

Minister Baird and Minister of State Ablonczy Continue to Call for Canadians to Leave Syria

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News Release

(No. 3 - January 4, 2012 - 9:00 a.m. ET) Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird and the Honourable Diane Ablonczy, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs), today issued the following statement:

“The security situation in Syria is increasingly volatile. Today, we reiterate our call to all Canadian citizens still in Syria: the time to leave is now.

“On December 15, 2011, we announced a voluntary evacuation of Canadian citizens in Syria and expedited services to help them leave the country as soon as possible.

“This initiative has allowed us to assist hundreds of Canadians and their dependents to obtain the necessary travel documents in order to leave Syria.

“Indiscriminate violence and brutal repression by Syrian authorities continue unabated. Assad’s increasingly isolated regime has lost all legitimacy and is desperately clinging to power.

“We call once more on President Assad and his backers to step down immediately and make way for a free and democratic Syria where the fundamental human rights of all its citizens are respected.

“We continue to stand with the Syrian people in their search for a brighter future.”

Canadian citizens in Syria requiring consular assistance should contact the Canadian Embassy in Damascus at 963 (11) 611-6692, 611-6851, or 611-6870, or call Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada’s Emergency Operations Centre collect at 613-944-2471. An email may also be sent to sos@international.gc.ca.

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