



No. 289

December 21, 1990

REVISED MIDDLE EAST TRAVEL ADVICE ISSUED TO CANADIANS

External Affairs and International Trade Canada today issued revised travel advice to Canadian citizens living in or visiting the Middle East. The advice reflects the Department's assessment that tensions in the Middle East may increase in the first part of January.

The travel advice revises one issued early in the present crisis and recommends that dependants and other non-essential personnel, whether resident or travelling in the region, examine the possibility of departure from certain countries early in January, if tension does not abate.

The Department is issuing such advice at this time in order to provide Canadians with the best possible information, as far in advance as possible, to help them to decide on their travel plans for the holiday season and the New Year. It does not reflect a belief that the situation has deteriorated in the last few days. Travellers should keep in close contact with events and keep their plans under review.

The countries concerned are Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan and the Eastern Province and Central Region of Saudi Arabia, including Riyadh. Residents in and visitors to other countries of the region, in particular Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, other areas of Saudi Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Iran and Israel, as well as the Israeli-occupied territories, 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 referred to in this travel advice.

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

The full text of this revised 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:

- (a) Canadian tourists, business and other travellers to these countries should consider deferring their travel or, if this is not possible, ensure that they maintain departure reservations.
- (b) Because of the possibility of increased tension in the Middle East in early January 1991 and the transportation difficulties which might arise in a deteriorating situation, all Canadian dependants in these countries not themselves in employment should examine the possibility of leaving by early January 1991.
- (c) Canadians normally resident in these countries and who are or plan to be out of the area on leave during the holiday period should consider extending their stay out of the region until tension subsides or, if they have dependants, consider leaving their dependants outside these countries when they return.
- (d) Persons employed in these countries or with other compelling reasons to remain should keep the situation under review.
- (e) Citizens who hold dual nationality are reminded that they may have obligations respecting the country of residence of which they have citizenship. This could affect plans they might otherwise wish to make in this respect.

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

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 holiday plans.

3. This advice is based on current expectations concerning the possible situation in early January. It does not reflect a belief that the situation has deteriorated in the last few days. 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 consideration of all factors affecting their individual situations.