

Item B: Letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
to the Egyptian Minister of Tourism

8 Dec 1998

Dr Mamdouh el Beltagui
Minister of Tourism
ARE

Dear Minister

During our recent meeting, you asked me to consider updating our travel advice for Egypt to reflect the improvements that have been made in the security situation there. We have now discussed this with our Ambassador in Cairo and have agreed to issue an amended version of the advice with immediate effect. I attach a copy for your information.

As I said when we met, our first priority must always be the safety of British nationals, but I hope you will be pleased with the changes we have made. We shall, of course, keep the advice under review.

Yours sincerely
Baroness Symons
Baroness Symons

ATTACHED DOCUMENT:

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Draft
EGYPT

More than 100,000 British nationals visit Egypt each year. Most enjoy a trouble-free stay.

Since 1992 extremists have conducted a campaign of violence against the Egyptian government, mainly in the provinces of Minya and Assiut (half way between Cairo and Luxor), but with sporadic attacks in other areas. Most of these incidents have been directed at the police, or were sectarian in nature. However, some have been directed against tourists: in the last such incident, now over a year ago, gunmen killed 58 tourists, including 6 British nationals. Extremist groups subsequently threatened further attacks against foreigners, including tourists: these threats should be taken seriously.

The Egyptian authorities have expressed their determination to prevent further attacks on foreign visitors and have taken a number of steps to increase security, especially at tourist sites.

British nationals are advised to be vigilant and to respect any advice from local security authorities, especially when visiting the Nile Valley south of and including Minya Province.

Local driving conditions and poor vehicle maintenance make road travel outside the main cities hazardous, especially at night. In the event of an accident emergency medical facilities are limited.