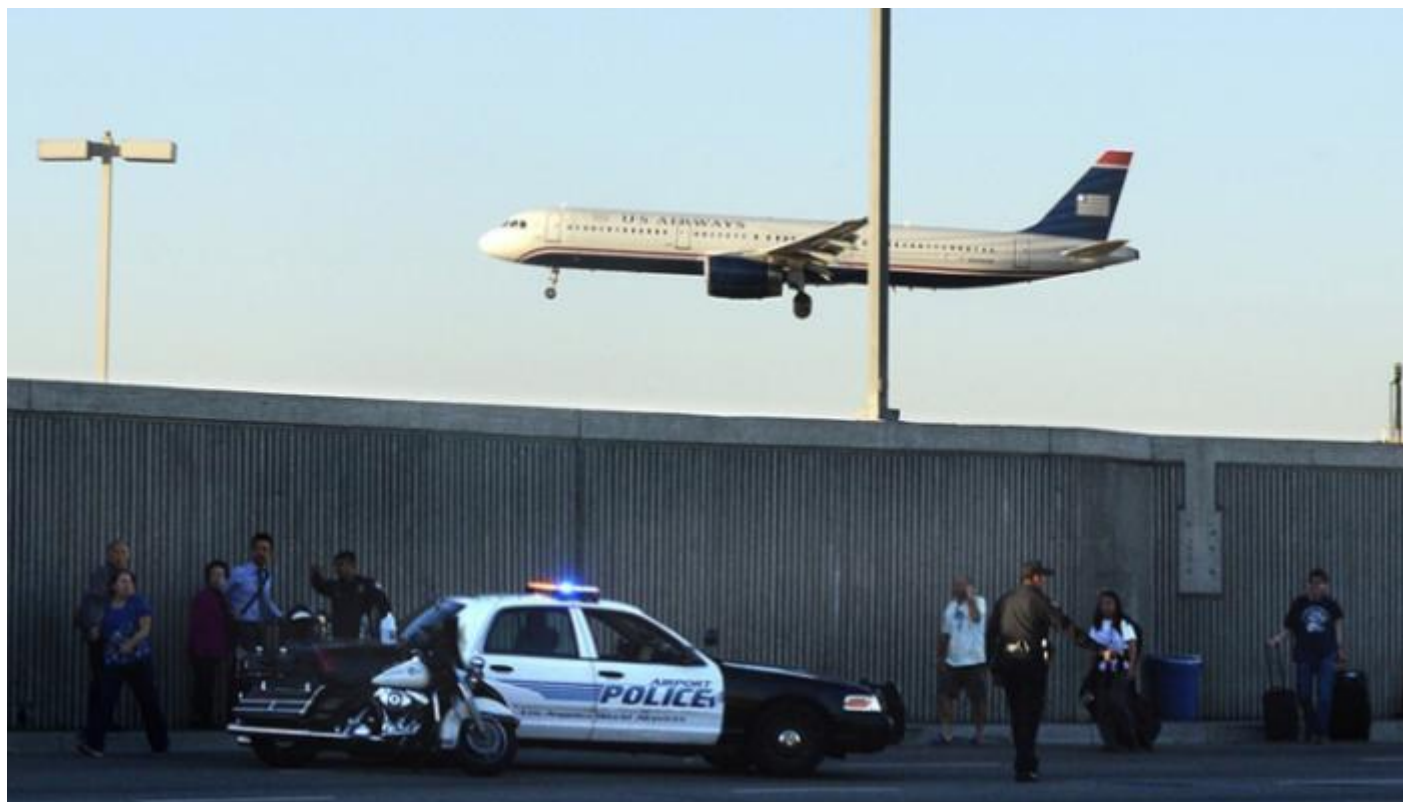


Report Shows Overseas Travel Warnings to U.S. Growing



New York, August 12 (RHC)-- A growing number of countries are warning their citizens about traveling to the United States over concerns about mass shootings, police violence, anti-Muslim attitudes and the Zika virus, according to a new report. France, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, Germany, the United Arab Emirates and Bahamas are among the nations urging caution to U.S.-bound travelers.

USA Today reports that the warnings on travel to the United States are issued by governments for foreign states that are dealing with war, political instability, diseases and recent natural disasters.

It is too soon to determine if the warnings are hurting the U.S. tourism industry, but the warnings taint the image that the U.S. promotes overseas of a nation that prides itself on being a welcoming society and bastion of democracy.

"People understand that there is a range of things to do and iconic things to see in the (United) States," said Tom Buncle, managing director of the Yellow Railroad, an international tourism consultancy in Scotland, UK. "But all of the warnings that come from specific instances add up and can potentially erode the positive image of the United States."

Buncle said gun violence in the U.S. is a big turnoff. "America has surprised a lot of the world, especially the Europeans, because of all the mass shootings and the attitudes on gun control, or lack of it."

European governments have warned about an epidemic of gun violence in the U.S., including the mass shooting at a nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in June that left 49 people dead.

“They need to get rid of their guns,” said Tina Müller, 54, of Berlin, who said she had no plans to visit the US soon. “It would solve a lot of their problems. We have racism and prejudice in Europe, but we don’t have mass shootings and violence on that level.”

Countries such as Britain have added America to the list of countries where travelers face a “moderate risk” of being infected with the Zika virus.

Rising xenophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment is another concern for foreign governments. Last month, the UAE government released a travel warning urging men not to wear traditional garments after a citizen was tackled to the ground and injured by police in the state of Ohio. Police officers had been alerted by hotel staff who feared the UAE businessman's robe and headscarf indicated he had a terrorist plan.

In August, a Muslim American couple was removed from a Delta Airlines plane after a flight crew member complained to the pilot that she had become suspicious over their appearance.

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