

U.S. Embassy Moscow
SECURITY MESSAGE FOR U.S. CITIZENS
RUSSIA- PARATROOPERS' DAY
August 2, 2012

The Embassy advises U.S. citizens that **Thursday, August 2, 2012** marks the 82nd anniversary of Paratroopers' Day in Russia. The event will be celebrated in Moscow and throughout Russia. In Moscow, Paratroopers' Day will begin with a ceremony at Suvorovskaya Square. Other locations for previous commemoration gatherings in Moscow have included Alexandrovsky Garden, Gorky Park, Kievskaya Square, Pushkinskaya Square, Red Square, Victory Park at Kutuzovsky Prospekt, VVC Exhibition Center, and local markets. In St. Petersburg, locations for commemoration gatherings will include 14th Line of Vasilyevskiy Ostrov, Palace Square, Mars Field, Peter and Paul Fortress, Primorskiy Park, Stadium on Zanevskiy 51 and other locations throughout the city. Many participants will be current and ex-paratroopers wearing traditional light blue berets and light blue and white striped shirts, singing patriotic songs and celebrating.

Although the majority of these gatherings are jovial and peaceful, in recent years there have been incidents of violence, instigated by ultranationalists and directed against foreigners, particularly Central Asians and people from the Caucasus Region. During the recent Border Guards' Day, Russian media reported numerous large-scale brawls and other public disorder, and such incidents have occurred in the past on Paratroopers' Day.

We wish to remind U.S. citizens that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. U.S. citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise caution if within the vicinity of any demonstrations. Please note the following guidance from the U.S. Department of State's Country-Specific Information Sheet for the Russian Federation: "U.S. citizens should avoid all public demonstrations, whether properly authorized by local officials or not, and avoid any large crowds and public gatherings that lack enhanced security measures."

Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Consulate General's website -- <http://stpetersburg.usconsulate.gov> -- and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs website -- www.travel.state.gov -- where current Worldwide Cautions, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information can be found. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada, or outside the U.S. and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444, between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except for U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Consulate General in St. Petersburg is located at 15 Furshatskaya Street. You may contact our American Citizen Services Unit by e-mail at StPetersburgACS@state.gov, by fax at 7-812-331-2646 or by telephone at 7- 812- 331-2600. If you have an emergency after normal

business hours, please call our telephone number and you will be given instruction on how to contact the Consulate Duty Officer.