

Dear sir

This note is confidential, for your information. Contacts information has been removed for reasons of safety of people involved. There is some additional information (only orally distributed), shared with IMF staff, in regard with intelligence collected, concerning violent riots in Athens on March, with Xs (the number mentioned is not possible to communicate) deads.

Kind request for discretional treatment.

FYI, this is the first travel advice ever issued by Commission for a mission of officials to a member state.

Greek employees in Commission have been severely upset and they read very carefully the recommendations also for their own safety whenever they will have to travel and accommodate back home.

Kind regards,

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Concerning your mission to Athens we would like to send you some recommendations and additional information about your stay in Athens.

What follows is security advice and tips recommended by the Security Directorate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Before you set off, inform the Representation and the Security Directorate that you will be on mission in the country.
- Remain informed.

Due to frequent strikes, be prepared to change travel plans or means of transport in case of disruptions.

For information on possible disruptions to flights you can contact Eleftherios Venizelos airport information on +30 2103530000.

As for mass transport strikes (metro, buses, taxis, etc.), the Athens Representation (+30 210 7272000) or your hotel reception should be able to provide reliable, up-to-date information.

- Stay away from protests & demonstrations.

In a politically sensitive time, even the mildest reaction can be misinterpreted by protesters. You are advised not to go near or through demonstrations, in order to gain access to the building where your meeting takes place; if necessary cancel your meeting.

Be aware of and avoid places where demonstrators usually rally or head towards, such as the Syntagma, Omonia and Klafthmonos Squares, the area of Exarchia and the Polytechnic University.

If you do find yourself in the midst of a demonstration, avoid drawing attention to yourself and seek shelter in the nearest commercial establishment.

- If a demonstration prevents you from exiting the meeting premises, wait.

Do not stand next to windows or at the building's lobby, watching the protest; your

presence might provoke aggressive reaction from protesters.

Close the windows of the room you are in, so as not to be affected by the possible use of tear gas by the police.

For a safe departure, await the demonstration's dispersal, or follow the instructions given by security personnel.

- Do not visibly carry indicators of your professional capacity.

Beware of documents, identification badges or other objects in plain sight that demonstrate your affiliation with the European institutions.

For example, do not visibly wear your Commission badge outside Commission buildings or read Commission papers in public places.

- Beware of eavesdropping. Avoid discussing your business issues (meeting venues/times, hotel name, any personal and mission information etc.) in public, on the street, in the metro, while on the phone.

Be conscious that you might be overheard.

If possible, avoid booking hotels and taxis under the name of the Commission.

Take care of your sensitive professional belongings.

If you plan to go for a drink, Lunch or dinner after your meeting, do not carry your sensitive documents with you at social venues (bars, restaurants, etc.).

- Invent an uninteresting "life story".

The taxi driver driving you to your hotel or the grocery store owner down the street do not have to know that you work for the European institutions.

When asked, talk about your previous profession or the one of your best friend.

- Handle suspicious packages with care.

Packages and letters arriving at the offices of the Athens Representation or the TFGR are systematically screened.

If, however, you believe that a package is suspicious (because it has no return address, it has a strange odor or peculiar stains, it has string or wire protruding from within, its envelope is secured using excessive amounts of duct tape, or for any other reason), request that it is double-checked by the screening staff.

Know and follow emergency procedures.

If a security- or a safety-related incident finds you inside a building, follow the evacuation procedures or instructions of the safety personnel.

Take note of emergency exits nearest to your room at your hotel.

- Keep emergency telephone numbers handy.

Have emergency contact information (police, police contact point, Representation, hotel, colleagues etc.) available at all times.

The local emergency lines in Greece are 112 for life-threatening emergencies (English-speaking operators), 100 for the Police, 166 for an ambulance, and 199 for the fire brigade. Add ICE (In Case of Emergency) phone number(s) to your phone number list of your mobile phone.

Inform mission members or the Representation when and where you are going including during after-work hours.

- Remain vigilant. Exercise common-sense safety precautions to mitigate the risk of petty crime.

Pay close attention to your surroundings and be cautious of attempts on the street to elicit

personal or professional information from you or distract you as part of a petty crime attempt.

If you think someone is following or observing you, go to the nearest place which is well-lit or busy and call the police.

- Report any suspicious behavior.

Any suspicious behavior and unusual incidents are to be reported to the appropriate services.