so I whispered a short prayer then said “God, please help me”. I then lay still waiting for that moment, still buried under the debris.

The choking smoke was too much. I knew I was going to die any minute. I wondered whether I had my Embassy badge on me. I had a feeling the building was going to come down and there was no way we were going to survive. I thought it would make it easier for people or my family members to identify me using my embassy badge. After fumbling for my badge in vain, I kept on thinking how my body be easily identified. It kept bothering me. I had no peace of mind. Meanwhile I could not breathe or open my eyes because of the dusts and choking fuel smoke that filled up the building. I gave up and lay still.

How would my body be identified? This kept bothering me. Cries of my colleagues trapped under debris and breathing their last breath were so painful that I started moving on my belly, reaching out to those I could. I remember reaching for one of my colleagues. His head had been shattered. He lay motionless by the time I reached where he was. I kept moving, not inhaling too much. Suddenly I felt fresh air coming from a direction. I started crawling towards that direction to get the fresh air. Little did I know I was moving towards the edge of one of the windows which had been blown off! The idea of my body not being identified kept haunting me. I said to myself: “If I can die outside this building, my body would be found intact, hence easily be identified!” I have never understood why my dead body was so important to me that it had to be identified! I guess because my dad and family loved me so much that they would not have believed I was dead until they saw my body.

At the window, I saw the garden outside and decided it would be OK to die outside. It was far down but because I was going to die, I didn’t care where I would land. I therefore closed my eyes and threw myself out of the window. I did not want to survive having seen the remains of what used to be my lovely colleagues! I landed down! Unconscious, I didn’t know where I was or whether I was still alive.

I was shocked when I realized I was still breathing. I said to myself, “ if I am alive, it would be meaningless to live on this earth. There is no way my body could be intact. I must have broken my bones all over my body and I cannot live with so much pain in my life.” I then started crawling on my knees around the fence, making movements so the attackers could shoot me dead if they were still in the vicinity instead of living. I had a feeling that if the embassy had been attacked by terrorists, they would be waiting to kill the escapees. I wanted them to see I had jumped out so they could shoot me dead instead of living with so much pains and trauma. Somehow I was convinced I had fractured most parts of my body but because I was still in shock, I could not feel it. I could see I was bleeding but didn’t know where the blood was coming from. However, death was not forthcoming. I therefore decided to jump over the perimeter fence with the help of the gardener who had also been injured and was just lying on the ground. My fingers were bloody and too slippery to hold on to the iron bars that made up the perimeter fence.

Finally I managed to climb over the fence, jumped and landed on the pavement outside. I was bleeding, shaken and terrified. At that moment one of the Ambassador's windows came falling down on me. At first I did not know what it was, it looked too big to be a falling object. I thought it was a chopper sent to rescue us. It was coming down on me! I rolled under one of the vehicles parked outside embassy parking – all these were in seconds. It fell with a big bang and glass particles flew in all directions, the flying glasses cut those who were running towards the nearby railway station.

I came out and started towards the Embassy door. I could not stand the cries of my colleagues trapped inside. When I realized I could walk, I moved fast. Before I could start the stairs, I saw an American lady with two little girls crying for help. They were trying to run out of the fence but there was no opening. The lady cried out "Help! Help! Please help my little children. Help!" I started towards where they kids were. They were trying to pass through the opening between the fences, but the openings were not big enough. Bob Godec, the Economic Attaché and I lifted the little girls over the fence and handed them to Linda Coulson, former Admin Secretary. I did not know what happened to their mother. I still don't know whether she survived!

Still thinking about my colleagues inside, I started towards the entrance when one of the Marines came out with a gun and shouted at me to back out. "Stay out of the building! This building will collapse anytime. Stay out!" I ignored him. I could not stand the cries inside in the building. I continued. "George! Stay out! I will shoot you!", the marine barked at me again. "People are dying inside and there is no way I am going to stay here and watch my colleagues die, go ahead and shoot me!" I shouted back in anger. He gave up and let me enter the building. It was still, dark, with dangerously hanging walls, ceiling and dead bodies all over. It was dark and smoky. I reached out for the few I could save. I feel bad I did not move in time to save many more lives. I do not remember those whom I helped out. However, there is one thing that has been bothering me over the years: There was this man I helped out of the building but whom I do not know whether he survived or not. The photograph appeared in the Newsweek and Times newspaper of August 17 1998. He lost so much blood. I would be happy to know if he survived.

One of the most painful moments during the operation was when, after walking this man to the vehicle and I went in for more recovery. I managed to hang on to what was left of the staircase and reached 1st floor. Because it was still smoky and dark inside the building, I started calling out, "Is anybody there? Can you hear me? It was quiet except for the noise that was coming from outside. I felt devastated, sad and weak. I did not know who among my colleagues were under the collapsed walls. I did not understand why those I was laughing with a few minutes ago could not answer me. I did not understand what had happened to my staff and visitor from Kigali. I did not know why. In that moment, a woman's voice called out my name "George! George! Please help me!" Still on my knees, I moved fast towards that direction, tapping bodies to feel any motion. "Yes, I got it!" I convinced myself. Without looking at the person I was pulling, I started for the stairs, forgetting it had collapsed. We all landed on the Marine Post one! As soon as we landed on the floor with my colleague, rescuers came running and grabbed the person from me. They wanted to take me too but I refused. I told them I was Ok. Still

remembering the voice that had called my name, out of curiosity I raised my head to see if the person I had pulled out was the woman who had called my name. She was not the one. It was a man instead. I was happy I had saved him but devastated and felt like I was responsible for the woman's death if she did not make it. I have been waiting for this woman to come and ask me why I did not help her for all these years in vain! To date I do not sleep when I think of that moment. I still hear it so clearly. I hate myself that I could not even remember whose voice it was. We were such a happy family at the Embassy, a family that had no boundary, a family that knew no color, race or tribe.

Recovery operation was still going on and the site was full of activities. I kept thinking about the lady's voice. The Embassy is fenced off. I was still bleeding. This time I could tell where the blood was coming from, I had incurred injuries on my left knee, left elbow and on my back. When I had thrown myself out of the building, I landed on the metallic flowerbed support bars. It had cut my left knee and started bleeding. One of the marines who had earlier warned me not to get into the building spotted me and ordered the rescuers to take me to the nearest hospital. I ended up in St. James Hospital, along Mombasa road, where I was dressed and treated.

At St. James, I regained my consciousness. I asked one of the nurses where I was and she told me it was St. James Hospital. I asked her what had happened. She asked me where I was working and after telling her, she told me that the Embassy had been bombed. I enquired if there was a taxi I could take back to the Embassy. She told me all vehicles were helping at the site. The nurses protested against me leaving the hospital but I insisted to go back to the embassy and help. I limped to the main road when I took a matatu (bus). I did not know I had no money on me. The bus conductor seeing how heavily bandaged I was, did not bother to ask for bus fare. That was my first time to get a free ride on a matatu!

No vehicle was allowed downtown. On reaching Nyayo Stadium roundabout, I alighted and started limping back to the Embassy. I arrived to find the place ringed off and recovery going on. The Marine we had shouted each other with spotted me, ordered that I be taken home, and locked indoors. I was driven home in one of the cabs and escorted to the bed. Still in shock, I began recollecting few moments before the blast and the aftermath with lots of pains and trauma. I was shivering and cried uncontrollably throughout the night. Relatives, colleagues and friends kept my house phone ringing throughout the night. While some callers wanted to know whether I had survived, some were passing sad news of colleagues and friends who did not make it. News of their deaths devastated me further.

The first person I asked for when I woke up was the late Consul General, Julian Bartley Sr. I was with Julian the night before the blast until past 10 pm at night in his office. Because it was on the eve of my departure to Accra I was trying to get most of the pending work done. Julian used to call me every evening for email problems or just to go and chat with him. He liked me so much. That night he had narrated to me how he grew up, how he went to school and challenges he faced in his career. He kept encouraging me to keep working hard. When I informed him I was going to Accra the next day, he asked

me to bring him an African mask. He told me to let him know before I leave so he could give me 50 dollars for the mask. We left each other few minutes to 11 pm. The next (fateful) morning I called him as he had asked me to. He requested me to wait for him in my office, that he was bringing the 50 dollars. I told him he didn't have to, that I would use my per diem then he will refund when I get back. He did not want to hear any of that. He told me, "Chief, Man I have to come and see you off" I never saw Julian, I never saw him later, I never saw his body, I will never see him again!

The events that followed were the identification of the bodies, helping family members piece together what was left of the bodies, attending funeral services and burials at the countryside, representing the Ambassador and reading her condolence message to the deceased families.

The Embassy resumed operations at USAID towers. IPC and Information Systems Center crew began counting the losses. A new computer system we had just installed eight months ago had been destroyed. My next worry, as the Information Systems Manager, was whether the valuable information was intact. We had put in place recovery procedure and so I kept thinking if it would work. I started working on rebuilding the Department of State E-Mail system back on line to facilitate recovery and communication between Nairobi and Washington. Of the salvaged computers and servers, we put together a network that was used until we moved to the Interim office building. Users could not believe reading emails they had received and documents they had done seconds before the blast. The information was intact. Our recovery plan worked!

There is a saying that "time is the best healer" I don't know if I will ever get over August 7 experience. To those who were taken adrift by the cruel waves, may your souls rest in eternal peace! This mission will never be the same without you. You are the heroes of the day. To those who survived, I have this to say: DO NOT GIVE UP ON YOURSELF. DO NOT HATE YOURSELF AS I DO. GOD HAD A REASON FOR SAVING YOUR LIVES. IT IS TIME YOU ASK GOD WHAT HE HAS IN STORE FOR YOU.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

I came out of the bombing a discouraged and completely a different person. I gave up on life, did not want to hear about long-term plans and savings for the future. Not having noticed my colleagues die before achieving their great plans or enjoying fruits of their labor. To date I do not park in basement parking spaces. Any loud sound makes me want to go under the table. Anytime I leave for work I get the feeling that I would not come back to see my family.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

I concluded that there is no safe place on this planet earth, that one can die any time. It made me more spiritual than before, always prepared for anything. Talking about it with

those who have gone through similar experiences also helped me start a new life. I always ask myself what I can do for as long as I am still alive.

JOANNE GRADY HUSKEY
FS Family Member

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

When the bomb went off on August 7, 1998, I was in the basement of the US Embassy at the doctor's office with my two children, Caroline (5), and Christopher (8) waiting to do their school physicals. I had unwittingly parked my car immediately next to the truck in the parking lot, where the two men who set off the bomb had watched us walk into the building. My husband, Jim, was on the 4th floor in a meeting in the Ambassador's office. One minute after we arrived in the doctor's office, there was a deafening blast that blew us all to the ground. As I regained consciousness from the sudden tremendous jolt, I found myself on the floor dazed and confused. I realized that my children were somewhere in that dark room in the rubble on the floor. They called out for me... and asked, "Is this an atomic bomb?" I said "no, but it is a bomb, and we are going to get out of here." I searched for them in the dark and gathered them to me. Clinging to each other, we crawled on the floor over cut glass and debris, groping in the dark through wires hanging from the ceiling, and climbing over furniture completely in disarray. We searched for a way out. Following the mental map I had of the hall layout, I pulled the children along the dark corridors. Still alone, we finally saw a light at the end of the long hallway... We sought the light, and climbed through a hole in the wall. Entering the pitch black garage, we ran up the ramp leading out the rear of the Embassy and hit a 100 foot wall of fire, precisely where I had parked our car! The buildings behind had collapsed and there was chaos everywhere. I saw one Kenyan man full of blood without his clothes on, and others running around with utter fear in their eyes. We ran around the perimeter of the Embassy and my kids slipped through the iron gate into the arms of their shocked and panicked father, who had frantically run out of the building, sliding down 4 flights of stairs, scared to death that we were all hurt or worse. FS officer Kevin Richardson and my husband pulled apart the iron posts of the barrier with their bare hands, letting me out of the perimeter. Many colleagues running out of the front of the embassy were sharing rumors that all the U.S. embassies in Africa had been blown up. We weren't sure if the perpetrators were still there or not. Gathering our family together, we ran away from the burning embassy as hordes of Kenyans ran toward it. My husband spotted a car with Embassy plates across the meridian and we jumped over and he threw us into the van and told the driver to get us home. Saying good bye to their father, my children cried for the first time, as he then went back to the Embassy to help victims get out. We zoomed through the chaotic streets of Nairobi driving on the sidewalk until we could go no further. We jumped out of the car and ran the rest of the way home covered in white soot with our faces blackened by the bomb debris. People stared, shocked to see us.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

As a family we pulled together and became even closer than we already were. The preciousness of our lives was ever present in our minds.

Although offered the option of leaving Nairobi, we opted to stay and help Kenyan victims. We all spoke openly about what had happened, wrote letters and articles about it. Our family went on many international news networks sharing the story of what happened in Nairobi with the world. As President of the American Women's Association, I got very involved in organizing a bomb relief fund for Kenyans injured in the bomb. I met many Kenyans who had been blinded, or deafened, or paralyzed by the bomb. This had a profound effect on me; working with them helped me to heal my own wounds. I organized a fundraising campaign and ultimately, we were able to fund the rehabilitation of many victims and help them to recovery. We worked not only to heal their wounds, but to heal the anger they felt toward Americans for causing them so much pain and sorrow.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

Writing and sharing my story helped me a great deal. Getting together with those who knew about or were involved in the bombing gave me solace following the event.

I feel that this event changed me forever, in that I became an active advocate for citizen diplomacy. The perpetrators of the bomb hated Americans without knowing anything about us, and we, in turn, knew close to nothing about them or why they would do jihad against us. From that moment on, my life's purpose has been to promote understanding between people of differing backgrounds. I have taught numerous courses, given lectures, written articles, written several books, and started a cross cultural training company, all with the goal of educating people about cultures different from their own.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

It helps to stay close to those who understand or even know first-hand what you've been through. It also is helpful to stay close to your chosen community, be it friends, family, or village. Those who offered me help, or called me, or came to see me after the bomb, were so important to me. Don't stay away from someone who has suffered a trauma. Be there for them, even if you don't know what to say or do, just your presence helps so much.

Being able to actively respond to the trauma was healing. Writing, telling my story, setting up a relief fund to help victims, and refocusing my career, all helped me feel less victimized and gave me a way to make sense of the bombing and of terrorism in general. It is important to find your own way to process any trauma and give yourself hope for the future.

JOYCE ANN REED
Administrative Assistant for Communications

I was in the Communications Center hallway of the top floor escorting a member of the Kenyan Char Force. She was doing routine cleaning. It was so many minutes after 10:30AM on August 7, 1998, I heard a loud crash on the roof, then there was total darkness. I was having trouble breathing. I saw the debris all over my clothes and in my hair when the emergency lights came on. Once the door was unlocked to the Ambassador's office, I took the Kenyan employee's hand and led her through it then out of the bombed building to safety. I immediately turned our car into an ambulance and started loading bleeding hurt American and Kenyans into our car to be taken to the hospital. I also helped with the triage that was being organized by Dr. Gretchen McCoy. In the afternoon, I went to the USAID building to help with the reorganization of the American Embassy.

The effect the bombing has had on me is that I do not feel safe anymore no matter where I go. I do experience painful feelings when I have flashbacks of the bombing. These flashbacks can be triggered by certain sounds, smells or just seeing or hearing about other events like our attack. The bombing damaged my husband's life since he was one of my co-workers at the Embassy. Our children's life's were changed forever.

The prescribed medication does help that I receive from my psychiatrist, who I see monthly, for my chronic post-traumatic stress disorder. I continue to keep in touch with other survivors through our non-profit charity called The American Society for the Support of Injured Survivors of Terrorism (ASSIST). This is my way of saluting the courage of survivors and providing me with purpose to help others of related terrorism events.

My advice is you must react to the situation without hesitation to save as many lives as you can. Remember one person cannot act alone. You must become a team player. There is no task too heroic or too mundane for any of us to do.

WORLEY LEE REED
Officer-in-Charge of the Engineering Services Center
for Central and South Africa, Diplomatic Security

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I left the Embassy approximately 20 minutes before the attack to arrange an equipment shipment at the GSO warehouse. I was starting to leave the GSO when I heard a sonic boom. I looked for a jet aircraft but only found the thin, black smoke characteristic of

Beirut car bomb attacks on the horizon. I radioed Post One, but no one answered. An FSN driver finally responded, “The Embassy is bombed. The Embassy is gone.”

I rushed back to the Embassy and found my wife, Joyce, had survived the attack. It was the longest 15 minutes of my life. We then began the Search and Rescue efforts. If I had remained in my office, I would have died in the rubble measuring approximately eight feet off the floor.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

There are experiences in this world that no human being should suffer. A major terrorist attack is one of them. The physical and mental trauma changes most of your life. You become a different person. From my experience, I believe the odds of suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome is almost 100 percent.

Your physical injuries limit your ability to enjoy your previous activities. Your mental injuries cause depression, flash-backs, panic attacks and a strange sense of guilt. Your family and colleagues are directly impacted by your PTSS since your new behaviors impact them. PTSS is transmissible.

I specialized in Counterintelligence and Counter-Terrorism all my life. I also have a master’s degree in psychology. Before the bombing, I thought I understood almost everything about terrorism and terrorist attacks. After the bombing, I discovered I had known little to nothing about them. As much as you may believe you understand terrorism, you will only understand the huge impact on the lives of survivors and their families by experiencing it yourself. I hope this never happens to you.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

Everyone involved in a terrorist attack including helpers are victims of the attack. You experience helplessness, vulnerability and a strong sense of being isolated. If you are overseas, American help can be days away. In our case, the Kenyan Government was paralyzed in Nairobi by the attack. If you survived, you become 911. The situation creates tremendous stress.

Given the overwhelming circumstances, it is easy to simply give up. You can slip into a state of self-pity. You can choose to stay emerged in misery or fight to regain a portion of your life through allowing others to help you, medication, therapy and a host of other strategies. You must fight to become a survivor (or warrior) by taking personal responsibility for your life and recovery efforts. While this “warrior” approach may seem strange to someone who has not experienced a terrorist attack, it is very essential to personal survival. An anonymous quote states, “Fate whispers to the warrior, ‘You cannot withstand the storm.’ The warrior whispers back to Fate, ‘I am the Storm’.”

As a survivor/warrior, you cease being a person who helplessly watches experiences happen to them, and you become the person that shapes your own future. It also helps if your spouse has experienced the same event. We will celebrate our 50th anniversary this year in a class of people who have a high divorce rate because we understand what is happening to each other and how to help the other.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

As previously stated, there are events in this world no human being should experience. There is literally nothing you can do to fully prepare you for the event(s). As a US Foreign Service employee, there is a strong possibility you may be involved in a terrorist attack.

In our Country's first document, the Declaration of Independence, we declared that "all men (and women) are created equal..." It is a fundamental cornerstone of our Country. When you raise your right hand and swear to protect the Constitution (the People) from all enemies foreign or domestic, then you voluntarily lower the value of your life by one percent. You will strive to protect and defend the remaining 99 percent with all your being, but in a desperate, last-option situation, you must choose the safety and security of another American's life over your life. This is your oath.

Some would call the choice heroic or brave, but the many who have experienced this situation call it morally correct. Heroism is not fed by bravery. It is the result of love for your Country and the American colleague serving next to you. You must rank their welfare above your wellbeing. This is not easy to do, that is why we award heroism medals. However, those who receive them are normally embarrassed for being rewarded for doing what they believed was morally right. For our Country to continue to exist, Foreign Service men and women must accept this heavy oath-burden freely and without reservation.

Is your goal to have a great career in the US Foreign Service? In my religion and Bible, it says that if you want to be great then freely serve other people. Be the servant on the team that provides Americans with safety, security and ultimately peace. Built bridges between cultures. During your work, do not forget to continue to fight for your 99 percent while always remembering your oath. This is the best way to start to prepare for experiencing an event that no human being should ever experience. I pray you never endure such an event.

Disposition of Worley (Lee) Reed in Owens Etal vs. Sudan Etal
Direct Examination of Survivor

1. Please state your name, address and present occupation. Worley Lee Reed, 4371 Dinner Lake Blvd, Lake Wales, Florida 33859. Retired under Disability from the United State Department of State.

2. *Could you give us the names of your mother and father?* Flossie Lucile Reed nee Pinkerton (deceased) and Herschel Clarence Reed (deceased)
3. *Have you ever been married? Name of spouse.* Yes, Joyce Ann Reed nee Whiteside
4. *Did you have any children?* Yes
5. *Could you give us the names and dates of birth of your children?* Cheryl Leeann Reed Blood, November 5, 1970; Bret Worley Reed, April 9, 1976.
6. *What is the date of your birth?* April 12, 1948
7. *Where were you born?* Greenfield, Ohio
8. *Could you tell us about your family growing up?* I grew up in a lower, middle class family where both parents were factory workers in the small Ohio town of Washington Court House. We had a large extended family in the town area of grandparents, aunts and uncles with many cousins. While we had little money, life was simple and good.
9. *Could you describe your education prior to August 7, 1998?* I graduated from the Washington Court House High School in 1966 then attended The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. I received a BS in Education majoring in Mathematics and Physics from OSU in June 1970. I attended OSU on an ROTC scholarship and graduated as a Distinguished Military Graduate, so I was commissioned as a Regular Army Officer in US Army Intelligence at my graduation. Being a Regular Army Officer, I attended the US Army Basic Infantry Officer Course at Fort Benning, GA for nine-week course then the Counterintelligence Officer's Course at then Fort Holabird, Maryland after which I was assigned to a unit. During a tour as an infantry officer with the 9th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Washington, I attended the Pacific Lutheran University where I received a MA in Social Psychology. My other US Army education was the Advance Military Intelligence Officer Course, the Human Relations and EEO Course, and the Signals Intelligence Officers Course. In 2002, I returned from South Africa with the US State Department. I had been struggling with my position as Regional Director of Security Engineering for Africa and the Middle East. The State Department agreed to send me to the US Air War College where class attendance was usually three hours a day during the work week. They thought the reduced work stress would help me recover from PTSD. The War College reading was intense but with the help of faculty and students who knew my condition, I was able to graduate with a Master of Strategic Studies in June 2003. After graduation in concert with State Department and private doctors, I went on paid leave until January 2005 when I retired under disability. My other US State Department education was the Special Agent Basic Course (Honor Graduate), the Security Engineering Officer Basic Course (classified) given by another agency, the Advance Signals Analysis Course given by another agency and Safe Haven Emergency Medical Course.

10. What kind of Student were you during those years? Until August 7, 1998, I had a photographic memory with my grade point average varying in all schools from 3.8 – 4.0. In the War College, I graduated with a 3.6 where 3.0 is average. I was in the National Honor Society and have won educational awards all my life.

11. Where you employed by the United States Embassy in Kenya on August 7, 1998? I was the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the Engineering Services Center (ESC) for Central and South Africa. The ESC is a counter-terrorism / counterintelligence unit for the US Diplomatic Security Service, US State Department.

12. Could you describe the work that you did at the Embassy? The work I did was mostly classified. The unclassified work was engineering in nature involving security system at the 18 embassies and consulates in our region.

13. Prior to August 7, 1998, did you have any physical condition which limited the work that you could do? I had torn my left Achilles tendon in a work-related accident in 1991. I also had high pitch hearing loss in both ears due to gun fire and other loud occupational noises. However, the above conditions had little impact on my work.

14. Prior to August 7, 1998, did you have any emotional or psychological problems of which you were aware? No. I carried a TOP SECRET with special accesses security clearance for 35 years. The clearance requires that the individual has no emotional or psychological problems.

16. What was your rate of pay on August 7, 1998? \$97,946 per year.

17. Prior to August 7, 1998, what was the state of your health? Excellent. I was a US Army Regular Army Officer in Military Intelligence and the Infantry. I could easily run three miles in 18 minutes in combat boots. My Special Agent duties were highly comparable to US Secret Service Agent duties, which require high physical conditioning and health. My duties required long hours under unusually high stress and danger factors.

18. During your childhood, so far as you remember, were you subjected to any events which might cause emotional psychological strain significantly more severe than what other kids your age were undergoing? Absolutely not since I had a happy childhood.

19. Prior to August 7, 1998, what was the worst thing which had occurred in your life? Three things: a) I was on the protection detail that took Secretary of State Shultz to Beirut to view the first bombing of the US Embassy in Beirut, b) For two years I spent every other week working at the US Embassy, Beirut out of the US Embassy, Athens. Beirut was an active combat zone at that time where we were routinely shelled and shot at. During this time, I led a team to help in the recovery of the US Embassy Annex, Beirut after it was car-bombed, c) In 1985, I developed Steven Johnson's Syndrome from a reaction to penicillin in Turkey caused by a bacterial infection I got in Cairo, Egypt. The doctors in the Turkish hospital told me every day for two weeks that they thought I was going to die. I survived the experience where the normal survival rate is 50 percent.

20. *In your own words, please tell us what happened on August 7, 1998?* The morning of August 7, 1998 was calm in Nairobi. I arrived at work at my normal time of 07:00 AM and began work by reading cable traffic. I tasked one of my Security Engineers to finish typing one of her reports on the classified computer in the room next to my office. At about 09:30, my wife, Joyce, who worked in the Communications vault, called me to ask me what I wanted for lunch. We agreed to meet at 11:00 for lunch. I had previously agreed with an Embassy contractor to inventory some stock at the Embassy warehouse about 15 minutes away from the Embassy. We agreed to meet at 10:00 AM in front of the Embassy where I had a car waiting for us. The contractor was late that day and we did not leave the Embassy until 10:15 AM. I took three of my employees with me to help with the inventory. By 10:30, we were at the warehouse where the contractor in his own car arrived a couple of minutes later. The inventory surprisingly took about two minutes, so we were re-entering the car to return to the Embassy at approximately 10:36. At that time, I heard what I thought was a sonic boom, so I investigated the sky for a jet airplane. This would be very unusual for any jet to fly over Kenya. I looked toward the Embassy and saw a black, thin cloud rising over the city. The cloud was characteristic of a car bombing, which routinely took place in Beirut during my TDY tours in Lebanon. I got everyone in the car and proceeded back to the Embassy. I called the US Marine Guard at Post One, who is always on duty, but there was only a static response. After repeated calls, a local national employee came on the radio and said, "The Embassy is bombed ... the Embassy is gone." I knew my wife, Joyce, was in the Embassy. I repeatedly called on the radio while we raced to the Embassy going at times over sidewalks to avoid traffic. A few minutes before arriving at the Embassy, Joyce called me from an Embassy vehicle radio telling me she had survived the attack. When we arrived at the bombing site, we had to stop a city block away from the Embassy due to the dead / injured bodies littering the entire area. Every building I could see was severely damaged and burning with cars / buses burning in the street. People were walking around aimlessly injured and covered in blood. I ran to the front of the building where I saw the survivors streaming out of the shattered building. They all had a blank stare on their faces in shock and disbelief. I found one of my SEOs first then I found Joyce injured but still alive covered with dust from head to toe. I kissed her then I ran into the building to assess the damage. I grabbed a fire extinguisher to put out isolated fires and tried to make my way through the dust cloud that filled the building. I used office names and numbers to locate myself. After checking the building, I returned to the front of the building to talk to the Acting Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Lucien Vandenbroucke and the Regional Security Officer (RSO) Paul Peterson. They were in shock and shaken. I had previous experience in bombing operations from Beirut, so I volunteered to lead the Search and Rescue (S&R) operations in the building and suggested that Paul Peterson take the external security operations with overall security oversight. The DCM would have overall site supervision. They agreed to my suggestion appointing me S&R leader. I then went to the top step of the Embassy and called for volunteers for the S&R team. Twelve employees responded representing every group in the Embassy including all branches of the military. Many of them were still bleeding from their own injuries. I told them that I did not know if the Embassy building would continue to stand. There were live electrical 220 V AC lines hanging from the ceiling. Debris covered six to ten feet of the original floors, and walls /

floors were highly unstable, so they could collapse at a finger's touch. Toxic air filled the building from smoke, burning plastics, dust and asbestos. Water was all over the floors making the electrical lines more dangerous. Voids in the floor could cause the floor to collapse on you when you walked over them. There was a fire burning in a generator room filled with oxyacetylene tanks. The room was over a 60,000 liters tank of diesel fuel. The generator room was a vault we could not access. If the tanks and diesel fuel exploded, then there would be a huge hole in the earth where the Embassy previously existed. The volunteers were on the steps below me. I told them that there would be no shame or recriminations if they chose not to volunteer. I told them that they could probably die or be at least seriously injured if they volunteered. I also told them that there were living people buried in the building who were now, if conscious, praying for our help. I asked them to step to the top of the landing stairs to volunteer. The twelve volunteers stepped forward as a group. It was the single most courageous group act I had ever witnessed in my life. "Home of the Brave" always had a special meaning for me after this display of courage. With Paul Peterson's help, I broke the teams into two groups each with an assistant RSO leading them. I sent one group to the basements, and I would accompany the other to the top floor as a worker / leader. After the short briefing, I turned and went into the building and up the stairs. We first carried out the wounded employees we found on the surface of the debris using blown-down doors. We did not have any normal rescue equipment just some hand tools we took from the ESC workshop. We carried heavy employees over uneven, broken floors down the one surviving damaged staircase in the building. The work was continuous and very heavy. Due to the uneven floors, you were normally required to lift with your back instead of your legs. The toxic air became a problem when it limited our breathing. Later in the day, my lungs started to bleed due to the toxic air. In the interim, a large crowd of 20,000 angry Kenyans had formed around the bomb site extending in all directions as far as you could see. The Kenyans later told me the crowd initially thought that the Embassy had exploded. We had seen African mobs tear a person apart when they thought the person had committed an offense. Paul Peterson's small group of guards with shotguns miraculously held them at bay until the British Embassy sent a company of British military engineers to help us in the afternoon. I still remember Paul standing with a shotgun between us and thousands of angry people. It was the bravest individual act I ever witnessed in my life. Once the Kenyans saw the British uniforms, they dispersed. There were still points where we all thought the crowd would kill us. Once we got all the visible living victims out of the building, we started to dig by hand for survivors. We would mark off a fifteen-foot area on the outer wall with women's lipstick then dig out a six-foot area in front of the wall by throwing the debris through the opening where the windows were blown out. Once we had the area clear, we would dig in six feet throwing the debris into the area we had just cleared. We moved this way all the way to the interior walls then marked off a new fifteen-foot area. We used rosters and last known positions to decide where to concentrate our digging. The digging involved moving sharp glass, metal debris and concrete blocks up to 200 pounds. Since people were presumed to be alive under the debris, the work never stopped. Later in the afternoon, the toxic air started to affect my team's performance, so we gave members 15-minute breaks outside for every hour they worked in a team staggered manner. I saw all the American victims in this case either in the Embassy or as they were being carried out of the Embassy. Gary

Spears looked like he had been shot in the stomach and he was holding his stomach. Frank Pressley was so severely injured in his face and shoulder that I initially did not recognize him. One of my workers told me who he was. Ellen Bomer was the same as Frank Pressley. She had been hit in the face with flying debris and her eyes were severely damaged. As for Frank Pressley, on August 8, 1998 while digging near where he was at the time of bombing, I found his lower right jaw bone in the debris. This sounds bad, but I also spent two days picking up small pieces of two friends of ours mixed into the heavy debris. One of them was Michelle O'Connor, who had two small children. The bomb had picked her up and slammed her into the corner of a cabinet where she literally exploded into hundreds of pieces. The only way we could tell the body parts apart was Michelle was Caucasian and the other employee was African American. At six PM, I had another conference with the DCM and RSO. Nightfall was beginning, and while the Embassy in daylight was highly dangerous at night it would become a death trap. I had rescued the last living employee, Moses, six hours after the bombing. He was buried three feet under debris with only the bottom of one of his shoes visible. I thought he was dead, but you dig everyone out anyway to be positive. We dug him out, and he was lying on another dead Kenyan woman employee. He had lost part of his skull, so you could see his brain and part of his left hand. You feel for a pulse and touch them saying, "Are you OK?" He was alive and started to move. We restrained his head and neck then carried him out on a door. The next days were even harder where I dug all day, carried out bodies of my friends and picked up thousands of pieces of my friends. This is just an overview. To say it was horrible is an understatement. I believe there are things in this world that no human being should ever see. This was one of them...

JUSTUS MUEMA WAMBUA
Warehouse Team (FSN)

It was a warlike full day; since I was born I have not come across a certain incident like that. I arrived at the scene after thirty minutes of the blast. It was terrible. There was no light. You could not see anything in the Building.

We were instructed to use flash lights; those we brought from the warehouse. When we got inside the Building it was so sad to me because I visited the location where my friend, where I found all of the dead. This was the Shipping Department. I was shocked. The first was Geoffrey Kalio, Joseph Kiongo, Dominic Kithuva and others.

When I saw that my maid was confused, even my pressure went up; but God is good. I tried to put myself into another frame of mind because there was nothing else to do. I gained strength and started to move the bodies from the building to the mortuary.

As a survivor, I have three Children who were in school at that time. They were affected very much because they saw me every evening after work. And I was working 24 hours at the Embassy to make sure all bodies were out of the building and sent to the place where they are supposed to be waiting for burial date. So they were worried what is

happening to daddy. They were crying asking their Mother where is Father? She had a hard time.

What made me who I am is to pray to God and concealing which we were given at that time of all we did. Today when I hear a sound like a blast I just feel scared due to that time.

I would like to tell the friend when a blast comes and you are not dead try to comfort yourself and you will survive the situation.

LARRY MESERVE
Director, Regional of the Food for Peace Office
and the Sudan Field Office, USAID

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I was in the USAID offices in Westlands on the phone with the Embassy Refugee Coordinator Kevin Richardson discussing the situation of Somalia refugees in Dadaab refugee camp. My position was the Director of the Regional Food for Peace Office and the Sudan Field Office. During the conversation, I heard a large explosion off in the distance and the phone line went dead. At the time there was no indication that the Embassy had been attacked. Some of us had thought a tanker might have exploded at the main train station or there might have been riots because of a teachers strike. All the phone lines were dead and it was not possible to get local or international lines. Since the explosion sounded serious and we couldn't contact the Embassy even by radio, I remembered that our Somalia office had a satellite phone. So, I went to look for Maura Barry who worked out of our Somalia office to see if we could get the sat phone up and running as we thought that it might be a good idea to report the explosion to the State Operations Center (Op Center). Once I got through I reported the explosion and said I thought it was likely down near the Embassy and said all the phone lines were down. I was informed that a similar explosion had occurred at the US Embassy in Dar es Salaam around the same time and the Embassy in Nairobi was the likely target. Since there had been a country team going on at the Embassy that morning, the senior USAID staff were at the Embassy. After the call, we also had reports that the Embassy was attacked and we tried to organize some staff who had first aid training to head down to the Embassy. I decided to stick around at the USAID offices to provide any updates to the Op Center. Some of the Embassy staff eventually headed over to our offices and Ambassador Bushnell showed up after being treated for some facial wounds. She had been at a meeting next to the Embassy when the explosion occurred. We were able to get her on the sat phone to provide various updates later that day and over the next few days and the USAID offices immediately began serving as the temporary US Embassy as well.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

I was single at the time but was glad to see that USAID senior staff recognized early on the many of our staff were traumatized by the loss of life of many of their colleagues and friends at the Embassy. Our senior staff worked closely with USAID/W to enable our staff to get various treatment options for such a traumatic incident.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

My workload remained busy but all the USAID staff worked well as a team and did whatever necessary to support our staff and our Embassy colleagues. It seemed to bring out the best from everybody and we all tried to help each other out. I was impressed by how much USAID/W tried to support us and provide staff with various types of trauma healing.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

Take advantage of all the different types of training available for dealing with various types of danger situations and maintain an active healthy life style and get lots of exercise. Maintain close friendships with the host country community and understand and respect cultural differences.

SUSAN NZII
USAID/Kenya, Administrative Assistant (FSN)

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I was at work in the USAID Building in Parklands. It was about 10:00am. We heard the first blast and we thought it was a gas cylinder burst or something – the second blast shook our building and we could see papers and smoke filling the skyline in the downtown area. As I was working in the USAID/OFDA office, we had a DART (Disaster Assistance Response Team) that was based in Nairobi and working on the Burundi disaster – they were all on temporary duty in Nairobi – we had to forward the list to the RSO before departing. Earlier on, I was waiting for my office director to clear on a SitRep (Situation Report) from the DART team that was transmitted daily – in those days, all cables were transmitted from the embassy building – so we had to hand carry the folders and log them for onward transmission. For same-day transmission, the cables needed to be at the embassy before 10:00am – we had called to request them to hold on for an urgent one and they agreed. I was waiting to carry it – it never happened. Instead, a disaster declaration cable was released from the USAID building...

There were sirens and the announcements on the PA system – we were asked to leave immediately. There was panic and confusion. I didn't know if I should leave or not – I stayed on. I dialed the embassy switchboard – the phone just rang and no response. Most

of us then gathered in the conference rooms to see the live coverage on KTN and later CNN – we had no cellphones so the landlines were jammed – I managed to speak to my mother and my grandfather tell them I was ok. Volunteers with medical skills were asked to go to the site immediately to help with first aid and ferrying people to the hospitals. We were worried about our colleagues and then we heard that the Tanzania mission was also hit. At that point, we left the building – taking a close look to the now concealed embassy building and its environs – ambulances, police, and people all over. My brothers were happy to see me well and alive – we hugged and cried and called our relatives to check on them and to confirm we/I was safe.

I returned the next day to volunteer to work at the switchboard, or the family assistance desk – the numbers and names of our fallen colleagues were flowing in – the USAID warehouse improvised a body storage facility because the morgues were full – packed them up with giant ice blocks... it was sad.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

I didn't know the effect it had on me until later on when I had to attend funerals and burial ceremonies of my colleagues – At one of these ceremonies, I was nominated to read the condolence message from the Ambassador – a tall order! I was the youngest in the group that attended this ceremony at Kangundo, Machakos County. I greeted people in the local language and told them I was there to represent the US Embassy and had a letter from the Ambassador – I read in English and tried to translate to the local language – one of my colleagues helped me. Later on my way home I broke down and cried – I remembered the faces of the widow and the kids who were looking at us like we would answer all their unspoken questions – I cried for myself. It could have been me in that casket. I imagined how my family would have been affected. I cried for all my colleagues who died and for their loved ones. I still remember the sight of the collapsed embassy and the screams and the sirens. To date, I panic during drills and or ambulance sirens – I don't like noise and I once wet my clothes during a drill in Kabul, Afghanistan.

My family always calls me whenever they get any news regards the embassy or terrorist attacks – to check on me and to confirm it's not a hoax. I have learned to call my parents and siblings before they call – or sent them sms's to say am well.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

I learned to take a day at a time. I realize that anything can happen anywhere, anytime. I am more aware of my surroundings and always look for exits wherever I am. I have learned to appreciate life and loved ones and to spend time with them – to take time off and relax. I learned to listen more and talk less; and to be there for others especially during trying times. I have learned that the US Embassy – my employer is committed to safety and to taking care of us – there are drills and trainings on safety and testing of the PA systems – gas masks and all safety measures in place. I share the information with my family and friends – they should 'duck and cover' and not run to the windows when they

hear gun shots or blasts ... they should keep a change of clothes and food and water in the cars and in the offices – and that they should keep their travel documents and some money handy in case of need.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

I have learned to be grateful for each day – to cherish every moment and smile more.

To be more flexible and accommodative – people are dealing with different issues that we don't know of – to be nice.

A day can end before it starts – the bomb happened at 10 am – people were still planning for the rest of the day. They had dropped their kids to school and spouses to work; they had pending issues and unfinished business – but they didn't have time for closure. I live each day as if it was my last.

I have learned to slow down – look around and savor the moment. I can be replaced in the office but not in my family. I spend more time with my daughter and my parents – we talk about anything and everything – death, property, education, sex, everything! Every day is a new opportunity.

LUCY MORGNI
USAID/Kenya, Administrative Assistant (FSN)

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

On August 7th 1998 I was in Parklands, the USAID offices on duty. I was an Administrative Assistant working for the USAID Population and Health Office and had worked there for ten years. This was a Friday and as usual a short day and schools were closing for their August Holidays, so I was very excited looking forward to go home early to be with my children. At about 10:30ish I saw a huge smoke and flying objects moving up. The dark grey/black smoke increased over time and I became curious wanting to know where it was coming from. The first person who came to mind was, my dear friend colleague and sister the Late Cecilia Agnes Mamboleo who worked in the Human Resource Office. To my surprise the phone could not go through as usual, I dialed the number at switchboard and asked for Ext 248 I have never forgotten to date these three digits. I spoke to the Late Cecilia many times in a day and she had informed me the previous day that she was busy working on her handover notes as the children were closing school and she was taking two weeks to be with her children but this didn't seem to be the story. I came to learn that the Late Cecilia died on the spot in the bombing.

Immediately after the bomb, we were called to provide help in identifying the bodies of our colleagues who were in different morgues. I found my dear friend Cecilia Agnes

Mamboleo at Lee Funeral Home. OOhhh no. Immediately when they opened the drawers I was still in denial and believed that my friend was still alive but as they went on opening the drawers, I saw her feet and she had worn her favorite African trouser outfit. That's when it sunk in that she was actually gone for good. The family members were waiting eagerly in my house (we were neighbors and our children went to the same school – Consolata School) to hear the good news that we had found Cecilia in one of the hospitals being alive and being treated.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

Yes to date this date August 7th is still fresh in my mind. I never knew how vulnerable I can be until after the August 7th bombing. My family who were young then, witnessed how our close family friend Ms. Cecilia Agnes Mamboleo got killed in the bomb and affected the lives of her family. It took me 15 years to go back to the bomb site at Haile Selassie Avenue a place I pass by daily to date and never wanted to imagine that the U.S. Embassy was no more..., I realized I had lived in denial for so long but I allowed myself to find some healing by taking a walk in that site. I meditated and read the names of the colleagues who worked in the Embassy. I visited the museum and watched the bombing video which brought me fresh memories. To be frank these memories will live with me forever. I keep praying and any time I remember the departed souls, Cecilia's name pops up the first. Rest in Peace my dearest sister it will never be the same again. I pray for Elvis, Sally, Teddy & Kevin that they hold as one family and know that mum's spirit is still in their hearts. Love you all!

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

Talking about it with my other colleagues who survived from time to time has helped me try to bounce back and this has become therapeutic. I appreciate the drills that are being conducted at my work place and take them seriously.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

That we hold together as one united family and pray for each other for Gods strength. We try to form a support group team for the survivors because though this has been 20 years, it's still fresh in our minds.

GEORGE JONES
USAID Kenya Mission Director (retired)
United States International University

The August 7th catastrophe -- one of the most traumatic days of my life -- began while I was at the Parklands Sports Complex watching the Kenyan Davis Cup team practicing

for an upcoming match. Having recently retired from USAID as the Mission Director, I was transitioning into a new position with the United States International University. This meant that I was free to move immediately to the site of the bombing to render assistance. Somewhat frozen by the thunderous roar and the blackened sky, it was the news that the American Embassy had been struck, that unleashed my inertia. Three events continue to stand out for me:

After a quick check of the USAID building which was close by, I raced to the embassy. My first encounter was with military attaché Colonel Ron Roughead who, still in shock, reported that his entire team had been killed! After listening to the Colonel, I was asked by the embassy administrative officer to head out to the Kenya National Hospital where the majority of the embassy personnel had been taken. It was paramount that all personnel, U.S. and local, be accounted for along with their medical status. Fortuitously, while en route, I met my former secretary who volunteered to assist me with this assigned task. When we arrived at the hospital, local police informed us that only those carrying the injured and doctors were allowed entry. Fortunately, I had a card with my Dr. title -- albeit it a PhD. We were allowed passage. Together, we covered every floor, hallway and operating room in search of embassy personnel. The image of glass shreds being removed from faces and upper torsos remains prominent in my memory. In addition to recording names and conditions, Shabyna Kolker, my ex secretary, and I were able to console and bring people up to date as to the whereabouts and status of their friends and colleagues. As well, we took messages for family members and promised to pass them on.

The tragedy, albeit a horrific manifestation of hostility, served to bring the American and Kenyan communities closer together. The spirit of “harambee”(pulling together) definitely prevailed. No task or request, big or small, made by the ambassador or those under her command went unheeded. For instance, a broken water main in the basement of the decimated embassy building became a liability in the search for possible survivors. Several of us were asked to find a way to have city water officials shut down the major water source into the building. Before I could locate and return with a water systems specialist recommended by one of my Kenyan colleagues, someone on site managed to get the water stopped. It allowed the search to continue unimpeded.

One of the most painful tasks that I undertook was to locate the body of the Consul General -- Julian Bartley. Receiving a report that his remains were not at the make-shift GSO warehouse holding area, quickly converted to house the demised, I began searching local morgues. At the first stop, the City Mortuary, I was forewarned by personnel that the sights might be overwhelming and that I should reconsider entering. The stench alone in the reception area gave credence to what was to come. Not dissuaded, I pursued and witnessed hundreds of bodies in unbelievable physical conditions piled like cords of wood on tables, floors and available gurneys. I was advised to use my handkerchief as a protection against the smell of formaldehyde, detergents and decaying bodies. After viewing about twenty five bodies, I had to rush outside for some fresh air. Inhaling deeply for about 10 minutes, I girded myself to return to this nightmarish scene. En route to the entry, however, I was greeted by Menelik Makonnen, the embassy GSO FSN supervisor and his crew who had been scouting other facilities with the same task as

mine. I was obviously showing some visual distress because Makonnen immediately suggested that I not go back in the mortuary. In that he and his team knew Consul Bartley well, they would be diligent and careful in their investigation. I reluctantly agreed not to return and waited outside until they had completed the search.

Certainly, many suffered from PTSD as a result of the bombing and aftermath, but as well, many gained personal strength facing danger head on. Moreover, it was heartening to see the two communities, Embassy and USAID coming together to give mutual support logistically and emotionally. I firmly believe that it was the strong leadership of the ambassador that “allowed our ship to stay afloat.” For most of us, FSNs, contractors and government employees, Prudence Bushnell made the critical difference.

LIVINGSTONE BUSERA MAAHANA
Voucher Examiner, Financial Management Center (FSN)

When the attack occurred, I was at my desk in the Financial Management Center, 2nd Floor, US Embassy, Nairobi. I was processing Vouchers for Payment since I was a Voucher Examiner. I heard a loud explosion and thought it was the Kenya Police quelling some commotion among striking Bank workers and Teachers who were on strike at that time. I lost consciousness immediately due to the severe injuries I sustained and went to coma. I was rushed to our national hospital (Kenyatta) in the intensive care unit for three days. Thereafter I was transferred to the US Army Hospital in Germany for specialized medical care in the company of my brother. Then later to the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and finally to the National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) in Washington DC. Meanwhile my wife Judy remained behind to settle our three young children with relatives in Kenya. I only regained consciousness after 2 months in Washington DC.

The August 07, 1998 bombing memories and effects will forever haunt me because it left me severely injured and legally blind, rendering me totally dependent on most activities of daily living on my dear wife, Judy and my four children, Levis, Christine, Emmanuel and Chelsea (conceived and born in Washington DC during my rehabilitation). I lost many colleagues and many others were injured. Over the years I also developed Diabetes which I struggle with daily by monitoring my diet and daily exercises. I count my blessings daily, and I try to be at peace with myself, family, colleagues and mostly my God. I will be forever grateful to everybody who touched my life in the course of my treatment, both in Kenya and in the USA. I am still a LES at the US Embassy Nairobi. I remain grateful to the Department of State for this offer.

Creating a new normal for my life has been a collaborative effort involving the excellent Medical care I continue to receive at the NRH, Washington DC and elsewhere in the US as well as many other health care workers here in Nairobi, Kenya. I have learned to use JAWS (the Assistive Technology software that enables the visually challenged people to use the computer).

My experience during the bombing and after has made me wiser than I was. I would like to advise future helpers to be kind to victims and extend every form of help to them immediately post-incident and in the aftermath thereof. To everybody who lives in a danger zone be extra alert. Take cover if you hear, see or sense anything that is pointing to a security breach. Besides being extra vigilant stay in touch with your family as often as possible during a working day. They will stand by you when you are the last man standing.

CARMELLA A. MARINE
Spouse of the Deputy Chief of Mission

Embassy Nairobi was our ninth overseas posting, but our first in Africa. We were excited to go to Kenya, which we had heard was one of the most beautiful places on earth. Our two girls would be attending a very good international school and Michael would be Deputy Chief of Mission, his dream job. Our new home was a lovely, large house, surrounded by five acres filled with incredible flowering trees and gorgeous flowers. The climate was ideal and the air was crisp and clean. It seemed like paradise!

Although Nairobi was plagued by a high crime rate, the Kenyans we met were impressive. The women wore modest, plain clothes and the men always looked proper. Kenyans have beautiful features and great posture. Their speech has a British lilt and as long as I was there, I never heard any Kenyan use an incorrect verb tense. Many people lived in a huge slum on the outskirts of Nairobi. Despite the crushing poverty, they set out each day, looking perfect. Washed and bleached in Nairobi's intense sunlight, the men's white shirts looked immaculate. Most people had very little, but they made do somehow.

After a year, we went home on leave. Less than a week later, we were awoken by a phone call at 4 am from a friend who exclaimed "turn on the tv, your embassy has been bombed"! We were stunned to see Ambassador Prudence Bushnell, wounded, walking with the colleague's support with her hair all white with dust. The embassy building looked badly damaged, although the front facade seemed relatively intact. The details were sketchy, but Michael called the State Department and made arrangements to return to Nairobi as quickly as possible.

Initially, I decided to stay in the United States with my daughters, but after a few weeks, Ambassador Bushnell called me and asked if I would come back to help with the healing process. My daughters were settled in boarding school, so I agreed, with some trepidation, to return to Nairobi.

The situation there was still chaotic. No one felt safe. There was a constant stream of visitors from Washington, all wanting to help, but often adding to the stress. A reinforced platoon of Marines was providing security – featuring barbed wire and machine guns – for the working staff and visitors at the temporary Embassy (the former USAID

building). The rest of us stayed in our houses, not able to do much but worry. The final numbers of dead (224) and wounded (over 5,000) were staggering. Why had this happened? We later found out about a Saudi named Bin Laden and a group called Al Qaeda, but we didn't really understand any of this at the time. Many Kenyans blamed the Americans for the death and destruction that had rained down on their capital city. In their view, if the Americans had not been in Nairobi, the bombing would not have happened!

Our house had a very nice garden with a large patio, so to help with the healing in a more informal setting, we held a series of dinners for all those who wanted to come together to share experiences and feelings. Some people simply were unwilling to come out at night, but nearly one hundred came. It was a way to reconnect and to find a way to cope with our fears. We all wanted to get back to normal, but now there was a new normal – just trying to get through the day. I think many people had "survivors' guilt", I know that I did. What can you possibly say to a family that had lost a loved one?

Despite our underlying fears and concerns, we did our best to carry on. For example, we decided to hold the annual Marine Corps Ball, which is celebrated at embassies around the world on or about November 1 each year. While it was a good tradition to uphold, it was a very emotional night. One of the Marines gave a long, heartfelt speech in memory of his good friend and fellow Marine who had been killed in the bombing. His anguish was painful to watch. Someone at my table commented that he "needs therapy". I replied "we all do".

About a year after the bombing, Michael and I traveled on leave to Washington, DC to see our daughters. While we were there, we decided to visit a Kenyan security guard named Joash Okindo who was still in recovery at Walter Reed Hospital. On the day of the bombing, Joash had been on duty in the rear of the embassy building at the entrance to the basement parking garage. His bravery and quick thinking saved hundreds that day.

The terrorists drove their bomb-laden truck up to the entrance gate and demanded that Joash open it. Unarmed, Joash calmly told them that he needed to "get the key". Then, as they argued amongst themselves and pulled out weapons, he sprinted to a nearby gap between the building and a large generator shed. The terrorists set off flash-bang grenades which sadly attracted dozens of staff to the windows and their deaths when the terrorists detonated a massive explosion.

Miraculously, despite being right next to ground zero, Joash survived, albeit just barely. He suffered two shattered legs, a concussion and numerous other injuries. Like many others, he was urgently evacuated to Germany. Eventually, he was sent to Walter Reed where he endured a long, painful recovery.

Of course, we knew about Joash's unbelievable bravery and his horrendous injuries, but when we first saw him, we were awed by his quiet grace. When we entered his room, we were met by a handsome man, standing with difficulty, but proud, erect and with a kind smile. I was so overcome that I started to cry and found myself being comforted by a

person who had suffered so much. What a brave soul! Who knows how many other victims there would have been if he had agreed to lift that gate?

Even a year after the bombing, Joash still had a long and uncertain road to a full recovery, but he was clearly determined. In a wonderful footnote to this horrible tragedy, Joash ultimately returned to Nairobi where he proudly accepted a new job at the Embassy.

We have a small plaque in our house in Vermont that was given to Michael by some of the Embassy staff. It is made of wood with a piece of marble attached and the inscription reads"

Marble from the Foyer
of U.S. Embassy Nairobi
Bombed August 7, 1997

I look at it every day. We will never forget the sacrifice of those who died nor the courage of those who survived.

Carmella A. Marine
Nairobi 1997-2000

CHARLES R. CHASE
Diplomatic Security, Washington, DC

I was the lead Agent of a team of (30) Diplomatic Security Agents to the site two days after the bombing. I also had under my control a team of (30) US Navy Seabees and Platoon of (50) US Marines from Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (FAST) to secure the site.

We travelled from Washington via commercial airlines, with almost (1) ton of equipment to support the securing the site. After flying continuously and changing airlines in The Hague, we arrived early morning at the Airport in Nairobi. As I was a former RSO assigned there, I knew the FSNs and Local Staff members were always there to greet me and provide visa and customs courtesies. This time there were no local staff there? That is when it hit me, that they were either injured or dead. We had to do all the formalities ourselves. Our resourceful DS agents were able to secure transport and the use of a large semi-trailer to transport our equipment to the Embassy site. As we got closer to the Embassy site, the entire area around it was in total darkness, not a light, vehicles or any persons on the street. It was an eerie feeling, to see the roundabout in front of the Embassy without people, vehicle traffic or matatus (mini buses), no matter what time of day or night.

Early the next morning the Security Engineering Officer, Worley Reed and RSO Paul Peterson, and ARSO Bob Simmons briefed us on the rescue mission and its activities. They also provided the team with a tour of the site. They introduced us to the Chief of the Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue and FBI team leader that had just arrived on scene. Every time a team would enter the embassy building, one of our DS Agents would accompany them. If it was a search dog, we had an Agent with them, FBI looking for evidence, we had an DS Agent with them. We set-up a command post, base radio and log for agents entering the Embassy to track them. We also identified an area of the consulate to serve as a temporary mortuary for human remains. One of our DS agents worked previously as funeral director. With his unique background, he would handle the removal of the remains with the Department Medical Officer.

Our team would work under the most arduous and dangerous conditions every time they entered the embassy building. The Seabees would go with us identifying dangerous or unstable areas of the building. The Seabees would shore up walls or areas of the building that had structural damage caused by the blast. This would allow for Agents to enter the areas to begin their work. The Agents and Seabees searched the elevator banks, air vents and crawl spaces in the Embassy. The FAST Marines secured the entire perimeter around the Embassy to keep out curious on-lookers, media and looters. We all worked hand in hand in securing and preserving the Embassy during the Operations.

Once the Urban Search and Rescue team declared the site from a Rescue to a Recovery Operation, they departed the scene. It was at this time we had the grisly task of searching the debris, for additional victims remains, their personal effects and classified or sensitive information. DS Agents even escorted family members, VIPs and victims into the building. Every time the DS Agents entered the structure they placed themselves in a very dangerous situation. The only lighting in the building was from the flashlights that the Agents carried. The debris from the bombing were protruding sharp pieces of metal and glass that littered every inch of the building. The water from the plumbing, generator fuel oil, and battery acid flooded into the lower levels of the Embassy, which created a HAZMAT Situation. The foul odors that were emitting from the interior of the building were most noxious and hazardous. The DS Agents had to dawn face masks every time they entered the building to overcome the foul stench coming from the lower levels of the building. The DS Team became known as "The Rubble Rats" worked 12-16 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The Team of DS Agents on site not only secured the site but they also worked with the FBI Investigating the Bombing, followed up on threats and leads in the bombing and searched for evidence at the scene. A local Kenyan came to the Marine post at the site and wanted to provide information on an suspicious individual who was injured at a local hotel. A DS Agent met with this individual and escorted him to the FBI Team investigating the bombing. The suspicious individual he spoke about, was later arrested and was one of the bombers who carried out the attack on the Embassy. The individual was handed over to the DS Agents and FBI by the Kenyan Police. He was transported via the Embassy's Courier van to the airport where he was examined, placed on an aircraft and transported to the US to face prosecution.

The DS Team remained on site for one month following the bombing only after every piece of paper to include cables, reports and forms was removed from the site and secured. All computers and hard drives were located and secured. The personal effects of the Embassy staff to include the deceased victims, were located and identified. Once this herculean task was completed, the DS Agents turned the building operations over to Foreign Building Operations now OBO for proper disposal.

GREGORY GOTTLIEB
USAID/Kenya, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I was with my family, wife and two kids, in Portland, Oregon, heading to the airport to return to Nairobi. A friend called at 6 am and said turn on the television. We then saw what happened. We then called Washington and were told to come there, but we would be held for an unknown time. We arrived in Washington and were held for a few days. As I was the USAID/Kenya Mission emergency officer, I was asked to return. We stayed long enough to be at Andrews AFB to see the bodies returned and hear President Clinton speak. We left evening, August 10, and returned to Nairobi. My job was to work with my Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance colleagues on remaining response, and then I became for the next eight months the head of the recovery unit.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

As the head of the recovery unit, I lived with the bombing and its aftermath for eight more months. At one point the pace of work was so great, the tendons in my right hand were damaged, and remain so today, arthritis now in my joints. I can recall struggling with the question of why men would be happy to kill kids, street sellers, and bank clerks to try and get at a few Americans. There is no answer to the question, but asking it over and over left me with a nagging sense of insecurity, many times wondering whether I was sitting in the right place should an explosion take place. I went to Washington in March 1999 to brief incoming Ambassador Carson. It was a thirty-minute appointment. After an hour and fifteen minutes I apologize to him for my verbosity, saying that this is what has happened to many of us in Nairobi, we just have to talk about what happened. I think he understood what he would be facing when he arrived in country. As a family, our son took it the hardest, the parent of a friend being among the dead. He developed depression, and three years after the bombing we finally left Nairobi at the urging of the State Department's psychologist. Our son still suffers from depression. As for colleagues, not from Nairobi, but in Washington and elsewhere, I realized that most just quickly moved on from what happened. In one sense that is all they can do. It was a news event, albeit a bit closer to home, but one that disappears from the front page. But when I returned to DC to brief Ambassador Carson, and then realized that Nairobi was no longer a part of

the current story, it made me grow even closer to my Nairobi colleagues who stayed because they were the ones who could best understand the impact that such an event has on individuals and communities.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life

It helped that I remained in Nairobi for three more years after the bombing, and devoted one of those years to dealing with the response. That allowed me to think through the “whys” of such an attack and to later on, as I went to work in other critical threat posts, live my life with greater understanding of the threats and impacts of terror. Also helpful was remaining in touch with many of those with whom I shared the most intense experiences, from Ambassador Bushnell to many Kenyan staff that I continue to see after 20 years. Finally, I was a constant advocate within USAID on preparing to deal with staff issues attendant to terror attacks and living under constant security threats. While it was clear that some did not want to hear this, it made me feel as though I was somehow ensuring that my Nairobi colleagues who were killed or injured were not forgotten.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

It is important to stay connected to those who went through the event with you because of shared understanding, which makes it easier to talk about what happened and its impacts. I have found that I still carry inside me considerable anger at the State Department for at first dismissive, and then later slow response to mental health issues, so talking about that tension helps lessen it. It is important to see a counselor, not to hide from the impacts of the event. It is important to listen carefully to your kids and spouse to assess the impact of the event on them, and then figure out what changes in yourself or circumstances are important. It is important, if you remain within the Foreign Service, particularly if you advance to a senior leadership position, to carry forward the lessons concerning staff care. I recently retired from USAID, and I believe I was the last officer serving in USAID who experienced the bombing and its aftermath. I now try and impart what I learned to my students who want to enter the field of diplomacy and development.

BRIAN W. FLYNN, ED.D.
Rear Admiral/Assistant Surgeon General
United States Public Health Service

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I was on active duty as a Commissioned Officer in the US Public Health Service where, among other roles, I directed the government’s domestic disaster mental health program. I was asked to come to Kenya by USAID (request from Kenyan Medical Association) to advise on psychosocial impact of the bombing on Kenyans. Since I was attached to USAID in the combined USAIS/State Department building, I soon became engaged in

observing and consulting on the psychosocial impact on members of both of those organizations as well as Kenyan response.

I worked closely with all levels of both organizations including the medical leadership and Ambassador Bushnell and her staff. Later, I worked with USAID in review and administration of a mental health program for Kenyans. I also worked with other U.S. mental health colleagues to assess the mental health impact of the bombing in both Kenya and Tanzania.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

Working on the other side of the world with Americans and well as different local cultures was a new experience for me. I felt an urgency to make an impact quickly and try to determine what of my knowledge and experience applied here. Candidly, I was not as confident in my abilities as usual.

I was also struck (professionally and emotionally) by witnessing the very personal impact on U.S. personnel (e.g., loss of friends and colleagues, needing to lead in the midst of personal loss as well as organizational and political upheaval).

I also experienced, first hand, the stress of role conflict. While serving in Nairobi, my home and Maryland was robbed. I learned through a late-night call from my wife. She and our young daughter were terrified. I learned what many USAID and State Department folks know all too well...sometimes professional responsibilities must trump powerful family needs.

This is what helped as I created a new normal for my life:

As usual, my family and professional support system was essential. I also used the experience to inform my ongoing work. I learned a great deal from my Kenya and Tanzania experience and that learning, and the experiences of those I encountered in Kenya continue to live as it informed my teaching, consulting, mentoring, and writing. Your experience (and mine) have better prepare a new generation of disaster and emergency mental health personnel.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future.

As a helper: Be as prepared as you can be but know you can never be as prepared as you want to be. Know and respect the organization culture in which you work and the culture of those you serve. Understand that tears taste the same no matter the color of the cheeks over which they roll.

SAM THIELMAN, MD, PHD
FS Regional Medical Officer/Psychiatrist

When the attack occurred, I was (please describe when, where and what happened):

I was deeply involved in the private practice of psychiatry in Asheville, North Carolina on August 7, 1998. I remember hearing the news stories about the bombing on television, but frankly, I did not pay much attention to them. To me, at that moment, the East Africa bombings were just another world tragedy, reported on ABC Nightly News. The impact on me began four or five months later when, during my interview for a job with the State Department as a Regional Medical Officer/Psychiatrist (RMO/P), I wondered why many of the questions had to do with how I would handle the psychological aftermath of an embassy bombing.

The August 7 bombings most affected me (my family and my colleagues) in the following ways:

In disaster psychiatry, there is a lot of discussion of the "ripple effect" of a traumatic event, and my family and I were certainly affected by this rippling. My first trip to Nairobi in my new capacity as RMO/P was in the latter part of 1999 some 16 months after the bombing. When I arrived, I was not only new to Nairobi, but to Africa, to overseas living, to the culture of the Department of State. I learned quickly that I was only one of many new people in such a position. In my role as the embassy mental health provider, I soon became aware that the August 7 event was exposing my wife and children to a community that was bereaved and angry. There were many who were cynical about the disaster response and about continued Washington efforts to help. My family and I were also in an environment that seemed continuously dangerous. There was resentment toward me at times for having taken the family from the beauty and safety of the mountains of North Carolina to this situation of comparative deprivation and threat.

I also became aware of the power of vicarious traumatization – the phenomenon in which people who hear stories of disaster over and over are themselves psychologically affected by the disaster. Though many were skeptical about claims of psychological distress by those at the mission who, though in Nairobi during the bombing, were not at the embassy itself when the bomb exploded. Exposure to the dead bodies of friends, stories of death and destruction, and pressure from all quarters to keep going, took a serious toll on everybody. Vicarious traumatization was known to the disaster response communities in 1999, but was not yet recognized as a cause of posttraumatic stress disorder by the American Psychiatric Association, and this led to a lot of unnecessary instances of “blaming the victim.”

This was what helped as I created a new normal:

The community at the Nairobi Embassy at the time of our arrival was comprised of a mixture of survivors and of those who had come to help rebuild. Both groups were hurting. I was struck by the fact that some of those who were hurting the most were the

people affected by the pain of their colleagues. Throughout much of my three-and-a-half-year tour in Nairobi, the August 7 event remained a topic of conversation among both Kenyans and Americans.

For all of us, the sense of community was especially important. It was a powerful force for healing. The new ambassador, Johnnie Carson, was a decisive and empathetic leader. This was his fourth ambassadorship, and he had seen the impact of the Rwandan genocide on the embassy community when he was Ambassador to Uganda. He had a forward-looking focus and made clear the need to continue with the work of the US government in Kenya. That work, involving as it did, formulating a response to HIV/AIDS, countering violent extremism in Kenya, and focusing on the safety of the continuing embassy community in Nairobi, was meaningful work and inspiring. This empathetic but forward focused leadership facilitated healing of individuals and restored the embassy's ability to carry out its mission.

For the Kenyans, healing came through their local communities, families, traditions, and religious commitments. The American survivors, being part of the transient foreign service community, had no nearby relatives. Many continued to live and work in Nairobi after the bombing, and others went to another overseas assignment shortly after the bombing. The Americans, in general, had much less social support than the Kenyan survivors. Still, the remaining community, though constantly in flux, was inclusive and tight. I have many friendships from that time that have continued, and there is an instant ongoing bond with most of the people I served with during the post-1998 recovery years.

Given what I have learned, I would like to pass on the following advice for those who may become survivors and helpers in the future:

For those who may become survivors, I would encourage taking advantage of the social support offered by work colleagues. Identify trustworthy colleagues (in my case, colleagues in the medical unit) and give and receive emotional support when needed. I would also advise thinking twice before criticizing those who are helping, as this can be particularly painful for them, and responders inevitably get some things wrong.

Another lesson for me was how important it is, to the extent possible, to take responsibility for our own emotional well-being during such difficult times. At some level we all know that the State Department is not a person and cannot "care" for us. Individual people in the Department often do care, and it helps to seek out and work with those people, to be thankful for them, and to be thankful for what you will learn from a difficult period in your life.

RON ROUGHEAD
Chief of the Kenya US Liaison Office

“Memories are the key not to the past, but to the future.” Corrie Ten Boom

I remember telling people weeks after the bombing in Nairobi, that it was just like a scene from a movie. But it was nothing like a movie scene at all. It was real and it was horrific and the remembrances and memories haunt many of us to this day. I don't compare much to movies any more. But, I will admit that every once in a while, a movie character provides insight into our comprehension that gives us pause and we should take to heart. In the second season of NBC's science fiction drama, *Heroes*, the fictional Dr. Mohinder Suresh offers in prologue "Is it man's ability to remember that sets us apart? We are the only species concerned with the past. Our memories give us voice, and bear witness to history, so that others might learn – so they might celebrate our triumphs and be warned of our failures."

But memories are fragile things that that ebb and flow over time moving us from the rounded warmth of friendships to the harsh sharp edged and cutting realities of mayhem, murder and gore and back again. The bombing of the American Embassies 20 years ago summons images of those we loved and those with whom we laughed and cried. My memory of that time invokes individual auras of compassion, heroism and leadership. It also offers the sharp and cutting edge of the evil that used the bombing as a launching pad for global terror. That evil also slices into my memories exposing our failures to see the attack coming as well as our failure to end its malevolence for the last 20 years. The author, Mark Lawrence, said "Memories are dangerous things. You turn them over and over, until you know every touch and corner, but still you'll find an edge to cut you." It is that sharp and cutting edge intrudes and that I want to address.

There is a Vai (Liberian) tribal proverb, "Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped." Where we slipped is the blade that cuts into my memories of those that left us that day. This article is in fact a rebuke of our government's agencies and leaders not putting a high enough value on lives lost, not only in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam but in attacks on our diplomatic outposts since 1983. It is an admonition of the recidivism of the commissions, reports, investigations and boards that since 1983, fault security, policy and intelligence failures. But in the end fail to hold accountable the seemingly unaccountable centers of power and their decision makers. In that light, it is my desire that if this is read, used or believed by those who now are on the front lines projecting US interest and influence or soon to go there, that things will change and that they will be the drivers of that change.

Time and again, after a catastrophic event the pattern begins with condemnation and a declaration of thoughts and prayers. That is soon followed by a promise that "...we will get to the bottom of this travesty by conducting a thorough study, appointing a blue ribbon commission, accountability board or a complete review. This is usually accompanied by the promise that "we will fix what was wrong and establish accountability." The Accountability Review Boards into the facts and circumstances surrounding the bombings of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania has disturbingly similar verbiage to reports that date back to the Inman Report published after the bombing of the Marine Barracks and the attack on the US Embassy in Beirut in 1983. In part the Africa report states "the Boards were most disturbed at two interconnected

issues: first, the inadequacy of resources to provide security against terrorist attacks and, second, the relative low priority accorded security concerns throughout the US government -- by the Department, other agencies in general, and on the part of many employees both in Washington and in the field. Saving lives and adequately addressing our security vulnerabilities on a sustained basis must be given a higher priority by all those involved if we are to prevent such tragedies in the future.” It continues “...The Boards did not find reasonable cause to believe that any employee of the United States Government or member of the uniformed services breached his or her duty in connection with the August 7 bombings. However, we believe there was a collective failure by several Administrations and Congresses over the past decade to invest adequate efforts and resources to reduce the vulnerability of US diplomatic missions around the world to terrorist attacks.” It goes on to say that while policies and procedures were followed regarding threat assessment and security, the threat had changed rendering those processes inadequate. It “found most troubling the failure of the US government to take the necessary steps to prevent such tragedies through an unwillingness to give sustained priority and funding to security improvements.” The Boards then made recommendations so this would not happen again. But, of course it did. Even considering blatant partisanship, the report on the events in Benghazi reveal conclusions that are disturbingly similar.

My memories of 7 August, 1998 created a desire to make a home inside of me everyone touched by those bombs, survivors and casualties, Americans, Kenyans and Tanzanians. But the knife’s edge of recollection of the failures will always be there. I remind myself that the only way I can touch those killed that day is to place my hand on their names etched into the memorials.

For those of you in the diplomatic outposts now or those soon to go, I would offer the following advice. First, if you feel safe you are probably vulnerable. Relentlessly let that vulnerability be known. Second, have the courage and persistence to inexorably give voice to your observations and assessments. Do so with the purpose of protecting those near you as well as the innocent who passes by. Commit to this before an event even to the detriment of your career. Third, never forget what value of life. It is not subject to risk and mitigation. Fourth, insist on accountability not just words in a report from a review board.

I have no doubt that unforgiving time and age will alter my view of that day and where we fell but I will make every effort not to forget where we slipped.

US Embassy Beirut - 63 killed

US Embassy Annex - 24 killed

US Embassy Yemen -18 killed

US Embassies Kenya and Tanzania - 224 killed

Ron Roughead, Colonel, US Army (retired) has served in a variety of overseas posts in his military career. Significantly his service includes tours with the US Military Training Mission, US Embassy, Liberia; US Military Mission, Saudi Arabia; Commander US Army Element, NATO, Izmir, Turkey and as the Chief of the Kenya US Liaison Office, US

Embassy, Kenya. For actions following the bombing of the Embassy in Kenya, Ron was one of several who were presented the Department of State Award for Heroism.

Addendum

Compiled list of articles and books that have been published by Dar es Salaam bombing survivors over the years.

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