

For immediate release

Statement by Mr. Adama Dieng, United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, on the situation in Syria

(New York, 8 July 2013) Special Adviser Adama Dieng is deeply concerned by the escalating use of rhetoric by political and religious leaders in the Syrian Arab Republic. In recent statements, certain religious leaders have portrayed the conflict in Syria as a religious conflict and have denigrated the beliefs of parties to the conflict and their allies.

“History has shown that exploiting religious tensions in the context of a political and armed struggle may incite violence and could lead to large atrocities,” stated Special Adviser Adama Dieng. “Such rhetoric, when it constitutes a stimulant to violence on religious grounds, could exacerbate the already disastrous violence in Syria, lead to further war crimes and crimes against humanity and fuel tensions between different groups both in Syria and elsewhere in the region.”

All leaders – whether religious, political or milit

“I urge all leaders in the wider region to act responsibly and refrain from using language that may escalate sectarian tensions. The consequences of such language will be felt by populations across the region,” said Mr. Dieng.

All leaders, whether local, national or regional, m

* * * * *

For media queries please contact:

The Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect
<http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/>
Phone: +1 917-367-4961
Email: osapg@un.org
866 UN Plaza, Suite 600