Statement by Minister Baird Updating Canada’s Involvement in Libya

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird today issued the following statement:

"I am pleased to announce that, having fully assessed the situation on the ground in Tripoli, Canada has re-established its diplomatic presence in Tripoli and is re-opening its embassy in a temporary location.

"Canadian Ambassador, Sandra McCardell, led a team on an assessment visit to Tripoli. Having now taken stock of the situation, we are starting the work of refurbishing and securing our embassy in Tripoli.

"We have also brought in a team of staff members who will enable us to liaise directly with officials of the new Government of Libya. The team will also prepare for a larger complement of diplomats that will allow us to resume commercial services to Canadians.

"Canada has also secured from the United Nations Security Council's sanctions committee an exemption to unfreeze $2.2 billion worth of Libyan assets for humanitarian needs.

"These funds will help the Libyan people in the short and medium term; this money will help the new Libya get back on its feet.

"Canada is proud to have 'punched above its weight' by leading the way in providing humanitarian, diplomatic and military support to the Libyan people and their cause. We now expect the new Government of Libya to fulfill its commitments to freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

"Canada stands ready to assist Libyans and their new government during their transition."

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