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03 May 2007

SYR102526.E

Syria: Follow-up to SYR102397 of 8 March 2007 on the procedures to obtain, renew and replace a passport; information contained in the passport

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

A Canadian embassy official in Damascus provided the following information on Syrian passports:

Passports are issued by the Department of Immigration and Passports. Applicants have to submit an identity card (individual civil record for minors) [and] four photographs along with an application form. Male adults over 18 must also provide a letter of approval from the military drafting office.

A parent or sponsor can apply on behalf of children by submitting a family book and individual civil record. The passport issuance process takes two days and costs about 1800 Syrian pounds (SYP) [CAD 40 (XE.com 10 Apr. 2007)]. (28 Mar. 2007)

According to a report from a Danish fact finding mission to Damascus, passports normally take 24 hours to issue and are valid for six years, except for passports for men about to perform military service, which are valid for only two years (Apr. 2007, 19). In the report, Brigadier General Mazhar Ahmed, Chief of Immigration and Passports Department, states that in order for children to leave Syria, they must have a passport and obtain their father's consent (Denmark Apr. 2007, 19). Consent from another male relative is required if the father is deceased (ibid., 19-20).

According to the Brigadier General, married women over 18 years of age may apply for passports without their husband's consent (ibid., 20). If there is disagreement between a married couple, judges may deny the woman a passport in order to preserve family unity (ibid., 20). Two sources cited in the fact finding mission report make reference to travel documents that can be issued to Kurds registered as foreigners in Syria (ibid.).

The Canadian Embassy Official stated that the photo page of the passport contains the passport issue number, the holder's given name and surname, parents' names, date and place of birth and gender (28 Mar. 2007). The following page contains the date and place of issue, expiry date and the occupation and signature of the passport holder (Canada 28 Mar. 2007).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

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