As we approach the holiday season, the U.S. Mission in Kampala would like to alert U.S. citizens residing in or traveling to Uganda of petty crime that tends to rise with the holiday season, and to the continued threat of terrorist-related activity in Uganda in light of the July 11 bombings and the December 20 attack on a Uganda-bound bus in Nairobi, Kenya.

Personal Protective Measures
Incidents of petty crime in Kampala often increase during the holiday season. The U.S. Mission reminds U.S. citizens in Uganda to exercise the same levels of caution in Kampala that one would exercise in any large city. This means being alert to your surroundings, avoiding poorly-lit areas, keeping doors and windows locked, refraining from displaying jewelry or large amounts of cash, and keeping a copy of the U.S. Embassy’s telephone numbers in case of an emergency.

Ongoing Terrorist Threat
Reports indicate that the terrorists involved in the December 20 Nairobi bus attack were boarding the bus en route to Kampala. While no one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, extremist organizations such as al-Shabaab remain active in the region and have warned of future attacks. U.S. citizens should avoid high-density public gatherings and remain vigilant. Please review the current guidance to resident and visiting U.S. citizens at http://kampala.usembassy.gov/warden_message08182010.html, as well as at http://kampala.usembassy.gov/travel_alert_europe.html for travel to Europe. Careful reassessment of each of these areas will better prepare the members of our community for the festive season and beyond.

If you are planning to travel to or reside in Uganda, please take the time to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at http://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/. By enrolling in this program, you will receive important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in case of 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 is located at Plot 1577 Ggaba Road. For after-hour emergencies, call (256) (414) 306-001 or (256) (414) 259-791, fax (256) (414) 258-451, email: KampalaUSCitizen@state.gov.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs website at: http://travel.state.gov, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Alerts, Travel Warnings, and Country Specific Information can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada, or, for callers outside the U.S. and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. Federal Holidays).

The U.S. Mission in Kampala wishes the U.S. citizen community in Uganda a peaceful and happy holiday season.