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**Peter Tarlow**

Tourism & More Consulting Services  
College Station, Texas

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## **Terrorism and Tourism**

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The recent terrorism attacks in the heart of London's central tourism zone and against tourists in Kusadasi, Turkey ought to serve to remind tourism professionals that there is a close relationship between tourism and terrorism. Modern militant terrorism is rarely about politics; rather it is the military side of a war against post-modern economics. As such, tourism, being a post-modern industry and part of the world's global economy stands on the very precipice of this on-going struggle. Simply put terrorism and tourism are not compatible and the industry should expect to see an ever-greater number of attacks against it. Terrorists know that tourism is a major generator of income on both national and local levels. Terrorists see tourism sites as ideal opportunities to create economic havoc. How tourism and travel security professionals act and the methods that they use can reinforce the marketing department's message or undercut it.

Tourism is based on the very principles against which terrorists are fighting. Tourism seeks to promote international understanding and an end to xenophobia. Tourism works for integrated economies, open borders, multicultural understanding and economic development. It sees business as good and poverty as bad. Representing such principles, tourism based on open customer service, is open to attacks and often permits itself to be unprotected. Tourism leaders desire to create a hassle free travel environment. Yet in an age of ever increasing terrorism, such a hassle free environment may be more than a pipe dream, it may lead to dangerous and/or disastrous conclusions. For example, the struggle between international travel based on visas and visa-free travel is just one example where the tourism industry has yet to face the international threat of terrorism.

To make matters even more challenging, many tourism professionals avoid addressing the issues of tourism security and tourism safety. Using a mid-twentieth century model these travel

professionals, who often come out of a pure marketing background, believe that the less said about any safety or security issue, the better. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth. In a world of "bloggers" and Internet communication, twenty-first century travelers and tourists are highly sophisticated when it comes to issues of security. For the most part, travelers seek out places where there is a real sense of security and safety rather than mere window dressing or faux-security.

Honest tourism professionals who seek sustainable tourism know that there is no such thing as total travel (tourism) security or safety. Instead the industry would do better to borrow the word "surety" from the insurance industry. "Travel Surety" refers to a lowering of the probability that a negative event will occur. It does not promise perfection, but rather improvement and takes into account that risks exist in all forms of life. Travel -tourism surety refers then to the point where security, safety, economics and a location's reputation converge. Below are some of the various components in tourism-travel surety that a sustainable tourism industry will need to consider in this ever increasingly dangerous age.

Tourism professionals will need to face the reality that there is no part of their industry that is safe. From buses to restaurants, from airports to nightclubs all aspects of the tourism industry are vulnerable to both terrorism and crime.

Travel experts dare not confuse crime and terrorism. These are two very different social diseases with very different goals and methodologies. Criminals need a vibrant tourism industry as they act as parasites and live off of the industry. Terrorists, on the other hand, seek for ideological reasons to destroy tourism. Terrorists seek negative publicity; criminals seek "quiet success." Furthermore, terrorism is not based on poverty and lack of education. In fact, in many cases, although not all cases, terrorists come from well-educated middle class backgrounds. Terrorism's job is to promote terror. It is rarely, if ever linked to political actions, but rather uses a political action as a form of ex-post facto justification for its real goal, the destruction of modernity and modern industries such as tourism.

Tourism surety experts tend to look at both man made crisis and so -called natural crises. For example, the tourism industry cannot simply ignore climatic changes, a greater number of tropical storms, hurricanes/typhoons and potential earthquakes. Building along exposed seafronts, placing airports at sea level and developing tourism infrastructure along earthquake fault lines can be as destructive as any terrorist attack.

In order to assure that the tourism industry is viable in the twenty-first century, here are a number of proposals for your consideration

As tourism surety professionals, industry leaders will need to work with security professionals and academics to better understand trends, to find ways o protect the visitor from both criminals and terrorists. This duality means that in the world of tourism surety one size does not fit all. Large cities such as Las Vegas and smaller places such as Bali will each need to consider their potential risks and develop guidelines that meet their particular needs.

Tourism surety professionals will need to have a better understanding of who works in their industry. Currently, there are very few tourism locales that have any form of security background check for people working in any of its component tourism industries. That means that not only is the public exposed to both terrorism sleeper cells but it is also exposed to undercover tourism criminals.

In the twentieth century tourism saw itself as site oriented. In the twenty-first century tourism sites are no longer a particular attraction but an entire city, state or nation. The term site now means much more than merely a place of lodging or a specific attraction. In an age of terrorism an attack against any cite in a locale is magnified and impacts the entire geographic region. This means that tourism surety must go beyond organizational and geographic boundaries, police departments and security professionals must learn to work together. Terrorists well understand the basic principle of physics, that an object is only as strong as its weakest point.

No tourism entity lives in a vacuum. In the twenty-first century there is no way to cover up security problems. Instead the tourism industry will have to come to understand that its security professionals are not its enemies but its allies, not only in securing the future of sustainable tourism but also as a major part of its marketing efforts.