Tanzania 2017 Crime & Safety Report

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Terrorism; Political Violence; Natural Disasters; Crime; Financial Security

Africa > Tanzania; Africa > Tanzania > Dar es Salaam; Africa > Tanzania > Dodoma

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Overall Crime and Safety Situation
U.S. Embassy Dar es Salaam does not assume responsibility for the professional ability or integrity of the persons or firms appearing in this report. The ACS Unit cannot recommend a particular individual or location and assumes no responsibility for the quality of service provided.

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS ASSESSED DAR ES SALAAM AS BEING A CRITICAL-THREAT LOCATION FOR CRIME DIRECTED AT OR AFFECTING OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT INTERESTS.

Please review OSAC’s Tanzania-specific webpage for proprietary analytic reports, Consular Messages, and contact information.

Tanzania has unique challenges domestically and regionally. Urban areas with the greatest populations (Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mwanza, Stone Town) are confronted with national security challenges, specifically crime and terrorism, that require mitigation strategies.

Crime Threats
Most incidents are non-violent property crime and non-violent street crime. Street crime is rampant in urban areas, including Dar es Salaam. Most incidents are crimes of opportunity, targeting people carrying bags, backpacks, computer cases, cameras, or pocketbooks. Most of these snatch-and-grab crimes are committed by unarmed assailants. Assailants tend to operate in small groups where only one person may overtly take part in a mugging. If the victim resists, additional members may appear with a knife/machete or on rare occasions a firearm.

Bag snatchings from passing vehicles warrant special mention, as they are extremely common and can be dangerous. Few sidewalks exist, so pedestrians walk on the street. Assailants drive near the victims, and an assailant grabs a bag and may drag the victim until the bag’s strap breaks. Many tourists, expatriates, and Tanzanians have suffered minor road rash to extensive injuries. In at least one case, a foreign visitor was killed in such an incident.

Residential burglaries are common for dwellings. Inadequate perimeter walls, minimal lighting, non-existent/weak grilles, and poorly paid/trained guards contribute to security challenges. Home invasions by multiple assailants who overpower lone/sleeping guards have become somewhat common in Dar es Salaam.

While data are not definitive, reports suggest that violent crime is rising. Americans have reported violent crimes that often result in physical harm. Sexual assault and rape are of concern. The overwhelming majority of victims are Tanzanians. However, rape/murder of expatriates has occurred, including during home invasions. It appears that expatriates and tourists may be targeted because, even in the unlikely event that criminals are caught, criminals know that most tourists will not be around long enough to testify against them.

Below-market offers for Tanzanite, diamonds, gold, uranium, precious metals, or even safari packages is a clear indicator of fraud.

Other Areas of Concern
There are many areas of the country where vigilance and crime mitigation strategies can reduce the likelihood of victimization. Avoid walking/biking near Toure Drive, Coco Beach, Ubungo Bus Station, South Beach Ferry area, or any place where there are not houses on both sides of the road.

Transportation-Safety Situation
Road Safety and Road Conditions
Travelers are more likely to be injured in a traffic accident than by crime or political violence. Self-driving is not recommended. Traffic laws exist but are randomly enforced and are generally not followed by the majority of drivers. Roadways are extremely poor. Travelers
should be particularly cautious while driving at night. If you are driving around Dar es Salaam late at night, be especially cautious when stopped at traffic lights. In order to avoid assault at isolated intersections, some drivers refuse to stop at lights and proceed cautiously after slowing down. Intersections may be very dangerous at night whether you have a green light or not. Refill your gas tank anytime it is half full to avoid running out of gas at a bad time/place. Avoid driving outside of cities at night; emergency response services are largely non-existent, and highways are dark and often poorly maintained. Non-existent or inadequate roadway lighting, gaping potholes, and inefficient traffic laws often lead to accidents, especially after dark. Quality medical care is not readily available, leading to a high traffic accident mortality rate.

When traveling long distances, travelers should anticipate mechanical problems and be prepared to perform maintenance in an emergency.

For more information on self-driving, please review OSAC’s Report “Driving Overseas: Best Practices.”

Public Transportation Conditions

Avoid public transportation (buses, Bajaj, motorcycles, daladala) and do not take taxis hailed on the street. Buses are often overloaded, poorly maintained, and drivers are exhausted. Three-wheel taxi vehicles (Bajaj) and motorcycles are also poorly maintained and offer little protection to passengers. Accidents in these modes of transportation could result in serious injury/death.

Ask local partners to book a legitimate car service or to arrange for your transportation. Take legitimate taxis from a car service, hotel, or restaurant. Photograph the front or back of the taxi showing the license plate and send it to a friend. Ask for the driver’s name and cell (implies future business) and send it to a friend. Test the doors and windows before you get in. Child-locked doors and tinted windows are a bad sign; find another cab. Do not take taxis hailed by people you just met, and do not take taxis that have other passengers already in them. If a taxi stops for gas or to pick up other passengers, get out.

Aviation/Airport Conditions

Immigration authorities heavily scrutinize foreigners: long-term business people, volunteers at NGOs, or tourists who are actually engaging in business.

Terrorism Threat

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS ASSESSED DAR ES SALAAM AS BEING A HIGH-THREAT LOCATION FOR TERRORIST ACTIVITY DIRECTED AT OR AFFECTING
OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT INTERESTS.
Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns
Terrorism is a reality in East Africa generally and a growing concern in Tanzania specifically. Terrorist incidents highlight the continuing threat and the capacity of terrorist groups to carry out attacks. In 2013 and 2014, Tanzania witnessed multiple small blasts in Arusha, Mwanza, and Stone Town (Zanzibar). It is important to manage fear/concern and to make rational decisions based on limited or conflicting information. Please refer to the Department of State’s Worldwide Caution.

Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS ASSESSED DAR ES SALAAM AS BEING A MEDIUM-THREAT LOCATION FOR POLITICAL VIOLENCE DIRECTED AT OR AFFECTING OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT INTERESTS.
Tanzania has experienced its share of political violence, especially prior to elections, in Arusha, Mwanza, Mbeya, Mtwara, and Stone Town (Zanzibar). National elections are held every five years with the most recent election taking place in October 2015.

Civil Unrest
Demonstrations and rallies are normally peaceful. However, they can escalate to violence quickly; rival factions can become aggressive toward one another and toward the police. Police often respond with force, exacerbating already tense situations. Visitors are cautioned to avoid large crowds, public gatherings, or demonstrations. These scenarios have the potential of becoming unruly, which can result in physical injury and possibly death.

Post-specific Concerns
Environmental Hazards
Tanzania is a mountainous country with many areas located in active flood plains. Heavy rains during the summer months have caused flooding, which resulted in loss of life, property damage, and disruption to infrastructure (roads, bridges) and utilities (power, water). Disaster relief efforts are very limited.

Economic Concerns
Fraud/economic crime is so significant a concern that the expatriate community generally interacts with the local economy on a cash-only basis. Expatriates are specifically targeted for economic fraud. Over the past two years, the U.S. Embassy has received multiple reports from U.S. businesspeople who came to Tanzania to complete transactions and were defrauded or kidnapped (held for immediate monetary gain, not for ransom).
Critical to international business is the selection of legitimate local partners. Business incorporation documentation language is confusing, and many fraudulent licenses and documents make it difficult to determine what is real. Markets are small, taxes are high, and prices may be high. Most land is sold as a 99-year lease hold, and fake property sales are common.

Personal Identity Concerns
In general, gender, race, nationality, and disability have not been causes for security concerns, although cultural/religious practices may encourage discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Kidnapping Threat
Express kidnappings are not uncommon. Expatriates and tourists often become victims when they hail taxis at airports, bus stations, hotels, or on the street. Victims are held until they provide passwords for credit/debit cards, and all their cards are maxed out. Victims are usually released hours later. A number of people have been victimized en route to the airport because criminals know that to international travelers, catching their flight may be more important than following the lengthy process to file a police report.

Police Response
The police are hindered by a lack of resources: low wages, an inadequate number of officers, limited vehicles, insufficient gasoline, few radios, and many training needs. Some police may not be responsive to citizen complaints. Others may take a report but fail to initiate an investigation. Authorities’ ability to investigate crimes is constrained by resource limitations; visitors should adjust their expectations accordingly. Property theft and non-violent crime may not rise to the level of investigation. According to some national polls, citizens perceive the police as the most corrupt institution in the country.

Immigration authorities (sometimes accompanied by the police) have a legitimate right to review passports and visas. The RSO recommends that travelers carry a photocopy of their passport and their visa (not the originals). If an authority requests that you enter a vehicle or go to their office, request their name, contact information, and address and then arrange to go to their offices with an immigration attorney.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment
If detained or harassed by the police, American citizens should identify themselves as such and immediately request to contact the U.S. Embassy.

Crime Victim Assistance
Travelers requiring police assistance are advised to contact the police at: 112.
If an American citizen is injured or is the victim of a serious crime, please contact the Embassy’s Consular Section at +255 22 229-4000. The Consular Section tracks these crimes and may request that the RSO coordinate with the police to assist/follow up on investigations.

**Medical Emergencies**

Medical facilities fall critically short of U.S. standards. People with serious medical conditions who require medications or frequent treatment are discouraged from traveling to Tanzania. Most medications are in short supply, of inferior quality, or are counterfeit. U.S. citizens are advised to travel with a sufficient supply of prescription medication to last the duration of the trip. For more information, please refer to OSAC’s Report, “Traveling with Medications.”

The cleanliness of medical facilities and quality of treatment is often very poor compared to U.S. standards. Misdiagnosis, unavailable treatment, and improper use of drugs are commonly reported. As a general rule, private clinics are significantly better than local, public hospitals.

**Contact Information for Available Medical Services**

- **AAR Health Services**
  Ali Hassan Mwinyi Road, Chato Street, Block One Regent Estate
  Tel: +255 754-760790 (Emergency) +255 222-133582/6 City Centre
  Website: http://www.aarhealth.com
  Email: info@aar.co.tz

- **Aga Khan Hospital**
  (CT, outpatient, pharmacy, radiology)
  Ocean Road / Ufukoni Street
  P.O. Box 2289 Tel: +255 222-115151/4, Mobile: +255 784-550100/550200, +255 756-886610/886620 Accident and Emergency Department direct line: +255 222-124111
  Doctor on call mobile: +255 782-004499
  Website: http://www.agakhanhospitals.org/dar/contact.asp

- **Hitech Sai HealthCare Centre**
  Plot No. 311 Upanga Junction of UN road - Lugalo Street
  Opp. Al Muntazir Secondary School
  P.O. Box 3741
  Tel: +255 754-787869, +255 714-179777
  Email: asheeshvali@yahoo.com or hitechsaihcc@yahoo.com
  Website: www.hitechsaihealthcare.com

- **IST Medical Clinic**
  Upper School, Ruvu Street, and International School of Tanganyika Campus, Masaki
  Tel: +255 222-601307/2601308 Fax: +255 222-60127
  Mobile: Emergency 24 hrs. +255 784-783393 (Dr. on call). E-mail: istclinic@istclinic.com
  Directions: http://maps.google.com/maps?q=-6.759463223837992,39.27839376827313

- **Premier Care**
  259 Ali Hassan Mwinyi Road, Namanga, Kinondoni (Next to Best Bite Restaurant)
  P.O. Box 220 Dar Es Salaam
  Tel: +255 222-668385
  Contact: Dr. Omar Awadh,
Dr. Pierre Bervas

The Consular Section maintains a list of medical contacts (in Arusha, Dodoma, Karatu, Kigoma, Moshi, Mwanza, and Zanzibar).

Insurance Guidance
All travelers are strongly encouraged to purchase insurance to cover medical evacuation in case of a serious accident, injury, or illness. Medical evacuation can cost thousands of dollars, depending on the severity of the situation, so all travelers should ensure their policies provide sufficient coverage. In the case of an emergency, contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance in facilitating a medical evacuation or medical attention.

Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance
The CDC offers additional information on vaccines and health guidance for Tanzania.

OSAC Country Council Information
The Dar es Salaam Country Council currently meets four times a year and has approximately 75 members. Please contact OSAC’s Africa team with any questions or to join.

U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information
Embassy Address and Hours of Operation
The U.S. Embassy is located at 686 Old Bagamoyo Road, Msasani, Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
The Embassy is open Mon-Thurs 0730-1700 and Fri 0730-1130.

Embassy Contact Numbers
Main Embassy Telephone Number: +255 22 229 4000
Marine Security Guard (24x7): +255 22 229 4111
Embassy Duty Officer (24x7): +255 68 567 7545
Regional Security Office: +255 22 229 4140
Website: http://tanzania.usembassy.gov/

Embassy Guidance
One can no longer obtain a volunteer or work visa at ports of entry. If you are traveling on a work visa, you should contact the Tanzanian Embassy for the latest visa guidance.
All Americans should register with the Consular Section’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) online prior to travelling but can also register online upon arrival. The U.S. Embassy
maintains a liaison with local law enforcement officials and is available to assist American citizens during their stay.

Additional Resources
Tanzania Country Information Sheet