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Governments Worldwide Issue Caution Alerts for Travel

F-2023-10-20a

Classification: TLP:CLEAR

Criticality: High

Intelligence Requirements: Key Personnel, Geopolitical, Travel

October 20, 2023

Scope Note

ZeroFox Intelligence is derived from a variety of sources, including—but not limited to—curated open-source accesses, vetted social media, proprietary data sources, and direct access to threat actors and groups through covert communication channels. Information relied upon to complete any report cannot always be independently verified. As such, ZeroFox applies rigorous analytic standards and tradecraft in accordance with best practices and includes caveat language and source citations to clearly identify the veracity of our Intelligence reporting and substantiate our assessments and recommendations. All sources used in this particular Intelligence product were **identified prior to 12:00 PM (EDT) on October 20, 2023**; per cyber hygiene best practices, caution is advised when clicking on any third-party links.

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› Key Findings

- The United States (U.S.) Department of State today issued a “Worldwide Caution” alert warning U.S. citizens overseas to exercise increased caution, especially in areas frequented by tourists.¹
- The governments of Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States have told all their citizens residing in Lebanon to leave immediately.²
- Attacks in France and Brussels this week have significantly elevated the travel warnings in Europe as well, with terrorism experts indicating that more terrorist attacks should be anticipated in the region.³
- As of this writing, Israel decided to close its embassies and recall diplomats today in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, and Turkey, likely in response to the Worldwide Caution and ongoing threats against its diplomats.⁴

¹ [hXXps://travel.state\[.\]gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/worldwide-caution.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/worldwide-caution.html)

² [hXXps://www.barrons\[.\]com/news/us-uk-urge-citizens-to-leave-lebanon-over-border-tensions-fb3c9212](https://www.barrons[.]com/news/us-uk-urge-citizens-to-leave-lebanon-over-border-tensions-fb3c9212)

³ [hXXps://www.euronews\[.\]com/my-europe/2023/10/17/fresh-wave-of-terror-attacks-should-be-expected-says-terrorism-expert](https://www.euronews[.]com/my-europe/2023/10/17/fresh-wave-of-terror-attacks-should-be-expected-says-terrorism-expert)

⁴ [hXXps://twitter\[.\]com/firstpost/status/1715339697646669849](https://twitter[.]com/firstpost/status/1715339697646669849)

| Details

The U.S. Department of State today issued a “Worldwide Caution” warning U.S. citizens overseas to exercise increased caution, especially in areas frequented by tourists. The alert was issued amid growing tensions surrounding the Israel-Hamas conflict and subsequent protests targeting U.S. diplomatic compounds, particularly in the Middle East; the U.S. State Department has urged all U.S. citizens globally to be particularly vigilant, citing the potential for terrorist attacks, demonstrations, or violence against US citizens and interests. The governments of Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States have told all their citizens residing in Lebanon to leave immediately.⁵

Caution October 20, 2023	Worldwide Caution
<u>Worldwide Caution</u> Due to increased tensions in various locations around the world, the potential for terrorist attacks, demonstrations or violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests, the Department of State advises U.S. citizens overseas to exercise increased caution. U.S. citizens should: • Stay alert in locations frequented by tourists. • Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive information and alerts and make it easier to locate you in an emergency overseas. • Follow the Department of State on Facebook and Twitter.	

Worldwide Caution Alert issued by the U.S. Department of State

Source:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/worldwide-caution.html>

This comes after the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) issued a warning on October 16, 2023, regarding France after the French government raised its security alert system to the highest level of “Emergency Attack” in the wake of the terrorist attack in Arras, France.⁶ On October 17, 2023, several European Union (EU) members issued temporary border controls to screen migrants concerned they may carry out terror attacks.⁷ EU states also approved measures making it easier to expel migrants or asylum

⁵ <https://www.barrons.com/news/us-uk-urge-citizens-to-leave-lebanon-over-border-tensions-fb3c9212>

⁶ <https://www.osac.gov/Country/France/Content/Detail/Report/07d926be-5645-4d24-808e-22a138b73e40>

⁷

https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen-borders-and-visa/schengen-area/temporary-reintroduction-border-control_en

seekers who pose a security risk.⁸ The temporary measures will last through October and indicate Europe's concern over increased terror attacks inspired by the war between Israel and Hamas. This follows a wave of anti-Semitic and Islamophobic attacks across Europe, including the shooting of two Swedish football fans in Brussels by an attacker inspired by the Islamic State, the torching of a synagogue in Berlin, the stabbing of a teacher in France, and numerous arrests by anti-terrorism police across Europe.⁹

As of this writing, Israel decided to close its embassies and recall diplomats today in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, and Turkey, likely in response to the Worldwide Caution and ongoing threats against its diplomats.¹⁰

| Recommendations

- Travelers—and organizations with employees based in high-risk areas— should consult their own respective government advisories for the latest travel updates.
- ZeroFox advises against all unnecessary travel to areas deemed high risk.
- Nationals based overseas in high-risk locations should ensure their presence is registered with their own respective government body or embassy.
- All individuals should avoid demonstrations and areas with significant police activity. Exercise caution if in the vicinity of large gatherings or protests.
- Monitor independent and reliable local media for updates on emerging events.

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[hXXps://www.rfi\[.\]fr/en/international/20231019-eu-ministers-call-for-tougher-immigration-policies-after-terror-attacks](https://www.rfi.fr/en/international/20231019-eu-ministers-call-for-tougher-immigration-policies-after-terror-attacks)

⁹ [hXXps://www.bbc\[.\]com/news/world-europe-67160740](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-67160740)

¹⁰ [hXXps://twitter\[.\]com/firstpost/status/1715339697646669849](https://twitter.com/firstpost/status/1715339697646669849)

Appendix A: Traffic Light Protocol for Information Dissemination

	Red	Amber
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:RED when information cannot be effectively acted upon by additional parties and could lead to impacts on a party's privacy, reputation, or operations if misused.	Sources may use TLP:AMBER when information requires support to be effectively acted upon but carries risks to privacy, reputation, or operations if shared outside of the organizations involved.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may NOT share TLP:RED with any parties outside of the specific exchange, meeting, or conversation in which it is originally disclosed.	Recipients may ONLY share TLP:AMBER information with members of their own organization and its clients, but only on a need-to-know basis to protect their organization and its clients and prevent further harm. Note that TLP:AMBER+STRICT restricts sharing to the organization only.
	Green	Clear
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:GREEN when information is useful for the awareness of all participating organizations, as well as with peers within the broader community or sector.	Sources may use TLP:CLEAR when information carries minimal or no risk of misuse in accordance with applicable rules and procedures for public release.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may share TLP:GREEN information with peers and partner organizations within their sector or community but not via publicly accessible channels.	Recipients may share TLP:CLEAR information without restriction, subject to copyright controls.

| Appendix B: ZeroFox Intelligence Probability Scale

All ZeroFox intelligence products leverage probabilistic assessment language in analytic judgments. Qualitative statements used in these judgments refer to associated probability ranges, which state the likelihood of occurrence of an event or development. Ranges are used to avoid a false impression of accuracy. This scale is a standard that aligns with how readers should interpret such terms.

Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain
1-5%	5-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%