

Syrian government expels Western ambassadors

Syria's Foreign Ministry spokesman Jihad Makdissi

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The Syrian Foreign Ministry has said in a statement that Damascus expelled the ambassadors of the US, Britain, France, Turkey and some other states.

Ministry spokesman Jihad Makdissi announced the list of expelled diplomats on Tuesday.

The expulsions came after Western states expelled Syrian diplomats from their countries last week.

The ministry called the ambassadors of the Western and some regional countries as personae non gratae.

The ambassadors of Canada, Italy and Spain and embassy staff from Belgium, Bulgaria and Germany are also in the list.

The ministry also said in the statement that Syria “still believes in the importance of dialog based on principles of equality and mutual respect” and that diplomacy is a “necessary tool” for countries to resolve disputes.

“We hope that those countries which initiated this step will adopt the same principles, allowing for relations to be normalized,” it added.

Syria has been the scene of ongoing violence since March 2011. Many people, including security forces, have lost their lives in the unrest.

The West and the Syrian opposition accuse the government of killing the protesters.

But Damascus blames “outlaws, saboteurs and armed terrorist groups” for the unrest, stating that it is being orchestrated from abroad.

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