Thanksgiving is a traditional American holiday, but it can be celebrated anywhere in the world. As our Outrigger ‘ohana counts its blessings this Thanksgiving weekend, we have much to be thankful for. In particular, we can be grateful for the continued strength of the hospitality industry throughout the Pacific and Indian Ocean region. The demand for travel has kept the “economic engines” of Hawai’i, Guam, Fiji, Thailand and the Indian Ocean humming, stimulating these economies and creating many excellent job opportunities.

I wish I could go on from here, as I have in years past, by simply expressing my heartfelt wish for peace and prosperity throughout the world.

Unfortunately, like many, I am deeply troubled by the ever-increasing pace of violence and terrorism around the globe. This year has been one of the deadliest on record. Wikipedia lists what I estimate to be some 200 separate attacks – bombings and assaults using grenades, explosive vests, guns, knives, etc. so far this year (http://tinyurl.com/ltauym).

In recent weeks alone, we have seen attacks on a hotel in Bamako, Mali (27 dead), shoppers in a Beirut, Lebanon, suburb (43 dead), a rally in Ankara, Turkey (102 dead), passengers and crew in a Russian aircraft over Sinai, Egypt (224 dead – everyone on board), pedestrians in Israel (20 dead in stabbings and deliberate vehicular homicides in near-daily assaults in just the last eight weeks) and, only two weeks ago, Parisians and visitors dining in sidewalk bistros, enjoying a rock concert and walking near a soccer match. In the Paris attacks alone, 130 died in just a few minutes.

Aon Corporation has compiled an analysis of the risks of terrorism in locations around the world. It is available without charge at http://tinyurl.com/terrorismmap, and it is truly disturbing.

So, as we enter the season where we traditionally count our many blessings, we should also do what we can to support every effort to stop the violence bubbling up in almost every country, large and small. There has to be a solution.

At the same time, let’s also dedicate ourselves to looking after the comfort and well-being of our guests. We need to be alert for all kinds of challenges, even the most mundane – for example the need to interact calmly and soothingly with guests who arrive in an irritable mood after a long, frustrating day of travel.

At Outrigger, this is our 68th Thanksgiving celebration, and every year we have had many reasons to be thankful. As we do again in 2015. We have a wonderful ‘ohana, now spread across half the globe, which I consider the nicest group of people you are likely to meet anywhere. We work in a company that places hosts first and prides itself on providing them with many opportunities to excel and grow. We are fortunate indeed, and I want to thank every member of our ‘ohana for what they all, working together, have helped us accomplish in the year now drawing to a close.