The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S. Warns Citizens to Leave Russia, Citing Draft, Security Risks

February 13, 2023



U.S. Embassy in Moscow. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow has urged its citizens to leave Russia "immediately" due to a slew of security risks that include possible forced enlistment into the Russian army.

"U.S. citizens residing or traveling in Russia should depart immediately," the embassy said in a travel advisory Sunday.

It pointed to the "unpredictable consequences" of Russia's invasion of Ukraine for Americans in the country, which include mobilization or conscription into the Russian military for dual citizens.

"Russia may refuse to acknowledge dual nationals' U.S. citizenship, deny their access to U.S. consular assistance, subject them to mobilization, prevent their departure from Russia, and/or conscript them."

Related article: Russia Threatens U.S. Envoy With Expulsions Over Anti-War Posts

The embassy warned that U.S. citizens are at risk of harassment and singling out for detention by Russian law enforcement.

“Russian security services may fail to notify the U.S. Embassy of the detention of a U.S. citizen and unreasonably delay U.S. consular assistance,” the diplomatic mission said.

Americans also face the added strains of limited flights to and from Russia, curtailed banking services due to sanctions and cash shortages, the U.S. Embassy said.

“The U.S. Embassy has severe limitations on its ability to assist U.S. citizens to depart the country,” it said.

The Kremlin on Monday described the U.S. Embassy’s travel advisory as “something we’ve heard in the past, it’s not new.”

The U.S. State Department's travel advisory level for Russia has been at “Level 4: Do Not Travel” since before the invasion of Ukraine.

Washington's diplomatic mission to Russia was forced to cut nearly all non-emergency services in 2021 after Moscow banned embassies of so-called "unfriendly" states from hiring non-Russian staff.

The U.S. Embassy has openly criticized Russia’s invasion of Ukraine as bilateral relations between the Cold War rivals plunged to an all-time low over the Kremlin's military campaign.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/02/13/us-warns-citizens-to-leave-russia-citing-draft-security-risks-a80208