



Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens: Damascus (Syria), Flight Cancellations and B Closures

Travel Health and Safety; Civil War

Near East > Syria > Damascus

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This Emergency Message is being sent to notify U.S. citizens seeking to depart Syria that many flights are being cancelled and land border crossings are subject to closure without notice due to the ongoing possibility of fighting between regime forces and armed opposition groups. Travelers should check with their airlines prior to planned travel. The United States continues to warn U.S. citizens against travel to Syria and recommends that U.S. citizens in Syria depart immediately.

U.S. citizens in Syria should monitor local and international news broadcasts for updated information. Avoid areas with heavy police presence or crowds assembling and exercise caution if within the vicinity of any large public gatherings and demonstrations. Even demonstrations or events intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. U.S. citizens in Syria should maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness.

The Department of State urges those U.S. citizens who decide to remain in Syria to enroll their stay in Syria through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at www.travel.state.gov, and provide their current contact and next-of-kin information. By enrolling, U.S. citizens make it easier for the Embassy to contact them in case of emergency.

U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs website, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information can be found. The U.S. Embassy also encourages U.S. citizens to review "A Safe Trip Abroad," which includes valuable security information for those living and traveling abroad.

Follow us on Twitter and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on Facebook as well. You can also download our free Smart Traveler iPhone App to have travel information at your fingertips. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain the latest information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or outside the United States and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These



numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Embassy in Damascus suspended operations effective February 6, 2012, given ongoing violence and a deteriorating security situation. All official U.S. embassy personnel and their family members have departed. The Polish government serves as the protecting power for U.S. interests in Syria. Neither U.S. passports nor visas to the United States are issued in Damascus at this time. For emergency assistance, U.S. citizens should dial 0969-333644. Callers outside of Syria should dial +963-969-333644. Please direct inquiries regarding U.S. citizens in Syria todamaszek.usint@msz.gov.pl. For U.S. citizens in Syria requiring emergency assistance, please dial 0969-333644.