

Canada–Syria Relations

- Canada established diplomatic relations with Syria in 1965 and opened an embassy in Damascus in 1985. Syria opened an embassy in Ottawa in 1999. Both countries are members of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Health Organization.
- In 1997, Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister visited Syria and the Defence Minister visited the country in September 1999. Syria's Foreign Minister visited Canada in June 1999.
- Canada and Syria are exploring ways to enhance their cultural and academic activities through contacts between institutions in both countries. A major exhibit of Syrian artifacts will be held in May 2000 at the Musée de la civilisation in Quebec City. Canada's Prime Minister and Syria's President are patrons of the exhibit, which is entitled Syria: Land of Civilizations.
- Canada is active in two missions relating to Syria. The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, which includes 190 Canadian Forces personnel, supervises the cease fire between Israel and Syria. The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization mission, with 11 Canadian Forces personnel, assists in supervising the general armistice agreements concluded separately between Israel and Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria.
- The Canada Fund for Dialogue and Development, which promotes Mideast peace initiatives in Syria, has supported a centre for the disabled through the Mennonite Central Committee.

Trade and Investment

- Canada has modest trade relations with Syria with two-way trade in 1999 valued at \$23.4 million. Although the Syrian economy has become more liberalized since 1990, the pace of reform has been curtailed to avoid serious social and political disruptions. The government hopes to introduce further reforms as it seeks new investors.
- In 1999, Canadian exports to Syria amounted to \$21 million and included pipes, instruments, wood, and zinc. Canadian imports from Syria for that year totalled \$2.4 million and consisted mainly of clothing, seeds, and dried fruits.