

U.S. Embassy Freetown, Sierra Leone
Security Message to U.S. Citizens: Media Protests
October 28, 2013

The U.S. Embassy alerts U.S. citizens that journalists and members of the media will be marching in black attire to the Law Court building in downtown Freetown to show solidarity for jailed journalists whose case will be heard on Tuesday, October 29. The day has been declared “Black Tuesday” and will involve a media blackout, including newspapers and radio stations.

The U.S. Embassy advises U.S. citizens to avoid the downtown area, crowds, and exercise caution if in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of Police stated today that the threat of terrorism means that security personnel are to be vigilant and firm. Be aware that the government has stepped up its security in Freetown. Tighter procedures are in place to control access to government buildings and to monitor the public’s movements, particularly in the evenings. Please be courteous and follow instructions should you be stopped by the police.

If you are going to live in or travel to Sierra Leone, please take the time to tell us about your trip by enrolling in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). 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.

You can stay in touch and get U.S. Embassy updates by checking the [U.S. Embassy Freetown website](#). You can also get global updates at the U.S. Department of State, [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#) where you can find the current [Worldwide Caution](#), [Travel Warnings](#), [Travel Alerts](#), and [Country Specific Information](#) . 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).

The U.S. Embassy in Freetown is located at Leicester Square, Regent. 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 to consularfreetown@state.gov or calling 232(76) 515-000 or 076-515-000. For after- hours emergencies, please call Tel: 232-(76) 515-000 or 076-515-000.