March 3, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Presidents, The University of Texas System  
Mr. James D. Spaniolo  
Mr. William C. Powers, Jr.  
Dr. Juliet V. García  
Dr. David E. Daniel  
Dr. Diana S. Natalicio  
Dr. Robert S. Nelsen  
Dr. W. David Watts  
Dr. Ricardo Romo  
Dr. Rodney H. Mabry

FROM: Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D.

SUBJECT: International Travel Risks

Ongoing unrest in the Middle East, North Africa and Mexico, as well as natural disasters around the world, continue to highlight the importance of thorough and thoughtful evaluation of the international activities of your students, faculty and staff. To mitigate risks associated with international programs and activities, we must be actively engaged in safety measures, security assessments, and emergency and incident response planning.

The University of Texas System is supportive of programs necessary to achieve increased research, global competitiveness and enhanced student success; however, as the world continues to become more complex, our responsibility to ensure the safety and security of U. T. travelers becomes more critical.

As a result of the increasing safety and security risks abroad, I issued a directive in April 2010 that institutions must:

- create an International Oversight Committee (IOC);
- suspend programs and travel to countries in which the U.S. Department of State had issued travel warnings, pending review and approval by the institutions' IOC; and
- require all students, faculty and staff traveling internationally on university business -- or on university-affiliated or sponsored trips -- be registered with International SOS prior to travel.
Please consider this memo as a reminder of this information and of the resources available to help facilitate them. Your IOC should consider and evaluate any university activity or travel to countries or regions in which warnings or alerts have been issued by the State Department, or where significant health or safety concerns are present.

Warnings or alerts from the State Department do not necessarily reflect the most up-to-date situations in any country. International SOS is available at any time to discuss current security and health concerns for any country, region or city where U. T. System faculty, staff and students may travel. These consultations already are part of the services offered under our current agreement and I encourage your travelers to take advantage of them.

The safety of our faculty, staff and students is of utmost concern to me and to our Board of Regents. I appreciate your continued support in ensuring these programs and procedures are implemented at your institutions.

FGC:jbp
cc:  Dr. Scott C. Kelley
     Dr. David B. Prior
     Kenneth I. Shine, M.D.
     Barry Burgdorf
     Phillip Dendy