

# Baird on Sad Anniversary of the Torture of Daraa's Children

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## News Release

**March 5, 2013** - Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird today issued the following statement:

“On March 6, 2011, the Assad regime arrested and brutally tortured 15 children from the Syrian city of Daraa for having painted graffiti calling for Assad to go.

“This deplorable overreaction marked the beginning of the regime’s public attack against its children and its people. It galvanized Syrians to take to the streets to demand the removal of the Assad regime and to demand their fundamental rights.

“The events at Daraa—and many more since—have shown the world that Assad is unfit to govern.

“His attempts to suppress the popular will have so far left 70,000 Syrians dead and driven hundreds of thousands from their homes.

“The Syrian people deserve better. Canada supports their calls for a better, brighter future. We support calls for Assad and those supporting him to face a justice of Syrians’ choosing. We continue to urge all those with influence to use every means at their disposal to end Syria’s agony and bloodshed.”

Canada is among the world leaders in helping those affected by the crisis in Syria. The \$48 million in assistance committed by Canada is being delivered through humanitarian organizations and international agencies to deal with the most acute needs arising from the Syrian crisis, with a particular focus on refugees.

Canada’s humanitarian assistance will not be delivered through channels by which it could risk being diverted to support the Assad regime inside Syria. Canada pays what it pledges and will be encouraging others to do the same.

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