

**CONSULAR NEWS  
SENEGAL & GUINEA BISSAU**

**U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal  
February 2008**

**Security Tightens Before OIC**

Recent newspaper articles have noted that security precautions will be tightened in and around Dakar in preparation for the upcoming Organization of the Islamic Conference Summit, to take place March 8-14. This heightened security may result in increased traffic throughout the city or increased identification checks. As noted in the Department of State's Country Specific Information page for Senegal ([http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1013.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1013.html)), Senegalese law requires that all persons carry personal identification at all times, and all Senegalese law enforcement officials have the authority to challenge suspicious activity and to request personal identification. Be aware that they may request personal identification even without cause, which is generally not the case in the U.S. If a U.S. citizen does not cooperate and provide identification, he or she may be detained for up to 48 hours without the filing of formal charges.

Please note that to minimize inconvenience in the event of theft, the Embassy suggests that U.S. citizens carry copies, preferably notarized, of their passports and other identification documents, rather than originals.

**New Passport Fees and Regulations**

Recently, there have been a number of changes to U.S. passport fees and policies. Here are answers to some of our most commonly asked questions. For detailed information on passports, including how to apply and to download the latest forms, please visit the Department of State's website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

- Q: How much does it now cost to get a new passport or renew my passport?  
A: On February 1, 2008, the U.S. Government increased its fees for certain U.S. citizen passport services. For adult applicants renewing a passport, the total fee has increased to \$75. For first-time applicants age 16 and over, the total fee has increased to \$100. The fee for minors under 16 years of age has increased to \$85.
- Q: I have an old passport application form. Do I need to use a new form to apply?  
A: Almost all of our passport application forms were revised earlier this month to reflect our new regulations and fees. These include the DS-11 - Application for Passport; DS-82 - Application for Passport by Mail; and DS-4085 - Application for Additional Visa Pages, as well as others. New applicants are required to use these new forms, which can be

downloaded at <http://travel.state.gov> or can be picked up here at the Embassy's American Citizen Services section.

- Q: I would like to apply for or renew my child's passport. Do I need to bring my child to the Embassy in person?
- A: Effective February 1, 2008, passport applicants who are U.S. citizen minors under the age of 16 must appear personally with their parents to establish identity, proof of citizenship and proof of relationship. Regarding parental permission required for the application, both parents must appear together and sign the form, or one parent may appear to sign and submit the other parent's notarized consent statement for passport issuance. This consent should be either a Form DS-3053 or a notarized Power of Attorney. Alternatively, one parent may appear, sign, and submit primary evidence of sole parental authority. Minors age 16 and 17 may apply in person with their own identification, but for security reasons, parental consent may be required. If your child does not have identification of their own, a parent will be required to accompany the child and present identification.

### **Passport Cards**

Beginning February 1, 2008, advance applications for the new U.S. Passport Card began to be accepted at U.S. embassies and passport agencies throughout the world. These cards were created in anticipation of land border travel document requirements and we expect cards will be available and mailed to applicants in Spring 2008.

The passport card will facilitate entry and expedite document processing at U.S. land and sea ports-of-entry when arriving from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda. The card may not be used to travel by air. It will otherwise carry the rights and privileges of the U.S. passport book and will be adjudicated to the exact same standards.

The Department of State is issuing this passport card in response to the needs of border resident communities for a less expensive and more portable alternative to the traditional passport book. The card will have the same validity period as a passport book: 10 years for an adult, five for children 15 and younger. For adults who already have a passport book, they may apply for the card as a passport renewal and pay only \$20. First-time applicants will pay \$45 for adult cards and \$35 for children.

Although this card cannot be used for travel by air, if you would like more information about this new document, as well as a list of questions and answers (FAQs), please visit [http://travel.state.gov/passport/ppt\\_card/ppt\\_card\\_3926.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/ppt_card/ppt_card_3926.html).

### **Annual Magal Touba Pilgrimage**

The annual Magal or pilgrimage to the town of Touba is scheduled to take place on Tuesday February 26, 2008. Traffic is expected to be unusually heavy on all main roads leading to the town for several days prior to the Magal, and for several days following the event. If you are

planning to travel outside of the Dakar area during this period (especially to or through the regions of Diourbel and Thiès) you may wish to consider alternate plans.

### **Crime Watch**

Last month, a security incident occurred in front of the U.S. Embassy which resulted in one American being punched in the head while seated in his car. The aggressor was immediately subdued by Embassy security personnel who later learned of his mental instability from Senegalese police. As is always the case when living in Dakar, awareness and remaining vigilant are key. One way to potentially prevent an incident such as this is to only lower your window or unlock your door when necessary.

A bag containing money and identity documents was taken from a couple through an open car window while they were shopping in Dakar in early January. The couple had stopped to greet some people in a market near the port, and had turned away from the vehicle for only a few moments. When the wife went to pay for some purchases, she discovered that the small bag she used to carry money and personal papers had been taken out of a larger bag that was sitting on the floor of the car. The next day they received a call from Sonatel asking them to come to retrieve her papers which had apparently been turned in. Her house keys, identity documents, telephone number list and a credit card were still in the bag.

### **American Citizen Services and Visa-Related Inquiries**

We would like to remind Americans that our American Citizen Services window and its Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon walk-in hours are reserved for those needing citizen-related services, such as registration, passport applications, consular reports of birth abroad, and so on. Inquiries regarding NIV or IV applications, regardless of whether the applicant is a family member or friend of an American citizen, should be submitted by e-mail to the Embassy consular section's address at [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto:consulardakar@state.gov).

Listed below are responses to a few of the most frequent visa-related questions we receive from American citizens. More detailed information on both non-immigrant and immigrant visas can be found on our website at <http://dakar.usembassy.gov/visas.html>.

- Q: Can you expedite my friend or family member's NIV or IV application?  
Why was my friend/family member refused a visa?  
Have you received the DNA results that were submitted for our case?
- A: The American Citizen Services unit does not handle visa or DNA cases. You may email your question to [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto:consulardakar@state.gov), and your question will be answered by the appropriate unit. This way, the unit can research your specific case and you will receive an accurate answer from the unit working on the case.
- Q: How can I invite my friend to visit the United States?

A: He or she must apply for a visa. Information on the non-immigrant visa application process can be found at [http://dakar.usembassy.gov/non-immigrant\\_visas.html](http://dakar.usembassy.gov/non-immigrant_visas.html). If you wish, you may give your friend a letter to present to the consular officer at the time of the interview, but please keep in mind that your letter will be only one part of your friend's overall application, and all applicants must qualify on their own independent basis.

Q: How can I take my fiancé(e)/spouse to the United States permanently?

A: For more information on fiancé(e) visas to the U.S., please visit our website at [http://dakar.usembassy.gov/fiancees\\_visas.html](http://dakar.usembassy.gov/fiancees_visas.html). Information on immigrant visas for spouses and family members is available at [http://dakar.usembassy.gov/immigrant\\_visas.html](http://dakar.usembassy.gov/immigrant_visas.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. For an after-hours emergency involving an American citizen, please call 77-383-9566.

We are also available by e-mail at [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto: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](mailto: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.