

# News Release

Secretary of  
State for  
External Affairs



# Communiqué

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## CANADIANS IN IRAQ AND THE GULF

The Canadian Embassy in Kuwait is maintaining contact with Canadian citizens there who have registered with it and who have been unable to leave the country since the invasion. To date 522 Canadians have been reached by the Embassy. The Canadian Embassy in Baghdad reports that about 200 Canadians are in Iraq. Canadians in both Kuwait and Iraq are believed to be safe. The Embassy continues to advise Canadians in Kuwait to stay put. Although some Canadians have managed to leave the area by travelling overland, the risks in doing so are considerable.

External Affairs and International Trade Canada in Ottawa and the Canadian Embassy in Baghdad continue to reiterate to the Iraqi authorities that Iraq must permit Canadians to leave Iraq and Kuwait and that it is Iraq's international obligation to do so and to ensure the safety of Canadians in both countries. The Canadian government has asked the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to play a role in the protection of civilians and the Red Cross has been pursuing this question with Iraq.

Canada has told Iraq that our Embassy in Kuwait is there to protect Canadians. We have no plans to leave. Our diplomats will remain in Kuwait as long as they are permitted to do so to assist Canadian nationals. There are ongoing consultations between like-minded countries on this issue.

In the hope that Canadians will be authorized to leave, the Canadian government has positioned an aircraft in Cyprus from where it could be used to evacuate Canadians. Contingency plans have also been made for the possible use of other aircraft if circumstances warrant.

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