

# Statement Of H. E. Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General Of The OIC At The 3rd Meeting Of The Group Of Friends Of The Syrian People

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Bismillahi Arrahmani Arrahim In the Name of God, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful  
H. E. Mr. Laurent Fabius, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of France Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Heads of Delegation Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, It is a great honor and privilege for me to address the 3rd meeting of the Group of Friends of the Syrian People convened at the beautiful city of Paris to discuss the situation in Syria and find ways and means to save the Syrian people and end its suffering and act together in order to stop the bloodshed which caused more than 15000 deaths. At the very outset, I would like to seize this opportunity to thank the French Government for convening the important meeting and for the excellent arrangements and hospitality accorded to all delegations. Honorable Ministers, Distinguished delegates, In spite of sincere efforts from the international community to resolve the Syrian crisis, I have no doubt that you share my deep concern and profound pain at what the situation there has turned into, with the ongoing bloodshed, the killing of innocent lives including children and women and the large scale destruction of homes and infrastructure. As we gather here today to examine this deplorable situation, we are reminded of the calamities endured by a people steeped in history who have suffered all kinds of killing, mutilation, torture and dispersion as a result of the mindless violence visited upon them, already claiming the violence. Moreover, the current situation could be an ominous portend of the breakout of a civil war that might crush even more thousands of innocent victims, with ripple effects reaching even beyond Syria, to all the countries of the region. Our duty now

commands that we extend our urgent succor to the victims of the violence. In this respect, I have already issued a call, less than a month ago, for an end to the killing in Syria, a call which takes root in the precepts of our noble faith that insist on the protection of human life, enjoins its preservation and prohibits the killing of innocents or their subjections to any harm. Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Since the onset of this crisis, we made a point of abiding by the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a Member State of the OIC, and of respecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, a principled stand which was coupled by our keenness to preserve Syria's safety, security and stability. However, the degrading security situation and worsened oppressive practices with the killing of large numbers of children and women have played in favor of internationalization of the crisis. Syria, being an important member of the OIC, the OIC sought to contain the crisis before it overspills. Indeed, I had talks and contacts with the authorities in Damascus. I expressed my concern over the potential spread of the crisis, and encouraged the Syrian authorities to see to the early introduction of the announced reform. Then I dispatched a special envoy to Damascus in May 2011 to deliver a written message from me to President Bashar Al-Assad. In my messages, I expressed our profound sadness at the continued escalation and aggravation of violent practices, and stressed the need for a commitment to protect civilians, respect human rights, activate the principles of good governance, implement the reforms promised by the Syrian leadership and resolve the Syrian crisis through peaceful means. Subsequently, the OIC issued a number of communiqués calling for de-escalation and negotiated settlement. The OIC has never abandoned its fixed stand regarding the repercussions and developments in Syria. Since the outbreak of this crisis, the OIC General Secretariat has issued a number of statements reiterating its stand in favor of resolving the Syrian crisis through putting an immediate end to the violence and bloodshed. Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Participants, The OIC Executive Committee, which held a first meeting at the Ministerial level on 30 November 2011, urged the Syrian Government to fulfill its commitments to reform and to respond to the legitimate aspirations and demands of Syrian people. The meeting called on all Syrian stakeholders to shun the path of violence and resort to the peaceful means of dialogue and negotiations to settle the crisis. In the face of the failure to achieve any progress in the attempts to steer towards a serious peaceful dialogue and continued killings and destructions, the OIC declared its support for the solution adopted by the League of Arab States and for Dr. Kofi Annan's six-point peace plan which, has so far met with no positive response. Distinguished delegates, The OIC convened the Second Executive Committee Meeting at the Ministerial level on the 24 June 2012 at its Headquarters. The meeting strongly condemned the continuing bloodshed by all parties in Syria, underlined the primary responsibility of the Syrian Government in the continuation of violence and expressed its serious concern at the deteriorating situation in the country. In this connection, it called for an immediate end to the violence and for full respect for Islamic values and human rights as well as for saving the country from the risk of a full civil war with grave consequences on the Syrian people and the region. The Meeting strongly urged the Syrian Government to immediately end the use of excessive force against Syrian nationals and to respond to the legitimate aspirations and demands of its citizens; it further expressed its support to the ongoing diplomatic initiatives to end violence in Syria. The meeting recommended to the next CFM meeting which will be held

in Djibouti the suspension of the membership of the Syrian Arab Republic from the OIC. The Meeting called on the UNSC to take its full responsibility to put an end to the ongoing violence and bloodshed in Syria through a durable political solution and urged the Council to consider the situation in Syria under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. In addition, the meeting strongly deplored the shooting down by Syria of a Turkish military plane, and considers it an action which poses a grave threat to the regional security and stability. Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, To conclude, I wish to call upon the international community to work more actively towards ending the bloodshed and reversing the ordeal of the Syrian people. I wish our deliberations every success in evolving specific recommendations which will contribute to finding an immediate solution to the grave Syrian crisis. I thank you all for your kind attention.

## **Other Press**

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