



OSAC Country Security Report Tanzania

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This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State Tanzania Travel Advisory and [Tanzania Country Information Page](#).

Embassy Contact Information

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OSAC Country Chapter(s)

Dar es Salaam has an active OSAC Country Chapter. Contact [OSAC's Africa team](#) with any questions.

Tanzania Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers exercise increased caution in Tanzania due to crime, terrorism, and targeting of LGB persons. Travelers should reconsider travel to Mtwara Region and the border areas of Ruvuma Region due to the threat of terrorism from extremists based in northern Mozambique.

All foreign non-residents traveling to Zanzibar will be required to purchase mandatory travel insurance directly from the national insurer, Zanzibar Insurance Corporation, prior to arrival. Air Tanzania has been added to the list of airlines that are subject to an operating ban or operational restrictions within the European Union, because the EU has determined Air Tanzania does not meet international safety standards.

On April 1, 2025, The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated the current Level 2 Travel Health Notice for Clade I Mpox in Central and Eastern Africa to include Tanzania.

Most roads conditions in the interior parts of the country are not tarmacked and can be impassable during rainy seasons.

Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Dar es Salaam as being a **CRITICAL**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Crime “C” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Tanzania, indicating that there may be widespread violent crime and/or organized crime present in the country, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.

Street crime is rampant in the country’s urban areas, including in Dar es Salaam. Most incidents are crimes of opportunity, targeting people carrying bags, backpacks, phones, computer cases, cameras, purses, or items left in plain sight inside a vehicle. Most of these snatch-and-grab crimes involve unarmed assailants, but it is not uncommon for them to be armed with a machete or similar bladed weapon. Assailants tend to operate in small groups, where only one or two people may overtly take part in a mugging. If the victim resists, additional members may appear with a knife, a machete, or, on occasion, a firearm. Avoid walking alone or with anything visible of value, especially after dark when crime spikes.

Hotel security in most upcountry hotels is not as robust as it is in hotels in Dar es Salaam, and as a result may lead to petty theft in those hotels.

Bag snatchings from passing vehicles (often two assailants on a motorcycle) are extremely common and can be dangerous, particularly if the victim is using a bag with a cross-body strap. Few sidewalks exist, so pedestrians must walk on the street; assailants drive near their intended victim, and an assailant grabs a bag and may drag the victim until the bag’s strap breaks. Many tourists, expatriates, and Tanzanians have suffered injuries as a result, from minor road rash to extensive injuries. In at least one case, a foreign visitor died in such an incident.

Residential burglaries are common. Inadequate perimeter walls, minimal lighting, non-existent/weak grilles, and poorly paid/trained guards who often fall asleep contribute to security challenges. Home invasions involving multiple assailants who overpower lone/sleeping guards have occurred in Dar es Salaam. Using all available security mitigations (locks, alarms, etc.) is the simplest defense against home robberies.

Although accurate statistics are limited, local reports and anecdotal evidence suggest that violent crime continues to pose a significant security risk. U.S. citizens have reported violent crimes that often result in physical harm. Sexual assaults are less frequent but of concern, notably in Zanzibar. The overwhelming majority of sexual assault victims are Tanzanian nationals. However, sexual assault and murders of expatriates have occurred, including incidents perpetrated during home invasions.

Scammers often use SMS or WhatsApp to solicit money or information. There are also scams involving offers to arrange volunteer visas and safari excursions. Vet anyone offering to provide you such a service and check their references carefully. Hire only legitimate tour guides,

preferably arranged by a known travel agency or hotel. Be wary of offers of sightseeing from new contacts and avoid being alone with strangers who propose special, customized sightseeing trips. Practice common sense and remain vigilant regarding your surroundings.

Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping “K” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Tanzania.

Express abductions do occur. Expatriates and tourists have become victims when they hail taxis at airports, bus stations, hotels, or on the street, particularly in Zanzibar. Kidnappers may hold victims until they provide passwords for credit/debit cards and kidnappers empty their accounts, usually releasing victims hours later. Criminals have targeted visitors traveling to the airport because they know that, to some international travelers, catching a flight may be more important than following the lengthy process to file a police report. Abductions involving business transactions also take place.

Tanzania’s borders are porous, hence crimes like human trafficking and drug trafficking have been increasing in the country. Refugees from neighboring countries with unrest such as DRC and Mozambique tend to migrate into Tanzania with weapons that are sometimes used in armed crimes. Authorities note that illegal immigration is especially high in border regions including Kagera, Kigoma, Tanga, Arusha, Mtwara, Katavi, Mtwara and Mbeya.

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Dar es Salaam as being a **MEDIUM**-threat location for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Terrorism “T” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Tanzania, indicating that terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.

Tanzania faces terrorist threats along three of its borders – with Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Mozambique. The Islamic State in Mozambique (IS-M) poses the greatest threat to Tanzania, having conducted more than a dozen attacks in Tanzania since 2020. These attacks have targeted civilians, including burning of villages, kidnapping, and looting of supplies, and have also targeted Tanzanian security services. As of the writing of this report, IS-M continues to be highly active in Mozambique along the border with Tanzania and the conflict continues to pose a threat to Tanzania. In response to growing IS-M activity, the Government of Tanzania sent additional security personnel to the border regions of Mtwara and Ruvuma as well as the neighboring Lindi region.

The U.S. Embassy has restricted travel to the Mtwara Region in southern Tanzania for U.S. government personnel due to this threat.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Dar es Salaam as being a **MEDIUM**-threat location for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Tanzania. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

Elections/Political Stability

Tanzania remains one of East Africa’s most stable and secure states, enjoying peace with its neighbors and a long and robust relationship with the United States. At the same time, international and local civil society and human rights organizations have expressed concern over government and legislative actions that limit freedoms of speech and assembly and fail to address human rights issues adequately.

In October 2020, the country held its sixth multiparty general election, resulting in the reelection of the union president, John Magufuli, with 85% of the vote. International and local election observers and civil society noted widespread election irregularities in the pre-election period, on Election Day, and in the postelection period, which affected the credibility of the electoral process. Prior to the election, opposition candidates were routinely disqualified, harassed, and arrested. There were reports of significant and widespread voting irregularities, internet disruptions, intimidation of journalists, arrests, and violence by security forces both in mainland Tanzania and on Zanzibar resulting in an election that was neither free nor fair.

President Magufuli died in March 2021; subsequently, Tanzania experienced a peaceful transition of power in accordance with its constitution, as then-Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan became the country's new president.

General elections, including the Presidential election, are scheduled for October. In general, recent political developments raise serious concerns about whether Tanzania can hold inclusive and peaceful elections. In the run up to the election, there has been a notable crackdown on opposition figures, with reports of deaths, disappearances, torture, arrests, harassment, and restrictions on political activities, raising concerns about the fairness and transparency of the electoral process.

Protests & Demonstrations

The government has historically restricted freedom of peaceful assembly. In 2016, the government banned political parties from organizing political activities and rallies. While the law applied to all existing political parties, NGOs and critics claimed it unfairly burdened opposition parties. The government required organizers of political rallies to obtain police permission, which was often times denied. Organizing demonstrations or rallies online was also

prohibited. After President Samia Suluhu Hassan came to power after John Magufuli's death in 2021, she began instituting her strategy of Reconciliation, Resilience, Reforms and Rebuilding. This included ending the ban on political rallies in January 2023. Since the reversal of the ban, opposition parties have held periodic peaceful demonstrations in the capital and other major cities. Tanzania's main opposition party, Chadema, hosted a number of demonstrations in multiple cities throughout January and February 2024. This includes a January 2024 demonstration against proposed changes to electoral laws organized by Chadema in Dar es Salaam. In the run up to the October 2025 national election, freedom to demonstrate has been significantly curtailed. Demonstrations are expected before, during, and after the October elections.

Demonstrations and rallies are normally peaceful but can escalate quickly to violence. Rival political factions can become aggressive toward one another and toward the police. Police often respond with force, exacerbating already tense situations. Avoid large crowds, public gatherings, or demonstrations; these scenarios have the potential of becoming unruly, resulting in physical injury and possibly death.

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

In general, safety and security concerns as related to anti-U.S. or anti-Western sentiment are moderate, although U.S. and other foreign citizens are often targeted in thefts and other crimes of opportunity.

Law Enforcement

The police emergency line in Tanzania is **112**.

Under Tanzania's Home Affairs Ministry, the Tanzanian Police Force has primary responsibility for maintaining law and order. The Field Force Unit, a special police division, has primary responsibility for controlling unlawful demonstrations and riots. The Tanzania People's Defense Forces include the army, navy, air force, and National Services. The Defense Forces are responsible for external security but also have some domestic security responsibilities and report to the Defense Ministry. Civilian authorities maintain effective control over the security forces and direct their activities.

Police Response

The police suffer from limited resources, low wages, an inadequate number of officers, limited vehicles, insufficient gasoline, few radios, and many training needs. Some officers may not be responsive to citizen complaints; others may take a report but fail to initiate an investigation. Resource limitations constrain the ability of authorities to investigate crimes; adjust expectations accordingly. Property theft and non-violent crime may not rise to the level of investigation. According to national polls, Tanzanians perceive the police as among the most corrupt institutions in the country.

Tanzanian officials must alert the U.S. Embassy if they arrest any U.S. citizen, however this almost never occurs. Accordingly, citizens who are detained or arrested should request the ability to contact the Embassy at **+255 (0)22 229-4000**.

U.S. citizen victims of a serious crime should contact the Embassy's Consular Section at **+255 (0)22 229-4000** or **drsacs@state.gov**. The Consular Section tracks crime and may request coordination with police to assist/follow up on any investigation.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Tanzania, review the local laws and circumstances on the Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [LGB Travelers](#)
- [Travelers with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Travelers](#)
- [Faith-Based Travelers](#)

Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention “D” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Tanzania.

Arbitrary arrest or detention is a concern. The constitution prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention, although regional and district commissioners have the authority to detain a person for up to 48 hours without charge. This authority is used frequently to detain political opposition members or persons criticizing the government. The law allows persons arrested or detained, regardless of whether on criminal or other grounds, the right to challenge in court the legal basis or arbitrary nature of their detention and obtain prompt release and compensation if found to have been unlawfully detained. The law requires, however, that a civil case must be brought to make such a challenge, and this is rarely done.

In recent years, authorities arrested many Tanzanian business executives, as well as at least one foreign national, on corruption or money laundering charges. In several cases, their companies were engaged in ongoing legal disputes with the government. Tanzanian authorities routinely arrest and then fine foreigners for improper visas while they are conducting business in the country.

Official harassment has occurred in recent years, with reports that authorities attack and intimidate journalists and political opposition. Journalists and media outlets frequently self-censor to avoid government retribution. For instance, the deportation of activists from Kenya and Uganda who were scheduled to attend and observe the court proceedings of the chairman of the main opposition party, CHADEMA, who is accused of treason and seditious behavior.

The law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, but the government does not implement the law effectively. There have been numerous reports of government corruption. Officials sometimes engage in corrupt practices with impunity. The late President Magufuli and current President Hassan both took several high-profile steps to signal a commitment to fighting corruption, including surprise inspections of ministries, hospitals, and the port of Dar es Salaam, often followed by the immediate dismissal of officials. Critics and observers claimed that the late President Magufuli and current President Hassan both used their anti-corruption platform to go after those who opposed them. While efforts have been made to rein in corruption, it remains pervasive. The Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) reported that most corruption investigations concerned government involvement in mining, land, energy, and investments. NGOs report allegations of corruption involving the Tanzania Revenue Authority, local government officials, police, licensing authorities, hospital workers, and media. Corruption featured in newspaper articles, civil complaints, and reports of police corruption from the PCCB and from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Cybersecurity

Authorities use the Cybercrimes Act and Electronic and Postal Communication Act and their regulations to bring criminal charges against individuals who criticize the government on a variety of electronic media. It is widely believed that government agents monitor the social media accounts, telephones and correspondence of some citizens and foreign residents. The nature and extent of this practice remain unknown, but due to fear of surveillance, many civil society organizations and leaders are unwilling to speak freely.

Import/Export Restrictions

It is illegal to export an animal or animal part (including live or dead animal parts, such as skins, bones, teeth, and feathers) without export certification. It is also illegal to export any such products received as a gift or exchange without the correct documentation. The penalties can range from a fine to a fine and two to five years imprisonment. Additionally, it is illegal to gather, collect, or remove flora or fauna, including seashells and ebony or mpingo wood. Penalties include a fine and/or imprisonment of up to two years.

Travelers are required to declare international currency valuing more than \$10,000 on both entrance and exit from Tanzania. Non-residents (except Kenyans and Ugandans) may not import or export Tanzanian Shillings (TZS).

According to the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), individuals or entities intending to import and use satellite phones must first obtain an approval license from the TCRA. The application process for this license is conducted exclusively through their official website at www.tcra.go.tz. Once the license is approved, importation of satellite phones is permitted.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).