

CONSULAR NEWS  
SENEGAL & GUINEA-BISSAU

U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal  
September 2008

VOTE ABSENTEE 2008

The 2008 U.S. election cycle is in full swing. We encourage every U.S. citizen overseas to act now so that your vote is counted in the November 2008 presidential and general elections. The official U.S. Government web site for overseas absentee voting assistance is the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) web site at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).

Generally, all U.S. citizens 18 years or older who are or will be residing outside the United States during an election period are eligible to vote absentee in any election for federal office. This includes primary, run-off, and special elections that occur throughout the year, as well as the presidential and general elections in November 2008. Some states will also allow overseas voters to vote in elections for state and local offices, and for state and local referendums.

Under normal circumstances, most states and territories begin sending ballots to overseas citizens 30-45 days before an election. Vote and return the ballot promptly to meet your state's ballot receipt deadline.

We are aware that mail service to some locations may be problematic, and may prevent you from receiving your ballot. Don't panic! An emergency ballot, the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB), is available from the U.S. Embassy in Dakar, Senegal. The Consular Section will be hosting Absentee Voting Week from October 12 – 18, 2008 and encourages all American citizens residing in Senegal to vote during this week. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto:consulardakar@state.gov) should you have any questions.

WORLD WIDE CAUTION

We take this opportunity to inform U.S. citizens of recent terrorist attacks in the Middle East and Africa, and to remind U.S. citizens of the "Worldwide Caution," addressing the threat of terrorist actions and violence against Americans worldwide, issued by the State Department on July 16.

On September 17, armed terrorists attacked the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen, detonating explosives in the vicinity of the Embassy's main gate. Several Yemeni security personnel were killed, as were a few individuals waiting to gain entry to the Embassy. On September 20, a large explosion took place at the Marriott Hotel in downtown Islamabad. On September 14, 2008, in Northeast Mauritania, 11 soldiers and one civilian were killed in Salafist terrorist attacks.

The Embassy reiterates its advice to all Americans to take appropriate individual precautions to ensure their safety and security at all times. These measures include maintaining good situational awareness, avoiding crowds and demonstrations, and keeping a low profile.

For the latest security information, Americans living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet web site at <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Alerts, Travel Warnings, and health-information resources can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada, or, for callers in other areas, by calling a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays)."

Americans living or traveling in Senegal or Guinea-Bissau are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Dakar through the [State Department's travel registration website](#), and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Senegal. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. The U.S. Embassy is located at Avenue Jean XXIII, Dakar; the mailing address is B.P. 49, Dakar, Senegal. The telephone number is (221) 33 829-2313; after-hours (221) 33 829-2209. The U.S. Embassy website is <http://dakar.usembassy.gov>.

#### CHOLERA IN GUINEA BISSAU

Responding to a request for assistance from the Bissau-Guinean government, a team of epidemiologists from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) arrived in Guinea Bissau on August 28, 2008. According to the CDC team, from mid-May through September 3, 4,423 cases of cholera and 102 related deaths were reported from ten of the eleven regions of the country. Despite efforts to contain the outbreak, the CDC team stated that as of September 3, 2008, new cases of cholera were being reported at an accelerated rate of close to 900 per week, with a case fatality rate of nearly 20 percent.

According to the CDC team, most of the cases, 72 percent, are in the capital city of Bissau, where the municipal watersystem reaches only 20 percent of residents, is unchlorinated and in need of serious repair. The lack of commercially available options to treat the water of Bissau and in the provinces is seriously hampering the effectiveness of the response. The outbreak is spreading in the provinces of Quinara and Biombo, and new cases have also been reported in Sao Domingo and the Bijagos Islands. The government has defined the situation as "difficult" and has called for urgent assistance in containing the epidemic.

#### BANDITRY IN THE CASAMANCE

Media report that on September 18, a group of heavily armed bandits attacked mass transit vehicles between Kandialon and Barandama, two villages in the department of Bignona. The attackers made away with all of the passengers' possessions, including cellular phones, money, etc.

We encourage all citizens to refer to the Warden Message issued on February 27, 2008 cautioning citizens to avoid all non-essential travel to the Casamance (composed of the Ziguinchor and Kolda 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.

## WARDEN ZONE RESTRUCTURING

After several months of trying to verify registrants and wardens, we are pleased to now create 11 sub-zones for what was once the Dakar zone. The new sub-zones are divided alphabetically by the registrants family name. We created a new zone for residents of Rufisque, Thies and Mbour.

1. Dakar Senegal A or B
2. Dakar Senegal C
3. Dakar Senegal D or E
4. Dakar Senegal F or G
5. Dakar Senegal H, I, J or K
6. Dakar Senegal L or M
7. Dakar Senegal N, O, P, Q or R
8. Dakar Senegal S
9. Dakar Senegal T
10. Dakar Senegal U, V,W,X,Y or Z
11. Thies/Mbour/Rufisque

We take this opportunity to thank our long-time wardens and to welcome the new wardens. We continue to seek individuals who will be willing to serve as secondary wardens in the event that the primary wardens travel or become unavailable. If you are interested in becoming a warden or learning more information about your new warden, please contact us at [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto:consulardakar@state.gov).

## CRIMES IN SENEGAL

Dakar: On September 23, a small group of American citizens were walking in the Plateau area when a man on a motorcycle tried to grab a woman's bag off her shoulder. She was dragged several feet and incurred minor injuries.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RE 2008 ELECTIONS

Q: What if a voter uses the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) and then receives their regular state ballot?

A: Voters who receive their regular state ballot after voting the FWAB should still mark the state ballot and return it. If the regular state ballot arrives in time, the local election officials will count it rather than the FWAB.

Q: Can voters e-mail or fax their voted ballot to the U.S.?

A: A few states allow the electronic transmission of voted ballots. Voters must waive their right to a secret ballot. Voters faxing their ballots to the Federal Voting Assistance Program for onward transmission to local election officials must use the Electronic Transmission Cover Sheet at <http://www.fvap.gov/resources/media/coversheet.pdf>.

Q: Are absentee votes really counted?

A: All absentee votes that arrive by the state's deadline are counted for the official record. Many states have deadlines after November 4. In that case, election results may already have been announced but the vote will be counted for the record.

## OCTOBER HOLIDAYS

The Embassy will be closed for the following U.S. holiday:

Korite - Date to be determined (Senegalese holiday)

October 13 – Columbus Day (U.S. holiday)

## 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 76-383-9566.

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.