

Safe on the Road – HEAT Training with a Focus on Israel & Palestine

Are you planning to resume your working trips to the Middle East—especially to Israel and the Palestinian Territories?

Our multi-day travel safety training offers an interdisciplinary, hands-on approach to safe behavior in urban and politically sensitive areas—tailored specifically to professionals in public service, civic education, or international cooperation.

What Makes Our Training Special:

◆ Proven Experience in the Middle East & Travel Security Context:

Our trainer Melissa Schimanek is an expert in gender equality, inclusion, and empowerment, with several years of experience in international cooperation, including with the GIZ. She has worked and traveled in over 70 countries, both professionally and privately, and has conducted numerous travel safety trainings for organizations, foundations, and government institutions—with a special focus on sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and culturally sensitive communication. Melissa holds a master's degree in Security and Diplomacy from Tel Aviv University and has extensive experience in the region, including Israel, the Palestinian Territories, Jordan, Oman, and Egypt. Her academic and personal engagement with local social dynamics, power relations, and security issues is directly integrated into the training, combining analytical skills with practical experience—such as traveling as a solo woman, researching gender risks in the field, and consulting for development organizations.

◆ Expertise in Travel Security, Risk Management, and International Cooperation:

Rolf Thienemann has been an international security trainer and consultant for over 15 years—working with organizations such as GIZ, KfW, GFA Consulting Group, GOPA, and Dorsch Impact. Clients especially appreciate his calm, clear communication of complex topics and his ability to realistically assess risks, based on over 30 years of experience with police special forces, UN missions (including in Kosovo and Bosnia), as well as serving as an election observer and trainer in international contexts. He combines solid security strategy knowledge with deep psychological understanding—supported by further training as a transactional analysis consultant, systemic coach, conflict advisor, and certified risk manager. In his work, he places particular emphasis on practical relevance: his trainings are action-oriented, realistic, and application-focused, with clear tools and exercises that prepare participants for real-life scenarios. Rolf specializes in preparing people for challenging contexts and specific threat scenarios—whether at checkpoints, in cases of sexualized violence, or dealing with urban insecurity. He works worldwide, often behind the scenes, always

with a clear focus: empowering people to move safely and confidently in difficult environments. His long-standing experience and realistic, composed training style make him a valued partner for international travel safety formats.

◆ **Relevant Scenarios & Realistic Exercises:**

The training includes simulations of checkpoint situations (e.g., military checkpoints, border crossings), risky everyday interactions (e.g., taxi rides, withdrawing money, moving in public spaces), as well as safe communication with authorities, security forces, and local partners.

◆ **Sexualized Violence & Prevention in Travel and Work Contexts:**

Melissa brings extensive training experience in dealing with sexual harassment and violence in international contexts. Her focus is on providing concrete prevention and response strategies—tailored to different countries, gender roles, and social contexts. Group exercises, case studies, and discussions on “bystander” approaches, perpetrator profiles, and institutional responsibility foster a practical, safe approach to sensitive situations.

◆ **Expert Lectures:**

- **“Very soon is far away”:** Bernd Mühlenbeck shares his highly personal experiences of 33 months as a Taliban hostage in Pakistan and Afghanistan. He answers participants’ questions afterward.
- **“Remote-Controlled Violence: Drone Operations in Armed Conflict and Terrorism.”** This online lecture focuses on the Middle East, with an emphasis on current developments. Group questions are answered afterward. Nils Raaf has many years of experience in the development, construction, and operation of unmanned aircraft, as well as in drone detection and countermeasures for critical infrastructure.
- **Chris Proctor shares his own experiences as someone affected by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).** This short talk focuses on experiences and perceptions from the perspective of the affected person. This lecture is held in English. (Only as part of the first aid training.)

◆ **Sample Topics:**

- **Behavior at border crossings and checkpoints**
- **Behavior under fire and during the use of explosive devices from the air and on the ground**
- **Kidnapping: What to do in an emergency?**
- **Security awareness in urban environments (taxi rides, walking, hotel check-in)**
- **Dealing with sexual harassment in public and professional settings**
- **Psychological first aid & communication with acutely stressed individuals immediately after incidents**
- **Intercultural communication and gender roles in Israel & Palestine**
- **Reflection on personal role models and behavioral patterns as travelers**

- **First aid under difficult conditions.** This approximately six-hour training module is led by Chris Proctor, a British paramedic who brings extensive experience from military missions.

Practical simulations are accompanied by assistants with their own operational experience, enabling realistic, repeated application of life-saving techniques. The thematic focus of the training is determined in close coordination with the client through detailed briefing. Specific wishes and needs of the participants are addressed individually and flexibly