

Thursday October 5, 2006

# Travel Warning

United States Department of State  
Bureau of Consular Affairs  
Washington, DC 20520

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## UZBEKISTAN

### October 04, 2006

This Travel Warning is being issued to remind U.S. citizens that the potential for a terrorist attack or civil disturbance still exists, despite the fact that there have been no violent incidents in Uzbekistan since May 2005. Visas are difficult for American citizens to obtain and are often valid for a single entry of very limited duration. The Department of State continues to urge Americans in Uzbekistan to exercise extreme caution. This Travel Warning supersedes the Travel Warning of April 7, 2006.

The Department of State reminds U.S. citizens of the potential for terrorist attacks or civil disturbance in Uzbekistan, although there have been no violent incidents there since May 2005, and continues to urge Americans in Uzbekistan to exercise extreme caution. In addition, relations between the United States and Uzbekistan have deteriorated over the past year. Uzbekistan no longer allows the Peace Corps to operate and has ended the U.S. military presence in the country. Visas are difficult for American citizens to obtain and often are valid for a single entry of very limited duration. The U.S. Government continues to receive information that indicates that terrorist groups may be planning attacks, possibly against U.S. interests, in Uzbekistan. Supporters of terrorist groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Al-Qaida, the Islamic Jihad Union, and the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement are active in the region. Members of these groups have expressed anti-U.S. sentiments and have attacked U.S. Government interests in the past, including the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, and may attempt to target U.S. Government or private American interests in Uzbekistan. In the past, these groups have been known to conduct kidnappings, assassinations, and suicide bombings.

Uzbekistan experienced a wave of terrorist violence in 2004. Three suicide bombings occurred in July 2004 in Tashkent, including one outside the U.S. Embassy. Other targets included the Israeli Embassy and the Uzbekistan Prosecutor General's Office. The Islamic Jihad Union released a statement claiming responsibility for these attacks. Multiple attacks also occurred in Tashkent and Bukhara in late March and early April 2004. These attacks used suicide bombers, and mainly focused on police and Uzbek private and commercial facilities. In late July 2004, approximately 15 people pled guilty in an Uzbekistan court to charges related to the attacks. The Islamic Jihad Union also claimed responsibility for these operations. In May 2005, armed militants stormed a prison in Andijon, released its prisoners, and then took control of the regional administration and other government buildings in Andijon Province. Fighting broke out between government forces and the militants, and reports indicated that several hundred civilians died in the ensuing violence. While there were no reports of U.S. citizens affected by these events, U.S. citizens and other foreigners in Uzbekistan frequently have experienced harassment from authorities and local residents since the 2005 violence.

Terrorist groups do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. As security is increased at official U.S. facilities, terrorists and their sympathizers seek softer targets. These may include facilities where Americans and other foreigners congregate or visit, such as residential areas, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, hotels, outdoor recreation events, and resorts. In 2003, the U.S. Embassy received information indicating that terrorist groups had planned attacks against hotels

in Uzbekistan frequented by Westerners, as well as against other institutions affiliated with or representing foreign interests.

The U.S. Embassy in Tashkent continues to employ heightened security precautions. U.S. citizens should report any unusual activity to local authorities and then inform the Embassy.

The Uzbek Government maintains travel restrictions on large parts of the Surkhandarya province bordering Afghanistan, including the border city of Termez. American citizens intending to travel to this region must obtain a special permission card from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, or Uzbek embassies and consulates abroad.

Americans traveling to or remaining in Uzbekistan are strongly urged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration website, <https://travelregistration.state.gov>, and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Uzbekistan. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent. The U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan is located at # 3, Moyqorghon Street, 5th Block, Yunusobod District, Tashkent-700093, Uzbekistan. The telephone number is 998-71-120-5450 and can be reached after hours as well. The fax number is 998-71-120-6335. The website is <http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov>.

Travelers also should consult the Department of State's latest Consular Information Sheet for Uzbekistan, the Public Announcement for Central Asia, and the Worldwide Caution Public Announcement at <http://travel.state.gov>. American citizens may also obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States or Canada, and 202-501-4444 from overseas.



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