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Guatemala: U.S. State Department Issues Travel Advisory

by Deborah Tyroler
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On Sept. 13, the US State Department issued an advisory for citizens planning to visit Guatemala to "take necessary precautions," and to avoid certain locations if possible. The advisory was distributed to travel agencies and government offices, and is effective until October. Foreign Minister Mario Palencia said that officially he had not received the advisory, but acknowledged it will affect US tourism in Guatemala. The advisory said that during a recently concluded public employees' strike a large number of terrorist incidents occurred, including bomb and grenade explosions in shopping areas, at bus stops and at public events, such as soccer games. In addition, it said, several vehicles have been robbed recently on the principal highway between Guatemala City and Panajachel, a major tourism site on Atitlan Lake. The communique noted that when some drivers refused to stop, assailants fired weapons at their vehicles. In tourist areas such as Antigua, Guatemala and Tikal, as well as in the eastern region of the country, terrorist incidents and robberies have not been reported. The advisory also said that fighting between government troops and guerrillas continues in western Guatemala. (Basic data from Notimex, 09/13/89)

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