

Ihsanoglu meets UN Secretary General, OIC calls for immediate implementation of a peaceful transitional mechanism in Syria, Ban Ki-moon: I count on OIC to help address tumults facing Arab countries in transition

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The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held their Annual Coordination Meeting (ACM) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 27 September 2013, under the Chairmanship of His Excellency, Mahmoud Ali Yussouf, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Djibouti. UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson attended on behalf of Ban Ki-moon and delivered his message in which he applauded the OIC's engagement on sustainable development, saying "I count on you to help us reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and shape a vision for a common agenda beyond that date." Ban Ki-moon added that he shares the OIC's concerns about surges of violence across sectarian and identity lines. "Our two organizations must join forces to respond by promoting tolerance in partnership with leaders from civil society, academics and religious figures. The media can also play an important role. I count on the OIC to use the satellite channel it plans to launch to promote greater cross-cultural understanding. At the same time, I count on the OIC to help address the tumults that the Arab countries face in this delicate time of transition from authoritarian regimes to new democracies," said Ban Ki-moon in his message to the OIC meeting. The OIC Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu was received by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon at the latter's office on Saturday 28 September 2013. In the meeting, Ban Ki-moon described Ihsanoglu as a regional and global leader who has established an unforgettable legacy of strong cooperation between the OIC and the UN during his nine years tenure. He mentioned that Ihsanoglu remained as a source of wisdom and inspiration for him while dealing with global crises situations. Ihsanoglu on his turn thanked Ki-moon for lending strong support through his seven years in office to the UN-OIC relations guiding it to a strategic partnership. While introducing his successor Iyad Madani to the UN Secretary General he expressed his expectation that the upcoming OIC Secretary General would receive the same level of

support and cooperation from the UN. The UN Secretary General assured Ihsanoglu of his continued and full support for the OIC as well as for his successor. Their discussion mainly centered on Palestine, Syria, Myanmar, and counter terrorism and radicalism initiatives. Meanwhile, the OIC Annual Coordination Meeting reaffirmed the centrality of the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif to the entire Islamic Ummah, and reiterated the OIC's full support for the just cause of Palestine and the rights of the Palestinian people. On Syria, the Meeting stressed the need to preserve Syria's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. It strongly condemned the ongoing bloodshed in Syria, and underlined the Syrian Government's primary responsibility for the continued violence and destruction of property. The Meeting called for immediate cessation of violence, killings and destruction, for the respect of Islamic values, human rights, and for saving Syria from the danger of an all-out civil war, including its dangerous consequences on the Syrian people, on the region, and on international peace and security. The Meeting called for the commencement of immediate implementation of a peaceful transitional mechanism that would allow building a new Syrian State based on pluralism, democratic and civilian system where there would be equality on the basis of law, citizenship and fundamental freedoms. The Meeting affirmed its strong commitment to secure humanitarian assistance for the Syrian people and urged Member States to donate generously to enable the General Secretariat to implement immediately effective humanitarian assistance activities for the Syrians based on burden-sharing principles. The Meeting held the Syrian government fully responsible for the chemical attacks against the Syrian people, which took place in Al-Ghoota in the suburbs of Damascus. It urged the international community and the Security Council to take all the necessary measures to stop the slaughter of the Syrian people and hold accountable all those involved in this crime by bringing them to international justice like all war criminals. The Meeting's Final Communiqué addressed several other issues on the agenda of the OIC.

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