

Syria and Iraq Resume Direct Flights to Russia

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Damascus International Airport. **Aziz1005**

Syria and Iraq have resumed direct flights to Russia, restoring air links that were suspended amid political upheaval in Damascus and the war in Iran, Russian media reported.

The renewed services come as most Western governments continue to advise their citizens against visiting Syria and large parts of Iraq because of the risk of terrorism, armed conflict and kidnapping.

Syrian Airlines has begun selling tickets for flights between Damascus and Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport, marking the first resumption of direct air travel between the two countries since the fall of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, RTVI [reported](#).

The first flight is scheduled for Aug. 16, with services subsequently operating once a week on Sundays.

The journey will take around four hours and 50 minutes, with economy-class fares starting at

about \$350.

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Iraqi Airways separately [resumed](#) flights between Baghdad and Moscow on Tuesday following a suspension prompted by the closure of airspace across parts of the Middle East during the war in Iran. The airline will operate two flights a week.

Iraq's ambassador to Moscow, Abdul-Karim Hashim Mustafa, said the country was safe for tourists.

"Restaurants are open until 2 a.m. So life is absolutely safe," he said when asked about the prospects for attracting Russian tourists.

Despite the restoration of air links, the United States, Britain, Germany, France, Canada and Australia continue to warn their citizens against travel to Syria and Iraq, citing terrorism, armed clashes, kidnapping, political instability and limited consular assistance.

Warnings for Syria remain particularly stringent, with Western governments advising against all travel to the country. Large parts of Iraq are also still considered unsafe for visitors.

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