

News Release

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UPDATED MIDDLE EAST TRAVEL ADVICE ISSUED TO CANADIANS

External Affairs and International Trade Canada today issued updated travel advice to Canadian citizens living in or visiting the Middle East. The advice reflects the Department's assessment of increasing tensions in the Middle East.

The travel advice updates one issued on December 21, 1990, and recommends that Canadians living or travelling in certain countries in this region, who plan to leave, should do so without delay.

The Department is issuing such advice at this time to provide Canadians with the best possible information to help them to decide on their travel plans. Canadians remaining in these countries should keep abreast of events and keep their plans under review.

The countries concerned are Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, the Eastern Province and Central Region of Saudi Arabia, including Riyadh, Yemen, Syria, Eastern Turkey, Israel and the Israeli-occupied territories. Residents in and visitors to other countries in the region, in particular Oman, the United Arab Emirates, other areas of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iran are being advised to exercise additional caution and to keep in close contact with the nearest Canadian embassy.

In issuing this consular advice, the Department noted that similar advice is being given by other countries, reflecting their respective assessments of the degree of risk in various countries and the number and situation of their nationals. There are about 17,000 Canadian nationals in the countries affected by this travel advice.

Lebanon is not included in the present notice since standing travel advice already exists advising Canadians not to visit Lebanon.

The full text of this updated travel advice is attached.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

Media Relations Office
External Affairs and International Trade Canada
(613) 995-1874

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ADVICE TO CANADIANS

1. The following advice applies to the region comprised of Saudi Arabia (Eastern Province and Central Region including Riyadh), Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan, Yemen, Syria, Eastern Turkey, Israel and the Israeli-occupied territories.

(a) Because of increased tension in the Middle East and the transportation difficulties which might arise in a deteriorating situation, all Canadians in these countries who plan to leave should do so without delay.

(b) Canadian tourists, business and other travellers to these countries should defer their travel.

(c) Canadians normally resident in these countries and who are or plan to be out of the area on leave should extend their stay out of the region until tension subsides.

(d) Persons with compelling reasons to remain should keep the situation under close review.

(e) Citizens who hold dual nationality are reminded that they may have obligations respecting the country where they have citizenship. This could affect plans they might otherwise wish to make in this respect.

2. The following advice applies to Egypt, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia (other than the Eastern Province and Central Region, including Riyadh area), and Oman:

Canadians resident in or contemplating travel to this region should be alert to the possibility of unrest including risk to foreigners in relation to developments in the Middle East and should be advised to exercise appropriate caution and prudence. Such Canadians are advised to register

with the nearest Canadian embassy on arrival. Canadians already registered should keep the embassy advised of changes in address or plans.

3. This advice is based on current expectations. Future travel should be based on ongoing assessments of the situation in the Middle East. Canadians contemplating travel to destinations in the Middle East in the future should check with Canadian missions or the Department again closer to their departure date.

4. While the Government of Canada is providing advice in this respect, it is the responsibility of individual Canadians to make their own decisions and arrangements after considering all factors affecting their individual situations.