

Canada Suspends Embassy Operations in Syria

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News Release

March 5, 2012 - Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird today issued the following statement:

“The deteriorating security situation in Syria has led us to suspend our services at both our embassy and consulate in Syria, effective immediately. Canadian diplomats have now safely left the country.

“Canada has maintained its diplomatic presence in Syria—despite the risks—to monitor developments on the ground and to deliver tough and frank messages to the Syrian authorities. These messages will continue to be delivered directly through the Syrian embassy here in Ottawa and through our other international forums.

“We continue to reiterate: Assad must go. Change will happen. Syrians will have their day—and Canada stands with the Syrian people in their push for a better, brighter future.”

From December 15, 2011, to January 14, 2012, Canada implemented a voluntary evacuation of its citizens in Syria and offered fast-track services to help them leave the country quickly. Canadians who have remained in Syria despite repeated calls to leave can now use the Canadian embassy in Beirut for consular assistance.

Canadians remaining in Syria place themselves at considerable personal risk. All Canadians in Syria are again urged to leave now, while commercial options are available. In the event that emergency consular assistance is required on the ground, Canada has an agreement in place with the Hungarian embassy in Damascus.

Anyone in Syria wishing to submit an application for temporary resident status in Canada should apply through the Canadian visa office in Beirut or Amman. Syrian nationals outside of Syria can submit their applications to any other Canadian visa office. More information on visa services previously offered at the embassy in Damascus is available in a news release issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Updates, when available, will be posted on the CIC website.

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