

### THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ISSUES A STRONG WARNING ABOUT HAMAS

The US State Department has issued a very strong travel warning in what must surely be the most-damning condemnation of the new Government of the Palestinian Authority: HAMAS.

HAMAS is an acronym for Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya, or Islamic Resistance Movement.

The mandate of HAMAS includes, inter alia, the destruction of the State of Israel.

It seems clear that the US Government is being proactive in sending out this travel warning, and there are strong suggestions, by innuendo, that it has plans in hand should HAMAS determine to try to carry out its determination to destroy the State of Israel.

US President George W. Bush has gone on record in a television interview, recently, stating that, in the event that Israel was attacked by HAMAS, the US Government would, immediately, come to that country's aid.

The following is a verbatim transcript of the US Government's travel warning with regard to Israel, The West Bank and Gaza, minus some extraneous information:

#### *'Israel, The West Bank And Gaza Travel Warning*

*'This Travel Warning is being issued to update information on the general security environment in Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip, and to reiterate threats to American citizens and U.S. interests in those respective locations.*

*'The Palestinian Authority held legislative elections on January 25 in which Hamas, a designated foreign terrorist organization, won a majority of seats. Uncertainty associated with this change in government may lead to increased levels of instability in the West Bank and Gaza. This warning supersedes the Travel Warning issued June 20, 2005. The Department of State urges U.S. citizens to carefully weigh the necessity of their travel to Israel in light of the risks noted below. The Department also urges U.S. citizens to defer unnecessary travel to the West Bank and avoid all travel to the Gaza Strip.*

*'American citizens in the Gaza Strip should depart immediately, a recommendation the State Department has maintained since the deadly roadside bombing of a U.S. Embassy convoy in Gaza on October 15, 2003. Unless specifically authorized, U.S. government personnel are prohibited from all travel in Gaza. Overall conditions of lawlessness prevail in the Gaza Strip, Israeli military operations continue, and areas of violent conflict shift rapidly and unpredictably. Militants have abducted Western citizens and held them for short periods, and terrorist organizations have threatened attacks against U.S. interests. Violence between the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and militant groups based in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank can flare up without notice in the form of rocket attacks into Israel by Palestinian militants, targeted assassinations of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip by Israeli forces, and ongoing IDF security operations in the West Bank. The uncertain security conditions within the West Bank and Gaza continue as well, with the potential for violent protests, kidnappings, including of foreign nationals, and fighting between various armed factions.*

*'In recent months, citizens of Western nations, including Americans, involved in pro-Palestinian volunteer efforts were assaulted and injured in the Occupied Territories by Israeli settlers and harassed by the IDF. Those taking part in demonstrations, non-violent resistance, and "direct action", are advised to cease such activity for their own safety. For safety and security reason, U.S. Government American personnel and dependents are prohibited from traveling to any cities, towns or settlements in the West Bank, except for mission-essential business or other approved purposes. For limited, personal travel, U.S. government personnel and family members are permitted to travel through the West Bank, using only Routes 1 and 90, to reach the Allenby/King Hussein Bridge or the Dead Sea coast near Ein Gedi and Masada. Each such transit requires prior notification to the Consulate General's security office and must occur during daylight hours. U.S. Government personnel and family members are permitted personal travel on Route 443 between Modi'in and Jerusalem during daylight hours only.'*

*'Travel to the Gaza Strip by U.S. Government personnel is prohibited. Under policy guidance issued by the Secretary of State, exceptions to the prohibition on Gaza travel are only for official, mission-critical travel. Private American citizens also should avoid travel to these areas. All travelers who enter or travel in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank should exercise particular care when approaching and traveling through checkpoints and should expect delays and difficulties. Travelers should also be aware they might not be allowed passage through checkpoints. Israeli authorities are concerned about a possible increase in suicide bombings in Israel. The January 19 suicide bombing in Tel Aviv, the December 5 suicide bombing in Netanya, and a similar incident in Hadera in October are reminders of the precarious security environment, even when a cease-fire has been declared.'*

*'The U.S. Government has received information indicating that American interests within Israel could be the focus of terrorist attacks. For that reason, American citizens are cautioned that a greater danger may exist in the vicinity of restaurants, businesses, and other places associated with U.S. interests and/or located near U.S. official buildings, such as the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem. Violent confrontation between organized criminal elements has led to the death and injury of innocent bystanders in incidents throughout Israel, including an October 26, 2005 incident in which a bomb destroyed a Tel Aviv apartment building, killing three people and wounding 5. Such incidents in the past have involved the use of bombs, grenades, anti-tank missiles, and small arms fire, and have taken place in Tel Aviv, Caesarea, Ramle, Acre, Hadera, Arad, and the Galilee.'*

*'The State Department urges American citizens to remain vigilant while traveling anywhere in Jerusalem, especially within the commercial and downtown areas of West Jerusalem. Israeli security services report that they continue to receive information of planned terrorist attacks in and around Jerusalem. In addition, American citizens should stay away from demonstrations and generally avoid crowded public places, such as restaurants and cafes, shopping and market areas and malls, pedestrian zones, public transportation of all kinds, including buses and trains and their respective stations/terminals, and the areas around them.'*

*'Spontaneous or planned protests within the Old City are possible, especially after Friday prayers. Some of these protests have led to violent clashes. American employees of the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem are prohibited from using all public transportation.'*

*'The Old City of Jerusalem is off-limits to them after dark during the entire week and between the hours of 11:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. on Fridays. U.S. government employees are also forbidden from patronizing discos and nightclubs.'*

For More About HAMAS As Well As Other International Tinderboxes,  
Please Refer To **TARGET Intelligence Report, Volume VIII, Number 42,**  
Published On Friday, March 3, 2006:  
**[‘Betty Letters’](#)**

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