

U.S. Embassy urges Americans to leave Haiti 'as soon as possible'

American citizens in Haiti should leave the country "as soon as possible" because of spiraling security and infrastructure "challenges," the U.S. Embassy said in a travel advisory issued late Wednesday.

The advisory urged U.S. nationals to depart Haiti immediately on commercial or private transportation and cautioned those traveling around the country to avoid demonstrations and large gatherings of people.

"Flights fill up quickly and seats may only be available several days or even weeks in advance of departure," the advisory said. It cautioned that if "you encounter a roadblock, turn around and get to a safe area," a reference to an escalating gang turf war that has seen Haiti consumed by random killings, rapes, extortion and kidnappings.

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