



Travel Warning: Niger

Religious Terrorism

Africa > Niger > Niamey

11/16/2012

The Department of State continues to warn U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to Niger, and urges extreme caution due to increased kidnapping threats against Westerners. This replaces the Travel Warning for Niger dated April 6, 2012 to update information on security concerns. Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), a terrorist group, continues its threats to kidnap Westerners in Niger, including U.S. citizens, and has been successful in kidnapping Europeans in the region. On January 7, 2011, two French nationals were kidnapped in the capital city of Niamey. They were found dead less than 24 hours later following a rescue attempt by French and Nigerien military forces. In September 2010, seven people, including five French citizens, a Togolese national, and a Malagasy citizen, were kidnapped by AQIM from the northern mining town of Arlit. Four French citizens are still being held hostage by AQIM. Although there have been no kidnappings in Niger since January 2011, the Department of State Worldwide Caution dated January 24, 2012, reminds U.S. citizens to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness when traveling in the region.

The border region with Mali is of specific concern since the Malian coup and the Malian government's loss of control over its northern region in early 2012. The border is porous, and there are regular reports of AQIM and other rebels crossing into Niger. The Government of Niger has increased its security forces in that region, but the situation remains unstable and travel there is not advised.

Because of the security threat, the U.S. Embassy in Niamey continues to restrict the travel of U.S. government employees and official visitors in the areas north of Niamey. The U.S. Embassy also continues to evaluate proposed travel and official and personal activities for employees, on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with Nigerien security authorities.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Recently, the possibility of violence related to extremist and criminal groups coming from northern Nigeria has led the Nigerian government to recommend armed escorts for travel in far eastern Niger.

As a result of safety and security concerns, some organizations, including foreign companies, NGOs, and private aid organizations, have temporarily suspended operations in Niger or withdrawn some family members and/or staff.

Although the U.S. government places the highest priority on the safe recovery of kidnapped U.S. citizens, it is U.S. government policy not to make concessions to kidnappers.

The U.S. Embassy in Niamey strongly encourages U.S. citizens who travel to or remain in Niger despite this Travel Warning to enroll in the Smart Travel Enrollment Program (STEP) so you can receive the most up-to-date security information. Please keep all of your information in STEP current. It is important when enrolling or updating information to include multiple phone numbers and email addresses to facilitate communication in the event of an emergency.

U.S. citizens should consult the Country Specific Information for Niger and the Worldwide Caution, both located on the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs website. Follow us on Twitter and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on Facebook as well. Download our Smart Traveler app for iPhone and Android for the latest information. If you don't have internet access, current information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or, for callers from other countries, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Embassy in Niamey is located on Rue des Ambassades. The Embassy's telephone number is (227) 20-72-26-61. You can contact the Embassy after-hours for emergencies at telephone: (227) 20-72-31-41. [Click here to visit the Embassy website.](#)

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.