

## **CANACA ADVISES CITIZENS BORN IN U.S.-TARGETED COUNTRIES TO RECONSIDER TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES**

By TOM COHEN, Associated Press Writer  
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TORONTO -- A travel advisory issued by the Canadian government this week has an ironic twist - telling Canadian citizens born in Iraq, Syria and other countries targeted by U.S. anti-terrorism policies to consider avoiding travel to the United States.

The advisory dated Monday focuses on a U.S. regulation adopted a year after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks that permits American authorities to closely monitor travelers born in certain countries suspected of terrorism links.

Canada considers the system discriminatory by targeting some of its citizens based on where they were born, said Reynald Doiron, a foreign affairs department spokesman.

"It's against basic principles on both sides of the border," Doiron said Wednesday. "Canadian citizens should be exempted from that measure."

There was no immediate comment Wednesday from the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, a spokeswoman said.

A man holding joint Canadian-Syrian citizenship was detained Sept. 26 while changing planes at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport and deported to Syria. Canada protested the deportation of Maher Arar, 32, saying he should have been sent to Canada due to his Canadian citizenship and residence.

Syria, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Sudan are the countries listed in the U.S. National Security Entry Exit Registration System introduced on the first anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks. The system authorizes the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to photograph, fingerprint and monitor the arrival and departure of visitors born in or citizens of those countries.

The Canadian travel advisory also says people born in or citizens of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen "could also attract special attention from American immigration and security authorities."

"In these circumstances, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade advises Canadians who were born in the above countries or who may be citizens of these countries to consider carefully whether they should attempt to enter the United States for any reason, including transit to or from third countries," says the advisory posted on the department's Web site.

The Arar case involved a telecommunications engineer who was returning home to Montreal from a trip to Tunisia.

Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham protested the deportation to U.S. Ambassador Paul Cellucci. Graham said U.S. officials told him they believed they could send Arar to Syria because of his Syrian citizenship. Canada has generally acceded to U.S. demands for greater border security since the December 1999 arrest of Ahmed Ressaam while trying to cross into Washington state from British Columbia with explosives in the trunk of his car.

Ressaam was convicted of plotting to bomb the Los Angeles International Airport during millennium celebrations and is scheduled to be sentenced this year. accomplices.

None of the Sept. 11 hijackers had known links to Canada, but Canada has joined the United States in tightening border security while trying to ensure that commercial traffic continues flowing smoothly to feed the world's biggest trade partnership, worth more than US\$1 billion a day.