



Senegal 2016 Crime & Safety Report

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Assault; Burglary; Financial Security; Fraud; Cyber; Separatist violence; Riots/Civil Unrest; Floods; Hate Crimes; Drug Trafficking; Kidnapping

Africa > Senegal; Africa > Senegal > Dakar

4/12/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: Critical

Crime Threats

Street crime is very common, particularly in urban areas. Aggressive vendors, panhandlers, and street children often attempt to divert the victim's attention while an accomplice carries out a crime. Official Americans, businesspersons, and visitors are victimized primarily by crimes of opportunity (backpack/purse snatching, theft of valuables from vehicles, assaults, residential burglaries). Perpetrators using scooters/motorcycles have also stolen purses or backpacks from pedestrians throughout all neighborhoods in Dakar with impunity in 2015. Most of these incidents do not result in injuries or the use of weapons; however, two men on a scooter used handguns to rob two Western diplomats in the Fann neighborhood of Dakar in 2015.

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There has been a marked increase of incidents of violent attacks using knives or machetes during street robberies.

Credit/debit card fraud is a concern, as credit card fraud and related scams are common. Skimming is the primary means of credit card fraud and is undetectable until fraudulent charges appear on statements.

Cybersecurity Issues

The Embassy saw an increase in Internet dating fraud perpetrated by English-speaking West Africans who targeted Westerners who frequented dating websites. Many of these victims were swindled out of thousands of dollars.

Other Areas of Concern

The Embassy prohibits its staff and family members from walking and running along the Corniche d'Ouest, particularly in the Ouakam, Fenetre Mermoz and Fann neighborhoods, during the hours of darkness. The increase in street robberies along the Corniche d'Ouest in Fenetre Mermoz and Fann (near the Radisson Blu Hotel), which the Embassy noted in 2014, continued in 2015.

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The RSO carefully scrutinizes and approves all travel by Embassy personnel to the Casamance region of Senegal due to the history of violence associated with a long-standing separatist movement. The violence associated with this movement has diminished considerably in recent years; however, isolated incidents of banditry do occur along the major arteries in the Casamance. Armed men have used the cover of roadside foliage to force civilian vehicles to stop at gun-point and then to rob passengers. OSAC constituents should exercise caution when traveling throughout the Casamance region. Embassy personnel are required to pre-coordinate their travel to the Casamance with the RSO, and at times the RSO may require a security escort. The geographic center of the conflict zone is concentrated between the northwest region in the department of Bignona along the National Highway 4 (N4) and National Highway 5 (N5). The presence of land mines in the Casamance is an additional concern. Although ongoing demining efforts continue to reduce this threat, travelers are encouraged to stay on paved roads or roads that are well traveled.

Transportation-Safety Situation

Road Safety and Road Conditions

The most prevalent danger posed to Americans is vehicle accidents, especially at night. Drivers are aggressive, unpredictable, and untrained. Poor traffic markers, changing traffic patterns, and random, unannounced road construction confuse even the savviest of drivers.

Road conditions outside of Dakar vary greatly. Many roads are in poor condition and are either unpaved or full of potholes. These poor conditions impact drive times and driver safety, as vehicles are constantly jockeying for a smoother surface or avoiding hazards.

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The further one gets from Dakar, the longer the response time of an ambulance and treatment in a quality hospital.

Public Transportation Conditions

Taxis are often in poor working condition. One must always negotiate a price before getting into a taxi and should exit the taxi prior to paying. RSO advises never to get into a taxi that is already occupied and to prohibit the driver from picking up another passenger once you are inside. There have been several reports of taxi drivers colluding with thieves to rob passengers using this method. Lastly, Embassy staff are encouraged, when they identify a competent taxi driver who operates a taxi in good working condition to develop a business relationship with this taxi driver for repeated use.

Embassy personnel are prohibited from using all buses except the "Dakar Dem Dikk" city buses. Most of the colorful "Ndiaye Ndiaye" (aka "Al Hum") buses lack safety restraints, are missing windows, and are operated in an unsafe manner by unskilled drivers.

Aviation/Airport Conditions

Arriving/departing the international airport in Dakar can be chaotic and intimidating for the less seasoned traveler. Although the arrival area has been renovated recently, one can experience

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long lines at immigration and delays in getting luggage. This is especially true if multiple flights are landing at the same time. Security controls into the baggage claim area are randomly enforced, and there have been incidents of travelers being approached by non-authorized personnel to “assist” them with their luggage. These personnel try to coerce an excessive fee for helping. RSO recommends that travelers decline assistance from anyone offering assistance unless that assistance has been pre-arranged and coordinated (travel expeditor). RSO also recommends that travelers pre-arrange with their hotel/company transportation from the airport, as taxi drivers have been known to take newly-arrived passengers on a circuitous route and charge excessive fees.

In 2015, departing passengers for regional and international flights have been approached by strangers and asked to check an additional bag and offered money for this service. Often times, this was done so the person making the offer can avoid paying excess baggage fees, other times the motivation was less clear. Security services working the airport seemed to have been successful in putting a stop to this practice, but RSO advises travelers against agreeing to accept and check bags for strangers.

Terrorism Threat

Post Terrorism Rating: Medium

Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

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There exists a real, growing threat of regional terrorism. Senegal has been spared any direct terrorist attacks but does remain vulnerable due to porous borders, increased regional instability, and the increased terror activities of AQIM (al-Qai'da in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb). The conflict in Mali has increased these concerns, as various groups have threatened the government of Senegal for its support to France and Mali through the contribution of troops. There have also been threats specifically against French, and more generally Western interests, due to the French intervention in Mali in 2012.

Anti-American/Anti-Western Sentiment

Americans are generally accepted and well-liked and have not been specifically targeted for criminal activity because of nationality. There was a brief period of negative sentiment directed at the government of France after the attacks on the Charlie Hebdo magazine headquarters in Paris.

Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

Senegal is considered one of the most stable political democracies in West Africa, and although a predominately Muslim country, religious extremism and its rhetoric has not gained a foothold.

Post Political Violence Rating: Medium

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Civil Unrest

Public protests, demonstrations, and strikes occur regularly and can lead to violence. Americans should avoid large gatherings, as riot police may resort to batons and tear gas as a means of crowd control. Common locations for public demonstrations are Place de l'Independence, Place de l'Obelisque, and University Cheikh Anta Diop.

Post-specific Concerns

Environmental Hazards

During the rainy season (June-October), heavy rains have caused severe flooding and frequent loss of life.

Personnel-Background Concerns

Homosexual relations are illegal, and arrests, while rare, often make headlines. Arrests for these offenses are usually made after a complaint is filed by a third-party.

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Drug-related Crimes

Senegal has become a pass-through point for West African drug trafficking, primarily from Guinea and Guinea Bissau. Some small, indigenous marijuana cultivation also exists.

Kidnapping Threat

The threat of kidnapping (primarily by AQIM and associated groups), although minor, does exist, particularly in the border areas between Senegal, Mauritania, and Mali. However, Embassy Dakar did not receive any reports of kidnappings in 2015.

Police Response

Police response to criminal activity is inconsistent and not comparable to Western standards.

Do not ignore a policeman's lawful or reasonable orders. RSO advises that you treat officers as though you were interacting with a U.S. law enforcement official. Becoming belligerent or showing a lack of respect toward them will only exacerbate the situation and may result in your arrest.

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Senegalese law requires that you have valid identification documents on your person. As a general rule, the police do not distinguish between original documents and photocopies, so at a minimum one should carry copies of the bio page of their passport. If driving, an original, valid U.S. driver's license is sufficient.

Crime Victim Assistance

Senegal has minimal resources available for victim assistance and support. If arrested, ask to contact the U.S. Embassy. This request is not always honored expeditiously and may need to be repeated.

Police/Security Agencies

There are two primary law enforcement entities: the National Police and the Gendarmerie. Both entities have country-wide law enforcement authority.

The National Police fall under the Ministry of Interior and are primarily located in major population centers.

The Gendarmerie falls under the Ministry of Armed Forces and are primarily based in the rural areas. They operate in select outlying neighborhoods of Dakar once considered outside the city.

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Medical Emergencies

Several hospitals and clinics in Dakar can treat a wide variety of injuries and illnesses. Public hospitals do not meet U.S. standards, but several private clinics are at the level of small European hospitals and even approach U.S. community hospital standards. While in-patient psychiatric care is inadequate, there is good office-based psychiatry. There is a lack of quality medical care in many areas outside of Dakar.

French medications are more readily available than American medications, and the limited selection of American drugs in stock are often listed under the French trade names. Medications may be obtained at pharmacies throughout Dakar and in other areas frequented by tourists. Travelers should carry a supply of any needed prescription medicines, along with copies of the prescriptions, including the generic name for the drugs, and a supply of preferred over-the-counter medications. For more information, please refer to OSAC's Report, "Traveling with Medications."

Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

This list is based on information available to the U.S. Embassy medical unit. The American Embassy in Dakar, Senegal assumes no responsibility for the professional ability or integrity of the individuals listed below.

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Family Physicians

Dr. Madji KAOUK, 144, Rue Joseph Gomis & Kleber, Off. (+221) 33 823-4679, Cell (+221) 77 638-4848

Dr. Chakib HAIDAR, Clinique de la Madeleine, 18, Avenue des Jambaars Off: (+221) 33 889-9477

Gynecologists

Dr. Ali ZAYAT, Clinique de la Madeleine, 18 Avenue des Jambaars. Tel: (+221) 33-889-9438; or (+221) 77-519-1544.

Dr. Rene BEYNISS, (+221) 33 822-5974, 70 Bd. de la Republique.

Radiology/Mammograms

Dr. Gilles Pineau, 41 Rue Mohamed VI., Tel: (+221) 33 822-5678

Dr. Babacar Kebe, Sicap Mermoz, 2ème Porte, Immeuble B., Tel: (+221) 33 864-1263

Dr. Faycal Ghozayel, Clinique de la Madeleine, 18, Avenue des Jambaars., Tel: (+221) 33 889-9477

IMODSEN, Corniche Ouest (next to the RADISSON Blu Hotel), Office: (+221) 33 859 1259
Contact: Mme Nidaye

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Pediatricians

Dr. Mareme DIALLO CHAUVIN, Rue de Kolda, Residence les Flammands - Point E; next to building BARA TALL. Office Phone: 33 864 3800

Dr. Hassan JOUBAILLY, Clinique de la Madeleine (+221) 33 889 9477, Cell: (+221) 77 638 4441

Psychiatrists

Pr. Mamadou Habib THIAM, Hôpital Chu Fann; Office: (+221) 33 869-1843

Dr. DIAKHATE, Hospital of psychiatry - Thiaroye, Tel: 33 879-8063, Cell (+221) 77 634-4619

Dr. Leopold BOISSY: Hospital of psychiatry - Thiaroye, Tel: (+221) 33-879-8080

Dr. Marcel Sey SARA, Hospital of psychiatry - Thiaroye, 33 879- 8080; 77 657 4801; saraseymarcel@yahoo.fr. Speaks English and is comfortable working with English speaking patients.

Dentists

Dr. Alain and Joelle VAUTIER, off. (+221) 33 821 3416, at 15, Rue Foch

Dr. Khali ABOU-KHALIL, Office: (+221) 33-822-9252, Cell: (+221) 77 639-9494, located at 16, Rue Colbert (facing Hotel Sofitel/Teranga)

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Dr. Yehya FARHAT, Office: (+221) 33 842-0900, Cell (+221) 77 506- 3925, Corniche Est (Clinique du sourire) near the Belgian Embassy, speaks English. He is a dentist surgeon.

Dr. Edmon NABHANE, Office: (+221) 33 821-7909, Cell (+221) 77 638-1338, located at 70, Rue Amadou A. Ndoye

Dr. Taha Emmie, Office: (+221) 33 825-4800, 1 Mermoz, Km 4, 5 Route de Ouakam - Fax: (+221) 33 825-4801

Dr. Stephen MAC, 62 Rue Carnot, Tel: (+221) 33 842-0420; Cell (+221) 77 409-3360 - He has lived in Florida and speaks perfect English.

Private Clinics

Clinique de la Madeleine, 18, Ave. Des Jambaars, +221 33 889 9470 Dr. Mamadou Ndiaye, (anesthesiology), Cell (+221) 77 634 79 Radiography: Dr. Ghosayel: Mobile: (+221) 77 639-1624

Clinique du Cap, Avenue Pasteur, near old Palais de Justice, Director: Dr. Hachem Diab El Hadi, Tel. (+221) 33 889-0202).

Clinique des Mammelles, Tel: (+221) 33 869-1313, Director: Dr. Abdoul Aziz KASSE

Public Hospitals

Hopital Principal, Avenue Nelson Mandela & Roume , Tel: (+ 221) 33 839-50, Chief of the Emergency Department: Colonel Khalifa WADE (+221) 33 839-5046, Director: Médecin-Général Bakary DIATTA; Email: hopitalprincipal@hpd.sn; website: [Http://www.hopitalprincipal.sn](http://www.hopitalprincipal.sn)

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Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Fann (known as Hopital Fann), Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop, Tel: (+221) 33 869-1818 or 33 869-1900 Director of the Hospital Dr. Cheikh Tacko DIOP - Chief of Emergency department (Chef Service d'Urgences): Dr. Oumar KANE: Tel (+221) 77 644-8654

Hôpital Aristide Le Dantec, Plateau Avenue Pasteur Tel: (+221) 33 88-3800, Director: Mme Asssatou Sy NDIAYE – 33 (+221) 33 821-5025 - Standard: (+221) 33 889-3800

Recommended Air Ambulance Services

Europ Assistance in USA

Address: #1000, 4330 East-West Hwy, Bethesda, MD 20814

The 24/7 number: 1-877-710-4082, Local (240)-330-1523;

Healix

Address: Healix House, Esher Green, Esher, Surrey KT 10 8AB, United Kingdom

Tel: + 44 203 640 67940

Healix – www.healix-international.com

International SOS

London call center at + 44-20-8762-8384 or US based POC: Ryan Clark: Phone 267-716-2411 if they are Tricare, ISOS should be used.

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Address: Chiswick Park, Building 4, 566 Chiswick High Rd, London 5YA, United Kingdom

Recommended Insurance Posture

Embassy strongly recommends that all visitors travel with medical evacuation insurance.

Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC at:
http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/senegal?s_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-double-001.

OSAC Country Council Information

Dakar has an active OSAC Country Council. The Regional Security Office in Dakar is available to meet with American business and private sector organization representatives and will provide information on the current security situation in country. The point of contact is RSO Michael Lombardo (+221) 33-879-4000. To reach OSAC's Africa team, please email OSACAF@state.gov.

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U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information

Embassy Address and Hours of Operation

U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal

Route des Almadies

Dakar, Senegal

Hours of Operation: M-TH 0800-1700, and F 0800-1300.

Embassy Contact Numbers

U.S. Embassy Switchboard: +221 33 879 4000

Marine Security Guard Post 1: +221 33 879 4000 (24/7)

Regional Security Office: +221 33 879 4420

Consular Affairs/American Citizens Services: +221 33 879 4000

Website: <http://dakar.usembassy.gov/>

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Consular coverage for multi-post countries

The Embassy is also responsible for Guinea-Bissau.

Nearby Posts

Virtual Post Presence Guinea Bissau: <http://guinea-bissau.usvpp.gov/>

Embassy Guidance

Country Specific Information Sheet
http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1013.html

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Scams

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Never accept anything from anyone on the street unless you are planning to buy the item. This is also true for anyone presenting you with a “gift.” This is a favorite ploy of street criminals, who will request money in return. Minimize your verbal contact with anyone other than legitimate contacts you may have. Just say “no” and be persistent and forceful.

Situational Awareness Best Practices

Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. If you must carry cash, place it in different areas on your person. Do not carry credit cards unless you plan to use them on a specific outing. The U.S. Embassy recommends that its employees avoid use of credit/debit cards. If an ATM/credit/debit card must be used, the Embassy recommends that you monitor your credit card activity closely.

Make photocopies of your passport, driver’s license, and other ID and carry copies while on the street. Place original documents into secure storage at your hotel or place of business.

Do not wear expensive jewelry of any value, as these are targeted for snatch-and-grab crimes. Do not carry backpacks or fanny packs, as they brand an individual as a tourist. Carry bags with short straps that can easily be placed under one’s arm.

Due to the critical crime level walking outside at night is not recommended. Never walk alone

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at night or drive into unfamiliar areas. The Corniche is off limits for pedestrian usage to Embassy personnel during the hours of darkness.

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