

## **In his statement at the twenty-third Arab Summit in Baghdad, Ihsanoglu: the international community is regrettably unable to stop the excessive use of force against Syrian peaceful demonstrations**

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In his statement at the twenty-third Arab Summit in Baghdad on Thursday, 29th of March 2012, Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) reiterated that the Palestinian Cause remains focal for the Muslim Ummah and that the OIC has devoted most of its activities to mobilize international support for the Palestinian people. He noted that the Islamic Group at both the United Nations in New York and the UNESCO in Paris has provided full support to the Palestinian bid for a full-fledged membership at both the UNESCO and the UN. Ihsanoglu renewed his call for all Member States and Arab and Muslim charitable and humanitarian institutions to provide support and immediate relief to the population of Gaza Strip in their current hardship. He reiterated the OIC's condemnation of the settlement and Judaization policies of the Israeli occupation authorities in Al-Quds and all other Palestinian occupied lands. Ihsanoglu touched upon the tragic situation in Somalia and asserted the need to intensify Arab and Muslim efforts to find a quick solution to the crisis and help the Somali people regain security and stability. The OIC Secretary General expressed his concern over the tense situation at the borders between the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan. He called upon the latter to abide by the Doha Peace Agreement and resolve all outstanding issues through negotiations and peaceful means. He also called upon all parties and armed movements to join the Doha

Peace Agreement and put an end to the suffering of the people of Darfur. With respect to the situation in Syria, Ihsanoglu indicated that the use of excessive force to crush the peaceful demonstrations calling for change, democracy and good governance is really painful, especially that it has been going on for over a year. He regretted that the international community has become unable to put an end to this bloodshed. He referred to the extensive efforts of the OIC to find a peaceful resolution to this crisis through continuous contacts with the Syrian leadership. The OIC Special Envoy to Syria handed the Syrian leadership a written letter requesting it to stop the bloodshed and carry out the reforms it promised. However, after the escalation of the situation therein, the OIC Executive Committee held a ministerial meeting on 30th of November 2011 that supported the Arab Initiative, demanded the Syrian leadership to positively respond to it, and highlighted the need to find a peaceful resolution to the crisis. The meeting also demanded the Syrian authorities to allow Islamic and international humanitarian relief organizations into Syria to provide humanitarian aid. In the same context, Ihsanoglu noted that after the failure of the UN Security Council to adopt the draft resolution proposed by the Arab Group, the Islamic Group in New York supported the resolution of the UN General Assembly adopted by a large majority and demanded the international community to intervene urgently to stop violence and resolve the Syrian crisis peacefully. The OIC Secretary General also noted that after long negotiations with the Syrian authorities, a joint OIC-UN humanitarian mission was sent to study the humanitarian needs under the catastrophic situation in Syria and the first OIC-UN batch of humanitarian aids set off from Damascus to provide basic humanitarian relief aids to two thousand families in some Syrian villages in Tartus region. At the end, Ihsanoglu commended the efforts of Iraq to hold the Arab Summit on its territory after it has recovered from foreign occupation and restored its sovereignty and independence.

## **Other Press**

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