

CONSULAR NEWS
SENEGAL & GUINEA-BISSAU
U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal
February 2009

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The U.S. Embassy would like to send our heartfelt wishes to all for a very happy New Year!

Follow Up on the COTE D'IVOIRIAN VISA REQUIREMENTS for American Citizens

To follow up on our January 15, 2009 Warden Message, there are new visa requirements for travel to Cote D'Ivoire. Beginning February 2009 U.S. citizens will need to have an Ivorian visa for entry into Cote D'Ivoire and Ivorian officials will no longer be issuing visas at the airport. Citizens of the U.S. traveling to Côte d'Ivoire on or after February 15 should check with the nearest Ivorian Embassy or Consulate to confirm the details below regarding the visa procedures and fees. There is a significant increase in the cost of these visas, and the Ivorian government has explained that the cost of visa fees for tourist passport holders will be used to support the implementation of a new biometric visa.

The current information we have is that the new visa fee will be CFA 50,000 (around USD 100). The visa application form should be filled out by the traveler, who will need to provide the following items: the address and phone number of where the traveler will be staying, a print-out of the itinerary OR copy of their airline ticket, and one photo. The traveler should plan on it taking at least three workdays to obtain a visa. A multiple entry visa will be valid for only three months. Operating hours for visas are 9:00 -13:30 from Monday through Friday.

Renewing a Senegalese Residence Permit

To renew a Senegalese Resident Permit, a U.S. Citizen should provide the following documents:

- A letter to the Ministry of Interior requesting a long-term visa for Senegal
- A photocopy of your U.S. passport
- An attestation tenant lieu de bulletin de naissance from a U.S. Embassy
- An extrait de casier judiciaire from the Senegalese Tribunal
- A medical certificate
- A fee of 15200 CFA for fiscal stamps
- Proof that the Citizen lives/works in Senegal

For more information, please visit this government of Senegal's website:
<http://www.demarches.gouv.sn/>

UNREST AND CRIME ISSUES IN SENEGAL

- According to news reports, during the last week of January, 2009, a group of 15 armed persons attacked and robbed five cars in Karong, near Bignona in the Casamance region of Southern Senegal.
- On January 28, 2009, there were students demonstrations on Route de Ouakam in which several tires were set on fire.
- An American Citizen reported that on the night of January 7, 2009, she was a victim of a house robbery near a beach in Golf, Senegal. While she was sleeping, someone entered her room and made away with the following items: an Apple Computer, Camera, iPod, backpack, CFA 40,000 and other valuables. Two Senegalese and an American were also sleeping in the house when this happened, but only her room was affected. She stated that she had forgotten to lock her door that night before going to bed. We join her in emphasizing the importance in locking doors at all times.
- On January 22, 2009, RFM radio reported that on the road known as National # 1 near the village of Sinthiou Bamambe (north of Senegal), armed men attacked a group of vehicles and robbed the passengers of all their valuables. This type of incident has become frequent in the Dioum, Matam, Bakel, and Tamba areas of Senegal, particularly after sundown.
- In early February, an American citizen was driving along Ouakam Road and slowing down for a pedestrian to cross. When he felt his car get hit on the side, the driver stopped to investigate. The passenger exited the vehicle and, using his cell phone, called for assistance -- leaving the doors unlocked. An individual tried to take his cell phone, eventually brandishing a knife. The assailant reached into the car, grabbed the victim's bag, and ran off. Meanwhile, several onlookers who saw what had happened pursued the thief, who dropped the bag while making his escape. The good Samaritans returned the bag to the American. No one was hurt. It is not clear whether the assailant was arrested or not.
- During the first week in February, an American citizen reported that around 3:00 am his house in Hann Mariste area was broken into. The thief entered the house by forcing himself through a wooden front door and gaining access by cutting the screen. He went into a bedroom and stole 2 laptop computers, an IPOD, and a cell phone. Another house nearby was broken into the same night. The occupants lost a computer, camera, cell phones and a purse with money in it.

As we have mentioned in previous newsletters, American citizens are encouraged to report criminal incidents to the Consular Section by emailing consulardakar@state.gov or calling 33-829-2313. For more

information about measures travelers can take to protect themselves overseas, see the Department of State's pamphlet "A Safe Trip Abroad" at http://travel.state.gov/travel/abroad_pub_safetrip.html.

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

Upcoming Senegalese elections in March will likely inspire numerous political demonstrations. We urge all American citizens to maintain vigilance during the days immediately prior to and following the elections. Safety precautions should include maintaining good situational awareness, avoiding crowds and demonstrations, and keeping a low profile. We also encourage American Citizens to ensure that their travel documents and visas are valid at all time.

DEAR CONSULAR DAKAR.....

Q. I am an American citizen who visits Senegal every year and I recently fathered a child in Senegal out of wedlock. Does this baby qualify for American citizenship even though I do not live in Senegal and am not married to his mother? Do I need my wife's cooperation to pursue a claim of citizenship for my child?

A. For your child to qualify for citizenship, you, your child, and the child's mother will need to appear at the U.S. Embassy in Senegal so that he/she can be issued a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA), which will cost US\$ 65. You will need to be prepared to prove that the child is indeed yours, such as proof of your travel dates around the time the child might have been conceived and/or DNA tests. You will need to bring with you the following items: the child's birth certificate; a document proving your citizenship status (birth certificate, naturalization papers, U.S. passport, for instance), evidence of your physical presence in the United States. In the case in which the parents of the child are married, the father would need to provide all applicable marriage and divorce certificates; and, in the case of a mother who is not a U.S. citizen, the mother's government photo identification. All documents must be submitted in original or be a certified copy.

IN THE NEWS....

In December 2008, it was reported that nine gay men – several of whom were known anti-AIDs activists – were sentenced to eight years in prison for criminal conspiracy and committing "unnatural acts." The sentence is unusually harsh and has produced outrage among Senegalese human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and AIDS activists, as well as international gay rights organizations. The government of France has formally condemned the convictions and sentences and called for the release of the men and the decriminalization of homosexuality. The men's attorneys have appealed the conviction and are working with civil society to obtain their release.

FEBRUARY HOLIDAYS

The Consular section of the Embassy will be closed for the following holiday:

Monday, February 16 President's Day

WORLDWIDE CAUTION

On February 2, the State Department issued a Worldwide Caution Public Announcement updating information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against Americans and interests throughout the world. For details, please see:

http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1161.html

HOURS FOR AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

We are open for routine American citizen services 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, telephone number 33-829-2313. For an after-hours emergency involving an American citizen, please call 76-383-9566.

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.