

Statement

by

**Dr. Seyed Ali Mohammad Mousavi D-8 Secretary-General at the
7th Working Group on Civil Aviation and Director-Generals Meeting 3-4 June
2013, Dhaka - Bangladesh**

Honorable Chief Guest,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,

On behalf of the Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), I would like to welcome you all to the *7th Working Group on Civil Aviation and Director-Generals Meeting*.

It is a great honor for me to participate in this important Meeting. First, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh, especially to the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry, for their warm hospitality and this well-prepared Meeting, providing us with this wonderful venue in the capital city of Dhaka. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh for their valuable coordinating efforts and all delegates for their participation. We are looking forward to a good Meeting, fruitful discussions, and a solid outcome.

Distinguished Delegates,

Air transport nowadays plays a major important role in driving sustainable economic and social development in almost every and each nation.

According to ICAO report in 2012, it directly and indirectly supports the
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employment of 56.6 million people, contributes over \$2 trillion to global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and carries over 2.5 billion passengers and \$5.3 trillion worth of cargo annually. Aviation achieves its impressive level of macroeconomic performance by serving communities and regions through clear cycles of investment and opportunity.

Infrastructure development generates initial employment and the ensuing airport and airline operations generate new supplier networks, tourism influxes and access for local producers to distant markets. These trade and tourism economies then continue to expand, fostering wider and more sustainable regional growth.

It is no mystery then why air traffic growth has so consistently defied recessionary cycles since the mid-1970s, expanding two-fold once every 15 years. It avoided these recessions precisely because it served as one of our most effective tools for ending them - an important consideration for governments at every level in a challenging economic environment.

Nevertheless, even as air transport's speed and efficiency significantly facilitate economic progress, its growth under certain circumstances can be a double-edged sword. Though a sure sign of increased living standards, social mobility and generalized prosperity on the one hand, unmanaged air traffic growth can also lead to increased Safety risks in those circumstances when it outpaces the regulatory and infrastructure developments needed to support it.

These are some of the main challenges in global civil aviation sector, in particular for D-8, as economic grouping. To address these concerns, it is understood, the Civil Aviation Authority in each Member Country will have to adopt and execute a set of necessary policies and measures, including in the area of promulgation of necessary legislation and development of requisite rules and regulations.

Dear Colleagues,

Let me now turn to the actual state of our cooperation in the field of civil aviation. Looking back and taking stock of our previous works, I can say that the progress we made at the Sixth Meeting in October last year on the four Task Forces was another important step towards laying the necessary institutional framework and foundation for the future activities of the Working Group. The Meeting also provided the opportunity for the private sector to present its potentials and capabilities - which we all hope would be utilized along the way.

Drawing on the past work, we have a number of specific issues to address here at the 7th Meeting as follows:

1. Increase exchange views on the current development and possible projects among D-8 Directors General Civil Aviation;

2. Articulation of concrete cooperation and collaboration programs - with specific timeframe - under Task Forces cooperation;
3. Current Development Information from D-8 Countries regarding the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between D-8 and ICAO;
4. The selection of new chair of the Working Group for the next one year period.

The issues in front of us are specific and concrete. These issues are necessary and fundamental requirement to ensure progress in the future work of the Working Group. In addition, the Working Group also needs to discuss and explore, in a very objective manner, a set of practical actions and measures that serve promote the state of D-8 cooperation in actual terms. For instance, opening new routes among D-8 airline companies is imperative for us to increase the level of passengers and cargo distribution in D-8 Countries.

What we need to discuss here, at the D-8 level, concerns collective cooperation in these and other possible and necessary areas to help the Member Countries make progress in addressing and tackling the issues and concerns of common interest. Sharing of information, experiences, and of course, best practice, in an institutional manner, and capacity building in its broad sense, is what we need to see as the concrete outcome of the activities of this Meeting.

To ensure that our Task Forces objectives continue to advance hand-in-hand, Member Countries shall take a strategic systems approach-linking progress in both areas under complimentary frameworks. This will now allow D-8 Member States and stakeholders to realize that increased efficiency and global standardization in the field of civil aviation are essential.

With this overall picture in mind, I would like to seize the momentum to underline my clear preference - and wish - that future meetings on civil aviation, in general transportation cooperation, will have much more to offer and register in terms of concrete outcome of actual cooperation within the D-8 community. Needless to say, the assessment of our previous works and creating workable action plan to implement of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on D-8 civil aviation cooperation are vital in order to evaluate the progress development as well to streamline the way of works in the field of D-8 civil aviation.

Distinguished Delegates,

Looking back at where we started, and looking forward to where we should

be headed, I believe that this is the high time for D-8 to enhance cooperation, not only in civil aviation sector, but also in other areas of transportation sector, which is also one of D-8 priority areas. Furthermore, it is advisable that the level of meeting shall be upgraded, from the experts and/or working groups to the Director General/senior official meeting for all meetings under transportation cooperation, so that chain of command of decision making policy level will have full power to instruct any tangible project among D-8 Countries. In this context, I am consulting with our Member Countries to hold Ministerial Meeting on Transportation in the future, which will be set up as an umbrella and legally framework of D-8 transportation cooperation.

Within this framework, I believe transportation cooperation in D-8 Community - for instance civil aviation, shipping and other sectors like sharing their experience on railroads and so on and so forth - will support and act as main vehicle for D-8 Intra trade. In addition, my last word would be to urge all of you to focus on developing a good set of concrete project proposals and, once again, workable action plan in order to strengthen our cooperation.

Finally, once again I thank the Government of Bangladesh, especially the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry of Bangladesh for warm hospitality and arrangement of this meeting and I thank you very much for your attention and wish all of you every success in this Meeting.