



Tanzania 2011 OSAC Crime and Safety Report

Burglary; Carjacking; Crime; Elections; Fraud; Information Security; Political Violence; Stolen items; Terrorism; Theft

Africa > Tanzania > Dar es Salaam

5/1/2011

Overall Crime and Safety

The Department of State currently considers the crime rate in Tanzania to be critical, particularly in Dar es Salaam. Ranked near the bottom of the UN's Human Development Index, Tanzania is known for endemic poverty. High unemployment rates, little investment in employment-generating industries, and low incomes associated with work in the informal sector create conditions of gross economic hardship.

Crime Threats

In Dar es Salaam, nighttime robberies, assaults, petty street crime and home invasions are common. The actual number of violent crimes in Tanzania is not exceptionally high, but petty crimes using threats of violence occur regularly. Assailants often commit crimes of opportunity. As is common in most developing countries, expatriates are frequent targets due to their perceived wealth. At all times, travelers should maintain a high level of security vigilance.

Carjackings occur in both rural and urban areas. Visitors are advised to drive with doors locked and windows rolled up. Travelers are urged not to stop between populated areas and to travel in convoys if possible.

The area near Tanzania's borders with Rwanda and Burundi has been the site of minor military clashes. There have been a number of incidents of violent criminal activity in the region. Travelers to this area should exercise caution.

Road Safety

Local roads range from well-paved to unpaved dirt trails. Regardless of road conditions, all travelers are advised to drive defensively and exercise caution. Many local vehicles fail to



meet conventional safety standards and local motorists often show little regard or understanding of conventional traffic laws or etiquette.

U.S. officials, in keeping with U.N. security procedures, request police escorts on parts of the Rusomo to Kahama road near the Rwandan border because of an increase in armed bandit attacks.

Political Violence

Historical Perspective

Political demonstrations and rallies are normally peaceful. During past election cycles, however, there have been sporadic acts of violence during the registration and election periods. In the past, much of this activity has occurred in the Zanzibar archipelago. Political demonstrations can also become dangerous, with rival factions becoming aggressive toward one another and the police. Police often respond in kind, exacerbating already tense situations.

There is no known organization targeting American citizens or affiliated interests in Tanzania. There is very little anti-American sentiment, but visitors are cautioned to avoid any large crowds, public gatherings, or demonstrations. These scenarios have the potential of becoming unruly which can result in physical injury and possibly death.

International or Transnational Terrorism

Terrorist incidents in the recent past highlight the continuing threat posed by terrorism in East Africa and the capacity of terrorist groups to carry out such attacks. On August 7, 1998, terrorists bombed the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi, Kenya.

U.S. citizens should be aware of the risk of indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets including usual gathering places of tourists and Westerners. U.S. citizens should avoid political rallies and related public gatherings. In the recent past, peaceful demonstrations have turned violent with little or no warning as riot police clashed with demonstrators.

Post-Specific Concerns

The majority of the population in Zanzibar is Muslim and holds traditional values. Some Zanzibar newspapers have warned that women who dress immodestly may be subject to harassment. American citizens are advised to dress modestly and to refrain from intemperate



public behavior.

Scams

There have been several recent cases of American businesspersons who have fallen victim to scams involving the sale of copper and other resources at cut-rate prices. Potential buyers are urged to be very cautious of good deals offered by agents based in Tanzania. Such precautions as using an escrow account arranged by an attorney outside of Tanzania should be considered.

Police Response

The Tanzanian National Police have a limited ability to respond in emergency situations due to lack of vehicles and communication equipment. The police frequently lack transportation to get to the scene of the incident, and when transportation is available, fuel is often not.

Many local police stations do not have working telephones. Officers answering the telephone often do not understand English. English is the official language, but is not widely spoken.

The most visible police in Tanzania are the unarmed officers who direct traffic and patrol on foot or motorcycle. Many officers lack conventional police equipment (two-way radios, restraints, defensive weapons, flashlights, etc.) required to be effective in their jobs. While the abilities of the police are on par with some other African nations, they do not compare to a U.S. police force in terms of capability, responsiveness or professionalism. Corruption is a problem throughout the ranks of the police. Low-pay and morale create an environment in which even bribes of a few dollars can make allegations disappear.

Travelers requiring police assistance are advised to contact them through the Tanzanian 911 equivalent: 112.

Medical Emergencies

Medical facilities fall critically short of U.S. standards. People with serious medical conditions that require medications or frequent treatment are discouraged from traveling to Tanzania. Most medications are in short supply, of inferior quality, or are counterfeit. The cleanliness of medical facilities and quality of treatment is dismal. Misdiagnosis, unavailable treatment, and improper use of drugs are commonly reported.



All travelers to Tanzania are encouraged to purchase insurance to cover the medical evacuation in case of a serious accident, injury or illness. Medical evacuation can cost tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars, depending on the severity of the situation, so all travelers should ensure their policies provide sufficient coverage.

Travelers are encouraged to see a physician prior to traveling to ensure that appropriate immunizations and precautions are taken. Please refer to the Centers for Disease Control's website (cdc.gov) for recommendations specific to Tanzania.

Aga Khan Hospital

Tel: 255-22-211-5151-4, Mobile: 075-430-9876

IST Medical Clinic.

Upper School, Ruvu Street, and International School of Tanganyika Campus, Masaki

Tel: 255-22-260-1307 or 255-22-260-1308,

Fax: 255-22-260-127,

Mobile: Emergency 24 hrs. 078-478-3393 (Dr. on call)

E-mail: istclinic@istclinic.com

Trauma Centre & Well Woman Clinic

Hospital Manager Dr.Zahi Alavi

P.O. Box 3867, 589 Yacht Club Rd, Msasani Peninsular

Tel: 255-22-260-2500/501

Mobile: 255-774-004-203

Email: admin@amipl.net/doc@amipl.net

The Consular Section maintains a more complete list of medical contacts at http://tanzania.usembassy.gov/list_of_doctors.html

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

All American citizens should register with the U.S. States Embassy Dar es Salaam Consular Section.

Always keep the doors and windows to your residence or hotel room secured. Do not keep excessive currency or other valuable items at your residence. It may attract the attention of criminals. Do not leave valuable items unsecured in your residence/quarters. Do not carry more than you need, and keep what you need in a secure place on your person.

Pick-pocketing is common in Tanzania. Avoid wearing flashy jewelry, clothing, or carrying expensive cameras in public. Ladies should avoid carrying purses or bags, as they are



enticing targets for criminals. Practice good operational security if you are transporting valuable items into and around Tanzania. Some reported robberies committed against expatriates appear to have been carried out by persons with inside information regarding the victims. Do not discuss travel plans or other business in a venue where others can hear you. In the event an armed criminal confronts you, do not hesitate to give him what he wants.

Be alert and aware of your surroundings at all times. Do not walk on the beach at night. Do not invite strangers into your quarters.

Use of public transportation, including buses, taxis, and mopeds, is highly discouraged. Hiring a dedicated car and driver from a trusted and reliable source is recommended. When traveling in a vehicle, keep doors locked and windows secured. Keep valuable items out of sight. Always keep adequate room between yourself and the vehicle in front of you to ensure you can maneuver in the event of a situation requiring escape from the area. Be aware of what is taking place outside of the vehicle. Always park in secure, well-lit locations. Do not pick up hitch-hikers. If you are involved in a vehicular accident, a large crowd may gather and could become hostile and aggressive. If you fear for your safety, go to the nearest police station.

Carefully protect all financial and personal information, as incidents of financial fraud and identity theft crimes are increasing in Tanzania.

Always ask permission before taking a photograph. Local citizens may request a small fee for taking a picture of them or their surroundings. Do not photograph government buildings, embassies, military installations, airports, harbors, or other locations or items of a possible security or intelligence interest. Cameras and film can be confiscated.

Do not respond to any unsolicited opportunities to make money, including business opportunities that seem too good to be true. Beware of offers to sell you gold, tanzanite, diamonds, etc. These types of activities could result in substantial loss of money or violation of local laws.

Contact Information

All Americans should register with the Consular Section's American Citizen Services at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> prior to traveling or online or at the Consular Section upon arrival. The U.S. embassy maintains a liaison with local law enforcement officials and is available to assist American citizens during their stay in Tanzania. The Consular and Political sections can be reached through the Embassy switchboard at: + (255-22) 266-8001.



However, you may reach the Consular Section in non-emergency situations via e-mail at <http://tanzania.usembassy.gov/citizen-services.html>.

OSAC Country Council Contact Information

An OSAC Country Council exists in Tanzania, but is currently inactive.