

Embassy of the United States of America

Maputo · Mozambique



American Citizens e-Newsletter

September 2008

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American Citizen Services:
Monday, Wednesday &
Friday
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

In the event of an
emergency involving an
American citizen, please
call +258 21 49 0723

VOTING

American citizens who have not yet registered to vote and requested an absentee ballot should do so now. Complete the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) using the instructions for your state in the Voting Assistance Guide. You may pick up a hard copy of the FPCA from any U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or use the online version available at <http://fvap.gov>.

EMBASSY CLOSURES

The Embassy will be closed due to Mozambican holidays on Monday, September 8th for the observance of Lusaka Agreement Day and Thursday, September 25th for Revolution Day.

ESTA UPDATE

On August 1, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) began its pilot of Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA).

ESTA allows non-U.S. citizen travelers going to the U.S. on the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) to obtain advance authorization

for boarding an aircraft to travel to the U.S. The ESTA program replaces the green I94-W card VWP travelers had to complete when they arrived in the U.S. with a brief on-line questionnaire.



Within the first two weeks of the pilot, more than 36,000 travelers successfully obtained their ESTA, which is valid for two years and can be renewed in two-year increments for the life of the traveler's passport. Travelers may submit ESTA applications at any time before travel, but DHS strongly encourages them to apply at least 72 hours ahead of a planned trip to the U.S.

Starting January 12, 2009, ESTA will become mandatory for all citizens and eligible nationals from VWP countries who wish to travel on the Visa Waiver Program. For more information on ESTA, please visit http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/esta/esta_faq.xml. To apply for ESTA, please visit <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Travelers who wish to confirm their passport is eligible for visa waiver travel may use a new tool on the U.S. Embassy in London's website at http://london.usembassy.gov/cons_new/visa/visa_wizard.html.

FROM THE U.S. EMBASSY'S REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICER

Dear Members of the American Business and International NGO Community:

The U.S. Embassy has taken steps to initiate a Maputo Country Council as part of the U.S. State Department's Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC). OSAC Country Councils currently exist in over 100 cities worldwide, including active councils in South Africa, Angola, Namibia, Nigeria and Kenya. Benefits of OSAC Country Councils include:

- Opportunities for representatives of various private sector organizations (to include companies, NGOs, faith-based organizations and academia) to network and share security concerns and best practices.
- Regular meetings, which serve to inform you about matters of security - from crime and safety awareness to terrorism concerns.
- A dedicated website for the exclusive use of the Country Council that will enable the business/NGO community to communicate regularly outside of meetings, with informative postings that will keep you up-to-date with the security situation.
- The full benefits of OSAC's Research and Information Support Center in Washington, D.C., where regional analysts focus on security concerns for representatives of organizations abroad and provide timely security information and coordination.

I encourage your organization to consider sending a safety and security representative to attend the meetings of the new OSAC Country Council in Mozambique. **Note that representatives at the meetings do not have to be U.S. citizens.** I also encourage you to visit the OSAC website at www.osac.gov to see what OSAC has to offer. As this is a government service there is no cost to you, and the benefits include a greater understanding of the security environment and how it affects your organization.

Our first OSAC Country Council meeting will be held in the 4th floor conference room at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), JAT Complex, Rua 1231, Nr. 41 Bairro Central, Maputo, Mozambique on Tuesday, September 9th from 10 a.m. to noon.

If you are considering attending this meeting, please respond by **Friday, September 5** to Deputy RSO Chris Belmonti at BelmontiC2@state.gov or at 21 49 2797 x3600. For security reasons, please respond ahead of time or you may not be allowed to enter on the day of the event.

I look forward to speaking with you soon regarding your involvement with Mozambique's new OSAC Country Council.

Sincerely,

Harland Rex
Regional Security Officer
U.S. Embassy Maputo
Tel: 21 49 2797 x3429
Email: RexHE@state.gov



SECURITY SITUATION — NEW WORLDWIDE CAUTION ISSUED JULY 16, 2008

On July 16, 2008, the U.S. Department of State issued an updated Worldwide Caution Public Announcement. It supersedes the Worldwide Caution dated January 17, 2008. Please view the full text at travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1161.html.

Since our previous ACS Newsletter for August 2008, the U.S. Department of State has issued five new Travel Warnings for the following countries:

- Algeria
- Colombia
- Georgia
- Kenya
- Yemen

The U.S. Department of State also has issued one new Travel Alert for the following country:

- Comoros

You can always read the most current information online at travel.state.gov.

For additional information, please visit "Americans Traveling Abroad" on the Department of State's website at travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans_1252.html. To obtain up-to-date information on security conditions, call 1-888-407-4747 (toll free in the U.S.), or 1-202-501-4444 if you are in Canada or outside the U.S.

THE AMERICAN CORNER IN MAPUTO NOW OFFICIALLY OPEN!

On September 1, the "Brazao Mazula" Central Library of Eduardo Mondlane University officially opened with the Vice Minister of Education and Culture, Dr. Luis Covane, presiding over the ceremonies. The library, the largest in the nation after the National Library, will attract thousands of students, researchers and professors from UEM and beyond. In addition to traditional book and reference collections, the library will provide the latest technological tools, to address what Rector Filipe Couto described in his speech as the "rapidization" of information these days.

For the U.S. Embassy's public affairs section, it was a special event: For years, UEM has been host to only one of two "American Corners" in Mozambique (the other is at Mussa Bin Bique University in Nampula). However, until now, the Corner at UEM was not functioning as it should – its grand new space on the ground floor of the Brazao Mazula Library means people will be able to learn about the U.S. and the English Language right on the UEM campus. (They are still always welcome at the Martin Luther King library on Avenida Mao Tse Tung as well.) The public affairs section also plans to work in collaboration with the UEM library to organize a number of events (film showings, debates, speeches) at the "American Corner" – keep your eyes open for these!

