

U.S. Urges Travelers To Reconsider Visiting Russia

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Sergei Savostyanov / TASS

The U.S. State Department listed Russia as one of the most dangerous countries to visit in a new travel advisory system released Wednesday, together with states including Sudan, Pakistan and Niger.

The new four-tier advisory replaces the State Department's travel warnings and alerts system and is based on seven risk factors including crime, unrest and other incidents. Travelers to Level 1 countries are told to “Exercise Normal Precautions” while the Level 4 category means “Do Not Travel.”

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Russia is listed as a Level 3 country, to which travel should be reconsidered, according to the State Department.

“Reconsider travel to Russia due to terrorism and harassment,” reads the State Department’s latest recommendation [released](#) on Wednesday.

Travelers are warned not to visit the seven North Caucasus regions over fears of civil unrest, kidnapping and torture, along with the annexed Crimean peninsula due to “abuses by occupying authorities.”

Russia's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said the U.S. move was a scare tactic designed to divide the two nations.

"If U.S. citizens massively come to Russia then they'll see with their own eyes that nothing that American public officials are scaring them with is actually true," she said.

Nearly a quarter of a million U.S. tourists visit Russia each year, the Meduza news website [cites](#) official statistics as saying.

"Increasing antagonisms among normal people is what the Russophobic campaign of figures like Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John McCain is based on," Zakharova said.

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