

**CONSULAR NEWS
SENEGAL & GUINEA BISSAU**

**U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal
April 2007**

April Frequently Asked Question

Q: I am an American citizen working in Dakar on a local contract. For the past year I have been paying taxes to the Senegalese government. I know that France has an agreement with Senegal so that all taxes paid in Senegal are registered in the French system as well. Does the U.S. have a similar agreement? If not, do I need to file my taxes in the U.S.?

A. Yes, you need to file taxes in the U.S. even though you also file in Senegal. For more information, please visit the IRS website at <http://irs.gov>.

Thanks to New Consular Wardens

In our March Consular News, we announced that we needed more wardens for our Senegal-Dakar zone. Many of you contacted us and accepted to be our warden for the Senegal-Dakar zone. On behalf of the U.S. Embassy, we wish to thank you for volunteering your time and hard work to assist American citizens. Because of the large number of American citizens living in Dakar, we would still like to have more wardens. For more information, please email consulardakar@state.gov.

Crime Watch

On Friday, March 9, at approximately 4:30 a.m., a man jumped the perimeter wall of an American's home in Les Almadies in Dakar. The man entered the grounds and took several items before climbing back over the wall. After securing the items in a nearby construction site, he returned to the American's home and attempted to break into the car which was parked on the street outside the wall. Although a Sagam guard saw the attempted break-in, he was unable to detain the thief, Sagam did retrieve the items hidden in the construction site.

On Saturday, March 10, at approximately 12:00 noon in Castor Market in Dakar, an American woman had her car broken into. The thief stole a sack that was hidden under the driver's seat, which contained her U.S. passport.

On Thursday, March 22, at approximately 4:30 p.m., an American woman walking down Rue des Maristes in Hann II (near the Caddie and L'Ecole Maristes) almost had her purse stolen by two men on a motorcycle. The male passenger on the motorcycle grabbed a loop hanging from her purse, but the American yanked it back, and held on. The men drove on without looking back.

On Tuesday, March 27, at approximately 11:00 p.m. close to Just 4 You club in Point E, an American woman had her purse (containing her U.S. passport) stolen by two men on a motorcycle. Several men were with her at the time.

Security Reminder

As this month's crime report reflects, petty crime continues to be an issue in Senegal and in Dakar in particular. This is a good time to reiterate the guidance in Senegal's Consular Information Sheet:

Minor street crime is very common in Senegal, particularly in cities. Most reported incidents involve pickpockets and purse-snatchers, who are especially active in large crowds and around tourists. Aggressive vendors, panhandlers and street children may attempt to divert your attention while an accomplice prepares to rob you. To avoid theft, U.S. citizens should avoid walking alone in isolated areas or on beaches, particularly at night, lock their doors and close their windows when driving, and avoid public transportation. Americans should not walk on dark streets at night, even in groups. To minimize inconvenience in the event of theft, U.S. citizens should carry copies, rather than originals, of their passports and other identification documents. U.S. citizens should carry a credit card only if it will be used soon, rather than carrying it as a routine practice. There is traditionally an increase in crime before major religious holidays.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to use common sense and situational awareness to ensure personal safety and to reduce the risk of becoming a crime victim. Always be aware of the surroundings, especially in large cities and crowded places such as markets and taxi parks. Keep a low profile, remain vigilant, and avoid potential conflict situations. Do not wear flashy clothing or jewelry, and be cautious about displaying any amount of currency in public. Use common sense when faced with something out of the ordinary or if someone is following you.

We have also updated the Consular Information Sheet to include the following information about the security situation in the Casamance:

The U.S. Embassy recommends that U.S. citizens avoid non-essential travel to the Casamance region west of the city of Kolda, except direct air travel to the Cap Skirring resort area or to the city of Ziguinchor. If travel is deemed essential, the U.S. Embassy recommends that U.S. citizens carefully monitor the security situation before traveling. During the early part of 2007, there has been a significant increase in fighting in the Casamance region (composed of the Ziguinchor and Kolda regions) involving factions of the Casamance separatist MFDC (Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance) in southern Senegal and the Senegalese military. Some military and political leaders in the Casamance region have been killed. Reports of banditry in the area have also increased. On September 1, 2006, a U.S. citizen was killed when her vehicle hit a newly placed mine on an unpaved road in this area. In addition, vehicles have been attacked by armed bandits even during daylight hours on well-traveled roads. On February 14, 2007, four people were killed when their bus was attacked after being stopped at a roadblock.

Handicap International, a non-governmental organization, recorded at least 17 incidents involving land mines in the Casamance in 2004, eight incidents in 2005, and seven in 2006. Since 1990, more than 1,000 people have been killed by land mines in the Casamance. The U.S. Embassy strongly recommends that U.S. citizens remain on well-traveled routes at all times.

To read the full Consular Information Sheet, please visit the State Department website at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1013.html

Hours for American Citizen Services

Routine American citizen services are available Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. When you arrive at the Embassy, please show your U.S. passport or proof of American citizenship to the guard and go directly to the Consular Receptionist window. You do not have to wait in line with visa applicants.

Emergency American citizen services are available during U.S. Embassy normal working hours which are Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For an after-hours emergency involving an American citizen, please call 637-9566.

The U.S. Embassy is closed on American and Senegalese holidays. Upcoming holidays include:

Monday, April 9 - Easter Monday
Tuesday, May 1 - International Labor Day
Thursday, May 17 - Ascension Day
Monday, May 28 - Memorial Day/Whit Monday

We are also available by e-mail at consulardakar@state.gov.

Have You Left Senegal or Guinea-Bissau?

If you have left Senegal or Guinea-Bissau, please e-mail us at consulardakar@state.gov so we can remove your name from the warden registration database. If you would like to remain on the newsletter mailing list, please let us know in your e-mail.