



Travel Warning: Ethiopia

Political Violence

Africa > Ethiopia

10/21/2016

The U.S. Department of State warns U.S. citizens to defer all non-essential travel to Ethiopia due to ongoing unrest that has led to hundreds of deaths, thousands of arrests, as well as injuries and extensive property damage, especially in Amhara and Oromia States. The U.S. Embassy's ability to provide consular services in many parts of the country is limited by the current security situation.

The Government of Ethiopia declared a State of Emergency effective October 8, 2016. An October 15 decree states that individuals may be arrested without a court order for activities they may otherwise consider routine, such as communication, consumption of media, attending gatherings, engaging with certain foreign governments or organizations, and violating curfews. The decree prohibits U.S. and other foreign diplomats from traveling farther than 40 kilometers outside of Addis Ababa without prior approval from the Government of Ethiopia, which severely affects the U.S. Embassy's ability to assist U.S. citizens. The full text of the decree implementing the State of Emergency is available on the U.S. Embassy's website.

Internet, cellular data, and phone services have been periodically restricted or shut down throughout the country, impeding the U.S. Embassy's ability to communicate with U.S. citizens in Ethiopia. You should have alternate communication plans in place, and let your family and friends know this may be an issue while you are in Ethiopia. *See the information below on how to register with the U.S. Embassy to receive security messages.*

Avoid demonstrations and large gatherings, continuously assess your surroundings, and evaluate your personal level of safety. Remember that the government may use force and live fire in response to demonstrations, and that even gatherings intended to be peaceful can be met with a violent response or turn violent without warning. U.S. citizens in Ethiopia should monitor their security situation and have contingency plans in place in case you need to depart suddenly.

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U.S. government personnel are restricted from personal travel to many regions in Ethiopia, including Oromia, Amhara, Somali and Gambella states, southern Ethiopia near the Ethiopian/Kenyan border, and the area near the Ethiopia/Eritrea border. Work-related travel is being approved on a case-by-case basis. U.S. government personnel may travel to and within Addis Ababa without restrictions. For additional information related to the regional al-Shabaab threat, banditry, and other security concerns, see the Safety and Security section of the Country Specific Information for Ethiopia.

Due to the unpredictability of communication in the country, the Department of State strongly advises U.S. citizens to register your mobile number with the U.S. Embassy to receive security information via text or SMS, in addition to enrolling in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

For further information:

See the State Department's travel website for the Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information for Ethiopia.

Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.

Contact the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia, located on Entoto Street in Addis Ababa, at +251-11-130-6000 from 7:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday. After-hours emergency number for U.S. citizens is +251-11-130-6911 or 011-130-6000.

Call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

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