

Ihsanoglu: the Crisis in Syria Puts the Security Council's Ability to Protect Civilians in Armed Conflicts to a Clear Test

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The Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, (OIC) Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu reiterated OIC's call on the Security Council to assume its responsibility to do its utmost to protect the Syrian people and bring a peaceful solution to the Syrian conflict through a political dialogue. "The real and grave challenge that needs the urgent action of this Council is the ongoing violence in Syria" he said. Ihsanoglu addressed the UN Security Council on "Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict" in United Nations headquarters, Tuesday, 12 February 2013. On Syria once again, The OIC Secretary General stated that the conflict there puts this Council's, and the international community's ability to protect civilians in armed conflict to a clear test. He affirmed that neither the Security Council nor the international community has passed this test. The Secretary General expressed his disappointment that the Syrian leadership perpetuated violence against its own people. On the other hand, Ihsanoglu stressed that the Palestinian People, be they in the West Bank or Gaza, continue to suffer under the illegal measures imposed by the Israeli occupation. He noted that the Palestinian people's aspirations to realize its legitimate right to freedom, sovereignty, and self-determination in its own independent state and in its own homeland, with East Jerusalem as its capital, should no longer be denied. The Secretary General of OIC highlighted that continuation of confiscation of Palestinian properties and construction of the illegal Israeli settlements on the occupied territories should be seen as the biggest challenge to the

credibility of the UN Security Council. Ihsanoglu concluded his statement by expressing the commitment of the OIC General Secretariat to work with the UN for the protection of civilians everywhere.

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