

News Release

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GULF CRISIS - SITUATION REPORT

The Embassy in Kuwait remains open, and the five Canadian staff who have remained inside the Embassy since August 24 are in daily contact, by telephone, with the Canadians who have decided to stay in Kuwait. To date, more than 500 members of the Canadian community have left Kuwait, either with the Embassy's assistance, on evacuation flights, or, in the case of dual nationals, on their own, using non-Canadian passports. To date the twenty-one Canadians who remain in Kuwait have declined the Embassy's offers to help them to travel to Baghdad, where conditions in general are better.

Fifty-nine Canadians remain in Iraq, in addition to the ten at the Canadian Embassy in Baghdad. Adult males aged 18 or over from a number of Western countries, including Canada, are still not permitted to leave Iraq. The same rule applies to adult females who were in Iraq under employment contracts. Food is available, and Canadians are free to move about Baghdad. No Canadians are under detention in Iraq or Kuwait. The Embassy continues to make representations to the Iraqi authorities for exit permits to be granted for all Canadians. These are still being refused.

The Embassy in Kuwait will be staffed as long as its personnel are able to offer assistance to Canadians, have sufficient supplies of food and water and their health or safety is not jeopardized. However the situation on the ground for the five Canadian staff members still in the Embassy has become extremely difficult. They have diminishing supplies of food and drinking water. The water mains and power have been cut off completely for at least three weeks and water for all purposes must come from their supplies of bottled water. The Iraqi military cordon around the Embassy has been tightened to prevent any unobserved access or departure. There are about a dozen other Embassies which have also remained in Kuwait, and most of them face similar conditions. External Affairs remains in contact with the Embassy in Kuwait although communication continues to be intermittent.

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