

A Personal Note on Safety in Ankara

By Baran Özongan, CPA (SMMM) — Ankara, Türkiye

I have lived and worked in Ankara my entire life. When I hear that international colleagues are hesitant to travel here due to regional tensions, I fully understand the sentiment — but I also feel a responsibility to share what daily life actually looks like from the ground.

This part of the world has never been far from geopolitical turbulence. I grew up during the Gulf War, came of age during the Iraq War, and have spent my professional years against the backdrop of the Syrian conflict and the Russia–Ukraine war. Through all of it, Ankara has remained exactly what it is today: a calm, safe, fully functioning capital city of 5 million people.

Right now, in April 2026, the city is quiet. Shops, restaurants, universities and conference venues are open as usual. International flights are operating normally. There are no checkpoints, no visible military presence, no disruption to everyday life. I walk to work, meet clients, have dinner with friends — nothing about this city signals anything other than normalcy.

Geographically, Ankara sits in the heart of central Anatolia, approximately 1,500 kilometres from the Iranian border. Putting that in perspective: that is roughly the distance from Berlin to Kyiv, or from London to Warsaw. Distance matters.

Türkiye is not a party to the current conflict. On the contrary, the Turkish government has consistently positioned itself as a diplomatic actor in the region — a role it has played, with credibility, across multiple crises over the past two decades.

I also want to gently offer a point of comparison. Many of the cities from which our international colleagues would be travelling — in Western Europe and beyond — have faced their own serious security incidents in recent years. Security risk is not unique to this region. What matters is an honest, fact-based assessment of the specific location in question.

For the SilicoNPV and bifiPV community, I want to say this clearly: Ankara is ready to welcome you. The venue is prepared, the city is safe, and those of us here are genuinely looking forward to hosting a memorable event.

I respect every individual's personal decision, and I understand that some institutions have blanket travel policies that are difficult to override. But for those who have a choice, I hope this note helps provide a clearer and more grounded picture. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Ankara this April.

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