

U.S. Consulate in Turkey's Istanbul Closed for Security Threat



Istanbul, December 9 (RHC)-- A "possible security threat" has forced U.S. authorities to temporarily shut the American consulate in Turkey's largest city, Istanbul. U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby made the statement Tuesday, saying the consulate in the western Turkish city of Istanbul would be operating with only a skeleton crew on Wednesday.

The consulate will not be handing out visas or providing any other services, either, he said, calling on people to "avoid" the area around it. While refusing to comment further on the reported threat, Kirby added that "Obviously, we want people to be mindful of the threat around the consulate in Istanbul. And clearly, send a security message that people should take pains to avoid that area."

The U.S. consulate in Istanbul is no stranger to such threats with two assailants opening fire at the building in August, causing a gunfight with the police that left no casualties.

Turkey has been on high alert after more than 100 people were killed by two bombers in the capital Ankara, in October.

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