



Namibia 2016 Crime & Safety Report

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Financial Security; Burglary; Rape/Sexual Violence; Murder; Extreme heat/drought; Floods; Drug Trafficking; Disease Outbreak; Fraud

Africa > Namibia; Africa > Namibia > Windhoek

5/26/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: High

Crime Threats

Americans have regularly fallen victim to street crime. Incidents occur more frequently after dark. Criminals sometimes display knives and occasionally firearms.

The most common incidents are non-violent crimes of opportunity (pickpocketing, purse snatching, vehicle theft, ATM card skimming, vehicle break-ins), committed by thieves who rely on stealth and surprise. Pickpocketing and purse snatching are more likely to take place in downtown shopping areas and other high-traffic locations where foreign visitors congregate. The vast majority of crime that occurs in Windhoek is petty street crime. Cell phone theft is particularly common.

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.



Theft from motor vehicles remains a concern. These types of crime usually involve smash-and-grab patterns and are sometimes associated with violence.

Personal robberies and residential break-ins and thefts remain prevalent. Residential burglaries in affluent neighborhoods were frequently reported in 2015.

According to the Windhoek City police, violent crimes and property crimes increased in 2015 over 2014. The Windhoek City police reported that murder rates rose 24 percent, reported rapes increased by 54 percent and theft increased by five percent.

Transportation-Safety Situation

Road Safety and Road Conditions

Driving can be hazardous. Although major roads are generally very well maintained, Namibia's network of gravel secondary roads can be dangerous, particularly during the rainy season. Defensive driving is essential to manage road conditions and the excessive speed of many drivers. Driving at night outside urban areas is dangerous, as darkened roads make it difficult to see obstructions and animals. Visitors planning to drive outside Windhoek should plan to arrive at their destination before dark. Vehicles should be in top condition and

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.



equipped with spare tires and plenty of water, food, and emergency medical supplies.

Road accidents remain a major concern despite a relatively good road infrastructure and good road conditions. Road accidents remain one of the highest single causes of fatalities in Namibia. Traffic fatalities among foreign visitors occur periodically. Drivers in urban areas should be aware that taxis often stop abruptly to pick up/discharge passengers, resulting in frequent rear-end collisions.

Police checkpoints are positioned approximately 15 kilometers outside the principal cities and towns on all major highways. During the holiday season, additional checkpoints may be established along the Windhoek-Swakopmund highway (B1) and near medium-sized towns. Most vehicles are allowed to proceed without inspection, but drivers should be prepared to produce vehicle registration documents, personal identification (passport, Namibian identification cards), car rental contracts, and/or drivers' licenses on request. All drivers should plan to stop and proceed only when waved through.

Visitors should refrain from displaying valuables in parked cars. When driving, doors should remain locked, and windows should be closed. Drivers have been approached by thieves who distract drivers at traffic lights while their accomplice attempts to steal items from the passenger side. Visitors should be aware of an increase in criminals using remote key fobs to unlock vehicle doors in parking lots.

Aviation/Airport Conditions

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.



Namibia has had several aircraft accidents involving privately-owned air operators.

Terrorism Threat

Post Terrorism Rating: Low

Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

The U.S. Department of State remains concerned about the threat of terrorist attacks, demonstrations, and other violent actions against U.S. citizens/interests overseas. There have been no incidents with links to terrorist organizations or large-scale organized crime organizations in recent years. The Prevention of Organized Crime Act and the Financial Intelligence Act contain measures to suppress organized crime, money laundering, and terrorist financing.

Anti-American/Anti-Western Sentiment

Bilateral relations between Namibia and the U.S. are good. Occasional, small-scale demonstrations to protest U.S. foreign policy have been held. There have been no reports of hostility directed toward Americans on the streets.

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.



Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

Namibia became independent from South Africa in 1990. There has been little political violence since independence, due in large part to its stable, democratic government. Namibia's local and regional elections in November 2015 were generally peaceful. There was no organized violence, and the police intervened to stop any election-related problems.

Post Political Violence Rating: Low

Civil Unrest

Demonstrations are rare and are usually non-violent. There have been cases of striking workers forming large groups to protest for workers' rights or increased wages, but the demonstrations have been peaceful.

Post-specific Concerns

Environmental Hazards

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.



Namibia is an arid semi-desert. It can experience extreme temperatures, especially during the summer (November-February), and can experience seasonal flooding during the rainy season (October-March) in the central and northern regions. Dry river beds occasionally flood, resulting in roads being inaccessible. Motorists should adhere to warning signs posted at riverbeds and not cross them when water is flowing.

Drug-related Crimes

Namibia is not a drug producing country. Most of the drugs that are locally available are smuggled in. The most popular drug is marijuana ("dagga"); it is relatively cheap. Other drugs (cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin) are also available. The use of cheap, readily available crystal methamphetamine ("tik") is also on the rise. Namibia is used as a transit route for drugs. Anti-drug laws are strictly enforced, and no bail is granted without a court appearance.

Police Response

U.S. Embassy Windhoek maintains cooperative relations with the national and local police forces. Local police lack the resources, training, and personnel to deter street crime or to respond to/investigate reported crimes.

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.



Under Namibian law, law enforcement officers are required to produce credentials and identify themselves before carrying out a lawful arrest. Whenever an arrest is imminent, it is advisable to comply with the arresting officer's request. Travelers should not challenge the authority of police or soldiers.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

An arrested person has the right to contact his/her family or legal representative. Report detentions or arrests to the Embassy.

Incidents of police harassment can be reported to any police station, the office of the Inspector-General of Police, or the Office of the Ombudsman in Windhoek.

Crime Victim Assistance

The police have established a Tourist Protection Unit (TPU) to assist tourists who have become victims of crime, but the TPUs seem hampered by resource constraints that hinder deterrence of crime. TPUs were established first in the Khomas region (where Windhoek is) and Erongo region (where Swakopmund and Walvis Bay are) and will be expanded to all 13 regions. The TPU in Windhoek is at the corner of Independence Avenue and Bahnhof Street.

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.



In case of an emergency, visitors should contact the local police in their area:

Windhoek

Police: 10111 /209-4111

Fire/Ambulance: 211-111

City Police: 290-2239

Outside Windhoek

Police

Fire

Swakopmund

064-10111/415000/415060

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.



064-410-4639/081-1279335

Mariental

063-10111/345000/345016

063-245-600/0812528152

Luderitz

063-10111/202255

063-202-255

Gobabis

062-10111/566100

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.



062-566-666/081-12-44936

Tsumeb

067-10111/2235017

067-22-1004/081-12-48677

Rundu

066-10111/266300

081-257-543/066-265500

Oshakati

065-10111/223600

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.



065-229-500/081-29-63300

Otjiwarongo

067-10111/300600

081-2022-222/ 067-30 4444

Katima Mulilo

061-10111/25122

061-251225/0813216472

American visitors can also contact U.S. Embassy Windhoek at: (264-61) 295-8500 if assistance is needed in communicating with law enforcement officials.

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.



Medical Emergencies

Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

Windhoek has a number of adequate medical facilities and medical evacuation companies, including:

MediClinic Hospital

061-4331000/061-222-687

Roman Catholic Hospital

061-2702911

EMed Rescue 24 (private ambulance and medical evacuation)

081-924

061-411600

Windhoek Municipal Emergency Services

061-290-2702

For medical emergencies outside Windhoek, visit the closest hospital in the region.

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.



In case of medical emergencies, the Embassy receptionist and after-hours duty officer can be reached at 264-61 295-8500.

Available Air Ambulance Services

For serious injuries, medevacs may be arranged through EMed Rescue 24 with office at Windhoek, Tsumeb, Ongwadiva, Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Otjiwarongo, and Keetmanshoop.

Recommended Insurance Posture

The Embassy recommends that all visitors have medical evacuation insurance before arrival in Namibia.

CDC Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

Windhoek's 5,600-foot elevation can cause fatigue or light-headedness. For more information, please refer to OSAC's Report "Traveling in High Altitude."

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.



Windhoek's dry, windy climate can cause dry skin. Because of fine dust and pollen in the air, visitors who suffer from allergies or respiratory ailments should bring appropriate medication.

Visitors who anticipate spending time outdoors should use sunblock, hats, and skin-covering clothing.

Tap water is generally potable; bottled water is widely available.

While Windhoek, the coast, and southern Namibia are malaria-free, malaria prophylaxis is recommended for visitors to rural areas in eastern Namibia and anywhere north of Otjiwarongo, especially between October-April.

Meningitis immunizations (types A, C, Y and W) and an adult booster for polio are also recommended.

Visitors should be aware that HIV/AIDS is common, with an estimated general prevalence rate of 14.5 percent of the population infected.

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.



For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC at:
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/namibia>

OSAC Country Council Information

For more information on Windhoek OSAC, contact the RSO at DS_RSO_Windhoek@state.gov or visit <http://windhoek.osac.gov>. To reach the OSAC Africa team, please email OSACAF@state.gov.

U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information

Embassy Address and Hours of Operation

The Embassy is located in downtown Windhoek at 14 Lossen Street, Ausspanplatz

Embassy Contact Numbers

Operator: (264-61) 295-8500

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.



RSO: (264-61) 295-8564

Consular: (264-61) 295-8522

American Citizen Services (after Hours): (264-81) 127-4384

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

Embassy Guidance

Long-term visitors should register with the Embassy.

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Scams

Local scams include offers to sell rough diamonds or precious stones to tourists, an illegal transaction. Often, the “diamonds” turn out to be glass.

Other scams consist of one person attempting to divert the victim’s attention (street children, requests to translate documents, etc.), so that a second perpetrator can take the victim’s

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.



wallet, bag, or cell phone. Visitors are advised to maintain maximum awareness if approached by strangers for any reason.

Situational Awareness Best Practices

Common sense measures (not leaving valuables in parked cars, safeguarding purses, keeping wallets in front pockets, being alert to one's surroundings) are the best deterrents against crime. Visitors should maintain a high level of personal security awareness.

Carry only as much cash as is required for the day's business and store the remainder (along with passports, credit cards, other valuables) in a secure location. Visitors should keep cell phones out of sight and use them only in safe locations. Visitors should not leave valuables unsecured in their rooms. Criminals tend to target victims who carry backpacks or similar personal bags, believing that backpackers carry all their valuables with them. Durable plastic shopping bags from local retailers provide a lower-profile alternative. Most confrontational crimes involve lone victims and take place in isolated areas. Visitors are advised to travel in groups and remain in high-traffic areas of town. Walking or jogging after dark is not recommended. In most instances, victims who surrender their belongings without resistance emerge from the encounter unharmed.

Residents who relied on centrally-monitored alarm systems, security guards provided by reputable companies, and high-quality door locks and window grillework are generally less likely to be targeted than those who do not.

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.