CIA Director: Saudi Arabia Helped is Stop Terrorist Attacks

By: Heba al-Makdisi

Washington – CIA director John Brennan said that recent attacks in Saudi Arabia bore the hallmarks of ISIS. He confirmed that the organization is a serious threat to Saudi Arabia.

Earlier this month, suicide attacks struck three cities across Saudi Arabia killing four security officers; no organization claimed responsibility.

Speaking at the Brookings Institution in Washington, Brennan said, "Those attacks bear the hallmarks of ISIS.” He added that al-Qaeda still poses a threat in the area and specially Yemen and Syria.

Brennan explained that ISIS is threatening not only to U.S. and Europe but also to Saudi Arabia. The explosions struck in Jeddah, Qatif and a security headquarters in the holy city of Medina, an attack Brennan described as "unprecedented".

When asked about cooperation between U.S. and Saudi Arabia in counter terrorism, "Saudi Arabia is among our closest counterterrorism partners," CIA Director said.

Brennan added, "The Saudi government and leadership today has inherited a history whereby there have been a number of individuals both inside of Saudi Arabia as well as outside who have embraced a rather fundamentalist -- extremist in some areas -- version of the Islamic faith, which has allowed individuals who then move toward violence and terrorism to exploit that and capitalize on that."

Last Thursday, Saudi Ministry of Interior revealed the identity of the terrorist attacker of Prophet Mohammed's Mosque in the city of Medina Naer Muslim Hamad; a 26-year-old Saudi citizen with a history of drug abuse.

The ministry also named three attackers behind the blast of Qatif: Abdulrahman Saleh Mohammed Al-Amer, 23, Ibrhaim Saleh Mohammed Al-Amer, 20, and Abdulkareem Ibrahim Mohammed Al-Hasini, 20.

The ministry announced it had arrested 19 suspects: 12 Pakistanis and 7 Saudis.

Tags: Saudi Arabia, CIA, Attacks, Terrorism, ISIS, al-Qaeda