

Terrorists won't attack what they can't see

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Although there is no specific threat to U.S. personnel and their dependants serving in Germany, the U.S. Department of State has issued a general worldwide caution to Americans overseas that there are terrorists everywhere in the world and they can attack Americans by any means possible.

Terrorist groups have been active throughout Germany for many years — recruiting, financing and supporting terrorism worldwide. The German police and intelligence services identify potential terrorist threats and work to reduce terrorists' capability to conduct attacks on U.S. citizens. However, a terrorist or criminal will occasionally manage to evade surveillance and successfully attack Americans.

Terrorists and criminals target Americans for different reasons, such as a desire for media attention or monetary gain.

There are several ways Americans and their family members can avoid becoming terrorist targets.

- **Try not to look like a foreigner.** Dress like the

locals. Leave baggy, loose-fitting clothes, baseball caps, tennis shoes, flip-flops, and any shirt with a sports team logo at home. Observe what Germans wear, and buy clothes from local stores. This doesn't require a new wardrobe: Simply omit the clothes that stick out.

- **Buy a German brand vehicle, if possible.** Many large-model trucks, SUVs, or vehicles with an American brand logo on it could become targets for bombs, theft or kidnapping. For those who do drive these types of vehicles, be discreet and stay aware of the surrounding area when driving.

- Remove personally identifying stickers from vehicles. These include installation stickers from a former duty station, along with bumper or window stickers with English writing, military qualification badge stickers and military spouse stickers. These stickers make a vehicle an obvious target for a terrorist.

- When traveling, use civilian backpacks and luggage. **Digitally camouflaged backpacks and duffel bags are signs that owners are in the American military.** Be discreet, especially in public places,

anytime you are off-post. **Keep your voice down.** When visiting new places, it's easy to get carried away with the sights and sounds of a busy tourist spot. Avoid yelling, which will also attract the attention of pickpockets, robbers and active shooters planning an attack.

- Terrorists often target a location where Americans meet, especially on a predictable and reoccurring basis, such as hotels, neighborhoods, restaurants and clubs. Be aware of your surroundings and avoid going to off-post locations where Americans are known to congregate.

Take advantage of living in Europe and traveling around, but maintain your situational awareness, and don't be ignorant of danger. Remember these tips, and reduce the signature of yourself and your family. It may save your life and the lives of your loved ones.

For more information, review the Antiterrorism Self Help Guide, located on the USAG Stuttgart website at www.stuttgart.army.mil under "Hot Topics."

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