

Japan warns travelers to U.S. of violence



Tokyo, August 7 (RHC)-- Japan has described the United States as a “gun society” and issued warnings to its citizens about traveling to the country in the aftermath of multiple mass shootings that took place over the weekend.

The Consulate General of Japan in Detroit, Michigan, warned Japanese residents in a statement on Tuesday to “be aware of the potential for gunfire incidents everywhere in the United States.” The consulate also advised residents to “continue to pay close attention to safety measures.”

Similar alerts were released by five other foreign countries after the two deadly shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, claimed 31 lives in less than one day over the weekend.

The Venezuelan government in Caracas issued a statement urging citizens “living in or planning to travel to the U.S., to be extra careful or to postpone their travel, given the recent proliferation of violent acts and hate crimes.”

The foreign ministry of Uruguay warned its citizens to practice caution “against growing indiscriminate violence, mostly for hate crimes... which cost more than 250 people their lives in the first seven months of the year.”

It also warned citizens traveling to the United States “to avoid areas with large concentrations of people like theme parks, shopping centers, art festivals, religious events, food festivals and any kind of cultural or sporting gathering,” noting the “indiscriminate possession of firearms by the population.”

France, New Zealand, and Germany have previously warned about the dangers of gun violence in America.

Early on Sunday morning, a man opened fire at an arts and entertainment district in downtown Dayton, Ohio, killing 9 people and injuring 16 others. The suspect was later shot dead by police.

A day earlier, another shooting at a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas, left 20 people dead and 26 injured. The gunman, who was arrested, published a "manifesto" before his shooting that had anti-immigrant and racist rhetoric. He described the attack as a response to a “Hispanic invasion.”

U.S. authorities have been investigating the Walmart incident as a case of domestic terrorism.

It took two days for U.S. President Donald Trump to address the suspected gunman’s alleged anti-immigrant bias in the El Paso shooting. In his 10-minute address to the nation, Trump decried the “mentally ill monsters” behind mass shootings as well as violent video games.

A video shows members of the activist group "moms demand action" protesting outside the White House after El Paso shooting.

In September last year, Amnesty International warned that the gun violence situation in the US has grown into a full blown "human rights crisis" and the Trump administration was doing little to solve it.

Loose laws that allow people to own handguns without a license or permit in 30 US states and the lack of preventive measures such as a national registration system for gun owners were among the factors that Amnesty said contributed to the situation.

According to the organization, an average of 106 individuals died a day from firearm-related incidents in 2016, totaling 38,658. Of that figure, nearly 23,000 were suicides and more than 14,400 were homicides, Amnesty said. The report noted that more than 116,000 people suffered injuries from firearms in 2016.

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