



*Embassy of the United States of America
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

WARDEN MESSAGE

February 16, 2009

The Embassy requests that wardens pass the following message in its entirety to members of the American Community:

United States Department of State

Public Announcement

TRAVEL ALERT FOR ARABIAN PENINSULA AND PERSIAN GULF:

This Travel Alert is being updated to warn Americans about heightened security concerns in and around the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf. U.S. citizens traveling to or already in the region are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This replaces the Travel Alert for the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf dated September 23, 2008, to include continued threats to the U.S. Embassy in Yemen, and expires on May 23, 2009.

The security threat level in the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf region remains high, with continued threats to the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen. On September 17, 2008, a terrorist attack on the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen killed several security personnel and innocent bystanders, including one U.S. citizen. Credible information indicates that al-Qaida and affiliated organizations continue to plan attacks against U.S. interests in the region. These attacks may employ a wide variety of tactics including suicide operations, assassinations, kidnappings, hijackings and bombings. While conventional weapons such as explosive devices are a more immediate threat in many areas, the use of non-conventional weapons, including chemical or biological agents, must be considered a possible threat. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Increased security at official U.S. facilities may lead terrorists and their sympathizers to seek softer targets such as public transportation, residential areas, and public areas where people congregate, including restaurants, hotels, clubs, and shopping areas.

Potential targets are not limited to those companies or establishments with overt U.S. ties. For instance, terrorists may target movie theaters, liquor stores, bars, casinos, or any similar type of establishment, regardless of whether they are owned and operated by host country nationals. Due to varying degrees of security at all such

locations, U.S. citizens should be particularly vigilant when visiting these establishments. From time to time, the Embassy may restrict official Americans from restaurants, hotels, or shopping areas. U.S. citizens should exercise caution and take prudent security measures, including maintaining a high level of vigilance, avoiding crowds and demonstrations, keeping a low profile, varying times and routes for all travel, and ensuring travel documents are current.

U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration web site at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> so that they can obtain updated information on travel and security. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency.

U.S. Government facilities worldwide remain at a heightened state of alert. These facilities may temporarily close or periodically suspend public services to assess their security posture. In those instances, U.S. embassies and consulates will make every effort to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens. Americans abroad are urged to monitor the local news and maintain contact with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

As the Department continues to develop information on any potential security threats to U.S. citizens overseas, it shares credible threat information through its Consular Information Program documents, including the Worldwide Caution, available on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or, outside the United States and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Friday, Eastern Time (except U.S. federal holidays.)

No. 04/2009

American citizens are reminded to keep their registration up-to-date. See <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> for registration information.

You can also review earlier Warden Messages at <http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/service/advisories-for-americans-in-ksa/warden-messages.html>.

General Inquiries: RiyadhACS@state.gov
ACS Website: <http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/service.html>