



**POLICY ON TRAVEL TO
COUNTRIES OR REGIONS WITH
SECURITY CONCERNS
ETC Foundation**

ETC	Management
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For Approval:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J.H.J. Dusseljee', written over a horizontal line.

J.H.J. Dusseljee
Director ETC Foundation

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1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

ETC staff may have to conduct assignments in countries that have heightened security concerns. Whether or not there is deemed to be a security concern is determined by:

- formal statements from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (negative travel advice or any other qualification);
- statements from partner organisations or clients;
- common knowledge.

Before accepting a mission or considering travelling, ETC employees should inform themselves of any potential security risks, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or any other reliable source.

ETC's policy regarding missions to countries or regions with permanent or temporary security constraints is outlined below.

2. PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

Employees should:

1. Verify in advance that the organising agency (client or partner) has a security policy that applies to the country under discussion. If not, this is not to be taken lightly and must be discussed with the line manager. If there is a security policy, it should be verified whether this is kept up-to-date, and also that it is adhered to by all concerned at HQ. This must be confirmed in advance through communication with the agency's HQ and if need be with the agency's in-country office.

The security policy should be sufficiently clear as to be able to take a decision on whether or not to travel. The organising agency should confirm that it supports the mission, and accepts responsibility for the consultant in as far as this can be expected. Some agencies have an internal procedure whereby any trip to a country with a confirmed security risk should be cleared by a senior person of that organisation in advance; such needs should be verified.

Some agencies require any consultant they hire to routinely sign a statement that safeguards the agency against any liability for any mishap during travel. Sometimes, there is a statement that refers to specific events such as abduction. Consultants must discuss such statements with the line manager before signing.

2. Inform their line manager and the ETC Director early in the preparations for a mission and seek their advice and formal approval (by ETC Director) before travelling.
3. Inform the Secretary to the Director of all travel details and obtain an SOS pass. The secretary will contact ETC's insurance company and will seek confirmation that the trip is adequately covered by the standard insurance arrangement. If this is not the case, and a separate or additional insurance cover (molest verzekering) is needed, this can be procured from ETC's insurance company with costs to be charged to the client.
4. Be positive. It is not helpful to travel to a particular country when in a stressful state due to a potential security constraint that affects your personal wellbeing directly or indirectly through relatives or friends being extremely worried. When in doubt, do not travel regardless of whether the recipient organisation or the employer has granted permission to travel.

3. UPON ARRIVAL

Employees should:

1. Ensure that they are collected at the airport by the host organisation and that, from that moment on, all in-country travelling is organised or facilitated by the host organisation.
2. Ensure that the host organisation provides a security briefing upon arrival and presents regular – if necessary daily – updates on the security situation, in particular on the situation in the area where travelling. Often, agencies have certain levels of security concerns, expressed in colours or codes, which dictate particular security measures to be taken. Any security instructions received should be followed.
3. Ensure that they have access to means of communication at all times. This requires a telephone that has access to an international network and a telephone that has access to a local network (take an extra phone unless you are sure that the host agency will provide one; obtain a local sim-card and sufficient credit right away). If any of these should not be available or if one travels to areas where there is no coverage ensure that one travels in a car with a radio facility or other satellite-operated means of communication. When necessary (and when instructed), any in-country travel should be confirmed before setting off and, similarly, one's arrival at the destination should be reported.
4. Inform the Dutch embassy (or a representing embassy if there is none) of one's arrival and anticipated itinerary, date of departure as well as contact details.
5. Ensure that one has a travel itinerary plus a list of phone numbers and names of who to contact in case of any inconvenience (including key staff of the local agency, the emergency number of the Embassy etc.).
6. Always rely on their own common sense even if in-country travel plans have been approved. When in doubt consider either aborting or postponing a mission or not travelling to certain locations with a high security risk. Inform the recipient agency, the agency's HQ and ETC of such a situation.
7. Always travel with your passport (and a copy), necessary travel documents, a statement from the employer confirming who you are and what the purpose of your travel is, a statement from the local agency confirming the fact that you have been invited and are on an official mission, contact lists with contact numbers both in-country and abroad, and with sufficient quantity of foreign cash in a mixture of small and large notes. Further, always have an emergency evacuation plan to hand.
8. Whatever the circumstances always stay calm, cooperative and respectful. There are also the obvious standard pieces of advice, such as avoiding crowds or encounters with peacekeeping forces, etc. These are usually listed with relevant details in the instructions received upon arrival.

4. TRAINING

ETC can arrange security training for those who frequently travel to insecure areas. This is frequently organised for employees of Dutch NGOs such as Cordaid and ICCO (information at www.centreforsafety.org)