

**Statement by the D-8 Secretary-General  
at 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the D-8 Commission  
04-05 June 2015, Islamabad, Pakistan**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Distinguished Commissioners,**

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is always a pleasure being with you. I profoundly thank you for your personal presence in this very important 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the D-8 Commission in Islamabad. After 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission in June last year, we have gathered here with a number of items having pivotal importance. In this Session, the Commissioners will discuss and decide, among others, the Summit, the Eminent Persons Group process, the budget, revision of Basic Documents etc.

At the very outset, allow me to warmly welcome H.E. Mr. Ahmad Naseem Warraich, Director-General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as the new D-8 Commissioner of Pakistan and current Chair. I welcome H. E. Ms. Abida Islam, the new D-8 Commissioner of Bangladesh, H.E. Ambassador Zainal Abidin Bakar, the new D-8 Commissioner of Malaysia, H.E. Ambassador Bulus Zom Lolo, the new D-8 Commissioner of Nigeria and H.E. Ambassador Ayse Sinirlioglu as the new D-8 Commissioner of Turkey in the D-8 family. I congratulate you all for your new role as D-8 Commissioners and for the trust which respective governments have put in you to carry forward the common objectives with cooperative partnership. We are eagerly looking forward to your inputs, experiences and versatility.

I recall with profound gratitude the contribution and untiring efforts of Late Esmaeil Afshari, then alternate D-8 Commissioner of Iran, who was an ardent promoter and well-wisher of the D-8 Organization. He was with us last year here in Islamabad. We continue to seek divine blessings for him and for eternal peace of the departed soul.

I would like to register my gratitude to other distinguished Commissioners and Delegates for their continued support, untiring efforts to furthering the D-8 cause and their kind presence in the meetings.

Before starting with our agenda today, I would like to once again express my deepest condolence for the loss of life in different incidents in the D-8 Member States in the earlier months.

I would like to make particular reference to the horrific terrorist attack in a school in Peshawar and reiterate my deepest condolences for the irreparable loss of life.

I share my deepest sympathies with those who lost their beloved ones, and pray for fast and full recovery of all the victims.

I congratulate Indonesia on the propitious occasion of the Presidential election in August 2014. I would also like to congratulate Nigeria on the auspicious occasion of Presidential election. Both Indonesia and Nigeria have elected new Leadership to guide the nations to a newer height of development and enlightened future. Turkey will also experience general election on 07 June 2015. I congratulate the people of Turkey in advance on this occasion.

**Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Commissioners,**

Since the last Session, the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, held on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014 in Islamabad, Pakistan, our Organization has achieved progress in different sectors. The D-8 Organization received Observer Status in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). I will discuss the details of the status in a separate agenda item. However, I would like to seize the opportunity to once again congratulate all of you on this significant development. I would like to thank you all, Excellencies, for your whole-hearted support and gratefully acknowledge the untiring efforts made by your colleagues at the Foreign Office as well as the Permanent Missions of the D-8 Member States to the United Nations in New York toward this end.

Another milestone is the signing of the Letter of Intent (LoI) between the D-8 Organization and Islamic Azad University for establishment of D-8 International University. A Letter of Intent was signed on the sideline of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Industry in Iran on 28 January 2015. The establishment of the D-8 International University will create great opportunity for promoting science, technology and innovation among the D-8 Member States. It may be mentioned that the LoI was signed in accordance with the Roadmap of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation in the 6<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit on 08 July 2008 in Kuala Lumpur.

**Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Commissioners,**

Since June last year till today, the Organization successfully held two Ministerial meetings: 4<sup>th</sup> D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Industry from 26<sup>th</sup> till 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015 in Tehran and 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture from 1<sup>st</sup> till 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey. Other meetings at different levels were also

held in D-8 Member States. The list of the meetings held since June 2014 is attached in Annex 6.2 in your dossier.

At this juncture, I would like to draw your kind attention to two important trends with regard to these D-8 meetings: frequent tendency of postponement and lack of participation at appropriate level. During last 12 months since June 2014, a significant number of D-8 meetings was postponed. You will find the schedule of postponed meetings in a separate document annexed in 6.3. Repeated postponement as well as cancelation of events not only has heavy cost implication on the host country, it also bears negative consequences and a sense of lack of seriousness in our own business. Frequent postponement, especially in Ministerial level, also affects our schedule and flow of progress in different areas of cooperation and worse, it many a time results in our failure to secure presence of Hon'ble Ministers from our Member States.

Related to this, level of participation in the Ministerial plenary may be taken note of. In the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture, only the State Minister of Nigeria attended the Ministerial Plenary apart from the host, i.e. Turkey at appropriate level. In the 4<sup>th</sup> D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Industry, Ministers of Bangladesh and Turkey attended the Ministerial session aside the host, i.e. Iran. Repetitive postponement of meetings, participation at a relatively low level, lack of seriousness and the Summit issue are, among others, affecting progress in Sectoral meetings significantly. We have separate agenda items to discuss these issues elaborately.

**Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Commissioners,**

I have been reiterating active and effective involvement of our private sector in order to realize the goals and targets set by our leaders. In order to realize the D-8 intra-trade target of US\$ 500 billion by 2018 as outlined in the Roadmap, private sector must play a crucial role. At the government level, Member States are developing rules and regulations to make a level-playing field for the private sector to operate more efficiently and profitably. Even though the organization

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successfully concluded a number of agreements and other instruments such as, visa and customs agreements to facilitate people-to-people contact and ease in movement of goods, we failed to inspire our private sector for enhanced participation and economic activities within the D-8. The Commission may discuss and suggest some actions for constructive engagement on the part of our private sector.

The Organization successfully held Eminent Persons Group (EPG) Meetings in 2014 with participation of Eminent Persons from all the Member States. A comprehensive report containing set of recommendations for more effectiveness and vibrancy of the Organization was finalized and submitted to the Council in its meeting on the sideline of the 69<sup>th</sup> JUNGAL last year. We have a separate agenda item to

discuss this issue in detail.

**Mr. Chairman, Distinguished  
Commissioners,**

The 9<sup>th</sup> D-8 Summit was scheduled to be held in December 2014 in Turkey, which as you are informed, did not take place and the esteemed Government of Pakistan accepted to continue the Chairmanship of the Organization. As you are aware, Excellencies, holding the meetings of the principal organs- Commission, Council of Foreign Ministers and the Summit, regularly and at a timely interval is of crucial importance in order to infuse dynamism and continue with the functioning of the Organization. Meetings of the principal organs are pivotal to advance and consolidate cooperation in sectoral areas of cooperation. I will update the meeting with latest information on this issue once this is discussed in agenda item no. 16.

While I look forward to a very productive outcome in a very conducive and congenial environment, I thank you for your attention.