



American Citizen Services Unit
U.S. Embassy Santo Domingo
Warden Message



TO: U.S. Citizens
FROM: ACS Unit
DATE: March 25, 2009
SUBJECT: Demonstrations

The following Warden Message is being transmitted to alert U.S. citizens to demonstrations occurring throughout the Dominican Republic. The U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Office and local media are reporting demonstrations in several cities to protest slow road repairs and energy shortages. Some of the protests have had episodes of violence. So far, protests have occurred in Santiago, Salcedo and Bonao on March 24, 2009, and further protests have been called for the next few days. American citizens are advised that additional protests related to ongoing problems with infrastructure and energy shortages may continue to occur periodically in these areas and other major population centers for the foreseeable future. Americans should monitor media reports for further developments, and as always, avoid street crowds and exercise caution when traveling throughout the country.

In Santiago, protests are being organized by Consejo de Lucha Serrana to protest the lack of government action to improve poor road conditions. The crowds primarily gathered in the neighborhood of Jardines Del Este on March 24 but upcoming actions are predicted to affect 42 communities surrounding Santiago. Commercial business areas, transportation, and schools may all be affected by the protests.

In Bonao, there have been street demonstrations that included tire-burning to protest wide-spread power outages of up to 13 hours in the province of Monseñor Nouel. Demonstrations are also planned for March 25 to protest the lack of basic public services provided by the government. The demonstrations in Bonao reportedly involve Coordinadora de Organizaciones Populares de La Provincia and Coordinador de Organizaciones Populares (Copobo).

In Salcedo, demonstrations are part of a 72-hour strike to protest government delays in repairing the highways of Monte Llano-Salcedo, Las Cuevas, Las Caobas, San Jose, Palmar de Villa Tapia y Los Mameyes. The call to improve electrical service in the area is also a subject of demonstrations. One man was injured in an armed confrontation between the National Police and protestors on March 24.

Demonstrations take place in the Dominican Republic from time to time in response to world events or local developments. American citizens are reminded that demonstrations do not generally occur in areas frequented by tourists and are generally not targeted at foreigners. American citizens should

be aware, however, that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. American citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise caution if within the vicinity of any demonstrations. Street crowds should be avoided. In urban areas, travel should be conducted on main routes whenever possible.

The U.S. Embassy will update this warden message if new information becomes available. American citizens should stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of their surroundings at all times.

American citizens traveling or residing overseas are encouraged to register with the appropriate U.S. Embassy or Consulate on the State Department's travel registration website at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>.

For any emergencies involving American citizens, please contact the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit of the U.S. Embassy. The Consular Section of the Embassy is located at the corner of Cesar Nicolas Penson Street and Máximo Gómez Avenue, Santo Domingo, D.R.; telephone 809-731-4294; after hours emergency telephone 809-221-2171; ACS unit fax 809-689-6142; e-mail acssantodom@state.gov; web page www.usemb.gov.do.