

U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal  
Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens

Election Weekend Security

Subject: **Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens: Election Weekend Security**

February 24, 2012

This message is to alert U.S. citizens in Senegal to certain safety and security concerns regarding this weekend's election and to provide information on recommended security measures you can take in preparation of this event.

As recent violent protests have shown, the security situation is expected to remain unpredictable and volatile into next week. The last emergency message reported the planned Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS) rally scheduled for today, Friday, February 24, outside the PDS headquarters located near the end of the VDN in Dakar. The event is likely to draw large crowds as well as close traffic in both directions on the VDN. Opposition candidates are likely to hold their own political rallies or opposing demonstrations. Please use caution when traveling on Friday and consider avoiding the area around PDS headquarters starting in the afternoon.

Campaigning is prohibited on Saturday, February 25. On Sunday, February 26, the day of the elections, polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.; if needed, polling station hours can be extended to 8:00 p.m. Please note that the Government of Senegal will restrict inter-departmental travel on Sunday. U.S. Embassy personnel are advised to remain in Dakar on that date and U.S. citizens are encouraged to limit movements within the department in which they are located, or they may be subject to stoppage/questioning at checkpoints. Ensure that you have proper identification with you at all times, and particularly on Election Day.

While it is expected that the morning and early afternoon on Sunday will be calm, we encourage U.S. citizens to avoid polling locations. As soon as the polls close, reporting of early results will begin by political parties and the security situation could change rapidly. As a precaution, Embassy personnel are advised to return to their residences by early afternoon on Sunday and to remain at their residences through the evening. U.S. citizens are encouraged to do the same.

The U.S. Embassy plans to operate under its normal business hours on Monday, February 27; however, in the event demonstrations prevent movement on Monday, the U.S. Embassy will reassess its operating schedule.

Embassy personnel are advised to take the following precautions:

- Ensure that all personal vehicles' fuel tanks are full by Sunday, February 26.
- Ensure you have sufficient food, water, and medical supplies to last a minimum of 72 hours starting on Sunday.

Given the uncertainty of the timing and size of demonstrations and the potential for violence, U.S. citizens are urged to exercise caution if traveling over the election weekend. Demonstrations can occur without advance notice and have the potential to quickly turn violent. Stay tuned to media reports, maintain situational awareness, consider alternate travel routes in case of blockage and avoid demonstrations should you come upon them.

You can stay in touch and get Embassy updates by checking the U.S. Embassy Dakar website (<http://dakar.usembassy.gov/>). You can also get global updates at the U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs website where you can find the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warning, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information ([http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1013.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1013.html)). If you don't have internet access, you can get current information on safety and security by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States, or for callers from other countries, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

If you are going to live in or travel to Senegal or Guinea-Bissau, please take the time to tell us about your trip by enrolling in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP - <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>). If you enroll, we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in an emergency. You should remember to keep all of your information in STEP up to date. It is important during enrollment or updating of information to include your current phone number and current email address where you can be reached in case of an emergency.

The U.S. Embassy in Dakar is located on at Avenue Jean XXIII, Dakar; the mailing address is B.P. 49, Dakar, Senegal. If you have questions or concerns about safety or related issues, you are encouraged to contact the consular section at the Embassy by sending an email message to [consulardakar@state.gov](mailto:consulardakar@state.gov). The Embassy telephone number is +221 33 829-2100. For after hours emergencies, please call Tel: 33-829-2209 and ask to speak to the duty officer.